



FOR AN EQUAL AND PEACEFUL AFGHANISTAN

PRESS RELEASE

Launch of Rawadari

As the world marks the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights today, people across Afghanistan face an unprecedented humanitarian disaster and an escalating human rights crisis.

Since the return of the Taliban to power, almost 16 months ago, Afghanistan has witnessed a complete reversal of women's fundamental rights. The fragile human rights gains in Afghanistan - scraped so painstakingly together over the previous 20 years - have been eviscerated. There has been a mass exodus of human rights activists from the country, their lives endangered by the Taliban.

It is in this difficult and uncertain context that Rawadari today initiates its public work after 15 months of reflection and planning, consultation, quiet monitoring of human rights violations and strengthening its network within the country.

On this International Human Rights Day and National Day of Victims in Afghanistan, we are inspired by the growing demand of Afghans across the country to live in dignity and realise their human rights and by the tireless and courageous work of Afghan human rights defenders inside the country and in exile to bring about an equal and peaceful Afghanistan.

In Rawadari, we are a small group of Afghan activists, human rights defenders and investigators, recently scattered to different corners of the world. We work closely with a longstanding network across Afghanistan. We are guided by a board of Afghan and international advisers.

Our aim is to deepen and grow the human rights culture of Afghanistan, ultimately reducing the suffering of all Afghans, especially women and girls. Drawing on lessons learned, failures and our shared losses, and inspired by the successes, we want to help strengthen an Afghan human rights movement. With a nationwide network, we monitor and report on human rights violations. Together with other Afghan human rights defenders and organisations, and utilising international mechanisms as well as victim-centred initiatives, we pursue justice and accountability for violations.

Across our work, we are guided by eight core values: impartiality, respect for diversity, inclusivity, honesty, trust, liberty, equality and equity and a commitment to learning.

We call on our Afghan peers and colleagues to partner with us in our shared journey of learning and service. We count on your solidarity. We hope our collective work becomes a meaningful resource for victims, survivors and the Afghan community at large.

We call on the international community - especially those who have for so long been engaged in our country - to ensure that human rights are at centre of your engagement on Afghanistan. We call on the leaders in the region and the world to stand with Afghans in defence of our rights. Afghans and international partners should jointly accept responsibility for the current devastating human rights crisis in Afghanistan.

We aim to keep the light on Afghanistan and the human rights situation in the country.

We will not give up.

