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Women in Afghanistan

Help Afghan Women. Do Not Recognize the Taliban Government.

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Frieda Afary conducted this interview with a representative of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) via the internet.

What is the current situation of masses of women in Afghanistan both in the cities and in the rural areas? There are reports that some parents are selling their infant daughters to pay for food. How common is this and what happens to the infant girls who are sold?

The situation of urban and rural Afghan masses and women is not so different. Both are suffering from war, fundamentalism, feudalism, poverty, and rape. The Taliban have banned high school, university, and work for all women, and women are not allowed to appear in media. Recently, the Taliban have assassinated some women such as Arzu, Frozan, Safi, and Nigar. They are brutally crushing all the women's protests and try to suppress women's voices. Although the Taliban are trying to present a "moderate" face to fool the world, so they can be diplomatically recognized, in reality, they haven't changed. They are the same creatures from the Stone Age.

Yes, there are many incidents, where parents are forced to sell one of their children to feed the rest. It is solely done due to poverty and it is not a common practice. Mostly, the buyer pays half the money, and once the child gets a little older, the remaining amount is paid, and the child is moved to the new house.

What types of expressions of solidarity has RAWA received from women in other countries, both in the area and globally?

RAWA always calls on freedom-loving women and men around the world to express their solidarity with the oppressed and tormented people of Afghanistan. We repeatedly say that you are our voices on the world stage, especially in this period, when the Taliban savages are trying to suppress the voice of every opponent, especially of women.

And thanks to the progressive organizations and individuals who are always expressing their support and solidarity with us. They have even arranged for protests and campaigns in solidarity with Afghan women and in particular RAWA. They arrange for fund raising events for us. Every day, we receive warm and encouraging messages of solidarity and support from around the world: Latin America, USA, Europe, Kurdistan, Turkey, Iran, India, Australia, etc. When the Taliban took over the country, we received hundreds of messages from around the world including from Hong Kong.

What do you think about the efforts of China, Russia, Pakistan, and some representatives of the U.S. and European governments to justify diplomatic recognition for the Taliban in the name of promoting humanitarian assistance for the Afghan people?

Afghanistan is like a cake and every big power and regional country wants to have its share/slice from this war-torn country. They are struggling for their own geopolitical gains and to have an upper hand over the country to take advantage of its strategic location, natural resources, and opium.

The claims of governments to defending women's rights, human rights, and civil freedoms are just lies. They are making these excuses against their rivals. The roles which the U.S, Europe, China, Russia, and Pakistan have played in Afghanistan have been very destructive and militaristic. China, Russia, and their allies are also competing

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with the United States and do not care about the plight of the Afghan people. They are advocating diplomatic recognition for the Taliban to provide a cover for their support for this terrorist organization and to promote their own imperialist plans in Afghanistan.

The U.S. used the slogan of democracy and “war on terror” to promote an imperialist occupation and a corrupt U.S.-backed government for 20 years and to force this government on the Afghan people. The U.S. has shown that it can make peace with the Taliban when it is in its interest. All these governments use the very real need for humanitarian aid to justify diplomatic recognition of the Taliban.

So far, the only large amounts of aid sent to the Taliban have been from China and Pakistan. It is clear that the criminal Taliban government is not concerned about the abject poverty of the masses. Taliban leaders have proclaimed that hunger is the will of God. If given access to frozen Afghan government funds, the Taliban would most likely help the families of their own suicide bombers. So far, humanitarian aid and medical equipment sent to Afghanistan through the Taliban have been mostly distributed among their militias.

What are some ways of sending humanitarian aid to the people of Afghanistan without being dependent on the Taliban?

Relief aid and large donations can still be sent through the World Health Organization. UNICEF has also been able to pay medical and educational staff without going through the Taliban network. Those who wish to send smaller donations for Afghan women, can contact Afghan Women’s Mission which is based in the U.S. The address is <https://www.afghanwomensmission.org/2010/08/make-a-donation/>.

Funds sent to RAWA through the Afghan Women’s Mission would be used to distribute basic food to needy families, especially to single-women headed households. We also promote literacy among poor and rural women. With more funds, we hope to establish underground clinics and schools for women and girls. RAWA would also appreciate solidarity through the publication of articles that tell the truth about what is happening in Afghanistan.

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