

THE VIENNA PROCESS FOR A DEMOCRATIC AFGHANISTAN

A Brief Report



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The Vienna Process

for a Democratic Afghanistan

*Pathway to Dialogue for a Democratic Afghanistan
An Overview of the Vienna Process*



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Forewords

CHRISTIAN REDER

Chairman of the private RD Foundation Vienna for Research, Development, and Human Rights—supporting civil rights projects, refugee programs, social work, art & science initiatives, and publications. He studied political science and is a consultant, writer and retired university professor. As a founder of the Austrian Relief Committee for Afghan Refugees in 1980, later on he published analytic books on his experiences there, and on research projects in Syria, Libya or Ukraine.

* * *

This report documents, that the Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan is the result of intensive discussions among prominent Afghan exile voices, initiated by activists from the Austrian Relief Committee for Afghan Refugees (ARC). This NGO, established in response to the Soviet invasion, operated from 1980 to 1994, managing humanitarian aid for Afghan refugees in Pakistan and inside Afghanistan. At its peak, the ARC employed up to 400 Afghan employees, half of them were women, this NGO operated on essential programs for refugees such as basic healthcare, mother-child initiatives, sanitation program, job training, schooling, and agricultural projects in Afghanistan. These programs were funded by relief organizations across Europe, the Austrian government, and the United Nations, with a budget of approximately 30 million Euro in 15 years. The long-standing relationships built through these efforts

were once again disrupted by the Taliban's takeover in August 2021, which destroyed the growing hopes for a stable future.

In response to this crisis, I acted with Mr. Nur Safa, and Ms. Fahima Zahma quickly to activate the widespread Afghan exile community in search of peaceful solutions. For that we initiated the Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan as a civil rights project, because no support from official institutions was available

The democratic ideals of this group are documented in my books on Afghanistan's history, including the latest, which has been translated into Farsi. This book discusses the country's issues in collaboration with the renowned former Kabul professor Ali M. Zahma (1928–2018).

To remain independent of government influences, the Vienna Process has been financed by the private RD Foundation Vienna—Research, Development, and Human Rights, which was established by my wife, Ms. Ingrid Reder and me to support civil society projects. Our foundation supports various initiatives, including also the publication of Afghan books and the Silk Road online platform, an important voice for Afghan democrats in exile.

The team preparing the five Vienna conferences from 2022 to 2025 and establishing international contacts in addition to the founders also included two invaluable experts: Ms. Manizha Bakhtari, Afghanistan's Ambassador and permanent representative to Austria, sent by the former government, and Dr. Wolfgang Petritsch, former Austrian diplomat and head of the Austrian Institute for International Affairs. The extensive experience of these individuals and Vienna Process founders, dating back to the Soviet invasion in the 1980s, brought a deep understanding of this effort, renewing the traditions of Vienna and Austria's long involvement in peace efforts, particularly in the Middle East.

The remarkable success of this private initiative demonstrates the potential of civil society and underscores the need for its greater

involvement in global efforts. The outcome of these intensive discussions is now an agreed “Roadmap” for further steps toward a better future and renewed international support. The fact that this initiative has been noticed and accepted by the UN Security Council office, the US House of Representatives (H. Res. 1433—118th Congress (2023–2024)), and EU institutions offers a glimmer of hope.

The fundamental intention of our efforts is to support universal human rights. Therefore, we seek to activate democratic forces and counter all hostile radicalism. Since Islamic-oriented societies like Afghanistan are often victims of such totalitarian forces, it is especially important to encourage civil rights groups and strengthen their ability to influence national policy toward more open societies, peace with all minorities and neighbors, and international cooperation. In light of the ongoing crises in the Middle East, more and more regional governments are realizing that supporting militant radicals does not guarantee a positive future.

Even an isolated Afghanistan, ruled by a totalitarian government after decades of horrific wars, will never recover. The Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan attempted to keep these opportunities alive—as a starting point for further initiatives by emboldened representatives in exile.

Prof. Dr. Christian Reder
Chairman RD Foundation Vienna

RANGIN DADFAR SPANTA

Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta is an Afghan politician and most recently served as National Security Advisor to President Hamid Karzai. He lives in Bonn/Germany. Previously, he served as Foreign Minister from April 2006 to January 2010. He studied political science at Ankara University and subsequently became an assistant professor of political science at RWTH Aachen University. Dr. Spanta also served as spokesperson for the Alliance for Democracy in Afghanistan, was active in the German Green Party, and briefly taught at Kabul University after the fall of the Taliban. In 2017, he published his memoirs, “Afghanistan Politics”.

The Taliban’s seizure of power on 15 August 2021 was not unexpected, yet it elicited a profound response, causing significant upheaval across various segments of Afghan society and resonating internationally.

The protagonists of the so-called ‘Doha Peace Process’ were taken aback by the Taliban’s destructive, fundamentally backward-looking policies and their brutality.

The handover of the state and society to the Taliban was a profoundly tragic event for the Afghan people. Conversely, this outcome represented irrefutable evidence of the international community’s failure and its absence of a clearly defined, goal-oriented strategy in Afghanistan.

At the onset of the intervention in Afghanistan and the subsequent withdrawal of international soldiers and their civilian staff, there was a conspicuous absence of coherent strategies and sufficient measures to pacify the nation and consolidate stability.

In the contemporary geopolitical landscape, characterized by

a shifting global order, the imperative for solidarity with Afghanistan necessitates a commendable degree of political and moral fortitude. The nation, besieged by conflict and violence for nearly a half-century, stands as a testament to the profound challenges of providing support and assistance in the face of enduring adversity.

In such a political atmosphere, a small circle of friends of Afghanistan and Afghan citizens gathered in Vienna to discuss how Afghan democrats, human rights activists and freedom-seeking citizens of Afghanistan can be given a stage and a voice right now to discuss their country's problems, find and strengthen their common ground and think about ways out. The participants then proceeded to document the fundamental values and norms of democracy, the rule of law, social justice and political and social participation for both men and women in Afghanistan, as outlined in the adopted 'Roadmap'. The roadmap was presented to relevant Afghan and international political actors. The response to this concept was positive and motivating.

The presence and active participation of prominent representatives of Afghan freedom seekers, women's rights activists, human rights activists and representatives of civil society at the meetings in Vienna, and, above all, the continuity and promotion of activities in this context, indicate the firm commitment of the participants.

From the outset, I have been a participant in this process, and I feel compelled to continue to observe it within the scope of my limited capabilities.

It is imperative that all democratic compatriots play an active role in this process. The resolution of the challenges faced by our nation cannot be achieved by a single group or through a simplistic form of resistance. To achieve this, it is essential to employ a diverse and imaginative category of resistance. The process of achieving freedom and democracy is often protracted and arduous, necessitating a degree of strategic patience.

It is my opinion that a peaceful, discursive platform must be both pluralistic and inclusive in its approach and show tolerance and integrity towards all forms of resistance. It is evident that a considerable amount of work must be completed. In light of these considerations, it is my earnest wish that all those engaged in this endeavor meet with unqualified success.

Dr. Dadfar Rangin Spanta

NUR SAFA

Nur Safa came to Vienna from Afghanistan to study in 1977. After completing his German language course, he studied Business Administration and Tourism (B.A.) at Modul University in Vienna. After successfully completing his studies, he worked as a manager in various business-related companies in Vienna. From 1980/81, he was coordinator of the Austrian Relief Committee for Afghan Refugees in Peshawar, Pakistan. In 1984, he married Fahima Zahma.

From 1986 to 1990, he studied political science in Vienna. From September 1990 to the end of 1994, he again worked as Coordinator and Management Board spokesperson of the Austrian Relief Committee for Afghan Refugees (ARC) in Pakistan. On the recommendation of Austrian Ambassador Dr. Hans Walser and Consul General Eugen Ruff, he moved to the Austrian Foreign Ministry in Vienna. After passing the entrance examination, he joined the Foreign Ministry in April 1996 and remained there until 2018. As an Austrian diplomat, he served in countries such as New York (USA), Pretoria (South Africa), and Tehran (Iran). He retired in 2019. He is one of the founding members of the Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan.

A Candle of Hope for Freedom

Following the Taliban's seizure of power in Afghanistan in August 2021, I envisioned bringing together all widespread Afghan opposition groups in Vienna to forge a unified response to our nation's crisis. From 2022 to 2025, we convened five conferences that produced a comprehensive, shared roadmap for Afghanistan's future.

The Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan united up to 50 opposition groups across these gatherings, reaching its culmination in our fifth and final conference. Through sustained dialogue

and collaboration, we have created a foundation for Afghanistan's democratic restoration.

I extend my deepest gratitude to all conference participants who helped develop our detailed roadmap, and to those who served on the four working committees of the Vienna Process. This dedication and tireless efforts have been instrumental to our success. Special recognition goes to the members of our Executive Committee, whose leadership proved invaluable throughout this journey.

My profound appreciation goes to Ambassador Manizha Bakhtari and her exceptional team, Dr. Wolfgang Petritsch, and Ms. Ziaqul Saljoqi for their unwavering support and expertise.

Above all, I must acknowledge Prof. Christian Reder and Ingrid Reder, whose generous financial backing of their RD Foundation Vienna made these conferences possible. Without their commitment to our cause and the involvement of the founder team this vital work could not have been accomplished.

As we conclude this phase of the Vienna Process in summer 2025, I extend my best wishes to all involved and renew our shared commitment to the principles that unite us.

It should be noted that the Vienna Process conducted its activities and work without any interference or assistance from governments or secret organizations, and all participants worked voluntarily.

Nur Safa
Director Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan

AHMAD MASSOUD

The National Resistance Front of Afghanistan (NRF), the first political and military front to rise against terrorism and for the liberation of Afghanistan after August 2021, has entered the political stage with a firm commitment to democracy, human rights, citizenship, and the establishment of an inclusive and just government.

The NRF is guided by the belief that the rights and dignity of the people of Afghanistan have been systematically violated under the rule of the Taliban terrorist group. Today, Afghanistan once again serves as a safe haven for more than 21 international terrorist organizations. In response, the NRF continues its struggle—both militarily and politically—firmly anchored in democratic and human values.

Alongside its military resistance to overthrow the Taliban and to build a democratic order based on the political will of the people of Afghanistan, the NRF upholds the principles of dialogue, tolerance, and coexistence. We have spared no effort to engage in meaningful political processes. The Taliban, however, with their absolutism and rejection of Afghanistan's political and cultural diversity, remain hostile to dialogue and pluralism.

It is in this spirit that the NRF has actively participated in five rounds of the Vienna Process, working with Afghanistan's political leaders, civic organizations, social movements, and other democratic actors to pave the way for a comprehensive roadmap toward Afghanistan's future.

The Vienna Process stands as a significant political achievement and a vital platform for all democratic and pluralistic forces. We believe it offers the key to ending the current catastrophe, halting the Taliban's crimes, combating global terrorism, and laying the foundation for a democratic, stable, and inclusive Afghanistan where the fundamental rights of the people of Afghanistan are respected.

The NRF welcomes the alignment, cooperation, and collective struggle of political movements under the umbrella of the Vienna Process. Only through greater unity and shared commitment can Afghanistan be freed from Taliban tyranny, oppression, and terror.

The Vienna Process is more than a dialogue—it is a unique opportunity to build consensus, strengthen democracy, and safeguard pluralism in Afghanistan. It provides every voice with a platform and advances the vision of justice, equality, and legitimacy through a political system based on the will of the people. By recognizing the diversity of identities in Afghanistan's society, it empowers pluralistic forces in their struggle against the imposition of a single, authoritarian voice.

The NRF remains steadfast in its mission to restore the fundamental rights of the people of Afghanistan, to end Taliban oppression, and to establish a just and legitimate system that protects human dignity. We will continue to cooperate with all democratic and national actors to achieve this goal.

Ahmad Massoud

Leader of the National Resistance Front of Afghanistan, NRF

DAUOD NAJI

The Freedom Front of Afghanistan, as a political and military organization, is committed to the restoration of the fundamental rights of the Afghan people, the reestablishment of the rule of law, and the creation of a democratic and just political order. Our struggle against the Taliban is a legitimate and necessary response to the forceful occupation of our country by a totalitarian group that rejects the most basic principles of human dignity and national sovereignty.

Recognizing the complexity of the current national struggle, the Freedom Front joined the fourth round of the Vienna Process as part of our broader engagement with political and civil actors working toward a democratic future for Afghanistan. We believe that, despite its limitations, the Vienna Process represents a significant step toward political convergence among democratic forces, civil society actors, and components of the national resistance.

The Freedom Front supports the core aims of the Vienna Process while also emphasizing the need for substantive reforms within its structure and direction. These include ensuring greater transparency, expanding inclusivity, and developing a clear, action-oriented roadmap for meaningful political change.

We firmly reject any path toward peace or stability that legitimizes the Taliban. Resistance to their authoritarian rule remains an essential pillar of nation-building, justice, and democratic transition in Afghanistan.

We also stress the importance of continued cooperation between democratic actors, resistance forces, civil society, women, and youth. Building a pluralistic and inclusive platform is vital if we are to overcome the current crisis and design a viable and sovereign future for our country.

The Freedom Front remains committed to a multifaceted struggle—political, military, and intellectual—and we stand ready to

work alongside all democratic forces dedicated to saving Afghanistan from tyranny and fragmentation.

Daoud Naji

Head of the political committee of the Afghanistan freedom front



First Vienna Process Conference, September 2022

Founders and participants: Wolfgang Petritsch, Manizha Bakhtari,
Christian Reder, Ahmad Massoud, Nur Safa, Fahima Zahma, Udo Janz



First Vienna Process Conference, September 2022



Second Vienna Process Conference, February 2023
Fahima Zahma, Nur Safa, Christian Reder, Ahmad Massoud



Third Vienna Process Conference, December 2023



History of the Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan

The Taliban's resurgence on August 15, 2021, destroyed the hopes that had been growing for a democratic and peaceful Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan are once again facing a severe political, economic, social, and humanitarian crisis marked by human rights violations, poverty, oppression, and fear. The political and social systems established over the previous two decades, with the support of the international community, collapsed under the Taliban's regime. This so-called regime, led primarily by Taliban police forces, is characterized by cruelty, incompetence, and hostility, particularly toward women and minorities.

In response to this crisis, the Vienna Process emerged as a vital platform for Afghan democrats in exile. Its roots trace back to the Austrian Relief Committee for Afghanistan (ARC), which from 1980 to 1994 supported numerous humanitarian projects for Afghans in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. This long-standing commitment to Afghan welfare provided the foundation for the Vienna Process initiative.

Key figures in the creation of the Vienna Process include Mr. Nur Safa, an Afghan-born former Austrian diplomat and coordinator of the ARC in Pakistan, and his wife, Ms. Fahima Zahma, a human rights activist. They were joined by Professor Christian Reder, former head of the ARC, who had been actively involved in Afghan affairs for over 45 years and had authored books such as *Afghanistan Fragmented* and *Noch Jahre der Unruhe*, (More years of unrest) on the history of Afghanistan. Their collective experience and passion for Afghan democracy led them to support the Afghan exile community in mobilizing for solutions to the ongoing crisis.

The RD Foundation Vienna, founded in 2011 by Prof. Dr. Reder and his wife Ingrid Reder, provided the necessary resources for these efforts. The foundation, which focuses on research, development, and human rights, supports has supported various civil society projects in Austria, also including the publication of Afghan books and the Silk Way Online Platform, which serves as an important voice for Afghan democrats in exile.

To further advance the Vienna Process, key figures Ms. Manizaha Bakhtari, Afghanistan's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to Austria, and Dr. Wolfgang Petritsch, a former Austrian diplomat and head of the Austrian Institute for International Affairs, joined the initiative. The Austrian Institute, founded in 1979, is dedicated to fundamental research in international politics and plays a leading role in analyzing political and social developments on a global scale.

Vienna, capital of as a neutral country with a strong tradition of contributing to global peace efforts and supporting Afghanistan through economic and cultural cooperation, was chosen as the ideal location for this initiative. The group aimed to establish the Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan as an independent political platform of competent Afghans in Afghanistan and in exile, focused on finding political solutions to the country's dire situation, free from hidden influences.

As the first step, the founders reached out to leaders of the National Resistance Front and the Freedom Front, both of which had been at the forefront of Afghanistan's resistance movements in the Hindu Kush and Pamir Mountains. The National Resistance Front was the first to respond positively to the invitation.

The outreach efforts were expanded to include a wide range of political parties, organizations, influential figures, civil society activists, intellectuals, women, religious and ethnic minorities, and human rights organizations. These efforts culminated in the establishment of the Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan, which seeks to provide a comprehensive and inclusive solution to the ongoing crisis and lay the foundation for a new political structure in Afghanistan.

Far from all over the world, coming together, a total of 305 men and women actively participated in five Vienna Process conferences from September 2022 to February 2025, demonstrating a strong and committed will to discuss, step by step, a framework for Afghanistan's possible future. In comparison to the usual "conference routine" of official institutions, the costs of these essential activities were reasonable—approximately €1,100 per participant per conference. Only one-third of travel expenses were covered by the Vienna Process budget, with many participants covering the remainder themselves. Over 30 journalists reported on the conferences, including correspondents from Arab News, the Associated Press, BBC Farsi, The New York Times, Japan's Kyodo News, the Press Agency of Germany, and leading regional newspapers.



First Conference

September 15–17, 2022

The inaugural Vienna Process conference, titled *Afghanistan Meeting: Coordination and Unity for the Future of Afghanistan*, took place from September 15 to 17, 2022, at the Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue in Vienna, Austria. The event was organized by the Transferprojekt Association, in collaboration with the RD Foundation Vienna and the Austrian Institute for International Affairs. The RD Foundation Vienna provided a budget for the conference, with additional logistical support from the Vienna Process Office.

Key Highlights

Participants: The conference brought together 30 participants, including political figures, members of the Taliban opposition, women, and youth, representing various ethnic groups such as Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, Turkmens and Balouchs.

Discussions: The conference focused on addressing Afghanistan's major challenges and exploring potential solutions. The goal was to unify opposition groups and create a platform for transparent, com-

prehensive discussions about Afghanistan's future. A key focus was on finding a democratic alternative to the Taliban and its regime.

Outcome: At the conclusion of the conference, a final declaration was issued. This marked the first major gathering of anti-Taliban opposition in exile, drawing significant international attention to the efforts for democratic change in Afghanistan.

Press Conference: A declaration was prepared and approved by the conference participants to publicly communicate the outcomes and goals of the meeting. Declaration was presented at the Press Conference. Four participants of the conference attended the press conference to answer journalist's questions. over 20 television, radio, and newspaper journalists attended the Press Conference.



Declaration of the First Conference

26th Sunbla 1401
September 17, 2022

In the name of God

After the passage of more than a year since the collapse of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban takeover of power, the crisis ridden situation of the country is not acceptable to the overwhelming majority of the people of Afghanistan, the region and the world. National and international efforts to create an inclusive, responsible and accountable government have not yet yielded results, and the Taliban administration continues to insist on monopoly, totalitarianism, and rejection to the creation of a government elected by the people's will.

This situation calls upon the people of Afghanistan once again to fulfill their historical and national responsibility to create a law-abiding, pluralistic and democratic Islamic system. In such a difficult situation, we are trying to make the Vienna Conference a good start for a great national and democratic discursive process to solve the crises of Afghanistan.

With gratitude to the Austrian Institute for International Affairs, which provided the platform for the meeting between Afghans from September 15–17 in Vienna, we, the participants of this conference, considering:

- Increasing humanitarian disaster and economic crisis in the country;
- Lack of national and international legitimacy of governance system;
- Isolation of Afghanistan;
- Continuous violation of human and citizenship rights, especially the systematic exclusion of women;
- Imposing restrictions on girls' education and the women's right to work;
- Arbitrary detentions, targeted killings, torture and extrajudicial trials, war crimes and crimes against humanity;
- Expansion of the activities of regional and international terrorist groups;
- Systematic denial of freedom of speech, freedom of media and civil and political rights;
- Structural discrimination, totalitarianism and disregarding Afghanistan's social diversity;
- Abolition of national laws and clear violation of international obligations and UN resolutions;
- Absence of an inclusive political process and national dialogue.

After three days of exchange of views on achieving sustainable peace and stability, ensuring the fundamental rights of citizens, creating a political system based on people's will, consolidating national unity and social justice, we have agreed on the following points:

1. We consider the Vienna Conference to be the start of a meaningful political process among all national political and civil movements, parties and activists to develop and consolidate a common vision that will lead to the formation of a comprehensive and alternative political structure;
2. Solving the country's problem through political dialogue is our preferred option, and in this way we will pursue all the necessary tools within the framework of international laws;
3. To realize the above, we emphasize on the key role of the United Nations and the countries of the region and the world;
4. We support the resistance of the people of Afghanistan in order to realize their legitimate and rightful demands; We support the historical and rightful struggle of the heroic women of Afghanistan;
5. We support regional integration with the neighbouring and regional countries based on mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and non-interference in each other's affairs;
6. We ask the countries of the region and the world to cooperate in providing the opportunity for creating a democratic and national governance system in Afghanistan;
7. We kindly request the continuation and increase of direct world aid to all the peoples throughout Afghanistan and the creation of a transparent monitoring mechanism for the fair distribution of aid;
8. With the return of the Taliban and their support for the expansion of the presence and activities of regional and international terrorist groups in Afghanistan, we ask regional countries and the international community to act in the fight against terrorism without exclusion and in doing so keeping in mind the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council;
9. We ask the United Nations and human rights organizations to document human rights violations and crimes against human-

ity, publish them and seek justice for the victims, and pay more attention in monitoring the implementation of the UN sanctions regime against the Taliban;

10. We demand the reopening of girls' secondary and high schools immediately and without interfering with the curriculum;
11. We welcome the regional and global consensus not to recognize the Taliban regime until the establishment of a government based on the will of the people of Afghanistan.
12. We request Austria and other friendly countries to continue their support to pave the way for holding such meetings and we create a working group to follow up on the above mentioned points of agreement.

God bless you



Second Conference

April 24–26, 2023

The second conference of the Vienna Process was held at the Bruno Kreisky Forum from April 24 to 26, 2023, with a budget provided by the RD Foundation Vienna. The event brought together 47 participants, including political figures, civil society members, and women, all representing diverse Afghan ethnic backgrounds.

Key Discussions

Political Situation and Solutions: The conference focused on “The Political Situation of Afghanistan and Pathways to a Solution.” It featured six panel discussions addressing both temporary solutions and long-term strategies. Topics included peace dialogue, coalition-building, political mobilization, and fostering unity among opposition groups.

International Guests and Outcomes: The conference concluded with a special session for international guests, followed by the presentation of a resolution and a press conference. These actions were

aimed at gaining global support for the Afghan people's struggle for democracy.

Formation of a Working Group: A key outcome was the formation of a Working Group coordinated by the Vienna Office. This group, which included representatives from political parties, ethnic communities, youth, and women, held twelve sessions to compile a list of individuals, organizations, and political parties opposed to the Taliban. The aim was to establish a united front to advance a collective movement for a Democratic Afghanistan.

Roadmap for Democracy: The conference focused on the future development of a Roadmap for a Democratic Afghanistan, emphasizing justice, human rights, and social inclusion. The draft of the roadmap was outlined, developed, and refined by working groups after the second conference, with strategies aimed at creating a society free from discrimination, particularly violence against women, and extremism.

Press Conference: A declaration was prepared and approved by the conference participants to publicly communicate the outcomes and goals of the meeting which they presented at the Press Conference. Six participants of the conference attended the press conference to answer journalist's questions. More than 35 Televisions, Radio, Newspaper Journalists attended the Press Conference, asking questions about the situation in Afghanistan and the activities of the Vienna Process Conference.



Declaration of the Second Conference

Saur 4-6 1402

April 24-26, 2023

After more than 20 months of Taliban rule, Afghanistan has become a wretched place for its inhabitants. In view of the despicable conditions in the country, we, the participants of the Second Vienna Conference, cognizant of our historical and patriotic responsibilities, consider the plight of our people as urgently demanding our taking serious and practical steps. These steps are towards the more effective coordination of all the national political, social, and intellectual forces, civil society activists, and independent personalities who are dedicated to supporting the peaceful resistance, both inside and outside the country. These steps are important especially if we are to be able to reverse the current conditions and to bring peace and stability to Afghanistan.

The Taliban, so far, have not heeded the legitimate and rightful demands of the peoples of Afghanistan, as they were articulated in the Declaration of the First Vienna Conference; instead they have increased their brutality and cruelty, pushing the country to the verge of an unprecedented human tragedy.

We, the participants of this Vienna Conference, while admiring continued persistence of all forms of national peaceful resistance efforts: by political groups, resistance in the cities and mountain ranges, women and girls protesting vociferously in the streets—we all express our gratitude to the Austrian Institute for International Affairs, for hosting this Conference in Vienna and advancing it into the Vienna Process. We have agreed to the following:

- Upholding the declaration made by the First Conference, we, the participants of the second round of the Vienna Conference, commit ourselves to the methodical integration of all the current opposition forces against the Taliban. We will also make every effort towards its expansion. To this end, we have formed a Working Group to help establish ways and means for strengthening cooperation and coordination among and between resistance entities and to develop a road map for reaching our common goals.
- While we consider negotiation and a peaceful political solution to be the best option but given the non-changing policies and practices of the Taliban so far, we support all forms of peaceful resistance against the Taliban and will strive to expand and strengthen them. We also ask that the international community recognize the legitimacy of all forms of peaceful resistance by the peoples of Afghanistan.
- Our top priority is: to attempt to create a single national umbrella organization against the Taliban, cognizant of the diversity of political views, ideals and commitments among them.
- We believe that the systematic exclusion of women from the public sphere is a perfect manifestation of the Taliban policies and practices of gender apartheid. While admiring and firmly supporting the struggles by Afghans to secure the rights of Afghan girls and women, we find the indifference of the international

community, especially the silence of the United Nations, to be disheartening and irresponsible.

- We also, consider the statements of the Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations, Amina Mohammad, regarding the situation in Afghanistan very unfortunate; and we consider the explanations offered to justify it utterly unsatisfactory.
- We request that the organizers of the Doha Meetings (May 1-2-2023), which is hosted by the UN, without the engagement of the real representatives of the peoples of Afghanistan, to refrain from any discussions that lead to the prolongation of the Taliban's rule which will only aggravate the already horrid situation in Afghanistan.
- Since the return of the Taliban to rule Afghanistan, many regional and international terrorist groups have moved to Afghanistan and have considerably enhanced their operational capabilities. Therefore, the risk of terrorism spreading in the region and beyond has become a serious reality. The Taliban claim that they are fighting against these terrorist groups is nothing but delusional.
- In addition, we strongly condemn the closing of schools and universities for girls in Afghanistan. We also, reject the changes they have made in the schools' curricula for the purposes of achieving the Taliban's extremist and terrorist goals.
- We ask the United Nations and the international community to reprimand the Taliban, and to impose sanction on those of their leaders committing systematic violations of human rights and women's rights.
- We ask The International Criminal Court ICC to identify and prosecute those Taliban leaders and commanders who have committed crimes against humanity and grossly violated human rights.

- We welcome the regional and global consensus on not extending official recognition to the Taliban regime and until the establishment of an elected government based on the free will of the peoples of Afghanistan.
- We request the Muslim countries, especially the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), to take a clear stance and undertake practical measures condemning the un-Islamic policies and practices of the Taliban regime.
- Since the illegitimate return of Taliban to power because of the 2020 Doha Agreement, resulting in the unprecedented tragedy-in-the-making, we believe continued adherence to that Agreement is no longer to the best interest of the peoples Afghanistan.

We, the participants of the Second Vienna Conference, thank and ask Austria and other friendly countries to continue their support for providing venues for holding future meetings, and to offer practical support to the Working Group we have just formed so that they could pursue reaching our stated objectives.

Vienna, April 26, 2023



Third Conference

December 3–5, 2023

The third Vienna Process conference took place from December 3 to 5, 2023, with participation from 58 representatives from 26 institutions, political parties, and civil society groups. The event received financial support by the RD Foundation Vienna and an additional financial support from Afghan entrepreneurs abroad.

Key Outcomes

Approval of the Vienna Process Roadmap: A major outcome of the conference was the approval of the *Vienna Process Roadmap*. This roadmap, developed by the Vienna Process Working Group, aims to restore a constitutional system in Afghanistan, end the Taliban's oppressive rule, halt systematic human rights violations, and eliminate gender apartheid. It also outlines pathways for the social, political, and cultural participation of Afghan citizens.

Formation of a Broad-Based Coalition: There was a strong consensus to form a broad-based coalition that includes all ethnic groups, women and men, political parties, and civil society actors. The goal

is to establish a political system grounded in Islamic, civic, and democratic values, where governance and legitimacy derive from the free will of the people.

Press Conference: A declaration was prepared and approved by the conference participants to publicly communicate the outcomes and goals of the meeting which they presented at the Press Conference. Six participants of the conference participants attended the press conference to answer journalist's questions. More than 30 Televisions, Radio, and Newspaper attended the Press Conference, asking questions about the situation in Afghanistan and the activities of the Vienna Process Conference.



Declaration of the Third Conference

Participants in the Vienna Conference for a Democratic Afghanistan, following extensive discussions held from December 3rd to 5th, 2023, at the Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogues in Vienna, in light of the ongoing illegitimate rule of the Taliban and the humanitarian crisis, with the aim of fulfilling the fundamental aspirations of the people of Afghanistan, declare the following:

1. **Renewed Commitment:** Building upon the declarations of the first and second Vienna conferences, we once again reaffirm our commitment to the foundational principles of democracy, human rights, and national unity as the basis for establishing a democratic and representative political system in Afghanistan.
2. **UN and International Community Support:** Emphasizing the pivotal role of the United Nations, we urge the active involvement of this organization in facilitating the political process for the development and adaptation of a national program to address the current situation in Afghanistan. We call upon the United Nations to take practical actions to ensure freedom, peace, stability, democracy, human rights, rule of law, and the fair distribution of humanitarian aid in Afghanistan. Furthermore, we request from

the United Nations to prioritize solutions to political problems and governance legitimacy and make engagements with the Taliban contingent on progress in these areas. The United Nations should also exercise increasing oversight in reviewing and enforcing the sanction's regime against the Taliban.

3. **Support for People's Struggle for Self Determination** according to the UN Charter, and people's Self Defence: We declare our unequivocal support for the people's struggle for self-determination, according to the UN Charter, and people's self-defence because of the gross violation of human rights in Afghanistan, to realize their legitimate aspirations in forming a peaceful governance system based on the free will of all the people and express our support for their just struggle against the tyranny of the Taliban, and securing their rights.
4. **Counterterrorism Efforts:** Considering the rise in regional and international terrorist activities in Afghanistan, we call on regional and global countries to coordinate their efforts to combat all forms of terrorism. This action must be carried out without exception in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and international conventions.
5. **Documentation of Human Rights Violations:** We urge the United Nations and human rights organizations, as well as international criminal courts, to document and address human rights violations and crimes against humanity, including mass killings, forced displacement, and the seizure of land and property belonging to the indigenous population. Recognition and dissemination of these findings are crucial for ensuring justice.
6. **Mobilizing Support from Islamic Countries:** We call on Islamic countries and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to support the struggles of women and take a clear stance against the misinterpretation of Islam by the Taliban.

7. Roadmap: We have developed a roadmap for overcoming the current crisis and effecting positive and rapid change in the situation in Afghanistan. We seek international support for this roadmap and the participation of Afghan organizations, figures, and political parties in this process.
8. Gratitude to the Hosts: We express gratitude to The Austrian Institute for International Affairs, RD Foundation Vienna, the Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue, and other civil institutions in Austria for their support in organizing the Vienna conferences. We call for continued support in this regard.

Vienna, December 5, 2023



Participants of the Vienna Process Conference, invited by
the Austrian Parliament, December 2023



Fourth Conference

June 24–26, 2024

Key Developments

This conference saw participation from 70 individuals, including 40 representatives from institutions, political parties, civil society activists, and leader of the National Resistance Front and representative of the Freedom Front. Participants represented a diverse range of ethnic groups, including Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, Turkmen, Pashais, and Hindus. The event was carried out with the financial support of the RD Foundation Vienna, and with additional financial contribution from Afghan entrepreneurs abroad.

Formation of Working Committees: The conference led to the establishment of four key Working Committees, each focusing on a specific area of Afghanistan's future:

- Politics
- International Relations
- Human Rights & Civil Society
- Economy

These committees engaged in intensive discussions and created initial strategy documents, outlining proposed solutions for Afghanistan's future. These preliminary documents were unanimously approved by the participants. It was agreed that the committees would continue to refine these documents virtually in preparation for the fifth Vienna Conference, ultimately creating a comprehensive strategic roadmap to address Afghanistan's crisis.

Key Discussions

Political Sector: There was a strong commitment to a unified, indivisible Afghanistan based on democracy, the rule of law, and civic values. The discussions emphasized ensuring social justice and the legitimacy of a political system founded on free elections. The role of political parties in organizing elections was recognized, alongside support for the legitimate resistance of the Afghan people.

International & Regional Relations: A strategy was developed for engaging with international and regional stakeholders, aiming to secure support for a legitimate political alternative to the Taliban regime.

Human Rights & Civil Society: The conference called for immediate international action to address human rights violations in Afghanistan. It advocated for the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions.

Economic Sector: The economic discussions focused on establishing a dynamic policy that takes Afghanistan's geo-economic position into account. The strategy aimed to attract investment, develop infrastructure, expand the private sector, and encourage foreign invest-

ment by reducing bureaucratic barriers. Ensuring investment security and improving Afghanistan's diplomatic standing in the global economy were also central goals, as well as pursuing international organization memberships and multilateral investment agreements.

Working Committees' Progress: The four Working Committees, comprising 49 members, held 24 virtual meetings to further refine their findings in the key areas listed above. Their discussions culminated in a comprehensive strategic document that was presented at the fifth Vienna Conference for further development and finalization.

Establishment of the Executive Committee: At this stage, an Executive Committee was formed under the management of the Vienna Process Office. This 18-member committee, selected from the four Working Committees, held three meetings to finalize the Vienna Process principals and preparation for the fifth conference. The meetings outlined the next steps in the movement's progress.

Press Statement: A press statement was prepared and approved by the conference participants to publicly communicate the outcomes and goals of the meeting. Press Statement was presented at the Press Conference. Eight conference participants attended the press conference to answer journalist's questions, over 40 Television, Radio, and Newspaper Journalists attended the Press Conference and reported on the situation in Afghanistan and the Vienna Process Conference activities.



Declaration of the Fourth Conference

The fourth meeting of the Vienna Process was held from June 24 to 26 in Vienna, with the participation of representatives from more than forty organizations and political groups, resistance groups, women, youth, ethnic representatives, and several influential Afghan figures.

During this meeting, the problems caused by the Taliban regime, including the spread of extremism and terrorism, the economic and political crisis, lack of rule of law, increase in migrants, human rights crisis, gender apartheid against women, and the crisis of the absence of constitutional governance were highlighted as the main factors of the internal crisis with extensive international implications. With the continued rule of the Taliban, Afghanistan has become one of the worst countries in terms of human rights, and the human and civil rights of the people, especially women, are being systematically violated. Mass killings, arbitrary detentions, and torture in both official and unofficial Taliban prisons demonstrate that this group does not believe in the principles and values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international treaties and conventions, the principles enshrined in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, or Islamic and human

values, and seeks to perpetuate its illegitimate rule through intimidation, violence, and torture.

Participants, representing the people of Afghanistan, unanimously called for global attention to the multifaceted current crisis in Afghanistan. Simultaneously, participants expressed their support for civil resistance, especially the struggles of women and the resistance of the Afghan people to achieve their fundamental rights.

Participants described the current security and political situation in Afghanistan as fragile, deteriorating, and unstable, and proposed specific actions to mobilize more forces against the current situation.

During the meeting, participants once again renewed their commitment to the three previous declarations of this process and the roadmap that was prepared and approved in the third round. Furthermore, in the fourth round, participants formed four specialized working groups in the areas of politics, economy, human rights, and international relations. After discussing the current situation, they approved indicators and strategies in four documents and predicted executive mechanisms for Afghanistan's transition to a legitimate, democratic, and stable state.

The documents have been developed in detail, and their summary is as follows:

- Continuation of efforts to establish a legitimate, democratic, inclusive government based on the free will of Afghan citizens.
- Emphasis on the essential and necessary support and coordination of neighboring countries, the region, and the world for the rightful and legitimate efforts of the Afghan people towards transitioning to a democratic and humane state.
- Emphasis on preparing an executive mechanism for Afghanistan to fulfill its responsibilities as an active, responsible, and bene-

ficial member of the global community in achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

- Highlighting the risk that Afghanistan under Taliban rule has become a haven for terrorist groups, drug traffickers, mafia networks, and organized crime. These groups are regularly equipped and funded and have found safe havens and even recruitment grounds in Afghanistan. Ignoring these issues will have dire consequences for Afghanistan, the region, and the world.
- Continued humanitarian aid from the world to the needy people of Afghanistan with the principles of transparency, impartial supervision, and assurance that this aid reaches the needy people.
- Participants of the Vienna Process believe that the technical extraction and use of Afghanistan's natural resources and mines are possible and feasible only under a legitimate and popular government. Therefore, they strongly urge countries cooperating with the illegitimate Taliban group in the extraction of Afghanistan's mines and natural resources to stop this action. Afghanistan's mines and natural resources are the capital of the Afghan people, and any use of them under an illegitimate and illegal regime means the plundering of Afghanistan's national assets and also strengthens and perpetuates the Taliban's illegitimate rule.
- Participants believe that the Taliban's policy against women, especially depriving women of work in the public sphere and banning girls' education, is a clear example of crimes against humanity, and they call on all countries of the world, human rights organizations, the United Nations, the International Criminal Court, the International Court of Justice, and all free citizens of the world to recognize the Taliban's policy against women as gender apartheid and to provide the grounds for the trial and accountability of those Taliban leaders involved in this crime.

- As the United Nations is scheduled to host the third Doha meeting on Afghanistan on June 30, 2024, participants call on the United Nations not to normalize the Taliban by interacting with a terrorist group, with no representation from the majority of Afghanistan in the room, and excluding women. The agenda of the third Doha meeting indicates that the United Nations has deviated from its main mission in this meeting and violated UN Security Council Resolution 2721. The unilateral participation of the Taliban and the way the agenda of the third Doha meeting has been written at their request not only undermines the legitimacy of the third Doha meeting but also the entire Doha process. Participants of the Vienna meeting expect Mr. Antonio Gutierrez, the UN Secretary-General, to act responsibly regarding the Afghanistan issue, understanding the sensitivity of this matter.

Vienna, June 26, 2024



Foreign guests at the Fifth Vienna Process Conference, 2025
Micke Coffey, Michael Barry with Mahmoud Saikal, and Nur Safa



Fifth Vienna Process Conference, 2025



Fifth Conference

February 18–19, 2025

The most recent Vienna Process conference, held from February 18 to 19, 2025, brought together 100 political figures representing 50 institutions, including the leaders of the National Resistance Front and the Freedom Front of Afghanistan. The conference also included civil society members, influential activists, and women from diverse ethnic backgrounds such as Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, Turkmens, Pashais, Baluch's, and Hindus.

The event was also financed with a financial support from the RD Foundation Vienna, and an additional contribution from Afghan entrepreneurs abroad.

- **Key Discussions:** The conference featured five separate sessions, two of which focused on presenting the finalized, detailed *Roadmap* prepared by the Working Committees. This roadmap was unanimously approved by all participants.
- **Approval of the Roadmap:** The approved roadmap emphasized key principles such as democracy, constitutional governance, the separation of powers, and human rights.

- **Establishment of the Grand National Commission:** The conference led to the establishment of a Grand National Commission, which will coordinate national consensus efforts among diverse political groups and civil society actors.
- **Press Conference:** A press statement was prepared and approved by the conference participants to publicly communicate the outcomes and goals of the meeting. Press Statement was presented at the Press Conference. Four conference participants attended the press conference to answer journalist's questions. More than 30 Television, Radio, and Newspaper Journalists attended the Press Conference, asking questions about the situation in Afghanistan and the activities of the Vienna Process Conference.



Declaration of the Fifth Conference

We, the participants of the Fifth Vienna Process Conference for a Democratic Afghanistan, comprising political parties and groups, liberation movements, women's resistance movements, civil society organizations, media representatives, and influential figures, convened on February 18 and 19, 2025, in Vienna to assess Afghanistan's current challenges and reflect the legitimate demands of its people. Following two days of discussions and deliberations, the following resolutions were adopted:

1. Adoption of Key Documents for Afghanistan's Future.

This conference has focused on enhancing and adopting the Vienna Process Roadmap, which outlines the country's future, to achieve democracy and the rule of law in Afghanistan. This roadmap presents a coordinated and strategic approach to establishing a stable and sustainable, democratic, and inclusive future for Afghanistan. The documents included in the roadmap, formulated through extensive consultations and expert analyses by the four Vienna Process working groups, include:

- **Political Vision:** Establishing and defining the principles and framework of a democratic and participatory system based on free elections, equal citizenship rights, and the rule of law.
- **International Relations:** Outlining strategies for effective engagement between the people of Afghanistan and the international community, fostering diplomatic relations, and securing international political and economic support.
- **Human Rights:** Addressing mechanisms to safeguard human rights, particularly the rights of women, children, and all ethnic groups in Afghanistan, and proposing concrete measures for justice, including the prosecution of perpetrators of human rights violations.
- **Economic Framework:** Presenting sustainable development strategies, poverty reduction policies, resource management plans, and measures to attract foreign investment for job creation and public welfare.

The Fifth Vienna Conference decided to establish a National Commission of 19 members, encompassing all groups within the Vienna Process and future participants. This commission's primary tasks will include drafting final documents, consolidating a common vision, formulating crisis-resolution strategies, and designing comprehensive political structures based on prior declarations and the work of expert groups.

We, the participants of the Fifth Vienna Process Conference, call upon Afghan civil institutions, neighboring and regional countries, and all international organizations and pro-democracy governments to recognize and support the principles outlined in this roadmap as a foundation for future actions aimed at assisting the people of Afghanistan.

2. Commitment to Democratic Principles and Human Rights.

We affirm our commitment to the principles of sovereignty of the people, human rights, territorial integrity, and national unity of Afghanistan, emphasizing the following points:

- Freedom- and independence-seeking and justice-oriented forces must unite for a democratic and just Afghanistan.
- We support all legitimate resistance of the people of Afghanistan to establish a democratic system, combat terrorism, and defend their fundamental rights.

3. Addressing the Catastrophic Situation in Afghanistan and Widespread Human Rights Violations.

Three and a half years after the Taliban's illegitimate takeover, the group continues to enforce oppressive policies and commits systematic human rights violations. The most pressing concerns include:

- Implementation of gender apartheid policies against the women and girls, forced displacements, and genocide.
- Commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity, depriving the people of Afghanistan their fundamental rights.
- Harboring and training international terrorist groups within Afghanistan territory.
- Systematic detention, torture, and execution of former Afghan defense and security forces.
- Escalation of drug production, trafficking, and organized crime, threatening regional and international security and stability.

4. Establishing a Legitimate, Stable, and Accountable Governance System.

We emphasize that Afghanistan needs a legitimate and people-centered governance system based on Islamic values and the rule of law that:

- Guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms of all citizens.
- Ensures security and social justice for all ethnic and social groups in Afghanistan.
- Effectively responds to threats of terrorism, organized crime, extremism, and human rights violations.

5. The Need for a Revised Regional and International Approach and Immediate Action.

The people of Afghanistan, regional powers, and the international community must collectively and urgently revise their approaches to resolving Afghanistan's crisis. In this regard:

- The resistance of the people of Afghanistan against the Taliban regime must be recognized globally.
- International bodies, including the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ), must fulfill their responsibilities in prosecuting Taliban leaders and addressing severe violations of human rights in Afghanistan.
- The international community must adopt a targeted and practical all-tools approach to pave the way for a new trajectory for Afghanistan and provide collective and sustainable solutions for peace, justice, and prosperity, including support for a transitional government.

- The documents and roadmap developed during this conference should be accepted as a basis for an inclusive and just future, gaining regional and global recognition.

6. Joint Commitment to a Democratic and Sustainable Future.

We, the participants of this conference, reaffirm our commitment to supporting the people of Afghanistan in their struggle for democracy, justice, freedom, and a moderate interpretation of religion. We call upon political groups, parties, and movements to join the National Commission of the Vienna Process to forge a broader consensus and find a viable resolution to Afghanistan's crisis.

Finally, we express our sincere gratitude to Austria, the Vienna Process Office for a Democratic Afghanistan, the Austrian Institute for International Affairs, and the Raeder Institute for their support and cooperation in organizing this initiative.

Vienna, February 19, 2025

Establishment of the Grand National Commission

of the Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan

In accordance with the resolutions of the Vienna Process Roadmap for a Democratic Afghanistan and the Declaration of the Fifth Vienna Process Conference, the Grand National Commission has been formally established under the framework of the Vienna Process.

The Commission comprises 27 distinguished members, representing a broad spectrum of Afghan society, including political parties, elected officials, women's advocates, civil society and human rights activists, media representatives, and other key stakeholders.

The mandate of the Grand National Commission, guided by the principles outlined in the Vienna Process Roadmap and the Fifth Conference Declaration, is to:

1. Develop common perspectives among Afghan stakeholders;
2. Finalize a crisis resolution plan addressing the urgent political and social challenges in Afghanistan;
3. Design a comprehensive and alternative political structure to promote a democratic, inclusive, and independent Afghanistan.

The Commission will submit its proposals to the Sixth Vienna Process Conference for formal approval and implementation.

The establishment of this Commission marks a significant step forward in fostering national consensus and advancing the Vienna Process's vision of a democratic and inclusive future for Afghanistan.

Director of the Commission: Mr. Mahmoud Saikal

Deputy director: Ms. Parwana Ibrahimkhail Nejrabi

Vienna, August 22, 2025

Call from the National Commission of the Vienna Process to Anti-Taliban Movements

28 Sunbula 1404
September 19, 2025

In accordance with the resolutions of the fifth Vienna Process Conference, the “National Commission of the Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan” was constituted last week.

The Commission was established with an initial membership of 27 individuals, comprising representatives from significant political, civic, and military groups, advocates for women’s rights, and other political personalities and professionals opposed to the Taliban. During its second meeting, the Commission ratified its procedural structure and thereafter chose a Chairperson and a Secretary. The Commission’s primary responsibilities encompass:

- Developing, articulating, and revising a unified vision for the opposition regarding the nation’s present and future;
- Concluding a strategy for exiting the crisis;
- Presenting a thorough, pragmatic, and alternative political framework for Afghanistan’s current circumstances, transitional phase, and permanent future.

The execution of these duties is scheduled for the forthcoming months, followed by a presentation for approval and implementation at the Sixth Vienna Conference, which will include significant participation from leaders of the concerned member institutions.

The National Commission of the Vienna Process hereby invites other reputable and distinguished anti-Taliban movements to participate in the process by 21 October 2025 (end of Mizan 1404) and enhance its efforts by appointing qualified representatives.

Executive Committee of the Vienna Process
for a Democratic Afghanistan

Coordinator of the Executive Committee: Nur Safa

Contact via Email: viennaprocess.afghanistan@gmail.com



Statements for exiting the Crisis

This roadmap formed as a result of three rounds of Vienna Process dialogues for a democratic Afghanistan, outlines the vision of establishing and revitalizing a system based on constitutional law in Afghanistan. The document charts a course to end the oppressive rule of the Taliban, cease systematic human rights violations, eliminate gender apartheid, and seek ways for the social, political, and cultural participation of the Afghan people. It also strives to prevent the massacre of ethnic and religious groups, particularly the Hazaras, by terrorist groups, systematic and targeted killings, forced displacement of indigenous people, and the seizure of their lands by the Taliban, as well as the potential threats posed by allied terrorist groups to regional and global security, are among the issues addressed by the Vienna Process.

This roadmap envisions the formation of a broad umbrella with the participation of women, men, ethnic groups, and all political, cultural, and social entities in Afghanistan as the singular solution to the country's crisis. The key objectives of this roadmap include establishing a political system based on civic, Islamic, and democratic values, where governance and legitimacy derive from the free will of the people. Such political authority must be based on the rule of law,

and its core content will shape Afghanistan as a united, prosperous, stable, non-discriminatory, and non-violent nation, ensuring justice, guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of citizens. Additionally, the document underscores the importance of mobilizing forces, especially women, restoring Afghanistan's international standing, and strengthening coordinated relations among different regions and ethnic groups as vital components.

Principles

Belief and Commitment to

1. National sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national unity of Afghanistan.
2. Establishing a system based on constitutional law and elections.
3. Creating and ensuring “human security,” sustainable development, and overall stability.
4. Ensuring justice and avoiding discrimination, violence, and extremism.
5. Promoting a culture of mutual acceptance free from ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, gender, and political biases.

Objectives

- Strengthening and expanding coordination and coherence among forces opposing the Taliban.
- Strengthening the groundwork for ensuring social justice and abolishing any structural and systematic discrimination and tyranny in the country.
- Creating a platform for discussion on the constitution, including the nature of the future political system.

- Mobilizing public support for anti-Taliban groups and people's resistance both domestically and internationally.
- Revitalizing Afghanistan's rightful place in the international community.
- Cleansing the country from the presence of terrorist groups, extremism, and their training centers.
- Putting an end to the culture of judicial impunity and ensuring uniform and consistent law enforcement.

Executive Mechanism

The participants in the Vienna Process believe that coordination and collaboration among all political, security, civilian, cultural, social, and influential forces opposing the Taliban are essential. For its implementation, the following executive actions are proposed:

First

Establishing contacts, maintaining, and expanding close relationships, and gaining support from all resistance movements and forces opposing the Taliban that seek an alternative political system based on democratic values.

Second

1. Issuing a call by the Vienna Process working group to all political, civilian, security, and cultural entities in Afghanistan to introduce qualified individuals for membership in the commission responsible for formulating opinions and proposing an alternative structure, ensuring gender, ethnic, and religious balance.
2. Creating a commission to formulate common opinions based on the first article of the Vienna Process declaration and the con-

tent of other relevant conferences, aiming to finalize the crisis resolution plan and shape a comprehensive and alternative political structure for Afghanistan.

Third

1. Holding a comprehensive nationwide session for presenting the commission's work report and finalizing proposed documents in collaboration with the global community.
2. Contacting regional countries and stakeholders in the Afghanistan issue to garner their support for a common perspective on resolving the crisis and supporting an alternative political structure, considering the outcomes of past conferences.

Fourth

1. Concurrently with the above, supporting the ongoing resistance of the Afghan people and continuous and systematic advocacy in international forums regarding the humanitarian situation, especially for women and girls.
2. Maintaining relations with international legal and judicial institutions, especially the International Criminal Court, regarding crimes against humanity, war crimes, systematic massacres, gender discrimination, religious discrimination, forced displacement of indigenous people, and detention and torture in Taliban prisons.

Conclusion

The Vienna Process roadmap is a strategic plan to create a democratic and effective alternative for Afghanistan and change the situation in Afghanistan under the control of the Taliban. This process empha-

sizes the principle of democratic participation of the Afghan people and systematic cooperation with the regional and international community. The proposed steps in this roadmap aim to coordinate people's resistance and create a collaborative environment, seeking effective support from regional countries and the global community.

Vienna Office

Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan

February 2025



New Horizons

The Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan, based on the principles of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, social justice, and sustainable development, was initiated in September 2022 in response to Afghanistan's ongoing crises and the urgent need for a sustainable and democratic political alternative. This process has so far held four major conferences (the first conference on September 15–17, 2022, the second conference on April 24–26, 2023, the third conference on December 3–5, 2023, and the fourth conference on June 24–26, 2024) in Vienna, the capital of the Republic of Austria.

Throughout its history, Afghanistan has faced challenges such as war, political instability, widespread human rights violations, and the suppression of civil liberties. Following the collapse of the republic and the Taliban's takeover of Kabul, the country has plunged into a deep crisis, with consequences affecting not only the Afghan people but also regional and global security. Under these circumstances, extensive efforts have begun to find a sustainable solution based on democracy and civil rights.

The Vienna Process, with the participation of a broad spectrum of political figures, civil society activists, intellectuals, women, reli-

gious and ethnic minorities, and human rights organizations, seeks to provide a practical solution for overcoming the crisis and establishing a new political structure in Afghanistan. In this regard, the roadmap for Afghanistan's crisis resolution was approved by participants during the third Vienna conference in December 2023 and was further reviewed and discussed at the fourth conference in June 2024. Over the course of regular online sessions until February 2025, four working groups have developed a detailed agenda on the roadmap.

This roadmap, which is the outcome of discussions within the Vienna Process, endorses the establishment of a democratic system based on constitutional governance and identifies the end of the Taliban rule, the cessation of human rights violations, the elimination of gender discrimination, and the prevention of ethnic massacres as its core objectives. Additionally, it considers the formation of an inclusive structure with the participation of all ethnic groups, parties, and social groups as the only viable solution to Afghanistan's crisis. This roadmap presents a strategy for establishing a legitimate and democratic alternative in Afghanistan, paving the way for fundamental change through public participation and regional and international support. It provides a clear framework for Afghanistan's transition toward stability, freedom, and democracy, outlining the path to crisis resolution and emphasizing the need to establish an inclusive government based on the will of the people.

The Vienna Process roadmap for a democratic Afghanistan has introduced frameworks in the areas of politics, international relations, human rights, as well as the economy and economic development. From a political perspective, it underscores the necessity of establishing a democratic system based on constitutional governance, the separation of powers, and free elections. In the realm of international relations, it proposes cooperation with regional countries and global powers to garner support for Afghanistan and com-

bat extremism. In terms of human rights, the document emphasizes the preservation of human dignity, the elimination of gender and ethnic discrimination, and the support of independent media and human rights institutions. In the economic sphere, sustainable development, investment attraction, and infrastructure improvement are highlighted as key factors for Afghanistan's future.

The implementation mechanism of the roadmap includes coordination among anti-Taliban forces, the establishment of consultative commissions, the organization of nationwide meetings, and securing international support. In this regard, special emphasis has been placed on public mobilization, restoring Afghanistan's position in the international community, and ending the culture of judicial impunity.

Additionally, support for the Afghan people's resistance and the legal pursuit of Taliban crimes through international institutions have been identified as fundamental steps towards establishing justice and a democratic system.

Overall, the Vienna Process, by providing a clear framework for Afghanistan's transition to a democratic, free, and stable system, plays a significant role in shaping the country's future. Based on the principles of democracy, human rights, and social justice, this process seeks, through internal cooperation and international support, to lead Afghanistan out of its current crisis and create a foundation for regional and global peace and stability.



First Vienna Process Conference, September 2022
Nur Safa, Christian Reder, Ahmad Massoud, Manizha Bakhtari



Fifth Vienna Process Conference, February 2025



Summary: The Roadmap of the Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan

This roadmap, formulated as a result of three rounds of discussions within the Vienna Process for a democratic Afghanistan, outlines the vision for establishing and restoring a constitutional system in Afghanistan. This document seeks to end the oppressive rule of the Taliban, put a stop to the systematic violation of human rights, and eliminate gender apartheid in Afghanistan. It also strives to identify pathways for the social, political, and cultural participation of the Afghan people.

Furthermore, the Vienna Process pays special attention to preventing the mass killings of ethnic and religious groups, particularly the Hazaras, by terrorist organizations, as well as systematic and targeted massacres, forced displacement of indigenous populations, and the seizure of their lands by the Taliban. It also highlights the imminent threat posed by the Taliban's allied terrorist groups to regional and global security.

This roadmap considers the formation of a broad and inclusive framework—with the participation of women, men, all ethnic com-

munities, and all political, cultural, and social groups in Afghanistan—as the only viable solution to the country’s crisis. The key objectives of this roadmap include establishing a political system based on Islamic, civic, and democratic values, where governance and legitimacy derive from the free will of the people. Such a political authority must be rooted in the rule of law, with justice, the protection of citizens’ rights and freedoms, and a vision of a unified, prosperous, stable, and discrimination-free Afghanistan as its fundamental principles.

Additionally, this document emphasizes the importance of mobilizing forces, particularly women, restoring Afghanistan’s international standing, and fostering coordinated relations among various regions and ethnic groups as essential elements for a sustainable future.

Principles

Commitment to and belief in

1. National sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national unity of Afghanistan.
2. Establishing a system based on constitutional governance and elections.
3. Ensuring “human security,” sustainable development, and nationwide stability.
4. Upholding justice and rejecting discrimination, violence, and extremism.
5. Promoting a culture of mutual acceptance, free from ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, gender-based, and political biases.

Objectives

- Strengthening and expanding coordination and unity among anti-Taliban forces.
- Enhancing the foundations for ensuring social justice and eliminating all forms of structural and systematic discrimination and tyranny in the country.
- Creating a platform for discussions on the constitution, including the nature of the future political system.
- Mobilizing anti-Taliban opposition and resistance forces both inside and outside the country.
- Restoring Afghanistan's rightful position in the international community.
- Eradicating terrorist groups, extremism, and their educational centers from the country.
- Ending the culture of judicial impunity and enforcing the law uniformly and equitably.

Implementation Mechanism

The participants of the Vienna Process believe that coordination and cooperation among all political, security, civil, cultural, and social forces, as well as influential figures opposed to the Taliban, are essential. To achieve this, the following executive measures are proposed:

First

Establishing, maintaining, and expanding close relations and garnering support from all opposition groups that seek a political alternative system based on democratic values and standards.

Second

1. Issuing a call by the Vienna Process working group to all political, civil, security, and cultural entities and figures in Afghanistan, inviting them to nominate qualified individuals for membership in the Commission for Formulating a Vision and Structuring an Alternative Political System, ensuring gender, ethnic, and religious balance.
2. Establishing a commission to formulate a shared vision, based on Article One of the declaration of the first Vienna meeting and the content of subsequent conferences, to finalize a crisis resolution plan and shape an inclusive and alternative political structure for Afghanistan.

Third

1. Holding a nationwide and inclusive conference to review the commission's report and finalize the proposed documents, in collaboration with the international community.
2. Engaging with regional countries and key stakeholders in Afghanistan's affairs to secure their support for the shared vision, with the goal of resolving the crisis and endorsing the alternative political structure based on the conclusions of previous conferences.

Fourth

1. Simultaneously with the above steps, ensuring continued support for the Afghan people's resistance and maintaining consistent and systematic advocacy at international forums regarding the dire humanitarian situation, particularly concerning women and girls.

2. Sustaining engagement with international legal and judicial bodies, especially the International Criminal Court (ICC), regarding crimes against humanity, war crimes, systematic massacres, gender-based discrimination, religious persecution, forced displacement of indigenous communities, and arbitrary arrests and torture in Taliban prisons.

Conclusion

The Vienna Process Roadmap is a strategic plan aimed at establishing a democratic and effective alternative for Afghanistan and transforming the current situation under the Taliban rule. This process emphasizes the principle of democratic participation of the Afghan people, as well as principled regional and international cooperation. The proposed steps in this roadmap have been designed to enhance coordination among popular forces, foster a collaborative environment, and mobilize effective support from regional countries and the international community.

Fundamental Principles of the Vienna Process Roadmap

in the Domains of Politics,
International Relations,
Human Rights, and Economy

I. Political Outlook

The political principles of the Vienna Process, based on the fundamental values of an efficient and effective political structure for the future of Afghanistan, reflect a commitment to a united, democratic, and citizen-centered Afghanistan. Observing human values and norms, rejecting all forms of political, social, cultural, ethnic, and religious supremacy, believing in social and economic justice, adhering to civil rights, supporting a just and sustainable peace, accepting the principle of political legitimacy through free and democratic elections, respecting freedom of expression, ensuring media freedom in accordance with global and human values, and valuing expertise and commitment to territorial integrity and the unity of the Afghan people are among the core values of the Vienna Process. At the fourth Vienna Process conference (June 24–26, 2024), participants identified eight points as the fundamental political principles of the Vienna Process:

Afghanistan is defined as a united and indivisible political entity.

Afghanistan is recognized as a single country, respecting its territorial integrity and national identity, without any inclination toward division. Any attempt to partition or weaken this unity is rejected. This principle forms the foundation for national solidarity and unity among all ethnic and social groups in Afghanistan.

The political system of Afghanistan is democratic and based on the rule of law, founded on civic principles and values.

Afghanistan's political system is established on the principles of democracy, citizens' rights, and the rule of law. The individual and social rights and freedoms of citizens must be respected, and citizenship must be recognized as the basis for social and political interactions. The constitution should be drafted in a way that guarantees equal rights for all members of society, ensuring respect and protection for linguistic, religious-sectarian, and cultural differences without discrimination. National trust should be fostered by creating opportunities for political participation, ensuring people's involvement in the pillars of power, policymaking, and political decision-making based on civil rights and pluralism.

Democracy means the active and equal participation of all people in determining the political fate of the country. Within this framework, citizenship is defined as the central pillar of all rights and responsibilities in society, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, or other differences, enjoy equal rights. The principle of direct, free, and transparent elections in selecting leaders and political institutions, such as people's councils at all levels (villages, towns, urban areas, districts, provinces, and the national level), is upheld.

Key Components of this Principle

Democracy (People's Rule)

Democracy means that political power originates from the will of the people and is based on the principle of local governance by the people themselves, as well as the election of state institutions and political bodies by the people.

In a democratic system, free, fair, and transparent elections are held to ensure that all members of society have the opportunity to participate in political decision-making. This includes the right to vote in elections for government institutions and representatives, participation in referendums, and the right to form political parties for healthy competition.

A state consists of three fundamental elements: territory, population, and political authority (sovereignty). The nature of legitimate sovereignty distinguishes one government from another. Legitimate and democratic authority means that the state has the right to exercise the will of the people over society.

For this reason, in a democratic system, governance is exercised by the people and through the people. This right is permanent and non-transferable.

Considering Afghanistan's ethnic, religious, and historical diversity, this principle holds particular importance. Over the years, internal conflicts and group rivalries have led to political and social instability in the country.

To achieve lasting peace and stability, the political system must be designed inclusively, ensuring that everyone has a stake in governance and that the civil rights of all groups are recognized. This principle guarantees that no group is marginalized and that equal opportunities for participation in national affairs are available to all.

Rule of Law

The rule of law means that the rights, freedoms, duties, and limitations of individuals, as well as the powers of the state, are defined by the constitution, supplementary laws, and international legal standards.

Under the rule of law, all political, social, cultural, and economic activities must be conducted according to laws passed by elected representatives of the people. These laws must also align with international legal norms.

No one is above the law, and all individuals and institutions must comply with legal provisions. This principle prevents tyranny and corruption and ensures that the government, like its citizens, is accountable and bound by the law.

Principle of Citizenship

The principle of citizenship guarantees the legal equality of all individuals. Every citizen, regardless of ethnicity, language, religion, or gender, enjoys equal rights before the law, without discrimination.

The state is obligated to safeguard citizens' rights according to established laws and to provide equal opportunities for all.

Citizenship not only entails rights but also responsibilities, such as respect for the law, tax obligations, and participation in political and social life.

This principle is inherently linked to democracy, as citizens are not only entitled to inalienable rights but also possess sovereignty, meaning their collective will determines the legitimacy of governance.

National Consensus

This principle means that Afghanistan's political system must be accepted and agreed upon by all groups and segments of society. Ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences should be regarded as national wealth and cultural diversity so that everyone believes that the political system represents the interests of all. This national consensus is achieved through public dialogues, referendums, drafting inclusive laws, and establishing institutions that represent all groups.

The principle of separation of powers is considered the most important pillar of Afghanistan's political system.

The separation of state powers, considering Afghanistan's historical experience, must take place in two directions: horizontal separation of state powers and vertical separation of state powers. In horizontal separation, the distinction between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches and the definition of their areas of authority are determined based on laws. This separation is one of the fundamental pillars of democracy. One of the most important objectives of separating and distributing powers is to prevent the concentration of power in the hands of a single individual or institution. If an institution has the authority to legislate, execute, and oversee the implementation of laws, the risk of abuse of power and the emergence of tyranny increases. The separation of powers mitigates this risk by distributing responsibilities and authorities among different institutions.

In vertical separation, the relationship between central authority and local bodies, along with their areas of jurisdiction, is defined. Centralization in Afghanistan has not been a successful experience. Therefore, reducing central authority and transferring necessary

powers to the provinces to achieve decentralization is a requirement of modern democracies. In this regard, legislative authority is granted to the central or national legislative body, while implementation is carried out by elected local governments in provinces, districts, and municipalities, with oversight of law implementation assigned to central government institutions to ensure fair and transparent accountability.

The organization of political power must guarantee transparency, accountability, and the prevention of power concentration in a single institution. The judiciary and the National Assembly must operate independently so they can fulfill the roles assigned to them by law and prevent corruption and autocracy.

The principle of separation of powers holds special significance in Afghanistan's political system because, given the country's history of instability and abuse of power, it ensures a democratic, transparent, and accountable system. Separation of powers limits corruption, reduces power concentration, and allows people to secure their rights and freedoms within the framework of the law.

The duties and authorities of the three main branches of government (legislative, executive, and judicial) are independent of one another. This principle, in democratic systems, serves as a safeguard against the concentration of power in a single institution, preventing the misuse of power and the emergence of corruption. The separation of powers also ensures transparency, accountability, and the rule of law. With the separation of powers, the political system operates based on laws rather than the will of specific individuals. Each institution must perform its duties and exercise its authority within the framework of the law. This strengthens the rule of law and prevents despotism and arbitrary actions by government institutions.

Legislative Power (Parliament)

The legislative power is the most important pillar of democracy and the principle of popular sovereignty. The legislature represents the will of the people and, for this reason, must serve as a true reflection of the people and the nation. The legislature consists of two chambers: the House of Representatives, which is elected through direct public vote, and the Senate, which represents the equal status of the provinces.

In addition to this crucial role, the legislature is responsible for lawmaking and approving laws based on the constitution, which are necessary for governing the country. This institution also holds the duty of overseeing the performance of the executive branch. The people's representatives, elected through free and democratic elections, are responsible for drafting, approving, and amending laws within this body.

The Role of the Legislative Branch in Democracy

- The legislature is elected through a direct public vote. The president and cabinet members are chosen by the legislature (the party with the majority vote) and are accountable to the legislature. (The cabinet as a whole, including its head, is responsible to the legislature.)
- Approval of the budget and financial laws.
- Granting a vote of confidence and confirming the proposed cabinet of the elected president, as well as overseeing government performance through monitoring its activities, summoning officials, questioning, impeaching, and conducting investigations.
- Ensuring government accountability to the people.

The Executive Power (Government)

The executive power is responsible for implementing laws and managing their execution through elected political bodies and the recruitment of professional personnel at the national and provincial levels. The president, prime minister, or council of ministers (depending on the type of governance system) leads the executive branch. This institution is responsible for providing public services, ensuring security, and implementing government policies and programs.

The simultaneous leadership of both the state and the government by a single individual has been a failed and flawed experience. Therefore, it is necessary that the head of state in Afghanistan be a president with a clearly defined role, similar to heads of state in parliamentary democracies, while the head of government should be a prime minister who obtains a vote of confidence from the parliament.

The Role of the Executive Power in Democracy

- Implementing laws passed by the parliament, considering the principle of separation of powers and the vertical and horizontal division of responsibilities in the constitution.
- Managing executive affairs, delivering public services, and overseeing public policies.
- Maintaining internal order and security, defending borders, and formulating and executing foreign policy.

The Judiciary

The judiciary is responsible for interpreting and enforcing laws, as well as resolving civil and criminal disputes.

This branch must remain independent from the other branches of government to ensure that justice is administered fairly and impartially.

Judges and courts are tasked with upholding individuals' rights and addressing legal and criminal cases based on the constitution and other national laws.

The Role of the Judiciary in Democracy

- Interpreting and evaluating laws, with the Supreme Constitutional Court ensuring their compatibility with the constitution.
- Adjudicating civil, criminal, and legal disputes.
- Settling legal and criminal cases between citizens and the state.

Independence of the Judiciary

Judicial independence means that the judiciary must function without interference from the executive or legislative branches or political pressure.

This independence is crucial for ensuring justice, as it allows judges and courts to make impartial decisions based on the law, thereby protecting citizens' rights.

Any interference from the executive or legislative branches in judicial affairs risks compromising justice and undermining the rule of law.

Ensuring Social Justice and Political Decision-Making Rights Based on Citizenship Rights

Social justice means the fair distribution of resources, opportunities, and access to social and economic rights for all citizens of Afghanistan. This principle ensures that every citizen, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or gender, has the right to participate in the country's political and social decision-making processes. The principle of "ensuring social justice and the right to political decision-making based on citizenship rights" refers to the creation of a social structure in which all individuals, regardless of racial, ethnic, gender, religious, or economic differences, enjoy equal opportunities and rights.

Social justice involves the equitable distribution of resources and opportunities, emphasizing that each individual should benefit from society's advantages and opportunities according to their abilities and needs.

On the other hand, the right to political decision-making based on citizenship rights means the active and equal participation of all individuals in political processes. This participation is not limited to voting but also includes the right to be present in decision-making institutions, freedom of expression, and the ability to bring about political and social changes. Ensuring this principle means that the government must enact laws and adopt policies that guarantee equality in access to social and political resources and opportunities. This includes combating discrimination and corruption, establishing fair systems in education, healthcare, and the labor market, and protecting individuals' rights to participate freely and without restriction in political decision-making.

Therefore, the realization of this principle means striving to create a society where every individual can, without facing discrimination and inequality, actively engage in all aspects of life as an aware and empowered citizen and fully enjoy their rights.

Recognition of Comprehensive Legitimate Resistance as a Fundamental Principle

The legitimate struggle against oppression, internal tyranny, and any form of foreign occupation must be officially recognized. Resistance is a legitimate right of the Afghan people in defending their rights, freedoms, and self-determination, and it must be integrated into the country's political system. Supporting this principle, legitimate resistance forces should be considered an essential part of Afghanistan's national and social security.

The Vienna Process supports all legitimate resistance movements of the Afghan people.

The Afghan people's legitimate resistance against the Taliban is deeply rooted in history, culture, and collective aspirations for freedom and justice. Following the fall of the Afghan Republic and the Taliban's takeover of Kabul on August 15, 2021, citizens—including women, men, youth, and various social groups—have continued resisting the Taliban in different forms.

This resistance is justified and widely supported for several reasons:

Protection of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms

The Taliban, with their extremist ideology, distorted religious interpretations, and terrorist practices, have severely restricted the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people, particularly women and girls. Most citizens reject these restrictions and continue to resist.

The restoration of fundamental rights, including the right to education, the right to work, and women's participation in society, is a key motivation behind this resistance.

Self-Determination and Freedom

For many Afghans, the Taliban's rule symbolizes the loss of personal freedom, self-determination, and autonomy. They view the Taliban not only as a violent group that seized power through force but also as a threat to national interests.

Ethnic and Cultural Diversity

The Taliban's unilateral and extremist policies have marginalized and suppressed Afghanistan's diverse ethnic and cultural communities. As a result, local and national resistance movements have emerged to protect Afghanistan's pluralistic identity and cultural richness from Taliban dominance.

Political Legitimacy

Many Afghans and the international community reject the Taliban's legitimacy. The absence of free elections, systematic human rights violations, and the use of force to impose their rule have led people to resist their authority. The ongoing resistance in different parts of the country, along with widespread civil protests in major cities, reflects this popular rejection of Taliban rule.

Defense of a Democratic State

Between 2001 and 2020, Afghanistan made significant efforts to build a democratic state. Many citizens, especially women and youth, seek to preserve the achievements of these two decades in human rights, democracy, and social development and continue to resist the Taliban to protect these gains. Despite immense difficulties and

challenges, this resistance remains morally and politically justifiable, driven by the Afghan people's belief in freedom, justice, and human rights.

The fight for rights, human dignity, and a better future is at the heart of this resistance, making it a legitimate, ethical, and essential struggle for the people of Afghanistan.

Legitimacy of Governance in Afghanistan's Political System Must Be Based on Free Elections

Free, fair, and transparent elections must serve as the foundation for the legitimacy of any government in Afghanistan. Elections should be held to determine political leadership and local councils both at the national and provincial levels.

All citizens must have the right to vote, and political officials should be elected through popular elections. To ensure the integrity and transparency of elections, both international and domestic oversight is essential. In democratic systems, governments derive their legitimacy from elections and the will of the people. However, this legitimacy is contingent upon elections being conducted in accordance with the law, in a transparent, free, and fair manner, with adequate provisions for nationwide participation.

Characteristics and Standards of Free and Fair Elections

- Drafting and approving a reasonable electoral law suited to Afghanistan's social and structural conditions.
- Freedom of expression and thought for candidates, voters, media, and all stakeholders.
- Freedom of assembly and gatherings, removal of barriers to election campaigning, and facilitation of public participation in elections.

- Fair and transparent elections, ensuring the electoral system does not favor any particular group, individual, or party.
- Establishment of an independent and impartial electoral commission, ensuring balanced and non-biased treatment of all candidates by media, security forces, and judicial institutions.
- Ensuring access to polling stations for all relevant stakeholders in the electoral process.
- Secrecy of voting, a uniform ballot model, and sufficient polling stations proportionate to the number of voters.

Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens in Elections

In the election process, citizens, candidates, and the government each have rights and responsibilities that, when upheld, ensure a legitimate election. Every eligible adult citizen has the right to run as a candidate and participate in the voting process without any form of discrimination.

Voting is not only a civic duty or a social responsibility but also a natural and civil right of every citizen, exercised freely based on their thoughts and beliefs to determine their own future. This process fosters trust between citizens and government officials.

A vote is a personal right of each citizen, protected by confidentiality, and must be cast in secret—no one has the right to disclose another person's vote. Voting must be direct, and except in cases of chronic illness, old age, or physical incapacity, no one is allowed to vote on behalf of another individual. This principle applies without exception to both men and women who have the right to vote.

Rights and Responsibilities of Candidates

The government is obligated to provide citizens with the opportunity to participate in elections. Every eligible citizen has the right to

take part in the political life of their country, either independently or within the framework of a political party or movement, to assume leadership and governance in accordance with the law and established criteria. They have the right to nominate themselves and benefit from all legal facilities and opportunities provided for candidates. Each candidate is required to respect the freedom of others and commit to accepting and acknowledging the election results.

Rights and Responsibilities of the State

The state is responsible for conducting elections in a transparent, legitimate, and fair manner, based on constitutional and electoral laws. To fulfill this obligation, the state must:

- Ensure an unbiased and inclusive voter registration process.
- Set clear eligibility criteria and provide fair financial resources for all candidates.
- Guarantee the legality of elections through strong monitoring and oversight.
- Protect freedom of movement, assembly, and political gatherings during elections and ensure equal access to media and public services for all candidates.
- Ensure the transparency of final results and the integrity of vote counting, so that citizens can have full confidence in the electoral process.

Security and Oversight

For the public to be assured of the legitimacy of elections, two additional elements are necessary. One of these is ensuring the security of voters and candidates at all stages of the electoral process

and after the elections, which is a fundamental responsibility of the state.

Security increases public participation in elections and ensures the foundation and standards of a legitimate election. Without security, it is impossible for national and international observers to monitor elections in different areas, verify voter participation, ensure the implementation of the necessary legal procedures, and confirm that voters are free from coercion and intimidation.

Every election must be observed by the people, representatives of political parties and movements, civil society, and national and international monitors to guarantee its transparency. When the relevant institutions announce the election results, and if the level of violations is not such that it undermines the legitimacy of the election, it is necessary for all involved parties and candidates to accept the outcome.

Protection of Religious, Linguistic, and Cultural Identities Based on Human Values in Afghanistan's Political System

Based on the principle of pluralism, respect for diverse religious and cultural identities in Afghanistan must be ensured through the recognition of their religious, cultural, and social rights within the political system. Any form of religious, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural discrimination must be prohibited, and the rights of religious, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural minorities must be upheld in accordance with human values and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Protecting religious identities based on human values in Afghanistan's political system means ensuring justice, equality, and dignity for all citizens. This approach not only contributes to social cohesion and political stability but can also serve as a model for other

nations facing similar challenges. By focusing on shared human values and respecting religious diversity, Afghanistan can move toward a peaceful and just society.

As a country with a wide range of religious and cultural diversity, Afghanistan has historically faced specific challenges in managing religious differences. Supporting religious, linguistic, and cultural identities based on human values not only helps maintain peace and stability but also strengthens democratic values and respect for human rights.

Peaceful Coexistence of Religions

Afghanistan is home to a religiously diverse society, including Sunni and Shia Muslims, Ismaili Shia, and smaller religious minorities such as Sikhs and Hindus. A political system that supports religious identities based on human values must be structured in a way that ensures all religious followers feel secure and respected.

This can be achieved by guaranteeing equal religious rights and preventing religious discrimination in governmental policies and institutions.

Islam, as the religion of the majority in Afghanistan, itself emphasizes human values such as justice, equality, human dignity, and peaceful coexistence. These values are shared by many other religions and can serve as a foundation for an inclusive political system that respects the rights of all citizens.

Legal and Constitutional Protection of Religious Minorities

In a political system that supports human values and religious identities, constitutional and ordinary laws must guarantee the religious rights of all citizens. This includes freedom of worship, freedom of religious expression, and the right to political participation for all

minorities without discrimination. Afghanistan should take inspiration from the experiences of countries that have successfully integrated religious identities within the framework of human values and human rights.

Respect for Religious Differences as Part of National Identity

Afghanistan's religious diversity should be seen as a cultural and social asset and must be respected and protected.

Encouraging interfaith dialogue and building bridges between different religious groups can help foster a national identity based on diversity.

The political system should use education and media to raise awareness about the importance of respecting religious identities and human values.

The Role of Religious Scholars in Promoting Human Values

Religious scholars and leaders play a crucial role in reinforcing human values in society.

Collaboration between religious institutions and the state to promote religious teachings that emphasize human dignity, respect for the rights of others, and justice can contribute to a culture of peaceful coexistence.

Religious institutions can also play a key role in reducing religious tensions and fostering tolerance.

The Role of the Education System in Promoting Religious and Human Values

One of the most effective tools for supporting religious identities within the framework of human values is the education system.

Educational programs in schools and universities should be designed to teach students the importance of human values, such as equality, justice, respect for others, and human rights.

These programs can also help promote mutual understanding and coexistence among different religious groups.

In the Political System Supported by the Vienna Process, Political Parties Will Play a Fundamental Role in Elections, Parliament, and State-Building.

A political party is composed of individuals who unite under a national and comprehensive charter and platform, aiming to attain and maintain political power through electoral mechanisms and strategic programs. A multi-party system must be recognized as one of the fundamental pillars of democracy in Afghanistan. Political parties, by presenting diverse viewpoints and programs during elections, will play a decisive role in state-building and the formation of the National Assembly, as well as provincial, district, municipal, and village councils.

This process will strengthen democracy and provide a structured opportunity for healthy and constructive competition among political forces.

The formation of political parties is often a response to political events and external realities, such as elections, revolutions, protests, and other political movements. In many cases, supporters of an electoral candidate organize themselves into campaign teams, which, through formalization and strategic planning for political power acquisition, evolve into established political parties.

Thus, the roots of party formation are closely linked to electoral systems, making political parties a vital component of democratic governance and institutionalized political competition.

The Impact of Political Parties on Elections

- One of the benefits of political parties in a political system is that in a party-based system, the number of electoral candidates is reduced, and candidates are only nominated through political parties. This measure lowers the costs associated with an excessive number of candidates and enhances voters' ability to make informed choices.
- Since political parties actively train individuals according to their policies during their operation, after winning an election, they do not need to search for competent individuals to govern. Given that not all individuals possess the necessary expertise in every aspect of governance, political parties act as support institutions, providing advisory, informational, and policy-making assistance to elected officials.
- After a party wins an election, opposition parties remain active and continuously monitor and scrutinize the ruling party or coalition. This oversight ensures that those in power exercise caution and remain committed to their duties and responsibilities.
- The victory and establishment of a ruling party prevent political chaos and contribute to overall political stability.
- The majority party or coalition in the National Assembly is responsible for ensuring that opposition parties can function within the legal framework and exercise their rights freely.
- The formation of political parties must be value-driven and policy-oriented, rather than centered on individuals or ethnic affiliations. Their goals should align with constitutional values and national interests.

II. International Relations Vision

Introduction

This section outlines the executive framework and roadmap for International Relations (IR) in implementing its role to achieve the objectives of the Vienna Process. The Vienna Process seeks to establish an inclusive government, restore peace, democracy, and social justice in Afghanistan, and serve as a sustainable and lasting alternative to the oppressive Taliban regime.

The mission of the International Relations (IR) Committee is to engage with the international community, coordinate diplomatic efforts, and develop unified messaging in support of the broader goals of the Vienna Process. This framework paves the way for the committee's activities, emphasizing international engagement and coordinated messaging to end terrorism in Afghanistan and advocate for human rights, equal participation, and social justice on a global scale.

The IR Committee plays a central role in the international success of the Vienna Process. Through coordinated efforts, targeted engagement, and strategic messaging, the IR Committee ensures that the Vienna Process gains the necessary international recognition and support to bring democracy, human rights, and social justice to Afghanistan.

Mission of the International Relations Committee (IR)

The mission of the International Relations Committee (IR) is to implement the Vienna Process's international engagement strategy by establishing and maintaining relationships with global stakeholders, securing support for a legitimate political alternative to the Taliban in Afghanistan, and delivering a coordinated and cohesive advocacy message.

The Committee will align its efforts with the security and economic concerns of global and regional stakeholders, while emphasizing the Vienna Process's commitments to human rights, democracy, and social and economic justice as the foundation of a stable and inclusive government in Afghanistan.

Implementation Framework: Establishment of the Executive Coordination Committee

To ensure the cohesive implementation of the Vienna Process across all sectors, the International Relations (IR) Committee proposes the establishment of an Executive Committee. This Executive Committee will consist of the heads of each Vienna Process committee, along with additional members as needed.

The Executive Committee will be responsible for overseeing regular coordination, reviewing progress, and making necessary adjustments to the overall strategy. Regular monthly meetings will be held to coordinate the activities of the committees, with a particular emphasis on ensuring the integration of international relations efforts with political and security strategies.

Messaging Coordination and Development

A policy briefing document will be developed as the foundation for Vienna Process diplomatic and advocacy messaging, ensuring it remains responsive to changing international conditions.

This document will emphasize the Vienna Process's commitments to human rights, equal participation, and social justice as core elements of a democratic and sustainable solution for Afghanistan. It will serve as the key advocacy message for engaging with international actors and stakeholders.

Official Visits and Public Communications

To ensure that all official visits and international engagement efforts are strategically aligned, well-coordinated, and consistent, the International Relations (IR) Committee proposes the establishment of a structural mechanism for authorizing and executing such interactions. All international communication efforts, including visits to key capitals and multilateral institutions, must be conducted with the approval of the Executive Committee and in coordination with the Political Committee. This mechanism ensures that diplomatic engagements remain in line with the overall strategic objectives of the Vienna Process.

Priority will be given to visits to key capitals such as Washington, D.C., Brussels, London, Berlin, Paris, Moscow, Beijing, New Delhi, Islamabad, and Tehran to secure political and diplomatic support for the Vienna Process through engagement with high-level lawmakers and decision-makers. By structuring official visits in this manner, the IR Committee ensures effective coordination, minimizes overlap, and guarantees that all international outreach efforts reflect a unified strategy for the Vienna Process.

Goal-oriented International Engagement

The International Relations (IR) Committee will work closely with the Political Committee of the Vienna Process to develop coordinated communication strategies for each of these stakeholders. This collaboration includes planning official visits, high-level engagements, and participation in multilateral programs to ensure that the Vienna Process is recognized as the most credible and appropriate solution for Afghanistan's future.

Communication efforts will be carefully designed to address the specific security, political, and human rights interests of each stake-

holder while remaining aligned with the objectives and priorities of the Vienna Process.

Engagement with Islamic Countries

- **Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)**
The Vienna Process will be presented as a legitimate and Islam-aligned alternative to the Taliban. Emphasis will be placed on shared religious values such as justice, democracy, and equal participation, as well as the necessity of a peaceful and inclusive Afghanistan to ensure regional stability.
- **Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**
The OIC will be regarded as a key platform for garnering Islamic support for the Vienna Process. Efforts will be made to build regional consensus on the necessity of a democratic solution in Afghanistan, using Islamic principles as the foundation for this engagement.
- **Engagement with Afghanistan's Neighbors**
Pakistan: Emphasis will be placed on the need for regional stability and economic security. The Vienna Process will be positioned as a tool for countering cross-border extremist activities, promoting sustainable trade, and managing migration.
Iran: The focus will be on shared interests in preventing extremism in Afghanistan, enhancing trade and economic cooperation, managing migration, and ensuring that the Vienna Process promotes interfaith tolerance.
China: The Vienna Process will be introduced as a stabilizing force aligned with China's economic and security interests, particularly in protecting regional investments.
India: The Vienna Process will be positioned as a guardian

against terrorism and instability in the region, serving as a crucial factor for broader stability in South Asia.

Central Asian Countries (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan): The Vienna Process will be presented as key to preventing the spread of extremism into Central Asia, with emphasis on shared regional security and economic interests.

- **Engagement with Regional Powers**

Russia: The Vienna Process will be introduced as a stable alternative in Central Asia, offering security and counterterrorism solutions aligned with Russia's interests in curbing extremism and promoting regional economic integration.

Turkey: The historical ties between Turkey and Afghanistan, as well as Turkey's potential role in establishing a stable political structure based on rights and inclusivity, will be highlighted.

- **Engagement with Multilateral Organizations**

Engagement with multilateral organizations will enhance the global legitimacy of the Vienna Process. The International Relations (IR) Committee will prioritize the following visits:

- **United Nations (UN)**

Efforts will be made to gain formal recognition of the Vienna Process and to secure resolutions condemning the Taliban's human rights violations.

- **International Criminal Court (ICC)**

Detailed reports on the Taliban's war crimes, human rights violations, and breaches of international law will be submitted.

- **European Parliament (EP)**

Engagement with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)

will focus on securing EU support for democratic solutions in Afghanistan, based on human rights and justice principles.

- **Human Rights Organizations**

Collaboration with reputable groups such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) will be pursued to raise awareness about human rights violations and promote international accountability.

III. Human Rights Outlook

Human rights are fundamental and essential rights that form the core of human nature and existence, are inalienable, and ensure the continuity of humankind. These principles, based on human dignity and honor, encompass rights and freedoms that all human beings on earth must enjoy without any discrimination. Afghanistan was one of the first countries to join the United Nations, accepting its Charter, principles, and values, and was also among the initial signatories of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Observing and implementing these rights in national laws is an obligation for the signatory members. By joining international conventions, States are bound and responsible for adopting, implementing, and, if necessary, amending their domestic laws in alignment with these covenants and conventions to improve the human rights situation for all their citizens.

Under the Taliban's rule, most Afghans have been deprived of their fundamental rights. Afghan women have been banned from education, employment, and participation in public spheres. Women who protest against the Taliban's gender apartheid policies face persecution, arrest, detention, torture, and even sexual violence in Taliban prisons.

The right to freedom of expression, thought, assembly, and fundamental civil and political liberties has been stripped from the Afghan people. Journalists and media outlets face censorship, bans, threats, intimidation, interrogation, torture, and imprisonment. Political parties are not allowed to operate, and the election commission along with all election-related mechanisms have been abolished. Former defense and security forces, as well as political opponents of the Taliban, have been subjected to persecution, torture, harassment, enforced disappearances, and imprisonment. Forced displacement, relocation, and eviction of local populations have significantly increased under the Taliban's rule, and people's properties and assets are being seized. Furthermore, individuals are under pressure, humiliation, and torture due to their choice of dress and personal appearance. In this regard, horrifying reports of physical and psychological abuse of Afghan citizens have been published both by international organizations and domestic civil society and human rights groups.

The Vienna Process welcomes the reports of Mr. Richard Bennett, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and other impartial and fact-based reports from various organizations. It urges the international community to take a firm stance against the Taliban and to prioritize the principles of the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the international treaties and conventions that Afghanistan has signed or acceded to. Additionally, mechanisms for accountability and legal prosecution of human rights violators in Afghanistan must be swiftly activated by the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ), initiating investigations and taking a leadership role in holding perpetrators accountable.

The Vienna Process calls for immediate international action to address human rights violations in Afghanistan. It is crucial that Af-

ghan citizens, particularly women and marginalized groups, participate in advocacy efforts and play a role in shaping the country's future. The human rights situation in Afghanistan, especially under the Taliban regime, is extremely critical, as this regime systematically violates the fundamental rights of its citizens.

The international community must remain resolute in rejecting any concessions to the Taliban unless significant progress is made in human rights, the rule of law, and democratic values. Moreover, the international community must support all initiatives aimed at restoring democracy in Afghanistan so that its people may have the opportunity to live in a free and democratic society.

Principles

1. The Principle of Human Dignity
2. The Principle of Freedom and Participation in the Public Sphere
3. The Principle of Equality in Social, Cultural, and Economic Arenas for All Afghan Citizens, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sect, gender, language, culture, and political beliefs.
4. The Right to Human Security, Sustainable Development, Solidarity, and the Observance of Rights in All Domains Without Gender-Based Discrimination.

Indicators and Solutions

1. Revival, amendment, or drafting of a new constitution for Afghanistan through legitimate mechanisms based on consensus, principles of representation, and democratic methods.
2. Adoption of new laws and amendment of subsidiary laws to implement the principles of the United Nations Charter, international covenants and conventions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Islamic Declaration of Human Rights.

3. Establishment or revival of an independent Afghanistan Human Rights Commission based on international principles.
4. Development of curricula for schools and higher education institutions with a focus on academic principles and international standards, ensuring that educational content remains free from political and ideological influence while guaranteeing its sustainability.
5. Immediate reopening of schools, universities, and academic institutions for girls following the curriculum revision mentioned in point five.
6. Immediate reintegration of women into the public sphere, particularly in education, higher education, employment, and politics.
7. Prohibition of persecution, imprisonment, torture, systematic and targeted killings, and summary trials of all Afghan citizens.
8. Immediate cessation of acts of revenge and arbitrary and mysterious killings.
9. Initiation of legal proceedings for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and gender apartheid committed by the Taliban at the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ).
10. Support for the continued work of the UN Special Rapporteur's Office for Afghanistan.
11. Facilitation of Afghan women's participation in international conferences and meetings, particularly in UN Security Council sessions.
12. Sustained support for media, civil society, human rights organizations, women's organizations, independent academic associations, artists, and writers of Afghanistan, as well as initiatives related to conflict resolution in Afghanistan.
13. Immediate ban on child and forced marriages and ensuring women's access to healthcare services.

14. Immediate halt to child recruitment, along with the identification and legal prosecution of individuals and institutions involved in brainwashing Afghan children under the guise of establishing religious schools.

IV. Economic Outlook and Sustainable Development

For many years, Afghanistan has been an active and committed member of global conventions such as the United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), and the Millennium Development Goals. With prudent political approaches and considering its geo-economic position, Afghanistan has the potential to become a key hub for economic and cultural development, a center for regional and global peace and progress.

A self-sufficient and prosperous society, based on a dynamic, inclusive, and employment-generating economy, in collaboration with an active private sector, environmental conservation, and participation in global climate change policies (as Afghanistan was committed to in the Millennium Development Goals), can be achieved.

Afghanistan's economic outlook depends on various internal, regional, and global factors, including its *current and historical geopolitical* status. A comprehensive solution to its economic challenges is linked to political changes within Afghanistan as well as regional and international developments concerning its political situation.

Key Factors for Afghanistan's Economic Future

1. Political Stability and Security Situation

Political stability (a legitimate system based on the rule of law) and security (physical, psychological, social, and economic security) are among the most critical factors for economic and social growth in the country. If Afghanistan achieves political stability through the establishment of an inclusive, legitimate, and lawful government and if the security situation improves, it will create opportunities for greater domestic and foreign investments.

2. Financial Aid from International and National Institutions

Since Afghanistan has not yet reached the stage of industrialization or the development of heavy and light industries, its economy is highly dependent on financial and monetary aid from international organizations, including the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Organization of Islamic Economic

Cooperation, international financial institutions, and private banks. The reduction or cessation of such aid and relations would have significant negative impacts on Afghanistan's economy, whereas the continuation and expansion of these relations and assistance could contribute to economic improvement and the empowerment of economic actors in the country.

To foster the growth of the private sector and attract foreign investments in Afghanistan, comprehensive measures are needed to reduce administrative bureaucracy, establish security in investment, economic, and judicial sectors, combat financial and administrative corruption, improve the country's diplomatic standing at the international level, and secure membership in global organizations and multilateral investment agreements.

Additionally, reviewing, developing, and enforcing policies, legal frameworks, and key regulations related to the financial and trade system—ensuring their alignment with Afghanistan’s conditions—would facilitate the fair implementation of policies, attract private sector participation, and create the foundation for implementing Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in the country.

3. Survey, Exploration, and Extraction of Natural Resources

Afghanistan is a country rich in diverse natural resources, including minerals, gemstones, and energy sources. Effective utilization of these resources requires professional and specialized survey, exploration, and extraction processes, the establishment of a transparent management system with adequate capacities, support for investment in the mining sector, and accurate assessment of the country’s mineral wealth.

4. Attracting Investment in Energy Production and the Development of Infrastructure

The availability and production of efficient and affordable energy in the country are considered crucial for the growth of the domestic industrial sector. The lack of electricity and cost-effective production leads to stagnation and gradual bankruptcy of domestic industries. The development of the energy sector and electricity production can be achieved through increased utilization of resources by attracting investments from both the private and public sectors.

5. Transportation

For transit and trade, the establishment of highways, roads, railway networks, metro lines, and standard airports is essential. Without

the reconstruction of roads and transit infrastructure, the country's progress is impossible. For economic development, the completion of regional highway systems—particularly the Silk Road project through Afghanistan, which first connects Asian countries among themselves and, secondly, links them to European countries and other continents—is necessary. Additionally, the rehabilitation of roads to improve rural access, the maintenance of road networks, the development of airports and the construction of new regional airports, the implementation of railway projects, and new transit agreements with neighboring countries are critical for Afghanistan's economic expansion.

6. Agriculture, Livestock, and Rural Development

Since the majority of Afghanistan's population in rural areas and districts earn their livelihood through traditional household livestock farming and small agricultural farms and orchards, agriculture and livestock are considered fundamental pillars of the Afghan economy. The development of agricultural and livestock technologies and attracting investment for the establishment of large-scale livestock and agricultural farms can increase agricultural production, dairy products, and meat, ultimately enhancing the efficiency and sustainability of this vital sector. Additionally, the implementation of commercial agriculture as a valuable livelihood source—through private sector participation and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in agriculture and rural development—can serve as a key solution to poverty reduction and the provision of alternative livelihoods. Furthermore, the rehabilitation of existing and traditional irrigation structures, improved water resource management, the initiation of water supply and sanitation projects, and the construction of small water dams to revitalize agricultural lands are crucial steps in strengthening the sector.

7. Urban Development

Managing the rapid urbanization process to enhance access to better services and affordable housing requires the implementation of national urban programs, including the National Land Policy and Urban Development Plans. The expected outcomes of these initiatives include increased access to affordable housing, improved urban environmental conditions with green spaces and open areas, and the attraction of private sector investment in the provision of urban services.

8. Education

Providing basic education and reducing illiteracy rates, improving the quality and management of the education system, ensuring equal access to public education for boys and girls, enhancing teacher training and working conditions, reconstructing and expanding educational infrastructure, improving curricula and learning materials, promoting literacy and non-formal education, and facilitating vocational training and skill development aligned with labor market demands are essential. These goals can be achieved by decentralizing responsibilities to local authorities for service delivery while simultaneously strengthening the strategic planning and oversight capacities of the Ministries of Education, Higher Education, and Labor and Social Affairs.

9. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Taking necessary measures to integrate the government into a modern e-Government system to enhance the quality of governance and reduce administrative corruption.

10. Health and Nutrition

Expanding access to universal basic healthcare services, implementing comprehensive primary healthcare programs, connecting patients to primary healthcare centers, developing maternal health services and family counseling associations, improving maternal and child nutrition, and controlling infectious diseases through a comprehensive institutional development program for healthcare services.

11. Social Security

Reducing poverty through financially sustainable and targeted social security measures, allocating adequate resources to the most impoverished areas via national programs and effective social support initiatives; launching coordinated programs in employment generation and social protection, as well as providing humanitarian aid to those affected by natural disasters, insecurity, and repatriation from migration.



Fifth Vienna Process Conference, February 2025

International Feedback

DOCUMENTS

- A 118th Congress Resolution, 2023–2024, H. Res. 1433, Condemning the Taliban as a terrorist organization and supporting the Vienna Process as a platform for anti-Taliban political opposition
- E Correspondence with His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations
- I Reply letter from His Excellency Mr. António Guterres to Vienna Process
- K Open letter to His Excellency António Guterres on the Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan activities
- N Allied Rescue Coalition, Mr. James P. Bradley, US President Candidate, September 10, 2022
- P Afghan Liberty Project, Mr. Ryan Mauro
- Q Flanders Fields, Ben Owen, September 9, 2022
- R Continuing Evangelical Episcopal Communion, Archbishop Robert Gosselin, 9 September, 2022
- T Project Exodus Relief, Mr. David Michael Edwards, Jr., September 10, 2022
- U Moral Compass, Travis Dale Peterson, 9 September, 2022
- W Media coverage

H. RES. 1433

Condemning the Taliban as a terrorist organization and supporting the Vienna Process as a platform for anti-Taliban political opposition.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

September 10, 2024

Mr. Burchett submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Condemning the Taliban as a terrorist organization and supporting the Vienna Process as a platform for anti-Taliban political opposition.

Whereas the Taliban, having seized control of Afghanistan in August 2021, has engaged in a systematic campaign of violence, repression, and terror, undermining the fundamental rights of the Afghan people and violating international norms, while also harboring foreign terrorist organizations and providing them with a safe haven to operate, further destabilizing the region and posing a threat to global security;

Whereas the Taliban's actions, which include the persecution of women and girls, the suppression of free speech, and the targeting of ethnic and religious minorities, exemplify the characteristics of a terrorist organization and warrant unequivocal condemnation by the international community;

Whereas, in light of the Taliban's continued acts of terrorism and oppression, it is imperative that the United States reaffirms its commitment to promoting democratic governance and human rights in Afghanistan, as well as supporting those who oppose the Taliban's authoritarian rule;

Whereas the Vienna Process, an inclusive political dialogue platform established in Vienna, Austria, serves as a beacon of hope for all anti-Taliban opposition groups, fostering a united front against the Taliban's oppressive regime;

Whereas the Vienna Process promotes collaboration and inclusivity, bringing together diverse factions, including former government officials, civil society representatives, and various ethnic groups, ensuring that all voices within Afghanistan's opposition are heard and represented;

Whereas the Vienna Process has emerged with an emphasis on inclusivity and comprehensive representation of the Afghan populace, thereby enhancing the legitimacy and effectiveness of efforts to establish a democratic and accountable governance structure in Afghanistan;

Whereas the Vienna Process embodies a commitment to peaceful negotiation and conflict resolution, providing an alterna-

tive to the Taliban's violent tactics and fostering an environment where dialogue can flourish;

Whereas the Vienna Process is endorsed by Vets4NRF, an organization of United States veterans that supports all anti-Taliban movements, including the National Resistance Front of Afghanistan, led by Ahmad Massoud, and the Afghanistan Green Trend, led by Amrullah Saleh, within the United States, with the aim of improving the relationship between Afghanistan and the United States;

Whereas the United States dedicated over 20 years to supporting democracy and strengthening the rule of law in Afghanistan through diplomatic and military efforts; and

Whereas the United States and veterans of the Global War on Terrorism, and their families, who sacrificed greatly in this 20-year war in the name of protecting the United States from terrorism by strengthening Afghanistan's freedom, remain committed to supporting the people of Afghanistan in their ongoing struggle for freedom: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

- (1) condemns the Taliban as a terrorist organization for its ongoing violent and oppressive actions against the people of Afghanistan and its blatant disregard for human rights and international law, as well as its support for international terrorist organizations;
- (2) supports the Vienna Process as a crucial platform for uniting all anti-Taliban political opposition groups, emphasizing the importance of inclusivity and representation in the pursuit of a democratic future for Afghanistan;

- (3) encourages continued international engagement with the Vienna Process and its stakeholders, recognizing its potential to forge a united front against the Taliban and create pathways for sustainable peace and stability in Afghanistan;
- (4) calls on the United States Government to actively participate in and support the Vienna Process, ensuring that the voices of the people of Afghanistan are prioritized in any future negotiations regarding the governance of Afghanistan;
- (5) reiterates the importance of standing in solidarity with the people of Afghanistan, particularly those who have been marginalized and oppressed under the Taliban regime, and affirms the commitment to uphold human rights and democratic principles in all diplomatic efforts; and
- (6) respectively requests that the Clerk of the House of Representatives transmit a copy of this resolution to the Secretary of State and to the United Nations, urging them to support the aims of the Vienna Process in fostering a democratic Afghanistan free from the tyranny of the Taliban.

Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan

Vienna Office, Austria

transferprojektwtk@gmail.com

30 April, 2023

His Excellency Mr. Antonio Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York City
U. S. A.

Our Urgent Appeal:

DON'T JUST LISTEN TO US, RESPOND TO US!

Re.: Your meeting with the Special Representatives in Doha

Dear Secretary General,

We, the undersigned Afghan women from deferent ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds are united in our grave concerns that a closed-door gathering, featuring special envoys on Afghanistan from various countries, is being hosted by the United Nations in Doha, Qatar, without the representation and inclusion of Afghan women.

This meeting reportedly aims to “clarify expectation” regarding concerns held by the United Nations and UN member states about the Taliban’s barbaric and violent oppression of women and girls. The lack of participation—and more so—the acknowledgment of Afghan women in these forums is of utmost apprehension, especially following the recent offensive comments by the UN Deputy Secretary General Amina J. Mohammad, who expressed the possibility of taking “baby steps to put us back on the pathway to

recognition of the Taliban, a principled recognition.” This, Your Excellency, expresses a shocking disregard for our ongoing and existential fight for survival.

The women of Afghanistan are incredulous that the United Nations, UN member states, or any international organisation would deliberately engage with a well-known terrorist establishment—let alone with the Taliban, who continue to outrageously violate basic human rights of the Afghan people, through targeted violence against women, girls and ethnic minorities. There is indisputable evidence of the Taliban’s gender apartheid and the systematic elimination of women and girls from all features of society in Afghanistan. The Taliban are not reformers. We protest and criticise any effort to “normalise” diplomatic affairs with Taliban.

Hence, we wholeheartedly appeal to the United Nations and its member states that instead of “taking baby steps” towards recognising the terror regime of the Taliban, the United Nation must, as a matter of immediacy, urgently embrace its long-stated mandate and work with the International Criminal Court (ICC) to hold the leaders of the Taliban accountable for their despicable human rights violations and war crimes. This includes the forcible displacement and confiscation of land from indigenous communities in northern and central Afghanistan, as well as the arbitrary and unlawful detention and persecution on of peaceful protesters, advocates of universal education, journalists, university professors, and former members of the democratically-elected government and national security forces. These egregious offenses, which contradict basic humanity, flagrantly violate international human rights agreements and humanitarian law and are clear contraventions of the ICC Rome Statute.

Since August 2021, Afghanistan has become a safe haven for terrorist groups, including Al Qaeda, Daesh, and other regional

terrorist fractions. The killing of Al-Qaeda leader Imam Al Zawahiri in Kabul by US forces in July 2022, as well as the attacks on members of the Tehrike-Taliban Pakistan in Khost and other provinces, provide clear evidence of the escalating terrorism in the region.

We, the women of Afghanistan who participated in the 2nd Vienna Conference, call upon all attendees of the Doha meeting on Afghanistan on May 1–2 to:

Ensure that Afghan women are invited and granted the opportunity to express themselves in any such summit about Afghanistan, especially on subjects relating to women and girls. This should include Afghan women's rights activists, protestors, and leaders in exile, as well as female members of civil society, both inside and outside of Afghanistan. Global leaders—who do not distance themselves from Amina J. Mohammad's irresponsible attitude and continue to only pay lip-service to the protection of girls' and women's rights of Afghanistan—do not represent us!

Confirm that Taliban leaders are accountable under the principle of Universal Jurisdiction for the heinous crimes they have and continue to commit against the people of Afghanistan, in particular against women and girls.

Confirm that disciplinary international restrictions are enforced on the leaders and administrators of the Taliban. Corresponding sanctions, comprising the extension of the travel prohibition, a world-wide restriction on assets owned by the Taliban and Taliban leadership, and systematically relisting senior Taliban officials on the UN sanctions list are essential steps to guaranteeing the defence of human rights for the people of Afghanistan.

Confirm that the people of Afghanistan are fully empowered in paving the way for an inclusive government that respects the will of all Afghans and includes representatives from all sectors

of society, with particular attention given to the participation of women and ethnic minorities.

A failure to courageously stand up against the Taliban and make them responsible for their crimes will enable their cruel, persistent, and ferocious rule of terror to carry on.

And you will be held accountable for your inaction before the court of humanity!

DON'T JUST LISTEN TO US, RESPOND TO US!

Sincerely, We, the women of Afghanistan who participated in the 2nd Vienna Conference.

To:

The United Nations Secretary General

The United Nations Assistant Mission for Afghanistan (UNA-MA)

The United Nations Human Rights Council

The United Nations Security Council

The Secretary of State, Washington DC, United States

The High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Brussels, Belgium

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Austria

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Australia

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium

The Minister of foreign Affairs Great Britain

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of France

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Iran

The Minister of Foreign Affairs India

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Netherlands

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Pakistan



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

2 May 2023

Dear Signatories,

I wish to thank you for your letter dated 30 April 2023, voicing your concerns about developments in Afghanistan, particularly regarding the rights of women and girls.

I condemn, without reservation, the decisions of the Taliban to ban women from attending higher education and from working for non-governmental organizations, and, now, the United Nations. These decisions are a violation of the human rights of women and have grave humanitarian consequences. This message has been consistently conveyed to all interlocutors, including directly to the Taliban during the Deputy Secretary-General's recent visit to Afghanistan, at my request.

The United Nations is committed to supporting the engagement of the international community on the issue of Afghanistan. The Security Council resolution, passed unanimously with 92 co-sponsors, condemned the decision of the Taliban to ban Afghan women from working for the United Nations in Afghanistan, which, it affirmed, undermines human rights and humanitarian principles, and called upon the Taliban to swiftly reverse the policies and practices that restrict the enjoyment by women and girls of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. It further reaffirmed the indispensable role of women in Afghan society, including in humanitarian response and peacebuilding, and stressed the importance of their full, equal, meaningful and

safe participation for the future and long-term development of Afghanistan.

On 1 and 2 May 2023, I convened a group of special envoys on Afghanistan to enhance principled engagement around common objectives, including issues of human rights and inclusive governance, with a view to finding a durable way forward on the situation in Afghanistan.

Regarding the issue of recognition, that is a matter for Member States. The United Nations Secretariat follows any guidance that the General Assembly or the Security Council may provide on whom to interact with as the government of a Member State.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm that the United Nations stands in full solidarity with the people of Afghanistan and will continue to call for the reversal of all measures restricting the right of women and girls to education and the rights of women related to employment, freedom of movement and full, equal and meaningful participation in public life.

Yours sincerely,
António Guterres

Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan

Vienna Office, Austria

transferprojektwtk@gmail.com

25 June 2024

His Excellency Mr. António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York City
U. S. A.

Open Letter

Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan

4th of Saratan, 1403 (June 26, 2024)

Vienna, Austria

Dear Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations:

We, the participants of the Fourth Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan, representing forty political organizations, resistance groups, civil society, human rights advocates, women's and youth groups of Afghanistan, as well as academic and scholarly figures gathered here in Vienna, representing the ethnic, linguistic, cultural, gender, religious, and sectarian diversity of Afghanistan strive to rescue our country from its current deplorable state and to bring about conditions that bolster our nation's socio-economic welfare through an inclusive, democratic process. The Taliban's illegitimate rule is not only a great calamity and a disaster for the people of Afghanistan, but it has also brought about unprecedented political, educational, economic, and cultural challenges facing our suffering nation. The Taliban are a criminal, extremist,

and terrorist group, which does not represent the people of Afghanistan. We know from the United Nations' own recurrent reports that that this group has facilitated the activities of regional and transnational terrorist groups, posing serious threats to regional stability and international peace and security.

As the United Nations has planned to host the third Doha meeting on Afghanistan on June 30, 2024, we ask that you avoid both normalizing the Taliban's terrorist group under any circumstances and creating an environment where a terrorist group represents sovereign Afghanistan, and its people gains the basic principles of the United Nations Charter.

The agenda of the third Doha meeting demonstrates that the United Nations has deviated from its people-cantered mandate, directly violating the UN Security Council Resolution 2721. According to the Resolution, the Doha meeting was supposed to appoint a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and to form a contact group. Moreover, the United Nations, according to the Resolution, was supposed to utilize the contact group for paving the way for dialogue between the Taliban and Afghanistan's political and civil society groups in order to find negotiated solutions to ending the multiplicity of growing crises confronting the people of Afghanistan today. However, the political groups have not been invited to the Doha meeting and the representatives of Afghan women and civil society have also been excluded from the third Doha meeting at the request of the Taliban. The unilateral participation of the Taliban and the setting of the agenda for the meeting at their request render the third Doha meeting and the entire Doha process illegitimate and unacceptable for the people of Afghanistan and their representatives.

Consistent with the UN Charter, the people of Afghanistan demand that the United Nations strictly adhere to the resolu-

tions of its Security Council and act as a neutral mediator and facilitator of meaningful efforts for sustainable peace and development in Afghanistan. To the contrary, however, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), by complying with the demands of the Taliban terrorist group and ignoring the oppression of the people of Afghanistan and gender apartheid in the country, unprecedentedly undermines the image and credibility of the United Nations in Afghanistan and across the world.

We, the participants of the Vienna Process conference, request you, Mr. Secretary-General, to act accountably, concerning the sensitivity of Afghanistan's political issues. We also call on the United Nations to ensure transparent oversight of international humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

Allied Rescue Coalition
30902 Clubhouse Dr# 16E Languna Niguel CA 92677
jbradley@alliedrescuecoalition.org

September 10, 2022

Dear Sirs and Madams,

On behalf of Allied Rescue Coalition and the many citizens we represent, please accept our deepest appreciation for your hosting a political meeting to be held in Vienna on September 15–17, 2022, which we expect to include prominent Afghan political leaders, human rights activists, and well-known Afghan scholars.

Apparently, Taliban forces were given the opportunity, despite the violence and illegitimacy of their takeover, to fulfil expressed commitments regarding the fundamental rights of all Afghans, particularly women and girls. A binding obligation was also imposed on them to ensure that they did not provide a safe haven for international terrorism in Afghanistan. International organizations and many countries pursued a dialogue and engagement strategy with the Taliban. We hoped that such interactions would positively influence the Taliban's approach and actions toward the needs of the civilian population.

As a result of their failure to deliver on all their commitments, the Taliban have re-enacted exorbitant policies and directives. As part of its systematic eradication of women and girls from public life, the Taliban have bled young women from access to secondary education and systematically restricted their fundamental rights to work and participate actively in society. Not only does the denial of education to girls and women constitute a grave violation of human rights, but it also compromises the future of the

Under the Taliban rule, detained activists, kidnappings, dis-

appearances, forced displacements, collective punishments, including those against minority groups, media crackdowns, extrajudicial killings, and torture, including torture of former members of the national security forces and government officials, constitute normal practices. These combined with other measures have perpetuated a climate of fear and physical and psychological insecurity, which has forced hundreds of thousands of Afghans to leave the country. The crimes must not be tolerated nor ignored.

Although there have been consistent national and international calls for the Taliban to respect basic human rights, they have been ignored and rejected.

We would like to thank you for inviting Honorable Ahmad Massoud, leader of the Afghan National Resistance Front, to your event. He is regarded internationally as the epitome of light and peace for our country and he represents the end of terrorism as we know it. Providing Afghanistan's political leaders with spaces who are not involved in corruption or human rights abuse for the past four decades provides a historical opportunity for the nation to establish a common ground and find ways to resolve Afghanistan's conflict through political means.

Respectfully,
James P. Bradley
US President Candidate
Allied Rescue Coalition

Afghan Liberty Project
Since 2021
www.afghanlibertyproject.org

To Whom It May Concern:

Afghan Liberty Project would like to express our appreciation of your inviting Ahmad Massoud to speak in Vienna on September 15–17.

We believe Mr. Massoud and the National Resistance Front represent the best hope for an Afghanistan that is free of terrorism and human rights abuses.

By allowing leaders like Mr. Massoud to have a platform, you are making a substantive contribution towards realizing that hope.

The peace process is dependent upon your support and your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Ryan Mauro

Ben Owen
President/CEO, Founder
745 Atlanta Rd., Ste 108
Cumplings, GA 30040

Flanders Fields
Veterans supporting Veterans

September 9, 2022

To whom it may concern:

Our sincere appreciation goes out to you for inviting Ahmad Massoud to speak in Vienna on September 15–17.

We believe Mr. Massoud symbolizes the end of terrorism and darkness.

By allowing Afghan politicians without a history of corruption or human rights abuses to speak up, we can find common ground and solve all conflicts.

The peace process in Afghanistan depends on your support and your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Best Regards,
Ben Owen

Continuing Evangelical Episcopal Communion
Office of the General Secretary
secretariat@ceec.church

9 September 2022

To whom it may concern

RE: Vienna Summit on Afghanistan (Sep 15–17, 2022)

Dear Organizers of the Vienna Summit on Afghanistan,

First of all, please allow me to express my heartfelt thanks for facilitating such a significant and potentially transformational political meeting in Vienna on September 15–17, 2022. The diversity of invited speakers—among whom are several prominent Afghan political leaders, respected human rights activists, and well-known Afghan scholars—bodes well for the quality of the interactions and offers hope for an outcome that will affect the harried nation of Afghanistan.

As a Communion, we have been involved in a number of substantive ways to help protect life and support and sustain Afghan refugees. We are therefore grateful for your invitation to Ahmad Massoud, leader of the Afghan National Resistance Front as a participant. We see him as the embodiment of peace and light for Afghanistan, marking the end of terrorism as we know it.

It's a historic opportunity to establish a common ground by providing Afghan political leaders with spaces who haven't been involved in corruption or human rights abuses. Torture, killing, brutality, intimidation, suppression of the media, forced displacement, and the issuance of stringent restrictions have summed up the reality of Afghanistan today and covered the nation like a pall of death. The goal of this conference is to find a path forward to

a sustainable peace, one that will protect the lives of all Afghans, and most especially those currently at greatest risk.

We write, therefore, to express our encouragement that you continue with the plan to convene this summit. Moreover, please do permit Mr. Ahmad Massoud to speak; the voice of freedom and peace calls and ought to be carefully attended to by all.

Your outstanding contribution to the peace and prosperity of Afghanistan will always be remembered with deep gratitude by the Afghan people.

Blessing of grace and peace,
Archbishop Robert Gosselin

David Michael Edwards, Jr.
Founder, Project Exodus Relief
mikee@prosxodusrelief.com

Sept 10, 2022

To whom it may concern,
Dear organizers of the Vienna Summit on Afghanistan,

Thank you for hosting this very important event. We hope that this summit will change the dynamic in Afghanistan and provide a way ahead for the desperate people of that country. Our sincere appreciation goes out to you for inviting Ahmad Massoud to speak at this event on September 15–17.

We believe Mr. Massoud symbolizes the hope the country of Afghanistan needs. By allowing Afghan politicians without a history of corruption or human rights abuses to speak up, we can find common ground and hopefully solve some of these disastrous problems being encountered by the Afghan people. I have personally witnessed atrocities committed by the Taliban, and other terrorist groups since the fall of Kabul just over a year ago. Girls no longer have the freedom to receive education like they did before the fall. Mr. Massoud is one of the biggest advocates for his people and we believe his message will be powerful.

The peace process in Afghanistan depends on your support and your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Please allow him to speak honestly as the key representative for those without a voice still suffering through this archaic treatment by the Taliban.

Very Respectfully,
David Michael Edwards, Jr.

Travis Peterson, MSgt USAF (Ret)
Founder and Director of Moral Compass Federation

9 September 2022

RE: Vienna Summit on Afghanistan (Sept 15–17, 2022)

To whom it may concern,
Dear Organizers of the Vienna Summit on Afghanistan,

Thank you for hosting such an important and historic event. This summit will hopefully change the course of history in regard to the legitimacy of Afghanistan and her populace. The taliban occupation of Afghanistan has stripped the freedoms and the rights of the Afghanistan people for too long. The past 20 years has brought religious, educational and most importantly prosperity opportunities to many that would have never had a chance. One year past, those freedoms were stripped from generations to come as the taliban took control. This taliban control by hatred and oppression needs to stop immediately and control needs to belong to the proud and free Afghan populace. The Vienna summit on Afghanistan is an awaking that will host many prominent Afghan political leaders, human rights activist and a wide array of scholars that have the best interests of Afghanistan in mind allowing for a prominent discussion and way forward.

As the director of the Moral Compass Federation I have witnessed the atrocities across Afghanistan due to the taliban control. The world has options to relieve the hellish conditions under which the Afghan civil society are currently living due to taliban rule.

I encourage an open dialogue focused on peace and prosperity across the board. Allowing Mr Ahmad Massoud to speak those

voices of freedom will be a step forward in the direction for peace within Afghanistan. The opportunity for girls and boys to not be afraid, but instead pursue their desired futures. For the men and women to rejoice in marriage and family values as God intended.

There is no more room in the hearts of the Afghan people to continue enduring such barbaric and illegal control due to the taliban occupation. Its time for the leaders such as Mr Ahmad Massoud to speak and let the masses of the world know that this wrong can be righted by support, education and advocacy.

Please in due respect allow Mr Ahmad Massoud speak the voice of the unheard at the Vienna Summit on Afghanistan.

Best and regards,
Sincerely,
Travis Dale Peterson

Media coverage



Arte TV-Movie: Afghanistan: *les derniers résistants* |
Die Unbeugsamen von Afghanistan, 53 min., 2023



Hudson Institute
POLITICAL STUDIES

ARAB NEWS



The Voice
Of The War
Victims

Süddeutsche Zeitung

Die Presse

DER STANDARD



Parlament
Österreich

Austrian Parliament: Hearing with members of the
Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan