

Proposed criteria for the participation of civil society representatives in the Doha Conference

At the invitation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, a conference on Afghanistan will soon take place in Doha. It is very important to hold this meeting in the current situation when, on the one hand, human rights violations and lack of accountability have reached their peak and, on the other hand, there is no clear vision for the future. The Human Rights Defenders Plus (HRD+) welcomes both the holding of this conference and the invitation of representatives of civil society and human rights defenders to this conference. To maintain transparency and strive for greater impact, it asks that the following criteria be considered when selecting civil society representatives:

- **Selection through a clear and transparent channel:** The United Nations must have a clear and transparent mechanism for the selection of real civil society representatives inside and outside the country so that those who attend the session on behalf of civil society and human rights defenders have the necessary legitimacy.
- **Full commitment to human rights values:** Individuals attending the session on behalf of civil society and human rights defenders must have a firm commitment to human rights values and an acceptable track record in defending these values, and are selected in consultation with civil society bodies and human rights defenders.
- **Lack of political and ideological affiliation:** Due to the sensitivity of the topic, persons who have political affiliations and ideological commitments to political and religious movements should not attend this meeting as representatives of civil society and human rights activists.
- **Accountability and regular communication of representatives:** The representatives of civil society and human rights defenders at this conference must have strong communication and the ability to respond to the main body of civil society and be accountable for their actions and responses at the conference.
- **The significant and prominent role of women:** Due to the prevalence of gender apartheid in Afghanistan, at least half of the civil society representatives should be women human rights defenders so that they can directly convey the voice of protest and the views of women to the other participants.
- **The English language requirement:** Knowledge of English should not be a criterion for participation in the conference and should not prevent women human rights defenders in particular from attending the conference.

HRD+ believes that compliance with the above criteria will be the basis for a stronger defense of human rights values at the conference. We ask all institutions and human rights defenders to support adherence to these criteria. Selected participants can contact HRD+ and seek the legal and technical advice of this institution to improve their positions and advocate more effectively for human rights values.

Human Rights Defender Plus (HRD+)