

HRD+ Statement

on the Massacre of Innocent Civilians in Baghlan Province

Recently, 12 innocent Afghan citizens were martyred by "unknown" assailants and terrorists while they were engaged in prayer and worship at a mosque in Nahrin District, Baghlan Province.

This is not the first time that our devout compatriots have been massacred during worship by cruel and terrorist groups. The Taliban de facto administration has failed to publish the results of any investigations regarding such incidents, deepening ambiguity about the perpetrators of these heinous crimes.

The Taliban de facto administration, which once claimed security as one of its key achievements, has been unable to address such critical matters. These repeated, organized, and group killings with unidentified perpetrators raise significant questions about who is behind these inhumane actions. Over the years, the Taliban's actions have clearly demonstrated sensitivity toward other religious groups, and their silence in this regard further implicates their responsibility.

Human Rights Defenders Plus (HRD+) strongly condemns these mysterious and organized killings and puts forward the following recommendations:

- The Taliban de facto administration must immediately investigate the perpetrators of this group killing of our citizens in Nahrin, publish the findings, and present concrete evidence.
- HRD+ calls on the Taliban de facto administration to release the findings of previous investigations into attacks against followers of different religious minorities in the country to inform the Afghan public.
- HRD+ urges Ms. Nazila Ghanea, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, to intervene in this matter and provide investigations and recommendations to the Afghan people and the international community.
- HRD+ calls on Mr. Richard Bennett, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, to take immediate action and, in coordination with civil society organizations and human rights activists, prepare a special report on the "challenges to freedom of belief in Afghanistan" and share it with national and international community alongside constructive and actionable recommendations.
- HRD+ strongly urges the International Criminal Court (ICC) to include the systematic killings of religious minorities in Afghanistan within its case on crimes against humanity and seriously investigate this issue as part of its work on Afghanistan.

- HRD+ calls on civil society organizations and human rights activists to document these crimes against religious and ethnic groups and actively contribute concrete evidence to international courts.
- HRD+ welcomes the active role of the media in exposing these grave human rights violations and urges them to safeguard documentation related to such crimes in secure systems to support future accountability on crimes against humanity in Afghanistan.

HRD+ stands ready to consult, cooperate, and coordinate with all legitimate national and international institutions to address the demands outlined in this statement.

Human Rights Defenders Plus

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