

## PRESS STATEMENT

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### **16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM: TOWARDS BEIJING +30: UNITE TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**

25 November 2024 – Joint UNAMA/UN Women Statement

The United Nations in Afghanistan calls upon the country's de facto authorities to take immediate action to end violence against women and girls and to reverse the systematic erosion of women's rights and the enjoyment of their fundamental freedoms that fosters such violence.

The call is made as the world marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the start of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign. This global campaign runs from November 25 - International Day for Ending Violence Against Women - to December 10, Human Rights Day. This year's campaign unfolds against the backdrop of the upcoming 30th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the UN's definitive roadmap for gender equality.

Afghanistan continues to have high rates of violence against women, which is exacerbated by the ongoing discrimination against women across all areas of life. With the dismantling of the gender equality architecture in the country, access to comprehensive and quality services for survivors of violence has been severely impacted. At the same time, demand for these services has surged.

"We are at a critical juncture for the women and girls of Afghanistan. We need urgent action for justice to end violence against women and girls in Afghanistan," said Roza Otunbayeva, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan.

In the face of these immense challenges, Afghan women demonstrate resilience and courage in their fight for dignity and freedom. Women's organizations across the country continue to provide essential support to survivors, while communities and religious leaders are challenging harmful social norms. Men and boys are increasingly stepping forward to support the women in their families and communities, amid heightened restrictions.

"The fact that Afghan women and girls have less rights today than generations ago is a devastating reminder of the urgency of their struggle and the need for the international community to double down our efforts to stand with them, investing in their resilience, leadership and empowerment," said Alison Davidian, the Special Representative for UN Women in Afghanistan.

Violence against women has no justification anywhere in the world, including Afghanistan. The UN in Afghanistan remains steadfast in its commitment to addressing the needs of women and girl survivors of violence, amplifying their voices, and advocating for their rights.

Through direct support to service providers and women's organizations, prevention programs, and engagement with national and international stakeholders, we are working to build a future free from all forms of violence against women and girls.

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