

Development Window

Mr. Sadiq Amini Founder of Afghanistan Impact:

It has now been more than five years since the terrorist Taliban group unlawfully seized power in Afghanistan—an authority rejected by the Afghan people, lacking any legitimacy, and unrecognized by countries in the region and across the world. In general, Afghanistan today lives under a government that has remained illegitimate for nearly five years.

Meanwhile, the fate of more than 40 million Afghan citizens—those inside the country and those living abroad—remains uncertain under this illegitimate system. In the absence of a legitimate government recognized at the regional and international levels, Afghanistan is effectively without representation: a country without a flag, without power, without a voice, and without an active presence on the world stage.

Similar experiences have occurred in other countries. When a mercenary group backed by a nation's enemies seizes the country and its power through various means and establishes an illegitimate authority, the responsibility to form a "government in exile" falls directly on the president. Once the government collapsed and the president left Afghanistan, he should have established and formally declared a government in exile, assembled his cabinet, protected Afghanistan's embassies and assets, and preserved the country's position in international forums so that relations could be maintained and the illegitimate authority would not endure or expand its influence abroad.

Unfortunately, Afghanistan's president failed to fulfill that duty. Alongside him, the first vice president had the responsibility to act if the president was unable to do so; or, in accordance with the constitution, the second vice president and the rest of the constitutional line of succession should have stepped forward. Political leaders and officials who had received a legitimate mandate from the people should have taken on the responsibility of creating a government in exile and actually established it.

In the absence of legitimate political leadership that had been elected by the people but lacked the capacity to form a government in exile, that responsibility then fell to the people's representatives in parliament, who should have taken the initiative. More broadly, Afghanistan's representatives and political figures—those who claim to serve the people and who wish to be their voice in the past, present, and future—should have come together.

Today there is an urgent need for these individuals to gather, consult, hold discussions, and reach an understanding so they can designate a specific location in the world as a meeting point for all legitimate and popular forces, genuine representatives, and political figures who care about Afghanistan's national interests. They must convene there to launch a serious movement toward establishing a "legitimate government in exile." We cannot simply wait and watch an illegitimate authority remain in Afghanistan while making no effort ourselves to create a legitimate government outside the country.

We must act. Even those who believe Afghanistan's problem should be resolved through negotiation and dialogue—though there is little reason for optimism, because over time the ruling group has monopolized power and shown no willingness to reach an understanding with the people on forming a legitimate government—should recognize that talks and negotiations would be more effective, organized, and



systematic if a legitimate government in exile existed. If the Taliban ever wished to negotiate, with which Afghan side or authority would they negotiate? A legitimate government in exile is therefore a fundamental necessity for the people of Afghanistan.

Both those who hope for negotiations (even though I personally see little chance of meaningful talks) and those who seek to overthrow Taliban rule through armed struggle need a government in exile to be established. Should the Taliban fall—an event that could occur at any moment inside Afghanistan—this government in exile would help ensure a peaceful transfer of power, allow forces to return to the country, and enable them to assume responsibility for serving the people.

Other groups that hold different views on Afghanistan's situation must also unify their efforts and work toward creating a legitimate government in exile. If the world does not recognize the Taliban today, then the people, political figures, and conscientious leaders of Afghanistan have a duty to establish a government that the international community can recognize and engage with.

May Afghanistan achieve freedom, dignity, and success. May you remain under Allah's protection.