

HRD+ Statement

On the Violent Suppression of Protesters in Herat

09/06/2026

Human Rights Defenders Plus (HRD+) strongly condemns the violent and unlawful suppression of women and citizens protesting in the Jebrail area of Herat by Taliban forces.

According to reports and published footage, women protesters who had gathered to demonstrate against injustice, the arrest of women, and the increasing restrictions on the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens were met with gunfire, beatings, and arrests by Taliban forces. This action constitutes not only a blatant violation of fundamental human rights, but also a direct assault on the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly, and the human dignity of the people of Afghanistan.

We are deeply concerned by reports indicating that Taliban forces opened fire on protesters, including women, resulting in injuries to a number of civilians. No government or authority has the right to respond to the legitimate demands of its people with bullets, violence, and intimidation. The violent treatment of women protesters reflects the continuation of a systematic policy of repression that the Taliban have pursued against the rights and freedoms of the people of Afghanistan.

HRD+ calls on the Taliban to immediately and unconditionally end the repression of the population, release all individuals detained in connection with these events, cease the use of violence against civilians, and respect the fundamental rights of the people, including the right to peaceful protest, the right to education, the right to work, and the right to participate in social and political life.

The Afghan people's demand for "education, work, and freedom" is a legitimate, humane, and undeniable demand. Suppressing these aspirations will not only deepen the human rights crisis but will further widen the gap between those in power and the people they govern.

We also call on the United Nations, international human rights mechanisms, Special Rapporteurs, civil society organizations, and all human rights defenders around the world not to remain silent in the face of these developments. The international community must exert more effective political and legal pressure to halt the widespread violations of human rights in Afghanistan and place the repression of women and protesters high on its agenda.

Silence in the face of violence against women and the suppression of the people's voices amounts to the normalization of human rights violations. The people of Afghanistan deserve to live in an environment founded on freedom, justice, human dignity, and respect for their fundamental rights.

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