



Afghanistan Human Rights Center

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Press Release on

The Forced and Mass Deportation of Afghan Refugees from Iran

The Afghanistan Human Rights Center (AHRC) expresses deep concern over the widespread, forced, and inhumane mass deportation of Afghan refugees from the Islamic Republic of Iran, condemning the violations of human rights and human dignity of the refugees, as well as the widespread mistreatment against them.

According to reports from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and credible media outlets, in recent weeks, between 30,000 to 50,000 individuals have been deported from Iran and returned to Afghanistan *daily*, with 70% of returnees being forcibly expelled. A large number of them are women and children. According to UNICEF statistics, over 5,000 unaccompanied and separated children have been deported so far, which is a serious concern.

A large number of deported refugees claim that, despite possessing legal documents, they were arrested without prior notice and without consideration of their legal status, either from their homes or workplaces, and were immediately sent to the border. This process is being carried out without adherence to due process, without individual assessment of the refugees' circumstances and documentation, and without regard for the dangers that await them in their country of origin.

Furthermore, evidence, images, videos, and testimonies from victims indicate that the deportation process has been accompanied by severe violence, threats, inhumane interrogations, and degrading treatment. Numerous cases of beatings and the separation of children from their families have been reported.

In addition to the violence and mistreatment by state officials, refugees have been subjected to widespread economic exploitation. Employers have taken advantage of refugees' lack of access to legal remedies—refusing to pay wages in some cases, or coercing migrant workers into accepting unfair conditions by threatening to report them to the police. Some vehicle owners and private individuals have also exploited the situation, extorting money from refugees in exchange for helping them evade authorities—or, conversely, handing them over to officials. These actions represent clear cases of human trafficking and exploitation.

The forced deportation of Afghan refugees from Iran, as described above, and the inhumane treatment they have endured, stand in clear violation of fundamental principles of international law and Iran's obligations as a state.

Article 33 of the 1951 Refugee Convention states that no country shall return a refugee or migrant to a territory where their life and freedom would be threatened. This principle as customary international law is binding on all states including those that are not parties to this convention.

Likewise, under Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture, no state party shall expel, return, or extradite a person to another country where there are substantial grounds for believing that they would be in danger of being subjected to torture. In determining whether such risk exists, the competent authorities shall take into account all relevant considerations, including the existence of a consistent pattern of gross, flagrant, or mass violations of human rights in the country concerned.

The forced and mass deportation of refugees to under the Taliban regime, without individual assessment of their cases, constitutes a grave violation of the principles and provisions of international human right instruments. It is well known that under Taliban rule, Afghanistan remains unsafe, with daily incidents of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrest, torture, corporal and cruel punishments in public, discrimination, and severe persecution of women. Credible international organizations continue to report systematic human rights violations and even the commission of crimes against humanity by the Taliban. As a state party to the Convention Against Torture, Iran is obligated to uphold the provisions of these international instruments and fundamental principle of non-refoulment.

Moreover, Iran is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The separation of children from their families without a court order and without consideration of the best interests of the child constitutes a clear violation of Article 9 of this convention. Furthermore, the reported actions—such as beatings, humiliation, and intimidation—are blatant violations of fundamental human rights principles, particularly the right to human dignity, the prohibition of torture and degrading treatment, and the right to a fair trial.

Based on the information presented, the Afghanistan Human Rights Center puts forward the following urgent recommendations and requests to the relevant authorities:

1. Immediate halt to the forced deportation of Afghan Refugees with legal documentation:

As noted, under international law, the Iranian government bears responsibility not to forcibly deport Afghans who possess valid legal documents—especially those who, for various reasons, face threats and danger under Taliban rule in Afghanistan.

2. Refrain from separating children from their parents:

According to Article 9 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, separation without a court order and without considering the best interests of the child is prohibited. The AHRC urges the Iranian government to strictly avoid separating children from their parents and calls on international bodies to immediately investigate and examine cases of Afghan children being separated from their families.

3. Guarantee legal due process and individual assessment of Refugees' cases:

The AHRC firmly remind that the Iranian government is obligated to implement Article 13 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which ensures the right to an individual review before deportation. According to provision of this article, all individuals facing deportation must have the

opportunity to challenge their deportation, and objections must be reviewed fairly by a competent judicial authority.

4. Independent investigation and accountability regarding torture and mistreatment of Refugees:

Judicial bodies and independent international agencies must transparently investigate reports of beatings, torture, humiliation, and extortion committed by both official and unofficial entities in Iran and must provide clear findings and updates to the victims.

5. Legal support for Refugees:

The AHRC calls on UN agencies to facilitate access for refugees to legal services, counseling, and complaint mechanisms—so that refugees are empowered to seek justice and defend their rights.

6. Effective international monitoring and support:

The AHRC urges the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF, the Human Rights Committee, and the UN Human Rights Council to deploy human rights field teams to the Afghanistan-Iran borders to closely monitor the situation of refugees, prepare comprehensive reports, present the findings to international bodies, and simultaneously apply political and legal pressure on Iran to adhere to its international obligations.

7. Addressing the humanitarian needs of deported Refugees within Afghanistan:

The AHRC recommends that the international community—especially UN agencies such as UNHCR, OCHA, UNAMA, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights—launch an emergency humanitarian support program to assist deported refugees inside Afghanistan, ensuring that this aid is delivered free from Taliban interference.

- 8.** The AHRC calls on all parties involved in the Afghan refugees to ensure the conditions for a voluntary, gradual, and violence-free return, free from humiliation and threats, in accordance with the principles of international law.

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