

Open Statement on the Situation of Afghan Migrants in Iran and Pakistan

Urgent Call to Halt Deportations and Uphold Migrants' Rights

We, the undersigned, express our deep concern over the deteriorating situation of Afghan migrants residing in Iran and Pakistan, and we do so based on the core principles of human rights and the international obligations of states.

In recent months, credible international reports and on-the-ground sources have documented a sharp escalation in mass deportations, arbitrary detentions, systematic violence, and blatant violations of Afghan migrants' basic rights. These actions are largely carried out without due legal process, without individual assessment, and without consideration of special or vulnerable circumstances.

As a result of this crisis:

Hundreds of thousands of migrants—including women, children, the elderly, and the sick—have been forcibly returned to Afghanistan without any protection mechanism. This return occurs despite the fact that Afghanistan does not meet any standard for voluntary, safe, or sustainable repatriation.

Numerous cases of suicide, severe depression, and psychological collapse have been reported among young migrants.

Sexual violence against women, children, and adolescents—both during deportation and in detention centers—is a painful and underreported dimension of this crisis.

Thousands of migrants are deprived of access to education, healthcare, job security, shelter, and the most basic human rights.

Migrants are increasingly used as tools of political pressure and diplomatic bargaining in regional disputes, while lacking voting rights, legal protection, or platforms to defend themselves.

In addition, many of those deported or under threat of deportation include journalists, human rights defenders, protesting women, former soldiers, and ex-government employees of Afghanistan—groups internationally recognized as being “at serious risk of persecution.” Forcibly returning these individuals directly violates states' obligations under international refugee protection.

From the perspective of international law:

Returning individuals to a country where they face torture, persecution, prosecution, or life-threatening danger is prohibited and unlawful. This principle is grounded in:

Article 33 of the 1951 Refugee Convention (Non-Refoulement)

The Convention Against Torture (CAT)

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and Refugee Protection

Interpretative Guidelines by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Furthermore, depriving individuals of a fair asylum process constitutes a violation of the right to due process and human dignity.

We call on the following institutions and states to take immediate action:

The United Nations Secretary-General, UNHCR, OHCHR, Human Rights Council, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Afghanistan

The International Committee of the Red Cross and regional oversight bodies

The governments of Iran and Pakistan

All states involved in shaping regional migration policies

Our specific demands are as follows:

Immediate halt to the forced and unlawful deportation of Afghan migrants from Iran and Pakistan, and clear condemnation of these actions.

Full adherence by host states to their international obligations toward migrants, including the right to fair legal process, prohibition of torture, and provision of temporary humane residency until safe alternatives are available.

Creation of legal, safe, humanitarian, and emergency pathways for the resettlement of asylum seekers at risk of physical, psychological, or gender-based harm.

Deployment of international observers and fact-finding missions to border areas, migrant camps, and detention centers for documentation and reporting.

Ensuring that migrants' voices are heard in international policymaking, and guaranteeing meaningful representation of migrant communities in consultative and protective frameworks.

In the current context, any silence, delay, or indifference constitutes indirect complicity in the violation of fundamental human rights.

Now is the time for action, accountability, and real support.

With respect,

Signatories



