
HAMBASTEGI

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF IRANIAN REFUGEES



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November 26, 2001

An Historic Conference

The ninth bi-annual conference of the International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) was successfully held from 16 to 18 November 2001 in Stockholm, Sweden with the participation of over two hundred delegates and members from various countries worldwide.

On Friday 16 November, a roundtable discussion was held focusing on the asylum policies of European states in general, including a critical examination of the Swedish government's policy. Maryam Namazie, the IFIR Executive Director, Mahin Alipur, Campaign in Defence of Women's Rights in Iran, Maria Bexelius, Amnesty International, Sten de Geer,

Member of Parliamentary Committee on Refugee Issues, Anita Dorazio, Asyl Committee, Lars Fransen, Swedish Immigration Minis-

Osewe, 'No-one is Illegal', engaged in an informative and constructive debate. Special attention was given to political Islam as the cause



try, Ismail Moloodi, IFIR-Sweden Branch and Okoth

of rights violations and the flight of millions of people.

Despite all efforts, Fahimeh Parvaz, a spokesperson from the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) was denied a visa to Sweden in order to participate in the conference.

On the following days, the conference debated and evaluated past activities and or adopted resolutions on future measures:

- * IFIR's Two Years' Activities
- * IFIR: An Effective Force for Positive Change
- * Asylum After September 11
- * The Islamic Republic of Iran, Political Islam and the Refugee Phenomenon
- * Our Priorities

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In Defence of Women's Rights in Afghanistan

More than two decades of civil war between criminal, drug dealing Islamic groups and Islamic rule - supported militarily and politically by reactionary regional and Western governments led by the USA - has destroyed any sign of civilisation in Afghanistan and degraded particularly women to slave status.

With the fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan, Western governments are conspiring to establish another Islamic and ethnic government in that country. A powerful international front of progressive people, organisations and defenders of women's rights can defeat this conspiracy and prevent the formation of

another anti-woman and inhuman Islamic government in Afghanistan. We must ensure that the women of Afghanistan enjoy full civil rights and a life worthy of 21st century humanity.

The following Declaration on Women's Rights in Afghanistan is an attempt to gather

support for the abolishment of all criminal and reactionary laws against women and for the improvement of women's status in Afghanistan. We call on all human rights, women's and socialist organisations and freedom loving people to sign the

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in Afghanistan, by Maryam
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End Rule of War Criminals in Afghanistan

by Maryam Namazie



The fall of the Taliban is being marked by a wave of celebration and joyous outbursts by the long-suffering people of Afghanistan. Women are throwing off their burqas and men are shaving off their beards; cinema houses are being reopened and TVs and satellites are being dusted off. While the

fall of the Taliban is being celebrated throughout the world, though, the people of Afghanistan are still living under Islamic reaction. The Taliban war criminals have been replaced by Northern Alliance war criminals that also have a known track record of raping, torturing, killing and executing people.

A few days have not passed since their entry into the city of Kabul and they have already deemed illegal a protest of several hundred women demanding their rights.

On Tuesday, November 27 in a meeting in Bonn, Germany, the UN and Western and regional governments will attempt to legitimise and impose another reactionary religious and ethnic government on the people of Afghanistan. Any attempts to impose another regime made up of reactionary religious and tribal leaders put together by the CIA and Pakistani and Iranian secret forces must be strongly condemned. The people of Afghanistan must have the right to choose their own political system in free elections. They must at

a minimum be able to live in a secular society with full civil rights.

While bombings, civil war, drought, famine, Islamic reaction, sexual apartheid and rights violations continue, many governments and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are going ahead with plans to 'repatriate' refugees and asylum seekers and 'encourage' them to return to 'rebuild' Afghanistan. This policy must also be strongly condemned. Afghan refugees and asylum seekers must be given full protection and rights. The decision to return voluntarily to Afghanistan (if any such decision is ever made) lies with individual Afghans alone.

An Historic Conference, from Page 1

* Solidarity Declarations with Afghan and Iraqi Refugees

Speakers included: Rebwar Aref, International Federation of Iraqi Refugees, Finland; Ladan Davar, IFIR Treasurer, Germany; Farshad Husseini, IFIR Deputy Director, Holland; Keyvan Javid, Editor of Hambastegi Monthly, USA; Asqar Karimi, Worker-communist Party of Iran, UK; Mehrnoush Moosavi, Editor of Hambastegi Weekly and IFIR Radio Producer,



Germany; Maryam Namazie, IFIR Executive Director, UK; and Nasrin Ramzanali, IFIR German

Branch Director. Throughout the conference, a large number of solidarity messages from individuals and organisations were received. The conference concluded with elections for the IFIR Executive Director. Maryam Namazie was re-elected as the organisation's leader.

Next Issue:

10 December
2001

Support Campaign to Defend Afghan Refugees

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I/My Organisation condemn(s) the US and NATO bombing of Afghanistan and the closing of borders to Afghans fleeing the bombing and Taliban repression. I/ my organization demand(s):

- 1- An immediate end to the USA and NATO bombing of Afghanistan
- 2- Neighbouring countries, especially Iran and Pakistan, and others must open their borders. The closing of borders is a crime and those governments enforcing it are accomplices in the killings of the Afghan people.
- 3- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) must immediately improve the living conditions and security of refugees and the refugee camps, and prevent this human catastrophe.
- 4- The right to asylum of Afghans must be unconditionally recognised both in the region and internationally.
- 5- The deportation of Afghan refugees must end immediately.

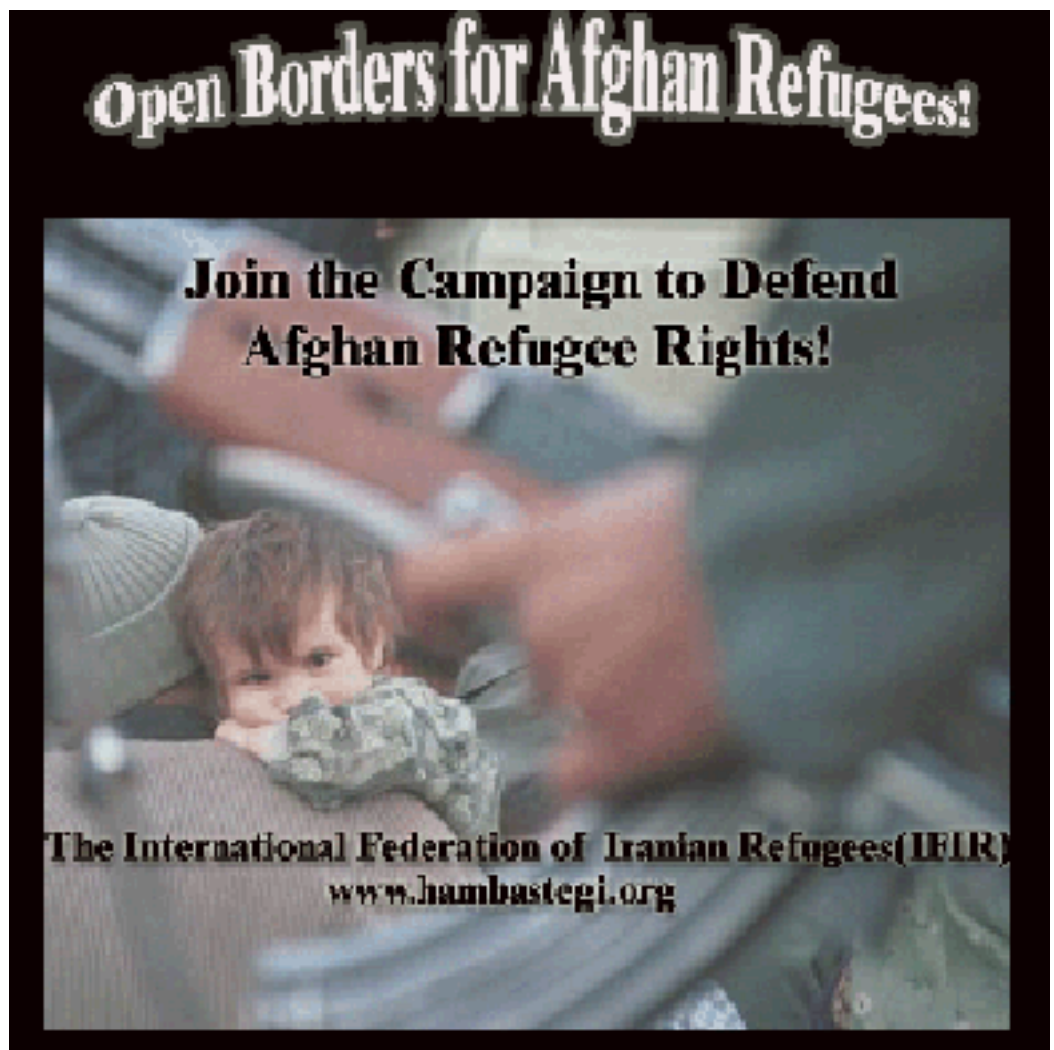
Signed

Name

Organisation (if any)

E-mail

cc: ifir@ukonline.co.uk



In Defence of Women's Rights in Afghanistan, from Page 1

Declaration on Women's Rights in Afghanistan and contribute to the formation of a powerful international front in defence of secularism and women's rights. The people and women of Afghanistan deserve the unconditional support of progressive people all over the world.

Declaration on Women's Rights in Afghanistan

More than two decades of the rule of Taliban and various Islamic groups in Afghanistan has made the lives of women intolerable. Under the yoke of reactionary, murderous Islamic gangs, women are denied the most basic human rights and any attempt by them to improve their lot has been crushed by torture, prison, execution, stoning, lashing, rape and indescribable violence. To end this brutality, any post-Taliban government must recognise the following minimum rights:

1. An end to Islamic rule and the establishment of a secular government;
2. Complete and immediate abolishment of sexual apartheid;
3. The immediate abolishment of compulsory veiling. The recognition of freedom of dress;
4. Prohibition of torture, execution, lashing, retribution and other Islamic punishments;
5. Equality of men and women;
6. Recognition of women's civil liberties including the right to work, education, travel and divorce;
7. Recognition of the freedom of activity of women's rights organisations in Afghanistan.

Signed:

Name

Organisation (if any)

Date

Send the Declaration on Women's Rights in Afghanistan to:

United Nations: Kofi Annan, Secretary General, Fax: + 1 212 963-4879, E-mail: ecu@un.org, Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Afghanistan, Fax: +1 212 963 0616, Email: brahimi@un.org and Mary Robinson, the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland, Fax: +41-22-9170123

Send copies to:

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