



PRESS INFORMATION

THE EUROPEAN UNION SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE IN AFGHANISTAN
THE EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION TO AFGHANISTAN

The European Union deeply concerned at the level of violence against Afghan women

*More than 12 cases per day of violence against Afghan woman are reported.
This worrying number is documented in the newly released report from the Ministry of
Women's Affairs on implementation of the EVAW Law.*

*The EU remains seriously concerned at the high level of violence against Afghan
women and calls on the Government to prevent it.*

Kabul, 10 March 2014

The European Union welcomes the first Afghan report on implementation of the 2009 Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW) and recognizes the comprehensive effort made by the Afghan authorities, such as the Attorney General's Office (AGO), the Ministry of the Interior (MoI) and the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), to compile the report, which provides factual and cultural sensitive insight important to continue the elimination of violence against women and girls in Afghanistan.

Serious concerns

The report documents 4,505 cases of 25 different types of violence against women and girls reported from March 2012 to March 2013. This is more than 12 cases per day. According to reports published by UNAMA, UN Women, and AIHRC in December 2013 the actual number of violent crimes against women is far higher than the number of officially reported cases.

"We are seriously concerned about the highly worrying numbers – both the recorded and unrecorded – of violent cases against women and girls. Human Rights – in particular the rights of women and girls – remains a key priority for the European Union. They stand as one of the fundamental principles guiding our actions in Afghanistan and elsewhere. We therefore urge the Government to take all necessary steps to continue prosecute the perpetrators as well as taking a tougher stance on the widespread traditional practices that discriminate against women and girls and violates their legal rights", states the European Union Special Representative Franz-Michael Mellbin.

The State must act irrespectively

In particular the EU is worried about the fact that in one out of five reported and registered cases, the victims do not follow-up. The concern is that these cases are not followed up due to fear and/or intimidation. Also the widespread use of mediation (41%) may very well reflect lack of access to proper legal action and justice delivery.



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"Mediation is in many cases also used to address more serious cases of violence against women, listed in the EVAW Law as 'criminal provisions'. These include sexual assaults, rape, and forced self-immolation, which all entail penal sanction under the EVAW Law and/or the Penal Code. Such serious crimes must be acted on by the State irrespective of a woman's failure to file her complaint or her withdrawal of a complaint", says Ambassador Mellbin.

The European Union calls on all government actors (including the MoWA, Mol, MoJ, AGO) to step up their coordinated efforts on the national and provincial levels to end violence against women and girls and stop the prevailing culture of impunity.

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