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## **Assassination and Killing of Afghan Prosecutors and Judges: In Defense of the Right to Life and Human Rights of our Oppressed Fellow Lawyers**

The security threats against the prosecutors, judges, and defense lawyers of the previous government of Afghanistan, as well as their family members, continue, and this vulnerable part of the Afghan society is subject to targeted killings by Taliban groups and assassinations by professional criminals, revenge of drug traffickers, perpetrators of major corruption and other terrorists.

After the Taliban took control of the provinces, especially Kabul and the major cities, 36,000 prisoners, including criminals, professional killers, ISIS and al-Qaeda terrorists, criminals affiliated with the mafia of drug production and trafficking, and sexual rapists of women and children, were released from prisons.

These criminals know which prosecutor sentenced them and which judge gave their court verdict, and now they are looking for these law enforcers to track them down, abduct, and kill them.

According to the latest report of the UNAMA (Wednesday, 20 July 2022), cases of "extra-legal killings, torture, ill-treatment, arbitrary arrests and detentions in Afghanistan" have been documented.

According to UNAMA's key findings, from August 15, 2021 to June 15, 2022, the Taliban are responsible for (160) extra-legal killings of former government officials.

According to the documented reports of the media, 26 of them are the prosecutors of the previous government, and in the latest case, this week (July 17), Mumtaz Shirzai Prosecutors of Khost Province was killed by armed men.

So far, about 2,500 prosecutors and most judges of the previous government have been dismissed, and threats, intimidation, and persecution have caused dozens of prosecutors to hide from or flee their homes. They live in fear day and night.

The Association of Afghan Lawyers in Europe, in addition to recent official reports, widely published in media sources and confirmed by the United Nations Human Rights Organization, has obtained documents and evidence and the names of judges and prosecutors who were abducted from their homes and brutally murdered.

In relation to all the crimes committed so far, the Taliban administration has taken the path of denial and so far, no criminal has been brought to justice.

The continuation of the great legal crisis, the lack of legitimacy, and the absence of the rule of law are the main factors that violate the rights of the people, including the servants of the law enforcement agencies.

The Association of Afghan Lawyers in Europe as an independent socio-professional institution, following previous actions and references, hereby from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations High Human Rights Council, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNOMA, the UN special rapporteur on human rights and international human rights organizations, requests the European Union and all refugee-receiving countries to:

- Ensure the physical security of these lawyers and their family members and to defend their right to life
- To pay serious attention and take appropriate measures
- To save the lives of these educated, experienced, and professional justice defenders in Afghanistan, whose own lives and that of their family members are seriously threatened and who are applying for the right of asylum and the transfer of their asylum seekers and their families to asylum countries.

In accordance with the content of the United Nations Convention 1951, the European Convention 1953, regarding the protection and respect of human rights, humanitarian laws, governments should take urgent action to prevent the victimization of the most vulnerable group of law professionals.

It is evident that in the bloody events documented by UNAMA, the occurrence of war crimes and crimes against humanity is involved.

According to all standards of International Law, from the Hague Conference 1907 to the Nuremberg Statutes, the International Criminal Court, the London Court, and the four Geneva Conventions 1948, these criminal acts that are "targeted" and "pre-planned" have been registered in the category of "war crimes against humanity".

The Association of Afghan Lawyers in Europe suggests the presence of the United Nations concern Commissions and the prosecutors of the International Criminal Court (ICC) for a detailed investigation.

By sending this letter to the United Nations and other relevant international authorities, the Association of Afghan Lawyers in Europe, as a professional body and defender of the legitimate rights of Afghans, shares its legitimate demand for human rights with the international community and requests urgent measures in this regard.

With compliments of Afghans Lawyers Association in Europe Council

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