

## Women for Afghan Women Deploys to Doha

### *Afghan Women and Girls Lives' at Risk as Peace Process Proceeds*

(New York, NY) April 19, 2019 – [Women for Afghan Women](#) (WAW) is deploying to Doha, Qatar to participate in an [intra-Afghan dialogue](#), a key step in Afghanistan's peace process, which thus far has exclusively involved direct talks between the United States (U.S.) and the Taliban. Despite Thursday's announcement that the [dialogue has been postponed](#), WAW will remain in Doha to make sure this vital component of the peace process moves forward.

During this critical moment for Afghanistan, Afghan women have the most to lose. The [massive gains](#) that women and girls have made since 2001, and WAW's ability to serve tens of thousands of women and children each year, may be undermined by the expected underrepresentation of women in the process. The talks' [lack of priority on women's rights](#) is reinforcing women's [fears](#) that their lives and freedoms will be negotiated away.

As the [largest](#) women's rights and shelter-providing organization in Afghanistan, and champions of #AfghanWomenRising, WAW refuses to let the voices of over half the population be marginalized in defining peace. We will be on-the-ground in Doha to amplify the hopes, grievances, and demands of Afghan women. Several of WAW's top leaders will be there to build allies, partnerships, and coalitions. WAW, which facilitates mediation and family reconciliation every day, grounds our work in the religious and cultural contexts in which we operate. We are well-positioned to demonstrate the ways in which Islamic laws and teachings value women and promote their rights, and have the experience required to resolve seemingly intractable conflicts.

According to WAW's founding Board Member, Masuda Sultan, "It has become clear that there is going to be no military resolution to this conflict and that diplomacy must be utilized to negotiate peace. WAW and other organizations will work together to ensure that women and their rights are at the center of all peace talks. Women are natural peacemakers, often preserving peace within their own families—they are peacemakers in the home, and should be peacemakers in the world."

As the Afghan peace process moves forward, the tens of thousands of women and youth WAW provides with life-saving and life-changing services annually are at risk. After the tremendous strides Afghan women and girls have made, and given their roles as mediators in their homes and communities, their omission from the country's peacebuilding could have devastating consequences. We are heartened that [dozens of women](#) will be in Doha to take part in the upcoming intra-Afghan dialogue. WAW seeks to guarantee women's meaningful participation, not as mere tokens, and in proportional numbers in all informal and formal initiatives moving forward. The peacemakers of Afghan families—the women—must be the peacemakers of Afghanistan.

After four decades of conflict, Afghans are ready for peace and stability—but not at the expense of their human rights. Women and girls may be jeopardized should the Taliban return to a more significant position of authority, or worse, the country descends into civil war. The frontline defenders at WAW and other women's rights organizations have risen up in powerful form since the oppressive days of Taliban rule, and have earned their seat at the negotiating table. We will be in Doha to ensure that the voices of the powerful, resilient women of Afghanistan are heard loud and clear.



WOMEN FOR AFGHAN WOMEN

**For Press Related Inquiries Contact:**

**Megan Corrado**, WAW Director of Advocacy

Tel: +1 202-403-9223 | E-mail: [megan@womenforafghanwomen.org](mailto:megan@womenforafghanwomen.org)

Women for Afghan Women (WAW) is a grassroots, non-profit organization dedicated to securing and protecting the rights of disenfranchised Afghan women and girls in Afghanistan and New York, particularly their rights to develop their individual potential, to self-determination, and to be represented in all areas of life: political, social, cultural, and economic. WAW advocates for women's rights and challenges the norms that underpin gender-based violence wherever opportunities arise to influence attitudes and bring about change.