

Open Letter: Do Not Reward the Taliban with Political Legitimacy

To the European Commission, the European External Action Service, and the Governments of EU Member States,

We are deeply concerned by reports that Taliban representatives have been invited to Brussels to discuss migration and deportation arrangements.

In 2021, the European Union set out clear conditions for engagement with the Taliban: respect for human rights, unhindered humanitarian access, commitments on counter-terrorism, and meaningful steps towards an inclusive government. All 27 member states and EU institutions have supported these benchmarks. However, none of them have been met. On the contrary, the human rights situation has deteriorated dramatically, particularly for women and girls, including through the systematic exclusion and persecution of women and girls while political repression has intensified. The European Parliament reaffirmed this position in its resolution of 21 May 2026, warning against any form of normalisation or implicit legitimisation of the Taliban while systematic human rights violations continue.

In these circumstances, inviting Taliban representatives to Europe is a serious mistake.

Such meetings are not technical exercises. Each invitation, each visa, each official meeting provides the Taliban with what they have sought since taking power: political legitimacy and international recognition. The Taliban would present a visit to Brussels as evidence that Europe is normalising relations, despite the complete absence of progress on the conditions established by the EU itself. The European Union has repeatedly presented itself as a principled actor in support of human rights, women's rights and international law. Granting political access to representatives of the Islamist-terrorist Taliban regime without any meaningful progress on these issues risks undermining the credibility of these commitments both in Afghanistan and globally.

The proposed rationale of facilitating deportations makes this approach particularly troubling. It sets a dangerous precedent whereby a regime accused of serious human rights violations can exploit collaboration on migration to gain political concessions and increased international acceptance.

Germany's experience should serve as a warning regarding the repercussions of its approach. Efforts to establish deportation arrangements have already led to increasing engagement with Taliban structures and concessions that would previously have been deemed unacceptable. Reports that Taliban-linked actors have been granted consular responsibilities and access to personal data are raising serious concerns for Afghan refugees and exiles, including fears of intimidation, surveillance, and pressure against those who fled Taliban rule. This also demonstrates that the government is highly susceptible to pressure, as the Taliban reportedly cancelled a deportation flight in order to demand even more 'diplomats'—representatives of an illegitimate and oppressive regime.

At a moment when many Afghans who supported democracy, human rights and European missions remain without access to protection and continue to face acute danger, granting visibility and access to Taliban representatives sends precisely the wrong message about Europe's priorities. It suggests that engagement with the perpetrators of repression is receiving greater attention than protection for those who stood with Europe.

The consequences will be felt far beyond Afghanistan. Governments and movements seeking international recognition are watching closely. If Europe demonstrates that pressure on migration can be used to secure political access and legitimacy, others will draw the same conclusion. It is difficult to restore foreign-policy principles that have been abandoned for short-term deportation arrangements.

We also urge to recognise that the Taliban's systematic exclusion of women and girls from public life amounts to a form of institutionalised gender persecution that many legal experts, UN Special Rapporteurs and human rights organisations increasingly describe as gender apartheid.

We therefore call on the European Union and its Member States to:

- Refrain from inviting Taliban representatives to Brussels or other EU capitals for political, diplomatic, or migration-related negotiations;
- Reject any arrangement that links cooperation on deportations to political engagement, diplomatic access, or recognition of Taliban-appointed representatives;
- Maintain the EU's existing conditions for engagement and make clear that these conditions remain unmet;
- Prioritise engagement with Afghan civil society, women human rights defenders, and victims of Taliban persecution;
- Ensure that migration policy does not undermine Europe's commitments to human rights, accountability, and international law.
- Offer pathways to protection via Humanitarian visa and protection within the asylum system
- Actively support international justice, especially for gender-based persecution, by cooperating with the ICC's Afghanistan investigation

Europe should not grant legitimacy where it has not been earned. Engaging without conditions rewards and legitimizes repression, weakens European credibility, and risks allowing migration to be used as a means of gaining international recognition.

Signed,

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2. **Dr. Hannah Neumann**, MEP (The Greens/EFA)
3. **Fawzia Koofi**, Former Member of Parliament, former Deputy Speaker of the Wolesi Jirga (House of the People) and women's rights advocate
4. **Agnieszka Brugger**, Member of German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens)

5. **Alessandra Moretti**, MEP (S&D), Vice-Chair Delegation for relations with Afghanistan
6. **Britta Haßelmann**, Member of German Bundestag (Co-chair of the parliamentary group Alliance 90/The Greens)
7. **Clara Bünger**, Member of German Bundestag (The Left)
8. **Claudia Roth**, Member of German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens)
9. **Debora Düring**, Spokesperson on Foreign Affairs of Alliance 90/The Greens and Member of German Bundestag
10. **Erik Marquardt**, MEP (The Greens/EFA)
11. **Fawzia Hamidi**, Former Member of Parliament and Member of the Parliamentary Network
12. **Dr. Franziska Brantner**, Co-leader of Alliance 90/The Greens and Member of German Bundestag
13. **Hilde Vautmans**, MEP Renew
14. **Homa Ahmadi**, Former Member of Parliament, Deputy Chairperson of the Parliamentary Network, and Afghan political leader
15. **Julian Joswig**, Member of German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens)
16. **Katharina Dröge**, Member of German Bundestag (Co-chair of the parliamentary group Alliance 90/The Greens)
17. **Luise Amtsberg**, Member of German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens)
18. **Malalai Eshaqzai**, Former Member of Parliament and Member of the Parliamentary Network
19. **Marcel Emmerich**, Member of German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens)
20. **Max Lucks**, Member of German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens)
21. **Nazifa Beg**, Former Member of Parliament, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Network, and Afghan political leader
22. **Noria Hamidi**, Former Member of Parliament and Member of the Parliamentary Network
23. **Raquel Garcia Hermida-van der Walle**, MEP (Renew), Chair Delegation for relations with Afghanistan
24. **Sayfora Niazi**, Former Member of Parliament and Member of the Parliamentary Network
25. **Sara Nanni**, Member of German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens)
26. **Schahina Gambir**, Member of German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens), Member of the Committee on Internal Affairs
27. **Shahnaz Ghousi**, Former Member of Parliament and Member of the Parliamentary Network
28. **Ulle Schauws**, Spokesperson on Women / Member of German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens)



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