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One Hundred Eighteenth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
2170 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

May 4, 2023

The Honorable António Guterres  
Secretary-General  
United Nations  
760 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Secretary-General Guterres:

We write to express deep concern over the Taliban's edicts banning Afghan women from working for nongovernmental organizations (NGO) and the United Nations (UN) in Afghanistan, and we encourage the UN to continue its support for Afghan women by opposing and rejecting male-only humanitarian aid implementation.

As you know, in December 2022, the Taliban banned Afghan women from working for NGOs. In the months following, criticism mounted against the fractured approach that aid implementors took in response to the edict, and we were gravely concerned to see reports of male-only implementation from some UN agencies in Afghanistan.

Male-only humanitarian aid implementation contributes to the Taliban's oppression of Afghan women and girls and further erases them from public life. Without female aid implementors, Afghan women may be unable to receive lifesaving humanitarian aid and children are more likely to suffer. Women are also critical to the oversight, evaluation, and monitoring efforts of humanitarian aid in Afghanistan and are a necessary component of all facets of humanitarian aid programming, especially for ensuring safety of vulnerable populations.

Following the Taliban's December 2022 edict, the group issued an April 2023 order banning Afghan women from working for the UN in Afghanistan, completely cutting women out of all humanitarian aid implementation in the country. Never before has a regime banned women from working for the UN. This ban violates the fundamental human rights of Afghan women and jeopardizes much-needed humanitarian efforts throughout Afghanistan. The UN's response to these orders contravening the UN charter will have a lasting impact on Afghanistan and on the UN's credibility.

We strongly urge the UN to emphatically oppose male-only humanitarian aid implementation. Women are essential to any principled humanitarian response and any credible humanitarian assistance effort in Afghanistan must include the full and safe participation of women and men.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL T. McCAUL  
Chairman  
House Foreign Affairs Committee



GREGORY MEEKS  
Ranking Member  
House Foreign Affairs Committee



JOE WILSON  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa,  
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BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER  
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CC:

Martin Griffiths

Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator