

---

**UN Human Rights Council**  
**53<sup>rd</sup> Session, 19 June 2023**

**Item 2: EID on Afghanistan**

Ambassador Meirav Eilon Shahar  
Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations in Geneva

---

Thank you, Mr. President.

Israel welcomes the Special Rapporteur and thanks him for his report. First, I want to express my personal admiration for the many women and girls standing up to the Taliban, both in Afghanistan and abroad. They are taking a stance, they are speaking out, they are demanding an end to brutal oppression, often risking their lives, and we, as the international community, must stand with them in solidarity.

Mr. President,

As we speak, the Taliban are now controlling every aspect of women and girls' lives. Afghan women and girls have been denied access to secondary education, to higher education, to public and political spaces and to employment opportunities. Israel condemns the recent decision by the Taliban to ban women from working for the United Nations. Women and girls have now become prisoners in their own homes. Many are without hope. Reports of an increase in suicide among women and girls are extremely concerning, as are reports that up to 90 percent of young women and girls have seen their mental health seriously affected.

Mr President,

Twenty years of progress towards gender equality in Afghanistan have now been erased. The Taliban must immediately guarantee and safeguard the rights of women and girls. Women and girls must not be scared to walk the streets. They must not be denied their education. They must not be subjected to violence for what they wear.

We must continue to highlight the brutal reality of Taliban rule. We must not turn a blind eye to the place where women and girls rights are under their greatest attack.

I thank you.