



ZONTA
INTERNATIONAL
USA CAUCUS
EMPOWERING WOMEN
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

President Joseph Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

August 25, 2021

Dear President Biden,

The Zonta USA Caucus, part of Zonta International, which is a leading democratic and global non-profit founded in the United States over 100 years ago to empower women, wishes to express our concern about the impact of the current situation in Afghanistan on all the women and girls who live there.

We represent over 7,000 members of Zonta International residing in the United States. From 2002-2008, we supported the health and education of women and girls in Afghanistan in collaboration with UNICEF and the Afghan Institute of Learning. We have seen more than 24,000 women educated and treated through our efforts. This work is now all at risk.

The situation in Afghanistan is at a critical point for women and girls. We urge the US Administration to respond by taking the following actions immediately:

- Prioritize the evacuation of women's rights defenders, particularly journalists and others already being targeted for violence,
- Provide increased security for those departing,
- Suspend bureaucratic requirements for visas and loosen eligibility requirements,
- Greatly expand resources for resettling refugees in the US,
- Support those women who stay behind in order to continue peacebuilding efforts,
- Ensure that aid workers have access to those needing services,
- Hold the Taliban accountable for any violations of promises they've made to protect rights of women and insist that Afghanistan women's voices are not silenced,
- Afford the same services to Afghanistan women translators who come to the US that our veterans are given,

- Consult with women leaders in Afghanistan and those who are refugees in other countries to determine the best courses of action to empower women according to their culture.

The United States has a responsibility to all the women and girls in Afghanistan to see that their rights are not jeopardized by the Administration's decision to withdraw troops from the country. The Zonta USA Caucus calls on you to take immediate action to protect them.

Sincerely Yours,

The Zonta USA Caucus