



**National Council of
Women of New Zealand**
Te Kaunihera Wahine o Aotearoa



Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minister of Foreign Affairs

23 September 2021

Tēnā koe Minister Mahuta,

Urgent - Action on Afghanistan

UN Women Aotearoa New Zealand and The National Council of Women of New Zealand – Te Kaunihera Wahine o Aotearoa wish to further support the voice of 33 organisations and 28 individuals who wrote to you on 16 September 2021 seeking more action from the Government on Afghanistan (UN Women was a signatory on that letter). Specifically, while acknowledging statements made by Aotearoa New Zealand at the United Nations and efforts to evacuate people, the escalating crisis requires further actions:

1. Urgently increase humanitarian and development support
2. Establish and ensure safe pathways of relocation and resettlement for Afghan nationals to Aotearoa New Zealand
3. Establish formal mechanisms to liaise and consult meaningfully with the Afghan community here in Aotearoa New Zealand
4. Lead international efforts

Our two organisations were pleased to see our Prime Minister's commitment to the joint call by women leaders on the rights of girls and women in Afghanistan. We wish to reinforce the international importance of the crisis. As women's organisations, in addition to our concern about the overall humanitarian crisis, we are deeply concerned about the gender implications of the situation in Afghanistan. This includes the undermining of women's rights and the risks to women activists and leaders who have become targets for Taliban retribution.

Given the specific risks to women and girls in terms of their safety and human rights we urge you to ensure a gender perspective is placed on all actions taken in relation to Afghanistan. As a country that is seen as a leader in gender equality, we expect the Government to take a decisive leadership role for women and girls in Afghanistan. This includes but is not limited to:

- Recognition of the risks to women activists when considering applications for resettlement
- Ensuring that the voice of women is actively sought in provision of humanitarian and development support

- Demanding in all international fora and engagements with the Taliban that the human rights of women and girls are respected
- Ensuring that all monitoring and investigation of human rights abuses involves women voices and experiences.

We look forward to hearing your response as to how the government will show this decisive leadership.

Naku noa, Nā,

Suzanne Manning

**President,
Te Kaunihera Wāhine o Aotearoa -
National Council of Women New Zealand**



Tara Singh

President

[UN Women Aotearoa New Zealand](#)

