



Statement on LGBTQ+ Persecution in Afghanistan

Released 25 December 2021

Amid reports of the LGBTQ+ community in Afghanistan being forced into hiding following the reintroduction of Taliban rule in August, as well as the statement made by a Taliban judge this summer asserting that “Gay men would be subject to death due to stoning or crushing,” *the Lemkin Institute condemns such policies of repression and subjugation toward individuals of the LGBTQ+ community and warns that such threats are genocidal in nature.* Any indication or suggestion that an entire group should be done away with based solely on group identity is a hallmark of genocidal ideology and should be alarming to the international community as a whole.

Despite a few weeks of international attention in mid-August, the world and media outlets have largely moved on from coverage of Afghanistan and how citizens are adjusting to a society under Taliban rule following twenty years of American occupation. Recent reporting suggests, however, that things have only gotten worse for Afghani civilians in the months since, who face starvation as well as persecution. While being LGBTQ+ in Afghanistan prior to Taliban rule was not necessarily met with acceptance, the situation since the Taliban has assumed power has only become more dire.

Just as troubling is the fact that the Taliban is said to be taking down the names of those individuals who they suspect are part of the LGBTQ+ community or who sympathize or advocate on their behalf. This indicates that repression is highly organized, which is extremely concerning in the context of genocidal patterns and intent. In line with creating an environment of fear, instances of family members being encouraged to report on any LGBTQ+ members within their own families have also been on the rise in the region.

Taken together, such extreme actions by the Taliban against the LGBTQ+ community in the region represent a very genuine threat to any members of this community in Afghanistan and should be closely monitored by NGOs and international nation states for further escalation and further red flags of genocidal ideology. *The Lemkin Institute encourages countries with strong LGBTQ+ protections to fast-track the processing of LGBTQ+ refugees from Afghanistan. The Institute also strongly encourages the Biden administration in the USA to waive the humanitarian parole filing fee, which would be possible via an appropriations bill by Congress or by executive order and would significantly reduce the financial burden of individuals in America hoping to sponsor an individual refugee from the LGBTQ+ community in Afghanistan.*