

Civil Society and Media National Conference on Peace Negotiations

Kabul – 2nd April – 2019

Introduction:

Civil society and Media National Conference on Peace Negotiations was held for one day at Inter-Continental hotel amongst 400 participants from across Afghanistan including Kabul.

The purpose of conducting this event was to create a platform to raise a joint voice concerning peace negotiations.

Participants was of the view that, all sides involved including the government of Afghanistan, neighboring countries, regional powers, super powers and Taliban are somehow involved in the process. But people's interest, voices, concerns, positions haven't crossed closed doors of the rooms that negotiations have been happening.

Participants was divided into 12 working groups and each group had different themes, but direct link to peace topics:

- Presidential Elections
- Ongoing Peace Negotiations
- Role and responsibility of High Peace Council
- Comprehensive and inclusivity in Peace talks
- Political Order
- War victims & Families of war victims
- Civilian casualties and ceasefire
- Pre-conditions for Peace negotiations
- Afghanistan Constitution
- Freedom of Speech and Media
- Guarantors of Peace
- Roles of International community on Peace talks

All the results of the working group discussions was incorporated into a declaration at the end of the conference.

Also, all the working groups discussions and results of the civil society and media conference will be prepared and will be shared with national and international stakeholders of the peace negotiations.

Declaration:

We, the participants of civil society and media national conference on peace negotiations, announce our position to all stakeholders involved in the peace negotiations that:

1. Afghanistan Constitution shall not be amended until peace negotiations comes to a conclusion and after peace deal, the constitution shall be amended based on the mechanism laid down in the constitution itself only.
2. Modification in Islamic Republic of Afghanistan shall not be deemed as expense for peace negotiations.
3. Presidential elections shall be held within the time set by the Independent election commission of Afghanistan, and if Taliban agrees to be part of the elections, all election facilities such as voting sites shall be assigned to Taliban controlled areas.
4. Formation of the interim government is not the solution since it is against the Afghan Constitution and there isn't any guarantee that the interim government would conduct the presidential elections as well as maintain countrywide security.
5. For prevention of civilian casualties and deterioration of security situation and also to create trust environment, the Afghan government and the Taliban shall announce for urgent ceasefire.
6. Pending ceasefire announcement, both sides shall refrain from launching rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) to prevent civilian casualties.
7. Taliban shall cut all their ties with terrorist groups and all agree to dis-arm their troops.
8. For Intra-Afghan peace dialogues, competence of the negotiators, good reputation, morality, and their assurance shall be taken into consideration.
9. Any Afghan citizen that would participate in peace negotiations with the Taliban shall take into consideration public's interests including rights laid down in the constitution. They shall take last 18 year's efforts as their base for negotiations and they shall never take decision against public's will and Afghans interests.
10. Presence of women in the peace negotiations and all other sectors especially in three branches of the state including social, economic, and security after the peace agreement.
11. During peace negotiations, clear role shall be taken into consideration to all segments of the civil society including women, youths, religious scholars, war victims, martyred families, tribal elders, ethnicity and religious minorities. Women shall be given (40 to 50) percent role within the negotiating teams.
12. Women journalists role in the media shall not be compromised in the peace negotiations.
13. Freedom of speech and media is the greatest achievement of the last 18 years that shall not only be compromised, in fact clear guarantees from both negotiating sides shall be provided for protection of it.
14. Access to information is the fundamental rights of the people. This right shall be protected by the Afghan government and Taliban between and after the peace negotiations.
15. Role of countries involved especially neighboring countries and United States of America shall be clear in the peace process.
16. Countries involved in the peace process of Afghanistan shall provide proper mechanism and guarantee for peace process.
17. None of the countries can alone be guarantor of peace and also role of countries involved in future of Afghanistan shall be clear.
18. Role of institutions within the government such as United Nations, OIC, SAARC, AASIAN, EU, SCO, ECO and others shall be as facilitators in the peace process. And each of these organizations shall encourage their members to facilitate in the process.

19. Role of high peace council in the process is unclear, this role shall either be defined properly or the high peace council shall be dissolved.

End