



Annual Report 2025

Center for Dialogue and Progress-Geneva





CDP-G Annual Report 2025

Center for Dialogue and Progress - Geneva

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MISSION, VISSION, AND VALUES

The Center for Dialogue and Progress-Geneva (CDP-G) is a research and policy advocacy organisation that studies critical socio-political and economic development issues in fragile states. The Center is an active platform for policy dialogue of young professionals, experienced scholars and experts whose work will inform and guide our activities and help generate solutions.

Our Mission

Become an incubator where local and global solutions come together to address the pressing issues facing countries and societies in a state of fragility and transition through open and critical dialogue. While respecting and cherishing time-tested and cultural norms of different communities, the Center focuses on promoting best practices in inclusive, democratic, and sustainable development and peace-building.

Our Vision

Empower countries and societies in a state of fragility and transition to appreciate the beauty and harness the full potential of diversity and inclusiveness.

Our Values

Our work revolves around the principles of fairness, inviolability of human dignity, open dialogue, and empowerment of communities.

Our Activities Across CDP-G's Strategic Pillars

I. Dialogue for Peace and Democracy

4th National Dialogue Conference on the Role of Civil Society and Democratic Forces in the Future of Afghanistan – May 26–27, 2025, Antalya,

The Fourth Round of the CDP-G’s National Dialogue Series, focusing on the role of Civil Society and Democratic Forces in the Future of Afghanistan, took place in Antalya, Turkey. The event brought over 60 participants together, including political figures, civil society leaders, academics, media representatives, women’s rights and youth activists, and analysts from both within Afghanistan and abroad.



The primary objectives of this Conference were to critically assess Afghanistan’s current situation, review the Doha Process and the United Nations’ “Mosaic” plan, explore the role of the constitution and the rule of law under the Taliban regime, and reinforce alternative mechanisms for democratic participation. Furthermore, participants sought to define coordinated strategies for addressing the political and social legitimacy crises in Afghanistan.

Key Discussions and Recommendations

Participants emphasised that Afghanistan’s current circumstances—marked by a repressive regime, political monopolisation, and the systematic dismantling of legal and participatory structures—underscore the crucial importance of national dialogue. Given the highly complex and challenging domestic, regional, and international environment, dialogue is viewed as one of the few viable tools for rebuilding trust, strengthening social cohesion, and generating alternative solutions.

Open and responsible dialogue offers democratic forces the opportunity to learn from past experiences, craft a more realistic vision for the future, and develop a unified national narrative that addresses the ongoing crises.

The UN’s “Mosaic” framework was critically analysed and viewed as ambiguous, unrealistic, and overly favourable toward the Taliban position. There was a unified call for its revision in an inclusive manner.

This dialogue reaffirmed the importance of inclusive, Afghan-led solutions and emphasised the need for unified strategies to promote democratic values, human rights, and accountability.

Read more on the occasion and the summary of discussions and recommendations in English, Dari, and Pashto by clicking [here](#).

The conference also launched the Afghanistan Civil and Democratic Forces Network (ACDFN) and featured the release of a major research report on constitutionalism under Taliban rule.

The Fourth National Dialogue Conference aimed to amplify the voices of marginalised groups—especially women, civil society, and youth—at both national and international levels, thereby laying the groundwork for a democratic and inclusive future for Afghanistan.



Geneva Peace Week 2025

“Convergence & Divergence in Regional & International Dynamics in Peacebuilding & Peace-Making: The Case Study of Afghanistan Since Doha Talks” 16 October 2025, 13:00 to 14:30hrs, GCSP Conference Room, Maison de la Paix, Geneva

The grave situation in Afghanistan formed the central theme of a vital discussion (Peace Panel) held during Geneva Peace Week 2025. The panel was moderated by Ambassador. Dr Andisha, with distinguished guests featuring Ms Fawzia Koofi, Mr Mirwais Naab, Prof. Michael Simple, and Dr Mustafa Mastoor, each with extensive experience and expertise on Afghanistan, contributed to the discussion by sharing their insightful remarks.



Speakers highlighted that the Taliban’s claimed “fragile peace” is ending and Afghanistan risks returning to a “very hot geopolitical game.” Ms Fawzia Koofi emphasised the continued exclusion of women from peace processes, noting that globally, women’s participation has only risen from 6% to 14% over twelve years (2010-22), while under the Taliban, women’s role in civil services and politics has dropped to zero despite their continued activism.

Speakers argued that the current crisis largely stems from the U.S.–Taliban Doha negotiations, which prioritised a safe withdrawal over the Afghan people’s demands for peace and ultimately legitimised the Taliban while undermining two decades of progress.

Mirwais Naab and Dr Mustafa Mastoor highlighted regional geopolitical pressures, the Taliban’s links to militant groups, and the growing risk of radicalisation, particularly as the Taliban invest heavily in jihadi madrasas while girls’ schools remain closed.

Professor Michael Semple described Afghanistan as experiencing an “active conflict,” warning of broader regional risks, including instability in Pakistan and concerns about nuclear security. The panel concluded that past strategies have failed and that the international community should shift its focus to supporting Afghan democratic forces, fostering political dialogue, and preparing for a future return to pluralism, as Afghanistan remains at the center of geopolitical competition.



To read a detailed summary of discussions and recommendations for the path forward, visit our [website](#).

Afghanistan’s Constitutional Law Expert Group

The Afghanistan Constitutional Law Expert Group is composed of eleven constitutional and rule of law experts from Afghanistan who are based outside Afghanistan and who promote constitutionalism to restore peace, public participation, and legitimacy to Afghanistan. The Expert Group has remained active as an indigenous knowledge-producing and advocacy body since its formation in 2022. In 2025, it had three major activities.

The group participated in a dedicated session during the 4th Antalya Conference, titled “**Reimagining Constitutionalism and the Rule of Law**”, to engage with participants on the soon-to-be-launched policy research report on the status of constitutionalism and the rule of law in Afghanistan since August 2021. Relevant parts of the report were presented by Dr Haroon Mutasem, Dr Lutfurahman Saeed, and Mr Shoaib Timory, followed by in-depth discussions and dialogue.

Launch of the Study “Status of Constitutionalism and Rule of Law in Afghanistan” August 2025, Geneva

Coinciding with the fourth year of the fall of the Republic, this notable research report was finalised and published. The report examines the current state of constitutionalism and the rule of law in Afghanistan. It highlights how legal frameworks and state institutions have been severely weakened by political upheavals, corruption, and authoritarian governance.

Key findings include:

- State institutions lack independence in ensuring justice and the rule of law.
- Fundamental rights of citizens are widely violated, with limited access to justice.
- The fall of the Republic dismantled previous legal structures, leaving a governance vacuum.
- Legal uncertainty affects nearly all aspects of public life under the current regime.



The report stresses that meaningful reforms, independent institutions, and a commitment to constitutionalism are essential for building a just and sustainable future for Afghanistan.

Read more about the Study under the publications part.

Public Conversation with Authors of the Research X/(formerly Twitter) Space, 6 September 2026



To engage in a discussion with the wider public, disseminate the findings of the study, and raise awareness on the status of the rule of law in Afghanistan under the Taliban four years on, the CDP-G organised a widely attended online discussion on X/Twitter. Moderated by James Joseph, director of The Duty Legacy, three of the authors presented the main findings of the relevant chapters and an account of developments since the writing. They also participated in a Q&A with the audience.



II. Civil Society Reorganisation and Network-Building

Constituting Assembly of Afghanistan's Civil and Democratic Forces Network, February 6, 2025.

The constituting meeting of the General Assembly of the Network of Afghan Civil and Democratic Forces (ACDFN) was held online on February 6, 2025, bringing together representatives of member organisations and individual experts to formalise the creation of an expanded network, review the progress, and strengthen coordination among Afghan civil society actors working in exile. The meeting reaffirmed the network's commitment to promoting democratic governance, human rights, and inclusive dialogue on Afghanistan's future, while emphasizing collaboration and advocacy to ensure Afghan perspectives are reflected in international policy discussions.

A key focus of the meeting was the adoption of the network's statute and membership criteria, which define its objectives, structure, and conditions for individual and institutional membership. Members discussed several aspects of these documents and introduced minor revisions. Both documents were approved by consensus. Participants also briefly introduced their organizations, highlighting the network's diverse membership of civil society groups, researchers, former public officials, media professionals, and human rights advocates based largely outside Afghanistan.

The assembly also endorsed the network's 2025 work plan, which prioritizes dialogue initiatives, research, international advocacy—including engagement with UN processes—and mutual support among members. The meeting concluded with the election of a Steering Committee to guide and coordinate the network's activities. Members also formed various thematic working groups. The Network decided that the CDP-G assumes the secretariat role, facilitating the convenings of the Network and its activities.

Throughout 2025, ACDFN successfully followed its action plan, playing an important role in agenda setting and organisation of the 4th Antalya Conference in May, organising joint advocacy events, issuing joint position statements and letters addressed to the UN, as well as holding regular periodic meetings to exchange views on the developments related to Afghanistan. Members also engaged in mutual support by sharing expertise and resources.

Recognising the importance of digital communication tools and public relations, the Afghanistan Civil and Democratic Forces has its dedicated website and social media channels. Visit acdfn.com to stay abreast of its activities.

Collaboration and Support for the Civil Society Session “Reflections on Cambridge Afghanistan Series IV (CAS-IV-2025), 19–20 September 2025: Towards a “Shared Vision” for Afghanistan’s Future “

CDP-G (Centre for Dialogue and Progress – Geneva) actively collaborated in and supported the civil society session of the conference, taking a leading role in facilitating dialogue among participants and contributing meaningfully to the overall success of the engagement, with the valued support of Ambassador Dr. Nasir Andisha and Mr. Masood Amer.



Read the full report summarising the key discussions and recommendations from the conference [here](#).

Preparatory Dialogues for the Antalya Conference 2026

CDP-G initiated its preparatory process in late 2025 for the Antalya Conference 2026 by conducting a structured series of interviews and thematic discussions with members of its network and relevant experts. These engagements focus on key issues including Afghanistan’s political future, the role of civil society, international engagement with the Taliban, the status of human rights particularly women’s rights and the evolving international position of Afghanistan.



The discussions also address the situation of media and journalists following the Taliban’s return, the impact of civil society activities and anti-Taliban movements, and the policies of the international community toward Afghanistan under current conditions.

This ongoing process, continuing into 2026, aims to strengthen coordination, gather diverse perspectives, and contribute to shaping a coherent and forward-looking agenda for the conference.

III. Human Rights Resource Center

The Afghanistan Human Rights Resource Center, a specialized subsidiary of CDP-G, promotes human rights through research, education, monitoring, and advocacy. It also facilitates engagement of Afghan civil society actors with Geneva-based human rights mechanisms. In 2025, the steadfast collective advocacy efforts of the CDP-G and civil society organizations culminated in the establishment of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Afghanistan (IIM-A). This represents a major milestone for accountability and justice in Afghanistan and the realisation of our priority advocacy goal for the past four and a half years.

The Center actively advanced its priorities by advocating for stronger accountability for human rights violations in Afghanistan, supporting Afghanistan's compliance with treaty obligations, and creating opportunities for victims, women's rights activists, and human rights defenders to engage with Geneva-based human rights mechanisms. To support these goals, the Center undertook the following activities:

Technical Support to Afghanistan's National Reporting and Review by the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

The fourth CEDAW review of Afghanistan took place in an extraordinary modality and amid a rapidly deteriorating situation for women and girls in the country. In response to the Committee's request, the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan in Geneva undertook the preparation of the fourth periodic report to ensure that the lived reality of Afghan women—largely absent from the de facto authorities' response—was reflected. The national report aimed to provide a comprehensive and evidence-based assessment of the implementation of the Convention, highlight developments since August 2021, and inform international action to address the women's rights crisis. The Committee reviewed the report during its session in Geneva in June, where a diverse delegation of Afghan women representatives engaged in an interactive dialogue with Committee members and highlighted ongoing violations and responded to their questions.

The CDP-G, with support from its partners, provided essential technical and logistical assistance throughout the process. This included the drafting of the report through experts and logistic assistance to the Afghan women’s delegation that travelled to Geneva. CDP-G’s support enabled Afghan women advocates to participate in the review process and contribute to the interactive dialogue with CEDAW, helping ensure that their perspectives informed the



Committee’s assessment and recommendations. Its significance also lies in creating a precedent for other treaty bodies to engage on Afghanistan, and the CEDAW conclusions help the broader accountability efforts, including the potential case at the ICJ.

Advocacy Events

In 2025, as in previous years, the CDP-G organised multiple in-person and hybrid events focused on restoring rights and on the need to establish an accountability mechanism, in parallel with Human Rights Council sessions.

Side Events during the 58th Session of the Human Rights Council

In February and March 2025, we cosponsored and provided technical and logistical assistance in the organisation of two important side events.

The first one, titled **“Accountability and Justice for Afghanistan: Addressing Human Rights Violations and Call for Legal Action”**, was organised on 27 February 2025. This event, with participation of the Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan, experts and victims, raised awareness, fostered dialogue, and explored effective avenues for achieving accountability.

The second panel titled “**Empowering Afghanistan’s Women and Girls through STEM Education: Advancing Human Rights and Education Opportunities**” was held on March 20, in connection with the screening of a documentary on the Afghan women robotic team titled Rule Breakers. It provided a platform for experts, policymakers, and activists to engage in dialogue on STEM education’s critical role in advancing human rights and fostering resilience among Afghan women and girls. It also urged stakeholders to increase scholarships and support to organisations undertaking education inside the country.



“From Call to Action: Designing the Right Investigative Mechanism for Afghanistan.” Official Side Event of the 59th HRC Session, June 17, 2025, UN Geneva & Online

The CDP-G, together with cosponsors Action for Development, Center for Human Rights Advocacy, and End Gender Apartheid Campaign, hosted this panel composed of the UN Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan Richard Bennett, Human Rights Watch Afghanistan researcher Fereshta Abbasi, and legal expert Azadah Raz Mohammad. The discussion highlighted severe human rights violations under Taliban rule, particularly against women, girls, and minorities, and gaps in documentation and ways to address them. Advocates presented a model of an investigative mechanism with pre-prosecutorial functions, one that would work in full complementarity with ongoing monitoring and accountability mandates. The panel also called for support for Afghan civil society and presented the legal arguments in support of the codification of gender apartheid.



Read a policy brief developed based on the discussion & recommendations of the panel [here](#).

“The Road Ahead: From Partial Progress to Full Accountability for Human Rights Violations in Afghanistan” Official Side Event of the 60th Session of the Human Rights Council, 10 September 2025, Geneva & Online

This side event, organised by CDP-G and cosponsored by Permanent Missions of Afghanistan, Liechtenstein, and civil society partners EGA, GCR2P, CHRA and TDL, brought together leading experts to assess progress on international accountability efforts for human rights violations in Afghanistan and examine remaining gaps and complementarities.

Ambassador Nasir Andisha stressed an independent investigative mechanism as the missing piece to close the accountability circle, complementing ICC proceedings, a potential ICJ case, and sanctions. Richard Bennett (UN Special Rapporteur) highlighted gaps in his mandate: inability to conduct criminal-standard investigations or identify perpetrators. Natasha Arnpriester (OSJI) detailed the historic CEDAW/ICJ initiative for binding compliance orders and ways an investigative mechanism supports the process. Azadah Raz Mohammad (End Gender Apartheid) spoke on the need and progress regarding the codification of gender apartheid and how the establishment of an investigative mechanism would support the process. Fereshta Abbasi (Human Rights Watch) underlined urgent documentation and evidence gaps.

Panellists agreed existing tools are insufficient alone; a new survivor-centred mechanism would fill gaps while strengthening complementarities. They urged the Human Rights Council and the EU (as penholder of Afghanistan resolution) to establish it immediately during the 60th Session.



Read a report summarising the discussions and recommendations on our [website](#).

Advocacy Trips

We are proud to amplify voices that matter.

In 2025, the Centre for Dialogue and Progress-Geneva (CDP-G) furthered its mission to enable Afghanistan-focused civil society activists to engage with Geneva-based human rights platforms. This was achieved by organising advocacy missions of prominent and outspoken Afghan women’s rights activists and survivors. These missions took place during the three sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Delegates attended and presented statements during the interactive dialogues with the High Commissioner and the Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan, spoke as panellists or moderated side events on Afghanistan, engaged in briefings to diplomats, and built strategic connections and partnerships during networking activities with fellow activists and civil society organisations.



Victims' Access to Human Rights/Accountability Mechanisms

Assuring accountability for human rights violations and abuses in Afghanistan is a core pillar of AHRRC's work. The Center advocated for a dedicated accountability mechanism while utilising existing platforms, supporting victims and their families in engaging with UN special procedures, treaty bodies, and other international justice mechanisms, submitting petitions on their behalf, and raising awareness through educational and audiovisual materials in local languages.

Collaborations and Participation in Partner Activities

Afghanistan Reports to Human Rights Mechanisms: HRRC experts provided inputs and participated in the advisory committees for the preparation of the Afghanistan national implementation report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Joint Civil Society Letter to UNHRC Member States: In September 2025, CDP-G took part in consultations and joined a coalition of over 100 Afghan, regional, and international non-governmental organisations in co-signing a letter to member states renewing their call on the Human Rights Council to establish an independent, comprehensive investigative mechanism for human rights violations and abuses in Afghanistan.

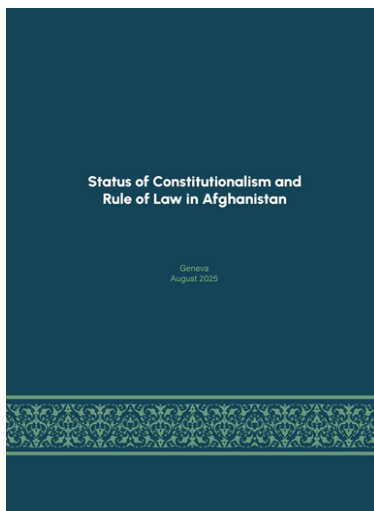
Documentation Working Group (DWG): HRRC continues to participate in the DWG's regular activities.

Joint civil society statement on CEDAW initiative: CDP-G joined this statement marking the anniversary of the announcement of a legal initiative to hold Afghanistan accountable under the CEDAW. The Letter calls on the claimant states to reinforce their commitment, translate their words into action by providing further transparency about the ongoing process, and to ensure meaningful engagement with Afghan women, survivors, and civil society.

Research and Publications

“Status of Constitutionalism and Rule of Law in Afghanistan”, a study by the Constitutional Law Expert Group

This report is commissioned by the Center for Dialogue and Progress-Geneva, and authored by distinguished members of the Afghanistan Constitutional Law Expert Group: Mr Ahmad Shoaib Timory, Dr Mohammad Haroon Mutasem, Dr Lutforahman Saeed and Dr Shamshad Pasarlay. The rationale behind commissioning this report is to present an assessment of the state of constitutionalism and the rule of law in Afghanistan, based on the insights and analyses of Afghan scholars, legal experts, and practitioners with direct experience of the country’s legal and political systems.



independence. Relevant to this is examining the role of organisations involved in judicial processes and the provision of justice. Given the Taliban’s emphasis on the application of Sharia in governance, one section of the report provides a historical overview of Islamic governance and whether the Taliban are following the key principles in this area.

Access the Study on our [website](#).

CDP-G Fellows and advisors have been active in writing numerous articles and blogposts on human rights, democracy, and governance in Afghanistan. Below are select examples:

“What the Erosion of the International System Means for Afghanistan”, August 2025, Written by Ambassador Nasir A. Andisha and Hamid A. Formuli. Published in Just Security. Read [here](#).

“The Taliban’s ‘Successful’ 2025 Was Anything But”, January 2026, by Ambassador Nasir A. Andisha. Published in The Diplomat. Read [here](#).

Policy Brief: Designing the Right Investigative Mechanism for Afghanistan, September 2025. Read [here](#).

Organisation and Team Building

Developing Safeguarding Policies

CDP-G updated its safeguarding policies package. These include a code of conduct and safeguarding policies that incorporate mechanisms for reporting complaints or concerns within the organisation. These guiding documents cover prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (PSEAH); data protection and privacy; online safeguarding; and accountability and escalation mechanisms.

Board and General Assembly Meetings

The role of the board and the general assembly is quite significant for the direction of the CDPG. They received updates from the CDPG members on the status of different activities, approved financial reports, and extended their support for fundraising and partnership building. Members of the board also helped with our activities by moderating events and taking part in them.

CDPG also benefits from the wisdom of its advisors to the Board, who had joint meetings with the Board and the general assembly and took part in other activities of CDPG.

Strategic Partnerships and Fundraising

During the year, the CDP-G maintained and strengthened its important strategic partnerships with various governmental and non-governmental organizations. Exhibiting high standards of efficiency, expert knowledge and proficiency in the primary areas of activity, CDP-G was awarded grants from notable institutional donors, including a new partnership with the Malala Fund on advancing accountability for Afghanistan.

Similar to the broader civil society organisations, particularly those working on human rights and democracy in Afghanistan, we are negatively constrained by the global funding cuts. Our staff and fellows exhibited an enormous spirit of volunteerism, creativity and administrative resilience, which allows us to continue our core functions and direct the majority of resources toward program activities.

We emphasise the importance of continued support for civil society and welcome collaborations with government and non-government organisations. We are committed to expanding our reach, establishing new partnerships and diversifying our network.

Looking Forward

Looking Forward

Since its inauguration, CDP-G has been able to establish itself and undertake important activities in the spheres of national dialogue, peace-building and human rights. We will reinforce our activities in these areas and enhance our activities in the area of civil society reorganisation and network-building, human rights advocacy, rule of law, and fragility assessment.

In the coming year, we will continue to support the permanent secretariat and leadership board of the civil society in exile and diaspora. We will also work closely with the democratic forces and will try to give them a venue to advocate for a peaceful, right based and democratic future in which all men and women, from different walks of life, can share their viewpoints and participate in the political life of the country. While we will organize the fifth conference on national dialogue and the future of civil society and democratic forces in Afghanistan in 2026, we continue searching for resources for organization of a conference in central Asia on the role of the civil society to gather the civil society leaders and decratic forces who reside in Central Asia to have a dialogue on the future of Afghanistan and the role of the civil society.

Furthermore, our focus would be on smaller expert groups. For instance, we will support the already established expert group on constitutionalism and the rule of law. The objective for this expert group is to have an in-depth analysis of the legal changes introduced post August 2021 and provide legal analysis of the required measures to reintroduce a constitutional government that adheres to rule of law and human rights of the citizens. The Group will continue engaging with relevant actors and constitutional law actors and practitioners. Given the importance the latest Security Council resolution gave to a new constitutional framework, the work of this Expert Group is of utmost importance.

Now that the Investigative Mechanism for Afghanistan (IIM-A) is adopted, the AHRRC will continue to advocate for its full operationalisation and the adoption of a victim and survivor-centred approach. We will strive to connect victims and survivors to the mechanism, facilitate the engagement of civil society, and provide avenues for sharing best practices and lessons learned from similar contexts. The Center will also continue to facilitate engagement of civil society with the broader human rights platforms and promote coordination and collaboration to avoid duplication and enhance the impact of all.

The AHRRC intends to train activists on access to UN Special Procedures and effective advocacy within the United Nations system. We will also work on promoting support for women's education and the codification of Gender Apartheid within the OIC group. The Center will build our initial research on exploring another untapped accountability tool into a practical initiative. We will continue to raise public awareness of the existing avenues of international accountability and aspire to assist and represent victims and their relatives in accessing mechanisms such as the Human Rights Council's special procedures.

