



PRESS RELEASE

The Centre for Dialogue and Progress - Geneva (CDP-G) organized the conference on
**National Dialogue, Role of Civil Society and the Future of Democratic Forces in
Afghanistan**
October 13-14, 2022, Geneva, Switzerland.

During a two-day conference, more than 60 intellectuals, civil society leaders, human rights experts, activists, journalists, academics, researchers, and professionals from all walks of life from the Afghanistan diaspora community convened in CDP-G to discuss the current situation and challenges Afghanistan is facing, as well as the role civil society and democratic forces can play in shaping the future.

After two days of interactive and engaging discussions, participants emphasized the following key points:

- The socio-economic progress attained over the past two decades before the military take-over of power by the Taliban in August 2021, has resulted in substantial positive social change in the country. It is hence crucial to explore ways to sustain the gains yielded.
- The systematic violation and abuse of human rights and the deprivation of people's fundamental rights and freedoms signal an immediate need for change and demand national and international attention as well as require a united civil society front to ensure that past mistakes are not repeated.
- Afghanistan's recently exiled professionals as well as the diaspora communities must be engaged in continued dialogue in exploring a viable and sustainable alternative for the country's future.
- By nullifying the 2004 Constitution, the social contract between the citizens and the administration does not exist anymore. The will of the people of Afghanistan exercised through elections and referendums are the only source of legitimacy in the country.
- Understanding the inter-dependencies within the region, emphasis has been made on meaningful regional cooperation for sustainable peace and economic self-sufficiency.
- Despite claims of revenue generation (USD1.2-1.7 over the past one year), the economy is in a precarious situation. One-third of GDP has been lost with over 20 million people in dire situations of starvation and hunger. The financial and banking sector is on the verge of collapse. International responses need to be measured, consultative and inclusive.
- The CDP-G-organized conferences should continue and focus on the thematic areas identified during the deliberations of this first round of the conference.
- The new diaspora community must be collectively engaged, connected and empowered through a network that would enable them to express, exchange, and further devolve ideas and policies related to the social, economic, and political future of Afghanistan.

CDP-G is committed to following up on the recommendations of the first conference and continuing to engage civil society and democratic forces in discussions about Afghanistan's future.

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