

Joint statement on Afghanistan, 25 March 2022

News story

Joint statement condemning the Taliban's decision not to re-open secondary schools to Afghan girls.



Joint statement from the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Italy, Norway, the United States of America, and the High Representative of the European Union. We are united in our condemnation of the Taliban's decision not to re-open secondary schools to Afghan girls:

We are united in our condemnation of the Taliban's decision on March 23 to deny so many Afghan girls the opportunity to finally go back to school. The Taliban's action contradicted its public assurances to the Afghan people and to the international community.

The decision came after months of work by the international community to support teacher stipends based on an expectation that schools would be open for all, with the higher interest of Afghan students and teachers in mind. And sadly, it came as eager Afghan girls were walking to their schools for the first time in seven months.

We call on the Taliban urgently to reverse this decision, which will have consequences far beyond its harm to Afghan girls. Unreversed, it will profoundly harm Afghanistan's prospects for social cohesion and economic growth, its ambition to become a respected member in the community of nations, and the willingness of Afghans to return from overseas.

It will have an inevitable impact on the Taliban's prospects of gaining political support and legitimacy either at home or abroad. Every Afghan citizen, boy or girl, man or woman, has an equal right to an education at all levels, in all provinces of the country.

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