



In the name of God

Statement of Civil Society and Human Rights Network (CSHRN) Regarding the killing of Afghan Journalist Mr Sultan Manadi

The killing of a Journalist is a threat to freedom of speech, freedom of the media and civil rights in Afghanistan

On September 9th Mr. Sultan Manadi, a committed Journalist and former colleague of the Civil Society and Human Rights Network (CSHRN), was killed during a military rescue operation by foreign forces in Konduz province of Afghanistan. Sultan Manadi and Stephen Farrell, a British national journalist, were kidnapped by Taliban militants from Essa Khel village of Chahar Dara district last Saturday. The reporters were in the district in order to ascertain information about a deadly NATO air strike that had killed about 95 people and wounded several others on Friday September 4th. The killing of Sultan has shocked civil society, Afghan intellectuals and the human rights community in Afghanistan. Sultan's killing indicates a lack of commitment on the part of the Afghan government to its citizens who work for civil freedom, the expansion of which has been one of the main achievements in Afghanistan during the post-Taliban period. Why the Afghan government forces could not rescue Sultan is the self-evident question posed by the Afghan Civil Society, which has so far been left unanswered.

In releasing this statement, CSHRN would like to emphasize the following points.

- The Afghan constitution clearly emphasizes the role and responsibility of the government and President to protect Afghan citizens' human rights. Afghanistan is party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights. Effective protection of the human rights of Afghani citizens is the responsibility of the Afghan state. CSHRN would like to urge the Afghan government to take its human rights protection responsibilities seriously, to organize an enquiry into the killing of Sultan and to effectively prevent acts of violence such as this one from occurring again in the future.

- This is not the first time that Afghani civil society and journalists associations have asked the government to organize proper investigations to identify the reasons for the murders of journalists. A series of horrible killings of Afghan journalists carried out by international forces and insurgents during the ongoing military operations have not been investigated. CSHRN calls on the Afghan government in general, and its investigative, justice and security sectors specifically, to put in place a mechanism capable of effectively investigating the killing of Sultan .

- CSHRN calls on the new government and President, who will start working after the election, to pay special attention to the provision of useful strategies for protection of the rights of journalists and human rights defenders.

- CSHRN would like to ask the new leader and government of Afghanistan to organize a constructive dialogue with those governments and international organizations which are involved in the security of Afghanistan. International forces must respect human rights of the Afghan citizens equally to those of their own citizens, according to Universal Declaration of Human Rights. NATO and ISAF forces should treat Afghan citizens, especially victims who are captured by Taliban, without discrimination during their operations.

CSHRN will closely follow the government's response to the matters raised in this statement and will react accordingly.

Afghan Civil Society Human Rights Network

The Civil Society and Human Rights Network (CSHRN), consisting of nearly 60 organizations, was established in August 2004 as an umbrella structure to coordinate human rights activities among local non-governmental organizations. CSHRN works to promote human rights and to strengthen civil society in Afghanistan. CSHRN carries out activities in more than 20 provinces of Afghanistan.

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