



In the name of God

## Message of CSHRN on the Presidential Election in Afghanistan

(Translation of the Dari original)

**10. August 2009**

Freedom is a God given right and a central value of human rights. Democracy means that this freedom is used to choose. Freedom of choice is the most significant part of human rights. In these days, the citizens of Afghanistan practice this important aspect of their rights: they elect their leader.

The Civil Society and Human Rights Network (CSHRN) appreciates this historical day and wants to emphasize the following points:

- Elections give legitimacy to the state. Each kind of fraud with regard to elections negatively affects the state and nation building process in Afghanistan. Therefore, CSHRN requests the persons and institutions involved in the election process to avoid any kind of fraud when conducting the election and counting the votes.
- The tolerance demonstrated on the day of election for the rights of citizens and the respect for the culture of democracy will have a positive effect on the trust of people in elections. The people will accept and officially recognize that elections can bring political sustainability as well as social and economy stability. For that reason, CSHRN requests from all the candidates and their campaign teams to respect the choice of the people and to avoid any kind of activity which would cause harmful effects on the social environment. To oppose or to support is the right of each citizen! The citizens of Afghanistan have the right to demonstrate if they do not agree with the outcome of the elections, but such demonstrations should not have negative effects on the sustainability and social security in our society.
- CSHRN requests from all national and international election observers to make available the information they collect during the elections in a transparent manner and a simple language through the national media within a reasonable time. Afghanistan experiences a very important moment. We have to learn from international experiences, in particular from our neighbouring countries, that the reports of the election observers have to be available to the Afghan citizens in time. By this, speculations about frauds can be avoided.
- CSHRN requests from all armed forces, including those that are engaged in the conflict, to respect the people of Afghanistan and this historical occasion and to stop fighting during these days. CSHRN believes that the only acceptable means to get

political power are political campaigns. There is no place for conflict or violence. In such a way, elections can pave the ground for all political forces to participate and all the political forces should respect such a principle.

- Freedom of media is a basic civil right. CSHRN requests from all state and private media to respect the people of Afghanistan and to work in a committed way to promote the political rights of citizens and the values of human rights in the country.

CSHRN believes that the Afghan people go through a historical phase. Participation in the election is an important practice to promote democracy and the culture of human.

CSHRN organised a series of programs to promote the political rights (rights to vote) of citizens through radio programs, printed publications and by conducting symposiums and educational workshops throughout the country. CSHRN through its member organisations will have an active participation in the election. CSHRN expects that this day will take place in a peaceful atmosphere in Afghanistan.

CSHRN hopes for the promotion of democracy in the country.

### 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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