

# THE ANNUAL SENATOR GEORGE J. MITCHELL PEACE LECTURE 2022

13 OCTOBER 2022

## HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE AND NEGOTIATING PEACE WITH TERRORISTS: THE CASE OF AFGHANISTAN

NADER NADERY (ASSER INSTITUTE, THE HAGUE)

4.00pm - 5.30pm  
Canada Room and Council Chamber,  
Lanyon Building, QUB.

[Register here](#)

On December 4, 2001 a peace agreement for a post Taliban government was signed in Bonn, Germany. The accord was facilitated by the UN after US and coalition forces launched a military operation against the Taliban in response to the 9/11 terrorist attack of the United States. Within a month the Taliban's first rule ended and Afghanistan embarked on a new path of stability, democracy and constitutional rule where rights and freedom of its citizen was promised to be protected and promoted.

In two years Taliban that were considered defeated, were provided safe havens across the Durand line, regrouped and began to launch two decades of deadly insurgency against Afghan government and NATO forces in the country. Finally the US and Taliban signed an agreement on Feb 29, 2020. The agreement known as the US-Taliban Doha agreement was negotiated for over two years and in the absence of the then Afghan government. The direct talks between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan delegation and the Taliban were one of the four provisions of the US-Taliban Doha agreement.

On September 12, 2020, the intra-Afghan Peace Negotiation began in Doha

capital of the State of Qatar. The two large delegations of 21 members each, met to find a peaceful settlement after nearly two decades of conflict. However, the US-Taliban negotiation changed the political and military realities of the country and as a consequence incentives for a political settlement within the newly created political and military reality, has reduced significantly in Taliban.

The two sides negotiated for 11 months until the Islamic Republic government collapsed on August 15, 2021. With the collapse of the republic, most of the gains in the field of Human Rights protection specially of women rights are being rolled back. There is now a systematic apartheid against Afghan women by the Taliban rulers.

The past two decades of international intervention in Afghanistan give many important lessons learned in the field of justice and human rights.

This lecture will tell the story of Afghans' struggle for institutionalization of human rights principles, their fight for justice and the international community's failure to side with them. It will tell how it looked like to

negotiate peace with a group that was conducting terrorist activities and does not believe in human rights and the citizens freedom. It will tell the history of heartbreak and the story of resilient people in their quest for dignity and justice in the face of unimaginable adversity.

The Senator George J. Mitchell Peace Lecture Series celebrates and recognises Senator Mitchell's contribution to the Northern Ireland peace process and to conflict resolution in the Middle East. His aim of transforming conflict and promoting social justice in Northern Ireland and across the world is shared by our Institute.

The Annual Peace Lecture series was inaugurated in 2018 with a lecture from President Mary Robinson on climate justice. President Robinson has subsequently become Chair of The Elders and has held prestigious posts in Ireland and the United Nations.

Previous speakers include Mamphela Ramphele (2019) and Professor Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (2020).



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