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Human Rights Council.

12th Session. 24 September 2009.

Item: 6. UPR- Country – Afghanistan

Individual Oral Statement- Islamic Human Rights Commission.

Mr. President Islamic Human Rights Commission welcomes and respects all work done by the working group and congratulates the council on the conclusions and recommendations that have been forwarded. However we note that recommendations 70, 71, 78 and 82 not only reflect the importance but also highlight the Human Rights Council concern.

Islamic Human Rights Commission believes that being a party to most international human rights treaties the Afghanistan government has a legal obligation under international human rights law in relation to freedom of expression. We are deeply concerned that arbitrary arrest and detention of journalist by the police and other official security agencies are widespread. One such case is the detention of an innocent journalist Jawad Ahmad, by the US run Bagram military airbase. Mr. Ahmad worked as a fixer and interpreter for Canada broadcaster CTV. He was freed after 11 months on 22 September 2008 stating that he did not represent a “risk for the US forces in Afghanistan.”

According to Islamic Human Rights Commission research there are approximately 630 Afghans and other foreign national which including 9 juveniles imprisoned without charge by the US government at the Bagram prison, and many have been held for as long as five years or more. Thus, it clearly shows that US military airbase is outside the protection of international human rights law

We are also concerned that in Afghanistan women’s health rights appear to be neglected. Cultural practices hinder women’s access to these rights. According to the National Action Plan for the Women



of Afghanistan the average Afghan woman has a life span of 44 years. Maternal mortality is one of the highest in the world at an estimated 1,600 to 1,900 per 100,000 live births. Being a party to ICESCR, women's health rights focus on array of legal obligations arising from human rights commitment of the state such as right to life, right to health and the right to equality and freedom from discrimination.

Afghanistan already faces a number of human rights challenges many of which relate to internal struggle in the process of democratization, questions of gender equality, empowerment of women as well as the fight against terror in coordination with US since 2001.

Islamic Human Rights Commission strongly urges the government of Afghanistan to ensure that no government agencies or the US run Bagram military airbase violates the right to freedom of expression and ensure prompt and impartial inquiry of all cases of maternal mortality

Thank you Mr. President