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Participation of Women Compulsory in Society

Women and their role in our society have been discussed and debated in different ways; mostly, they have been cursed. The attitude of their co-gender has been very much discriminating towards them and, throughout most part of history, they have been treated with violence, and inequity, yet they have not given up. They have replied the tyrannies and violences through love and warmth.

Their being is definitely wondrous and miraculous; how is it possible that undergoing so much oppression they are able to maintain their attitude to adore others and treat them with never ending love?

Nonetheless it must not be understood that praising their quality of tolerance, the tyranny that is carried out against them must be justified. Such tyranny is definitely unjust and there should be efforts made not only by the women themselves but by the governments in different states to eradicate it from its roots.

Women have all the rights that the men have as the citizens of a country. Violating their rights just because they have the capacity to tolerate the worse is the worst act ever imagined. The patriarchal systems and setups require changing their attitude towards women. If a woman's nature is properly studied, it can be easily observed that she is tender and caring as well; therefore, she has the right to be treated in similar fashion - with tenderness and care. Does she get such a treatment from our society? Unfortunately, that is not the case.

Women in Afghanistan have been suffering discriminatory behavior for a very long time. The religious extremism and obsolete tribal values have played a dominant role in making every sort of violation and violence possible against them. Though they have been raising their voices every now and then but in the noise of male shrieks they seem to be negligible and get faded away. In fact, the male-chauvinistic ears are not ready to hear them though they feel their vibrations clearly. Nonetheless, the efforts in this regard must never be given up and they should continue in every possible way.

One of the ways to rise up and be counted in the social and political life is to strive participating in the social and political institutions and processes. One of the examples of such process is the election. Recently, women participated in the parliamentary elections in a large number, which will ultimately affect their overall role and status within Afghan society. They need to keep this in mind that the upcoming presidential election is yet another chance to show that they can have an imperative role in Afghan society.

Showing their commitment towards democracy and their understanding of the value of their votes, thousands of women casted their votes in different parts of the country. They may continue the same in upcoming elections as well. Moreover, many of them participated as candidates, ran their campaigns and proved through their debates and discussions that they are ready to be considered active and useful citizens of the country, like men.

Besides elections, women must also be active in other processes and events. However, to change the overall scenario the overall attitude towards women should alter and the men have to play a large role in doing so. In fact, it is a challenging task and requires the roles and efforts of both men and women.

Both women and men have to bring about changes in their attitudes. Fighting the discrimination and violence does not necessarily mean that women alone should shoulder the responsibility. The men can also play an important role and they have to be made aware of it. There should be efforts to bring about changes in the attitude of men towards women; otherwise, fighting for the rights of women would be very difficult.

Different strata in society can also play an imperative role. The different institutions, functioning in the society must ensure that there should not be biased policies and attitude against the women. Their policies and practices must never be inclined towards discrimination and injustice on the basis of gender. Not only the women rights organizations but different other social, political and administrative organizations can have a part in making sure that women are properly compensated within the system and are not neglected on the basis of prejudice.

In the countries like Afghanistan, the religious and tribal institutions can also play tremendous role in uplifting the position of women and giving them the status they deserve. As most of the people are religious and tribal, they can easily be motivated by such institutions for better and higher purposes.

Afghan Youth and Their Role in Peace Process

By: Bezhaz Azam

Peace in a general definition is the concept of harmonious well-being and freedom from hostile aggression. In a social sense, peace is commonly used to mean a lack of conflict (such as war) and freedom from fear of violence between individuals or heterogeneous groups. A peaceful society is a society in which people have physical security, mental security and economic prosperity. A society where there does not exist discriminations and where people have equal access to justice, their basic rights and services.

Youth are the vast majority of Afghan population. Therefore, young people have the power to transform our communities, societies, country and the world. They are an important source of creativity and drivers of social change. Today's generation of youth has vastly been excluded from national and global efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts contrary to the Security Council resolution 2250 stating that Building peaceful, cohesive and resilient societies requires the full and meaningful participation of young people. They should be active partners, not passive beneficiaries.

Afghanistan has been hurt so much and so long, but youth progress, resilience and aspirations have kept them focused to work for a better, peaceful and prosperous future. Two-thirds of the Afghan population is youth. The young generation of Afghanistan has been the main driver of many successes in last eighteen years; media is an illustrious example. In addition, Afghan youth have been playing an important role in bringing national unity that has a direct positive effect on peace process. Until we do not dry the root of all discriminations and prejudices, justice and lasting peace will not be maintained. We are sure that Afghanistan will never go backward since there are thousands of like-minded youth who are hopeful and committed to make their country with their own hands.

In an attempt for peace, I and more than two other thousands of youth with different backgrounds from all across Afghanistan attended the National Peace Conference in Kabul to discuss and debate our ideas of peace and present their resolutions. We debated on how we want the peace with consideration of past 18 year's achievements. We underscored for putting the values

of democracy, the constitution, civil rights of citizens in particular the women rights, media and free speech in top priority during the peace process and negotiation as these values have been gained with sacrifices of thousands of the country's citizens and therefore, the values must not be victimized.

In addition, an Afghan peace movement from Helmand started recently its marching without shoes from southern Helmand province to Kabul requesting for restoring peace in the country. Among them was a high school student who went home to complete his final exams before re-joining the others; a young poet who was carrying in his chest one of the four bullets he was shot with; a bodybuilding champion who abandoned his gym and has lost 20 pounds of muscle on the journey; and a polio victim on crutches. Another member of the Helmand peace march was 22 years old, Zahir Ahmad -e- Zendani who was blinded five years ago by a roadside bomb. This shows the strength, commitment, struggle and aspirations of Afghan youth for peace!

Today's generation of youth are seriously concerned about their future as the main victims of imposed war on our country. They hold that as an influential generation they have a historical and momentous responsibility regarding coming up generations. Hence, peace talks are regarded as the future of Afghanistan and young generation.

Therefore, the United Nations Security Council resolution 2250 that urges member states to consider ways to give youth a greater voice in decision-making at the local, national, regional and international levels must be enforced in the Afghan peace talks. Youth should be actively engaged in shaping a lasting peace and contributing to justice and reconciliation. In addition, it has been stated in Afghanistan National Youth Policy (ANYP) that lasting peace and security are the most important needs of the people of Afghanistan and young people can play an important role in bringing peace and security in the country. To conclude, if we want lasting and sustainable peace, we can no longer afford to leave youth behind. We must listen to and work with them.

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France's Big Hate

By: Noëlle Lenoir

Emmanuel Macron's unexpected victory in the 2017 French presidential election, with 66% of the vote, made France seem, at least to some, a safe haven from the populism roiling European politics. His triumph came as a relief to a large majority of the French, as well as to other governments in the European Union and around the world.

But Macron's victory incited a form of near-hysterical derangement among his opponents on the extreme right and left. The increasingly violent, racist, and anti-Semitic "Yellow Vest" protests are the visible manifestation of that rage.

True, some of the blame for this lies with Macron, and with the technocratic tin ear of some of his team. In particular, the sharp increase in taxes on fuel announced in November 2018 - a move intended to advance the president's climate agenda while helping, at the margins, to balance the budget - disproportionately hit rural and suburban voters, who were already feeling squeezed economically. This triggered the Yellow Vest rebellion.

But as the protests have shrunk in size and intensified in violence, Macron and what he represents have become the focus of the extremists' hate. For starters, Macron stands out nowadays for his commitment to revitalizing Europe. He rejects the emerging consensus that mainstream politicians can defeat populism only by downplaying their support for the EU. Instead, Macron relentlessly asserts his belief in a strong, democratic, and prosperous Europe that is capable of acting with authority in the world.

Moreover, Macron has so far pressed ahead, despite the protests, with the reforms he promised during his campaign. Laws to increase labor-market flexibility, ensure ethical behavior by elected officials and civil servants, and modernize the country's obsolete university entrance system were adopted in less than a year. But Macron underestimated the difficulty of reducing France's budget deficit and public debt to comply with eurozone rules, contributing to his decision to raise fuel taxes last November.

Today, Macron's opponents from across the political spectrum portray themselves as part of some spontaneous popular movement. But the truth is that many of the politicians Macron defeated in his victorious campaign are now out to undermine him. To the astonishment of many, former President François Hollande, whom Macron once served, now openly encourages the Yellow Vests to harden their protests. Laurent Wauquiez, leader of the center-right Republicans, has actually put on a yellow vest. Meanwhile, far-right leader Marine Le Pen and far-left leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon both sense revolutionary possibilities in the protesters' rage.

The Yellow Vests may seem to resemble other populist forces in Europe, in particular Italy's Five Star Movement. But the French protesters are extremely violent in both word and deed. Macron and his wife are threatened with death almost daily. This is reminiscent of the vicious attacks against Léon Blum, France's Socialist prime minister in the mid-1930s, who

was later sent to Buchenwald by Marshal Philippe Pétain's collaborationist World War II government.

Charles Maurras, a prominent Catholic essayist and journalist of the interwar years who became a member of the prestigious French Academy, called Blum "a monster" and "a man who deserves to be shot, but in the back." Today, the far-left deputy François Ruffin vents his hatred of Macron in similar terms. Not since the 1930s has France experienced such hysteria against a political leader in office.

Violent words go hand in hand with violent deeds. Stores have been smashed and looted. Public buildings, parliamentarians' offices, and even the private property of the President of the National Assembly have been destroyed by fire. Deputies have been threatened (including with a gun), newspaper headquarters have been ransacked, and more than 1,500 police officers have been injured.

How did France get to this point? It is no secret that Kremlin-funded television channels RT and Sputnik - followed by social networks and other TV stations - have provided platforms that encourage the incitement of rage, anti-parliamentarism, lies, disinformation, racism, and anti-Semitism. France seems to be living daily through the "Two Minutes Hate" of Orwell's 1984.

The material and moral damage to the country is considerable. But there will not be a civil war. A clear and broad majority of the French are exasperated and shocked by rising violence and intolerance. The CFDT, the country's most important labor union, has taken a stand against "all forms of violence." Laurent Berger, its leader, has argued that, "If a trade-union organization had been responsible for as much violence in a movement that it triggered, it would be banned for at least 20 years." And Macron himself is gaining renewed legitimacy for facing down the crisis with self-control and sticking to his reform agenda.

But the Yellow Vest movement is far from over, and the clock cannot be turned back. First and foremost, the authorities must punish the perpetrators of violence and vandalism severely, beginning by requiring them to compensate victims, and eliminate all forms of impunity. Ideologically motivated assault and destruction must be treated like any other violent crime. Anything less would encourage those who would embrace violence in pursuit of their aims.

Second, fake news and abuse of social media, which is endangering social cohesion and democracy itself, must be confronted head-on. Macron's great "National Debate" via local meetings and the Internet is providing a useful counterweight. He continues to assert himself as a truly outstanding debater. But this unique experiment will end on March 15. For the sake of French and European democracy, one hopes it will give a new impetus to the much-needed reforms that France has been awaiting for decades.

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