

This statement has been co-signed by Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden

We are gravely concerned by the violations of the human rights of women and girls in Afghanistan, particularly the severe restrictions on the education rights of Afghan women and girls. The exclusion of women and girls from the public sphere is jeopardising the positive changes achieved over the last two decades and has serious consequences for wider society as well as the individuals whose rights are being denied.

Education is a fundamental human right, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, endorsed also by Afghanistan. Every person in Afghanistan has the right to education. Equal access to education is a cornerstone of universal values, including freedom of expression, the principle of non-discrimination and gender equality.

Equal access to education benefits wider society. Education is also an investment in the future, which promotes the well-being of individuals and the overall progress of our societies. Education helps fight social exclusion and reduce poverty. Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all is one of the Sustainable Development Goals, which were also endorsed by Afghanistan.

Afghanistan cannot compromise on the right to education, as to do so would compromise its own future. Women and girls in Afghanistan should not be subjected to discrimination or any form of limitation of their right to education.

We call on those in positions of power and authority across Afghanistan to guarantee, in words and deeds, the right to education of Afghan women and girls across all levels of education, to ensure their right to participate in, complete and benefit from quality education without discrimination, and to ensure that female educators may carry on their professions.

We will continue to follow closely the human rights situation of women and girls in Afghanistan, including the upholding of their right to education. We will do everything in our power to promote an equal access to education for Afghan women and girls, and prevent any form of human rights violation or discrimination in this area.



Mr Heinz Faßmann

Minister of Education, Science and Research – **Austria**



Ms Lydia Klinkenberg

Minister of Education and Scientific Research from the German speaking Community of Belgium – **Belgium**



Ms Caroline Desir

Minister of Education for the French Community – **Belgium**



Mr Ben Weyts

Flemish Minister for Education, Sports, Animal Welfare and Vlaamse Rand – **Belgium**



Mr Nikolai Denkov

Minister of Education and Science – **Bulgaria**

Mr Radovan Fuchs

Minister of Science and Education – **Croatia**

Mr Prodromos Prodromou

Minister of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth – **Cyprus**

Mr Robert Plaga

Minister of Education, Youth and Sport – **Czech Republic**

Ms Pernille Rosenkrantz-Theil

Minister of Children and Education – **Denmark**

Ms Linna Kersna

Minister of Education and Research – **Estonia**

Ms Li Andersson

Minister of Education – **Finland**

Mr Jean-Michel Blanquer

Minister of National Education, Youth and Sport – **France**



Ms Anja Kraliczek

Federal Minister of Education and Reserch – **Germany**



Ms Niki Kerameus

Minister of Education and Religious affairs – **Greece**



Mr Zoltán Maruzsa

Minister of State for Public Education – **Hungary**



Mr Jozsef Bodis

Minister of Higher Education, Innovation and Vocational Education and training – **Hungary**



Ms Norma Foley

Minister of Education – **Ireland**



Mr Simon Harris

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science - **Ireland**



Mr Patrizio Bianchi

Minister of Education – **Italy**



Ms Anita Muižniece

Minister of Education and Science – **Latvia**



Ms Jurgita Šiugždiniene

Minister of Education, Science and Sport – **Lithuania**



Mr Claude Meisch

Minister of Education, Children and Youth – **Luxemburg**



Ms Justyne Caruana

Minister of Education – **Malta**

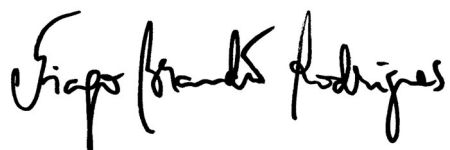
Ms Ingrid van Engelshoven

Minister of Education, Culture and Science – **Netherlands**



Mr Przemysław Czarnek

Minister of Education and Science – **Poland**



Mr Tiago Brandão Rodrigues

Minister of Education and Science – **Portugal**



Mr Sorin-Mihai Cimpeanu

Minister of National Education – **Romania**

Mr Branislav Gröhling

Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport - **Slovakia**



Ms Simona Kustec

Minister for Education, Science and Sport of the Republic – **Slovenia**



Mr Manuel Castells Oliván,

Minister of Universities – **Spain**



Ms. Pilar Alegria

Minister of Education and Vocational Training – **Spain**

Ms Anna Ekström

Minister for Education, Ministry of Education and Research – **Sweden**