

Afghanistan: Statement by the EU High Representative/Vice-President



This statement was delivered by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission, Josep Borrell, via video message at the launch of the Intra-Afghan Negotiations on 12 September 2020 in Doha.

The European Union welcomes the launch of the direct Intra-Afghan Negotiations between the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban movement.

This is a ground-breaking moment.

It marks the start of a genuine peace process, which should lead to the peace that the people of Afghanistan deserve and have long demanded.

As the European Union, we urge the parties to accompany the start of the peace talks with an immediate, comprehensive, nationwide and unconditional ceasefire.

With this new chapter opening, a mere reduction of violence is no longer enough. Now all preconditions are fulfilled, nothing should prevent a ceasefire from being accepted and implemented by both parties.

This process must now be truly owned and led by Afghans. International partners must respect Afghanistan's sovereignty and independence when supporting these negotiations.

It must preserve and build on the political, economic and social achievements of the citizens of Afghanistan since 2001, especially on women's rights.

To achieve this, the European Union is working with all parties. We want to ensure that peace negotiations are inclusive and respectful of the wish of Afghans to live in a peaceful, secure and prosperous country. A country with economic development and growth, providing new opportunities for its citizens, where rights are upheld and vulnerable groups are protected.

Let the start of these negotiations be the much-needed and long overdue beginning of a new and more peaceful chapter for Afghanistan.

Link to the video: <https://youtu.be/ww4v8Qw7Cws>