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AFGHANISTAN

GOOD NEWS: FOUR WOMEN PROTESTORS RELEASED

Zholia Parsi, Neda Parwani, Parisa Azada, and Manizha Seddiqi, women human rights defenders and protestors, have been released following several months of unjust detention.

The Taliban arrested and detained the four women between September and November 2023. During their detention, they lacked access to lawyers and regular family visits, facing the risk of torture and ill-treatment. None of them were charged with any offences. Additionally, Neda and Zholia's family members were also arrested.

We campaigned extensively for their release from November 2023 onwards. Our efforts included sending individual and group letters to the Taliban's General Directorate of Intelligence and promoting their Urgent Action on social media. Our goal was to highlight the unlawful arrest, absence of due process, and violation of their right to freedom. Throughout, their family members outside Afghanistan provided updates on prison visits and emphasized the need for sustained action.

Their release occurred at different times between December 2023 and April 2024. Zholia Parsi was released on December 18, 2023, Neda Parwani on December 14, 2023, Parisa Azada on December 27, 2023, and Manizha Seddiqi on April 7, 2024. They are now in Afghanistan with their immediate family.

Since the Taliban took control of Kabul in August 2021, they have increasingly violated women's rights, barring political participation and public involvement. These policies have restricted freedom of expression, association, peaceful assembly, and rights to equality and non-discrimination. Despite this, women have led peaceful protests against the Taliban in various Afghan cities, including Kabul, Faizabad, Herat, and Mazar-i-Sharif.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.