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**Recommendations made by Iceland to Afghanistan
18th session of the Universal Periodic Review (27.01.14)**

Iceland welcomes the honourable delegation of Afghanistan to the UPR.

The situation of women and girls in Afghanistan remains of grave concern. Iceland emphasises Afghanistan's obligations under CEDAW. We appreciate Afghanistan's submission of its combined initial and second periodic reports and its first appearance before the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2013. However, we note the significant gap between commitments to gender equality and efforts to comply with them.

In particular, Iceland expresses deep concern at the high prevalence of violence against women, and the persistence of harmful practices such as child marriage. Iceland strongly recommends that Afghanistan reinforce the implementation of the Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women.

We also express concern at the low representation of women in decision-making and their limited participation in the peace and reconciliation process. Iceland urges Afghanistan to take more effective measures to counter discrimination against women, and to adopt a National Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

Iceland further encourages Afghanistan to strengthen efforts to ensure the access of girls and women to all levels of education.