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صدای مردم افغانستان
VOICE OF THE AFGHAN PEOPLE

Statement

People's Consultative Gathering in Badakhshan and Takhar

3rd September 2022

Faizabad, Badakhshan

The first one-day consultative local gathering for people and the IEA for Badakhshan and Takhar provinces was conducted in Faizabad city today. The gathering brought together nearly 180 men and women from different communities, including religious scholars, social and cultural activists, tribal leaders, businessmen, youth, victims of conflict, and minorities.

The Voice of Afghan People, a local initiative, organized the gathering and aimed to collect people's input and share it with the relevant authorities of the Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan (IEA).

Maulvi Abdul Ghani Faiq, Governor of Badakhshan, and other provincial authorities attended the summit and addressed the participants on behalf of the IEA. They reiterated the IEA's commitment to listening to the participants' demands and suggestions. Additionally, they called for organizing similar events at the provincial and districts levels.

In his turn, Mufti Niamatullah Nayal, a community elder, called on the IEA to respond positively to the demands of the public. Moreover, on behalf of women, Dr. Nagina Emami asked the IEA to prioritize women's education and open girls' schools for girls attending grades higher than six.

Following the introductory remarks, the participants were divided into group discussions and exchanged views on different issues such as the economy, education, natural resources, and confidence building between the public and cultural and social organizations and the IEA. The summary of these discussions are as follows:

1. The participants consider the country's current economic crisis dangerous and asked the IEA to adopt policies to improve the recent financial situation without putting pressure on the people. In addition, the participants asked the international community to remove sanctions to prevent the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan from escalating and its economy collapsing fully.

2. According to the participants, domestic policies that are formed through consultation with the public and reflect public consensus can pave the way for better international relations and, at the same time, lead to greater public trust in the state.
3. The participants believe that unemployment is a big challenge in the current circumstance, which has caused migration and brain drain. Hence, they asked the international community for more help to create jobs at the local level.
4. The participants considered education as a vital issue and demanded the expansion of education in all remote parts of the country for boys and girls. They said that any delays in the opening of girls' schools is harmful to all people and called upon the Islamic Emirate to address this issue as soon as possible.
5. The participants believe that building routes between cities and villages is one of the country's economic growth factors and consider the lack of attention in this field as the cause of economic stagnation and the emergence of a crisis. Therefore, they suggest that the distance between provincial centers and districts should be removed, and accessible transportation and communication routes should be established.
6. The participants expressed their concerns about the lack of fair, technical and effective extraction of mines and asked authorities to pay serious attention to freeing people from poverty and growing the local economy through better investment in the extractive industry.
7. The participants said that they wanted to remove the distance between the people and the IEA and emphasized upon creating a positive atmosphere of trust and sustainable dialogue with the officials.
8. The participants are well aware of women's marginalization and called upon the IEA authorities to pay serious attention to women's role and active participation in the decision making systems. Women's role and participation in all levels of decision-making are recognized from early Islam and based on Islamic Sharia.

Finally, the participants asked the IEA to ensure broad interaction with the various spectrums of civil society and to work together to create transparency and confidence-building between citizens and officials. The participants also welcomed any other priorities the Islamic Emirate wanted to discuss in the continuation of the talks.

The one-day gathering will be followed up with various other summits at the regional and provincial levels.