

Ursula von der Leyen  
President of the European Commission

David Sassoli  
President of the European Parliament

Charles Michel  
President of the European Council

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Dear President von der Leyen,  
Dear President Sassoli,  
Dear President Michel,

I am contacting you on behalf of the ETUC to raise with you the need for the EU institutions to take immediate action and ensure that all EU Member States work together for the safe passage out of Afghanistan and asylum for anyone in danger. The EU and Member States must do all that they can to protect all trade union, human and women's rights activists, journalists and those who have campaigned for freedom, democracy and equality. The creation of humanitarian corridors for refugees is more than ever needed.

The ETUC welcomes and supports the call by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres urging all countries to receive Afghan refugees, and refrain from any deportations and forced returns. The particular circumstance of women and girls must be recognised. Asylum processes throughout the EU must guarantee the safety and well-being of the Afghan people, particularly of women and girls. The ETUC fully supports the statement made by the Chair of the European Parliament FEMM Committee Evelyn Regner, who raised concern that for Afghan women and girls, this means systemic and brutal oppression in all aspects of life. In Taliban-controlled areas, women's universities have been closed, they are denying girls access to education, and women are sold as sex slaves.

The ETUC joins the ITUC in raising concern about the safety of trade union officials and activists.

The Taliban has promised a government that is liberal, plural and inclusive. Actions thus far appear to be in stark contrast to these undertakings.

The ETUC urges EU institutions and Member States to act swiftly and protect the Afghan people, to bring the safety of women and girls and grant immediate access to safe and regular pathways to the EU. It is the EU's duty and responsibility to give them a dignified and unconditional welcome.  
Thanking you in advance for your kind attention.

Yours sincerely

Luca Visentini  
General Secretary of the ETUC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luca Visentini', written in a cursive style.