

Gender indicator of socio-political processes ‘quality in modern Afghanistan

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Annotation. Afghanistan is the important geopolitical point in South Asia, the struggle for dominance in which has been going on for over a century. Western-style democratic transformations and radical Islamic fundamentalism, two opposites that destroy the comfort and peace of civilians. The social system’s transformation is inevitable; Afghanistan has chosen the first and through ensuring gender equality, embark on the path of democratic reforms.

Keywords: political process, political crisis, gender equality, democratic transformations

Despite the current crisis and the international image of the country, engulfed in internal conflicts, deep corruption and deep-rooted social conservatism, the last hundred years of Afghanistan's history contain periods of stability, peaceful ethnic coexistence, and moderate Islamic fundamentalism. The stages of positive development can be determined by the actions taken during these periods aimed at resolving gender conflicts. The participation of women, in various types of political processes, presupposes some kind of professional activity in the structure of the public administration system or the presence of an effect of direct influence on the actions of the country's leadership through the implementation of various public initiatives [1].

Liberated from religious prejudices in the second half of the last century, during the presence of the Taliban, from 1996 to 2001, Afghan women were in a position of severe distance from all spheres of public life, including political. The Taliban, relying on radical Islamic views, deprived women of their basic civil rights, including the right to education, the right to mobility, not to mention active and passive suffrage. Women were forbidden to visit public places unaccompanied by older male relatives and outside family and household events. Requirements to cover themselves from head to toe seemed the most harmless; women were not allowed to seek treatment from a doctor of the opposite sex. Cases of violation by women of these requirements irreversibly led to harsh punishments by the religious police of the Taliban, most often women were killed at the hands of executioners. After the process of ousting the Taliban movement from the territory of Afghanistan began in October 2001, the Bonn Conference, held under the auspices of the UN, laid the foundation for the democratization of social and political processes in the country. It was agreed to create an interim administration, which was supposed to ensure the presidential elections. According to the Bonn Agreement, the interim government of Afghanistan was to adopt a democratic constitution within two years. The Bonn Agreement provided for the creation in the country of conditions under which women, along with men, were given the opportunity to participate in public life and enjoy their political rights. The atmosphere of fear and lawlessness had to disappear into oblivion. Former US President Mr. Bush noted that the Taliban used violence and fear to deny Afghan women access to education, health care, mobility and the right to vote, our coalition liberated Afghanistan and restored basic human rights and freedoms for Afghan women. [2] In 2012, with the creation of the Interim Government, the Ministry of Women's Affairs was created to address the myriad gender gaps that women face. Devotion to serving women is considered the first achievement of women since the Taliban, and the participation of 114 women out of 504 delegates in the Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly), which was convened to consider a proposal for a new constitution by the interim government in December 2003, is seen as the beginning of women's participation in decision-making. The constitutional foundations of modern Afghanistan provide equal rights to men and women, article 22 of the constitution states: "Any discrimination and privileges between the citizens of Afghanistan are prohibited. Afghan citizens - be they men or women - have equal rights and obligations before the law." [3] Of particular interest are Articles 43 and 44, of the Constitution guaranteeing the right of women to education, while Article 48 codifies

their right to work. As part of the implementation of the legal framework, an independent commission was established in 2011 to oversee the observance of the Constitution within the framework of labor law. In addition, article 7 of the Constitution emphasizes the need to comply with the Charter of the United Nations, interstate agreements, as well as international treaties to which Afghanistan has acceded and plans to ratify.

Another step taken by the Afghan government to promote women's rights was President Karzai's 2009 law on the elimination of violence against women. The law criminalizes more than 22 types of various forms of violence against women, such as rape, domestic violence, forced marriage, and marriage with minors. The creation of a democratic system in accordance with the new constitution of Afghanistan and the international community's support for women's rights have opened up opportunities for women in public administration, now they work as civil servants in the government, as legislators in parliament, as ministers, officials in the economic and social spheres [4] Habiba Sorabi was the first woman to be appointed governor in 2005, in 2009 a woman was elected mayor; similarly, three ministries were headed by women. Of the 2,500 who came together at the Loya Jirga (Grand Gathering) to negotiate a Bilateral Security Agreement with the United States in November this year, 400 were women. The fact of women's participation is very indicative in assessing the quality of socio-political processes in the country, but, unfortunately, their number in the public sector is very small, with the exception of the parliament. Elections are the main process of forming representative bodies of power, given the past historical stage of excluding women from the political sphere, a system of quotas was provided for in the electoral law of Afghanistan. According to the proposed proportion, 27% of the seats in the lower house of parliament and one fifth of the total number of seats in the provincial assemblies are reserved for women. The state electoral law stipulates that 16 percent of the seats in the Meshrano Jirga (upper house of parliament) must be held by women, a third of the upper house of parliament is elected by the president, and the president is required to elect half of them from among women. [5] The 2004 presidential elections in Afghanistan marked an important historical milestone for the country. For the first time, citizens felt a sincere desire to go to the polling station in order to directly vote for their president. The turnout is in the millions, of which about 40% are women.

Despite some notable advances made by women in the political arena, there are problems that prevent women from participating in political life. There is no proper level of security, cultural barriers; financial problems are not completely overcome. [6] Poor security is considered one of the most pressing problems in Afghanistan, from which women are severely affected. The Taliban, which are vehemently opposed to the emergence of women in the social and political sphere, are targeting high-ranking women politicians. In less than ten years, two heads of the women's affairs department were physically eliminated; they were killed one after another, the Taliban kidnap women parliamentarians, ambush the cars of women senators. Not only politicians are dying, but members of their families, close people, so the daughter, a senior officer of the Afghan police, died. According to a UN report, in 2012, 300 women and girls were killed and 560 injured, an increase of 20% over the previous year. According to the international organization, the number of victims among women and children increased by 38 percent in the first half of 2013 compared to the same period in 2012. Insecurity of life affects the electoral activity of women in elections. The findings of the National Democratic Institute show that all women politicians faced threats. However, it is not only the Taliban who threaten women; they face harassment from their male opponents and society, including tearing up campaign posters, verbal abuse and even physical violence. Cultural barriers continue to limit women's participation in the political process, for example, when a woman wants to run for government office, it is important that she obtains the consent of her family and village elders.

Raikhana Azad stresses that the significant increase in the number of girls attending school, the presence of women in legislation and the cabinet, and the reduction in the death rate of women during childbirth are the main achievements that women have made over the past decade. It should be noted that the women of Afghanistan have made significant progress in protecting their rights. Since the countries of the world community have stepped up in the processes of stabilization of the political and legal system of Afghanistan, progress has been obvious, especially in equality and protection of the rights of citizens regardless of gender. It is too early to speak of a complete victory in this area, as women continue to suffer from widespread violence and are victims of the informal justice system in rural areas, although it has been repealed by state law. Moreover, a patriarchal society does not allow women to fully exercise their political rights, and, in addition, women lack the tools such as education and financial self-sufficiency to successfully participate in the political process. Since the attitude of society

towards women has not changed, the progress they have achieved remains fragile [7], but its presence allows us to positively assess the results of the reforms begun.

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