

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Amnesty International's Challenge in Addressing the Women's Rights Crisis (Gender Apartheid) after the Taliban's Political Coup in Afghanistan

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Abstract

After the Taliban coup in Afghanistan, women's rights deteriorated further, creating a state of so-called Gender Apartheid. Violations included restrictions on access to schools and jobs, forced marriages, withholding of identity cards, and bans on public appearances. Many women were imprisoned and tortured for violating religious rules. As evidenced by Amnesty International's report, more than 50% of women in Afghanistan currently experience Gender Apartheid, down from 78% in 2021 and 60% in 2022. This research examines the multifaceted challenges Amnesty International faces in addressing the escalating women's rights crisis in the post-coup landscape. The method used is a Qualitative Approach with a Liberal Feminism Perspective and International Organization Theory according to Clive Archer. Clive Archer explains the role of international organization through three approaches, first, international organization as instruments, second, international organization as

forum/arena, and third, international organization as independent actor. The results showed that the challenges were divided into internal and external challenges. Internal challenges such as the safety of activists and lack of funding. External challenges include a lack of support from major countries, the complex Taliban culture, and distrust of Amnesty International.

Keywords: Amnesty International, Gender Apartheid, International Organization, Liberal feminism, Taliban.

I. Introduction

Human rights are an important concept that protects the dignity, freedom and well-being of individuals. Everyone has the right to live with dignity, but it is also necessary to respect and protect those rights. The state must protect the rights of its citizens and ensure justice. However, discrimination based on race, gender, religion and sexual orientation continues to be a serious problem around the world. Liberal feminism emphasizes that biological differences between men and women cannot be used as a basis for limiting women's rights and opportunities. This school of thought holds that every individual possesses the same rational capacity and is therefore entitled to equal freedom and opportunities in various aspects of life. One of the leading figures in liberal feminism, Naomi Wolf, asserts that women must continue to fight for equal rights and the freedom to make life choices without dependence on men. From this perspective, the crisis of women's rights following the Taliban coup in Afghanistan represents a form of gender inequality stemming from a patriarchal system and male dominance that



restricts women's freedoms and rights (Azizah, 2021).

This study employs Clive Archer's theory of international organizations to analyze the role of Amnesty International. Archer explains that international organizations, including International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), can act as actors with distinct identities and objectives, even while remaining dependent on state support and other actors. In this context, Amnesty International functions as an INGO that promotes the protection of human rights through advocacy, research, and international campaigns. This theory is relevant for analyzing the challenges faced by Amnesty International in addressing the crisis of women's rights or gender apartheid in Afghanistan (Hayati, 2023, p. 17).

The role gap between men and women is still evident in various aspects of life, such as education and employment. The following data show a significant gap in gender equality between men and women in Afghanistan:

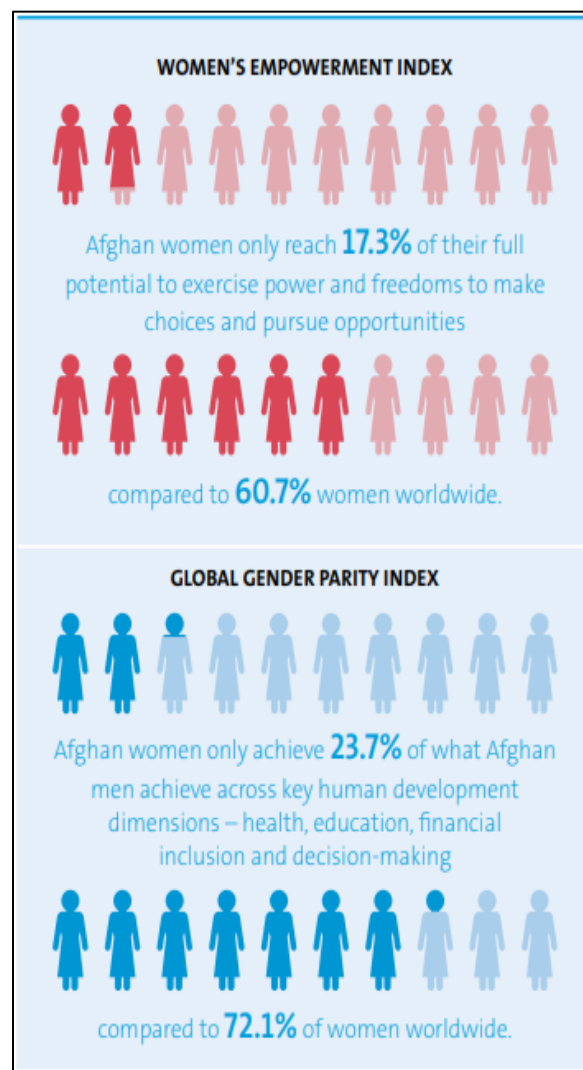


Fig 1. Afghanistan Gender Index 2024

Source: Gender Index (2024)

Afghanistan remains one of the countries with a high level of gender inequality. This disparity has worsened since 2021, as the Taliban has taken control of most of the country. The Taliban's far-right ideology severely restricts access to gender equality, resulting in the rights of many women being neglected. This Gender Index report shows that only 17.3% of women in Afghanistan are able to exercise their rights to freedom. Meanwhile, in terms of human development—which includes health, education, financial



inclusion, and opportunities for decision-making—the figure stands at only 23.7%. These numbers are certainly far from the expectations for the implementation of gender equality there (Gender Index, 2024).

This crisis is reflected in the Taliban's various discriminatory policies toward women. According to a report by Mehran Metra, the Taliban has repealed a number of regulations protecting women's rights, including the Law on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and dissolved human rights monitoring agencies. In addition, women face various forms of rights violations, such as forced marriage, gender-based violence, arbitrary detention, and extrajudicial killings. In the first year and a half of the Taliban's rule, 159 women were killed and 1,115 women were imprisoned on charges of "moral corruption" (Ameliya, 2024).

This gender inequality is further evident through more than 40 decrees issued by the Taliban since 2021. These policies include a ban on co-education, gender-segregated classrooms, restrictions on women's access to employment, the dissolution of the Afghanistan Human Rights Commission, and a ban on women working at the United Nations (UN) office in Afghanistan in 2023. These various policies demonstrate systematic and institutionalized discrimination against women, thereby reinforcing practices of gender subordination and apartheid in Afghanistan. Although there are various regulations that regulate gender equality based on the principle that every individual, both men and women, are entitled to equal rights, challenges still remain. There are several obstacles in achieving gender equality. These

include cultural and social situations that still adopt the concept of patriarchy, the double workload faced by women between reproductive and productive tasks, and the false beliefs that still develop in society regarding marginalization, subordination, stereotypes, violence, and workload (Audina, 2022, p. 11).

Discrimination against women, particularly in Afghanistan, is a pressing issue that needs attention in international relations. Women in Afghanistan face severe discrimination and poverty, which limits their access to education, health and employment. With the withdrawal of US and NATO troops in 2021, the Taliban managed to seize much territory, including the provincial capital of Zaranj on August 6, 2021. After the Taliban coup, policies were adopted that severely restricted women's rights, including mandatory face coverings and banning education for girls beyond the primary level. These policies violated the human rights of women and children (Setyawan et al., 2024, p. 22).

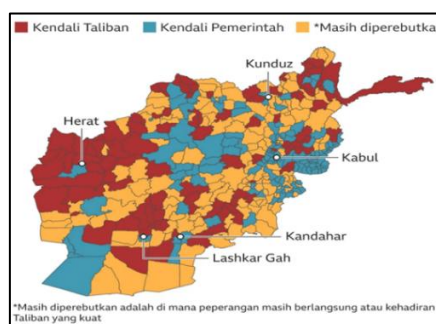


Fig 2. Afghanistan power map 2021
Source: BBC News (2021)



In 2021, most of Afghanistan, namely 90%, is under Taliban control, except for a small number of other areas. For example, in the provinces of Ghazni and Maidan Wardak which are located in the North and Northeast. Then there are also urban areas such as Kunduz, Herat, Kandahar, and Lashkar Gah. This organization established a government based on a very strict interpretation of Islamic law. In this context, the Taliban controls several districts in the administrative center as well as in terms of security and other government institutions (Sundari et al., 2024).

The Taliban implemented more than 40 discriminatory decrees that could be considered "Gender Apartheid." International conventions consider gender apartheid to be a form of apartheid. "International conventions consider apartheid a serious crime and severe discrimination. These decrees include harsh sanctions against women, such as forced marriage and domestic violence. The issue of gender apartheid in Afghanistan can be understood through a human rights perspective, particularly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979).

Gender disparity becomes a human rights issue when women are denied equal access to education, employment, political participation, and freedom of movement. Under Taliban rule, restrictions on Afghan women systematically limit these rights, constituting violations of internationally recognized human rights standards. CEDAW further defines discrimination against women as any distinction or restriction that impairs

women's enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Therefore, gender apartheid in Afghanistan can be viewed as an institutionalized form of gender-based discrimination that deprives women of their fundamental rights, making it both a gender issue and a human rights concern. Many laws protecting women's rights were repealed, and institutions monitoring human rights violations were disbanded (Mehran, 2023).

Tab.1. Data on access to public services for women and men in 2024

Health Service	Men : 77% Wownen : 67%
Education	Men : 48% Women : 3%
Mental Health Support	Men : 22% Women : 15%
Formal Dispute Resolution	Men : 50% Women : 3%
Informal Dispute Resolution	Men : 50% Women : 7%
None	Men : 18% Women : 2%

Source: UNAMA Report (2024)

Notes: Adopted from United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

Amnesty International considers the practice of Gender Apartheid a crime under international law and continues to collect evidence of abuses committed by the Taliban. However, they have not been able to make a significant impact. An analysis of the challenges Amnesty International faces in addressing the situation of women's rights in Afghanistan is needed (Nabiyin & Sinambela, 2021).



II. Methods

The purpose of this research is to understand how Amnesty International's efforts and challenges in overcoming the crisis of women's rights (gender apartheid) after the political coup of the Taliban group in Afghanistan. In this study, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative research method that allowed the author to collect data through analyzing documents relevant to the issue being studied. With this approach, the author can deeply understand the causes of Gender Apartheid in various countries, especially in Afghanistan, and observe the various responses to this issue from the international community and international institutions.

This approach also allows the author to explain in a complex and structured manner the issues that are the focus of the research. In addition, this research aims to present informative results regarding Amnesty International's challenges in dealing with the Women's Rights Crisis (Gender Apartheid) following the political coup by the Taliban group in Afghanistan.

III. Theoretical Framework

As an international organization, Amnesty International has made various efforts to address the women's rights crisis (gender apartheid) that emerged after the political coup by the Taliban group in Afghanistan. As we know, Amnesty International cannot directly stop this gender Apartheid issue, because as an international organization, its power is limited by the sovereignty of the country controlled by the

Taliban. The Taliban group considers Afghanistan as its territory, so neither other countries nor international organizations have the right to intervene. However, it cannot be denied that until now, Amnesty International has carried out many efforts as an independent instrument, arena and actor according to Clive Archer in fighting for women's rights.

a. Effort as an Instrument

As a tool for governments, Amnesty International plays an important role in assisting policy and decision-making, especially in the context of diplomacy and interstate cooperation. Amnesty International's role as an instrument is crucial to support a country's interests. However, it is important to note that not all decisions taken within the organization are designed to meet the interests of every member. The creation of an international organization indicates that the states involved have reached a limited consensus through multilateral agreements to govern their activities in a particular field. Amnesty International has a vital role to play in national policy, with the government's long-term goals remaining focused on multilateral coordination (Desyanti & Sushanti, 2025).

Amnesty International's independent reports emphasize the importance of oversight to ensure accountability and prevent women's rights violations. In a recent report, they stated that the Taliban have targeted women's rights defenders and activists, who are often arbitrarily arrested without legal protection (Hayer et al., 2024).

Amnesty International is calling on all UN Member States to take immediate and decisive steps to end impunity and ensure



justice for women victims of abuses committed by the Taliban. This call comes in line with the recent report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan at the 52nd session of the Human Rights Council, which states that in recent years, the Taliban have targeted women's rights defenders, academics and activists with unlawful detentions. Many of them were arbitrarily arrested, without access to legal remedies or their families. These detentions are believed to have occurred as a result of their public criticism of Taliban policies. Amnesty International calls on the United Nations Human Rights Council to urgently establish an independent investigative mechanism in Afghanistan, focusing on preserving evidence to pursue international justice. They emphasized the need to collect and preserve evidence for future prosecutions in accordance with international principles of justice (Amnesty International, 2021).

In a recent report, Amnesty International highlighted that during the conflict in Afghanistan, women have experienced injustice, lost access to the truth and redress. They propose principles to support accountability in conflict and provide justice for all victims. In its latest public statement, Amnesty International calls on all countries to establish a Fact-Finding Mission or independent investigative mechanism in Afghanistan similar to those already in place in countries such as Ethiopia, Iran and Myanmar. This mechanism should have a mandate and sufficient resources for several years to investigate, collect and preserve evidence of human rights violations occurring across the country (Amnesty International, 2023).

Therefore, in Amnesty International's report presented at the 57th session of the UN Human Rights Council, it was stated that during the four decades of conflict in Afghanistan, women have suffered injustice and lost access to truth and redress. Human rights violations committed by the Taliban and other armed groups occurred before August 2021, and failure to address these cases risks neglecting the victims. Amnesty International emphasizes the importance of rebuilding trust in Afghan society and providing justice for all victims (Ramcharan, 2025).

Amnesty International's Crisis Evidence Laboratory has authenticated photos and videos from at least eight incidents uploaded to social media between May and August 2022. In these incidents, large numbers of women were arbitrarily arrested and detained without trial by the Taliban in Panjshir. The videos show at least 87 women at various stages of detention, many with their hands tied. Witnesses reported that the Taliban detained civilians after clashes with the National Resistance Forces (NRF) in Panjshir (Zalalzai, 2021).

b. Effort as an Arena

Amnesty International acts as a platform that brings its members together to discuss current developments. Within the organization, members have the opportunity to discuss, debate and work together, even when there are differences of opinion. As a collaborative forum, Amnesty International allows its members to exchange views on issues of common concern, while understanding each other's perspectives. As



such, the organization serves as an arena for members to gather, consult and collectively formulate international decisions or agreements, such as conventions, treaties, protocols and other agreements (Ristovska, 2021).

In-depth consultations with over 150 stakeholders, including human rights defenders in Afghanistan, academics, protesters, women activists, youth, civil society representatives and journalists. The Bahhan meeting brought together delegates from several countries in South Asia (Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bhutan). Amnesty International had brought them together to give voice to the frustrations of the Afghan people with the international response (Putri et al., 2023).

The human rights community in Afghanistan states that they not only face ostracization by the Taliban, but also by the international community. Human rights defenders who spoke to Amnesty International expressed concern about the deepening human rights crisis in Afghanistan, which is largely distorted by Taliban rhetoric and propaganda. They seek to convince the world that Afghanistan is now more “secure” and has a thriving economy, where citizens are valued and treated with dignity according to Sharia (Islamic law) and local culture. However, the reality is that the Taliban have created an environment filled with fear and tight control (Brobbeey, 2023).

After three years, the frustration in the Afghan society has become more prominent. Despite numerous statements and meetings, the world still feels uneasy as the Taliban continue to violate human rights and destroy two decades of progress in many aspects of

public and private life. Every actor involved in Afghanistan needs to collaborate, find safe and creative platforms to discuss and find effective long-term solutions. This can only happen if they have access to the necessary tools, resources and skills. The international community must commit to supporting these measures, respect the diverse voices of the people, and avoid unprincipled engagement with the Taliban, which will only harm these collective efforts (Amnesty International, 2025).

c. Effort as an Independent Actor

In its capacity as an independent actor, Amnesty International has a crucial role in formulating policies without external interference. Archer explains that Amnesty International functions as an autonomous entity, capable of taking action globally without significant influence from outside forces. They have the freedom to make decisions and act within established corridors. Furthermore, the international organization contributes to the dynamics of world development through policies taken based on the aspirations of its members. For more than six decades, the organization has been exposing the darker side of the world. As a global movement with more than 7 million members, Amnesty International strives to create a world where all human beings respect human rights (Diego, 2022).

Amnesty International is committed to utilizing funds in accordance with the Global Strategic Framework. The total spending on human rights is divided into six strategic results and flexible work areas, namely 20% to



strengthen freedom of expression and association, 13% to guarantee the right to peaceful assembly for every individual, 18% to promote gender, racial and intersectional justice, 8% to strengthen the right to health, housing and social security, 4% to ensure climate justice, 13% to protect the rights of refugees, migrants and individuals on the frontlines of crisis, 24% earmarked for flexible work areas. As such, Amnesty International strives to make a significant impact in the fight for human rights around the world. 91% of Amnesty International's income is "unrestricted", meaning it has the freedom to allocate it according to the most pressing needs (Ganzfried, 2021).

Amnesty International in the report "Death in Slow Motion: Women and Girls under Taliban Rule" states that the Taliban's policies violate human rights governed by international treaties. This report analyzes whether these violations can be categorized as crimes under international law, specifically related to gender persecution. The data in this report comes from research involving interviews with 90 women and 10 girls from 20 provinces in Afghanistan between September 2021 and June 2022 (Amnesty International, 2024).

Other sources include interviews with Taliban detention staff members, NGOs, UN representatives and experts on the situation in Afghanistan. The report's conclusions show systematic human rights violations from August 2021 to January 2023. The lack of oversight of the situation points to the need for further investigations into violence and violations of the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan (Amnesty International, 2023).

Amnesty International has interviewed a number of female protesters who recounted their experiences of physical violence perpetrated by Taliban agents during peaceful protests. In some cases, the treatment they experienced could be categorized as torture or even as cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, which is clearly prohibited by international law. Methods of violence used against women during protests include beatings with pipes, whips, or firearms; torture with electric shocks; and the use of tear gas. Based on information compiled by Amnesty International and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) as of February 2022, more than 30 women have been arbitrarily arrested and detained in the country simply for taking part in peaceful protests (Watch, 2024).

IV. Findings and Discussions

a. Amnesty International's Internal Challenges in Overcoming Apartheid Gender in post-Taliban political coup Afghanistan

As an international organization, Amnesty International certainly faces various internal challenges in carrying out its role. These challenges arise from within the organization itself. As a non-governmental organization, Amnesty International cannot operate alone. Despite their status as independent actors, they still need support in the form of human resources and funds, which are clearly internal challenges that must be faced. The following are some of the internal challenges faced by Amnesty International as an independent instrument and actor.



b. Challenges as Instruments

The safety of local activists and journalists who work with Amnesty International in field data collection is an issue for Amnesty International as an Instrument. As an organization committed to promoting human rights, Amnesty International has sought to compile reports describing grave abuses committed by Taliban groups against women. However, due to the limitations of going directly to the field, Amnesty International relies heavily on the support of journalists and human rights activists to gather information (Afghanistan, 2024).

Unfortunately, many journalists, volunteers and human rights activists have been subjected to abuses by the Taliban, which in turn has hampered Amnesty International's efforts to gather evidence of these crimes. More than 80% of women journalists were forced to cease their activities between August 2021 and August 2023 due to increasingly stringent restrictions. In addition, the UN reported that between March and June 2024, 95 women-led protests were recorded across Afghanistan. In an attempt to disperse these protests, the Taliban reportedly used firearms, water cannons and stun guns (Amnesty International, 2022).

During the period between August 2021 and August 2023, at least 64 journalists were detained by the Taliban, for various lengths of time. One example is Murtaza Behboodi, a French-Afghan journalist, who was released after nine months of detention. On the other hand, activists, human rights defenders and members of civil society continue to face violence, intimidation and surveillance. Many of them are subjected to

arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearance and illegal detention. According to UN reports, detainees are often subjected to torture and other ill-treatment, including sexual abuse. Nida Parwani and Zhulia Parsi, two female human rights activists, were arrested on September 19 and 27, 2024 respectively along with their family members, but were released in December. Matiullah Wesa, an education rights activist, was also released in October 2024 after seven months in prison. Nargis Sadat and Parisa Azada Mubariz were arbitrarily arrested by the Taliban, but were released after some time. Meanwhile, many other activists and journalists remain in prison (Amnesty International, 2025).

Some of these cases show that the Taliban are trying to prevent the international community from highlighting their abuses. Anyone deemed to be hindering the group in implementing their ideology is arbitrarily arrested. The Taliban did not hesitate to torture anyone who became their opponents. To this day, the Taliban still frequently carry out arbitrary arrests of journalists and human rights activists. This is part of their efforts to silence criticism and prevent independent reporting on their human rights abuses. Since returning to power in Afghanistan in August 2021, the Taliban has taken harsh measures against press freedom and freedom of expression, including the arrest, exile and intimidation of journalists and human rights defenders. International organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have denounced these actions as serious violations of human rights and press freedom. Amnesty International urgently needs journalists and human rights activists



who can be key witnesses to the atrocities committed by the Taliban (Watkins, 2021).

d. Challenges as Independent Actor

Amnesty International, as an independent actor, often faces challenges related to financial limitations that can affect its efforts to maintain neutrality and credibility. Given the fact that Amnesty International relies heavily on individual donations, we cannot ignore the impact of the economic instability that has hit various countries since 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This causes the organization to face major budgetary challenges, especially as most of the funding they receive comes from voluntary contributions and donations from members and individuals. Amnesty International derives its financing mainly from voluntary contributions and individual donations, without relying on support from governments or international institutions (Rodriguez, 2023).

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 problem, individuals, the private sector and countries have been focusing on how to recover from this health disaster. In the midst of the pandemic, in 2021, new conflicts continue to emerge, while unresolved conflicts are getting worse. In countries such as Myanmar, Ethiopia, Israel/Palestine, Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya and Burkina Faso, these conflicts have led to massive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law (Callamard, 2021).

Most of Amnesty International's income comes from small individual donations.

In 2023, more than 1.7 million people donated, with an average contribution of €13.30 per month. Total fundraising reached €370 million, down 4% from the previous year. 72% of funds came from individual donations, with the remainder from grants, major donors and other sources. Amnesty recognizes that rising global costs are impacting donors, leading to a 13% decrease in average individual donations. For 2023, spending stands at €383 million, an 8% increase from last year. The budget is allocated to human rights research, campaigns and fundraising. However, challenges remain due to the uncertainty of donations from donors (Amnesty International, 2025).

A report published by Amnesty International shows that since 2021, funds raised have decreased significantly, while global problems have increased. Although 91% of the funds raised are flexibly allocated according to the priority issues identified by Amnesty International, challenges remain. The unpredictability of donations from donors, which vary in size, is an obstacle to the organization addressing the issues at hand (Amnesty International, 2023).

e. Amnesty International' External Challenges in Overcoming Apartheid Gender in post-Taliban political coup Afghanistan

The challenges faced by Amnesty International are not only internal, but also external. In fact, external challenges are often more complex and hamper the organization's journey. In an effort to address the women's rights crisis (gender apartheid) in Afghanistan, support from various parties is crucial. Without the help of other countries and the support of



the Afghan government itself, Amnesty International will find it difficult to take the necessary actions. Therefore, there are several external challenges that Amnesty International faces as an independent instrument, arena and actor in dealing with the women's rights crisis (Gender Apartheid).

f. Challenges as Instruments

The lack of support and assistance from major countries is a challenge for Amnesty International in carrying out its functions. Amnesty International can serve as an important tool for countries in formulating foreign policy, imposing sanctions, and pressuring Afghanistan to end discrimination against women. Unfortunately, many countries are still indifferent to the issue of violence against women. For example, China does not see the Taliban group or the form of government in Afghanistan as the perpetrators of women's crimes or a problem. China's main focus in the Afghan region is on economic factors (Amnesty International, 2021).

China sees security stability in Afghanistan as critical to protecting security in Xinjiang province and their investments in the region. Conflict in Afghanistan could affect Chinese investments, including in large projects such as copper mining in Mes Aynak, which is worth 3.4 billion USD. To keep these projects safe, China chose to cooperate with the Taliban and avoid conflict. They put less pressure on the Taliban over the issue of violence against women, prioritizing China's economic stability and national security (Mawardi et al., 2022).

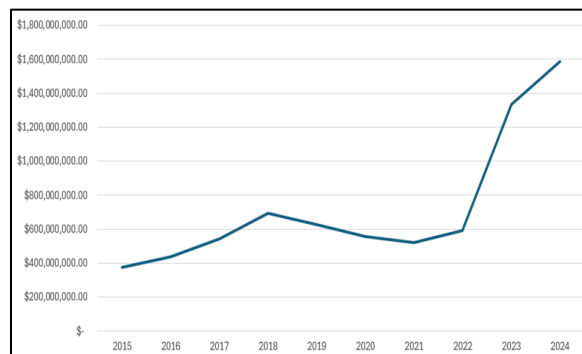


Fig 4. China-Afghanistan Total Bilateral Trade 2015-2024

Source: General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) (2025)

In the global context, the issue of equality has become a major concern of many international organizations, including the United Nations (UN). The UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets gender equality and reducing inequality as two main goals that all countries need to achieve. This reflects the importance of the principle of equality in creating a more just and harmonious world. Gaps in the understanding and implementation of human rights can be seen in various contexts, such as economic inequality, racial discrimination, unfair treatment of women, and political oppression. Developed countries often enjoy better access to human rights compared to developing countries, creating significant inequalities among the global community. Therefore, concerted efforts from the international community are needed to address these disparities and ensure that human rights are recognized and respected equally around the world. In this context, research and advocacy continue to strive to raise global awareness of the importance of human rights and the need for concrete action to address this gap (Nguyen, 2025).



g. Challenges as Arena

Afghanistan's cultural and religious complexities pose challenges to Amnesty International's universal advocacy efforts. This complicates the organization's role as a forum for discussion to find effective solutions. Amnesty International and similar organizations are often faced with the dilemma of either consistently championing universal values or adjusting their approach to operate and engage in dialogue in a highly conservative region like Afghanistan under Taliban rule. This creates ethical and strategic challenges that are not easy to overcome (Welchman, 2021).

The Taliban viewed Afghanistan at the time as a place far removed from the teachings of Islam, so their return to power was aimed at bringing pure Islam back under their control. In this process, the Taliban believed that such purification would rid Afghanistan of the influence of modernization and Western propaganda. The Taliban were more readily accepted in Afghanistan due to the high degree of homogeneity of the society, which is dominated by Sunni Islam of Pashtun ethnic origin. This dominance has allowed religion to legitimize power based on Islamic law, which is often used to justify violence against women, known as Gender Apartheid (Amnesty International, 2025).

Islamic identity is deeply embedded in the Taliban, not only as an official label on the name of the government or the flag that is the symbol of the state, but also seen in the physical appearance and activities of individual members. Akhundzada, as the supreme and undisputed leader of the Taliban regime, did not provide reasons or justifications for his

rejection of girls' education. However, in his short written decisions that were widely disseminated by Taliban officials, he always emphasized that his decisions were in full accordance with Islamic law (Schmeding, 2023).

Meanwhile, some experts argue that the Taliban leadership's opposition to girls' education is likely based on Afghanistan's tribal patriarchal traditions, rather than religious teachings. Misogynistic practices, including in Muslim-majority countries like Afghanistan, continue to promote male domination over women and girls, with the Taliban's un-Islamic ban on girls' education a clear example of this phenomenon (Piela, 2021).

h. Challenges as Independent Actor

The Taliban's reticence towards the intervention of international organizations poses a challenge to Amnesty International as an independent actor. Amnesty International operates without interference from any state interest. However, the Taliban view international organizations, including Amnesty International, as tools for the West to undermine Islamic governments. The Taliban's distrust of Amnesty International makes every effort made by the organization perceived as an intrusion from Western countries (Tjäder, 2021).

Furthermore, the Taliban believe that Afghanistan is under their control, so no other state or international organization has the right to control their internal affairs. The provisions contained in Article 7 of the 1998



Rome Statute provide an explanation of the various acts that can be considered international crimes. In this context, the implementation of humanitarian intervention can not only be carried out based on the existence of crimes against humanity occurring in a country, but must also receive a mandate or permission from the UN Security Council, either through collective or individual actions (Amnesty International, 2023).

In relation to the steps taken by Amnesty International in overcoming Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan perpetrated by the Taliban group, this is in accordance with the provisions of Article 7 of the Rome Statute of 1998, precisely in paragraph 10, which regulates Apartheid as an international crime. Thus, the intervention that has been carried out by Amnesty International can be considered to have a strong foundation. Despite being based on a solid legal foundation, namely the Rome Statute which is the basis for Amnesty International's intervention, the resulting changes have been minimal (Amnesty International, 2025).

Various reports published by Amnesty International have clearly demonstrated the immunity that the Taliban group enjoys, which has limited any decisive action that can be taken to date. Impunity continues to apply to such crimes under Taliban rule. There have been no adequate or transparent investigations into extrajudicial executions or other gross human rights violations. Taliban officials continue to deny the existence of such violations and reject the findings of non-governmental organizations, including Amnesty International (Jaya, 2023).

It can be traced back where the conflict in Afghanistan was not entirely triggered by the behavior patterns of local people but external influences also played a big role, making this country often trapped in tension. It can be seen back to the reign of King Zahir Shah in 1973, who was considered a "puppet" of the Soviet Union. At that time, King Zahir was given the authority to carry out a cultural revolution, which was one of the Soviet Union's strategies to spread communism in the Afghanistan region. However, this revolution actually caused controversy that triggered rejection from the Islamic community (Murtazashvili & Murtazashvili, 2021).

Given this situation, this has led the Taliban to feel that Amnesty International is not trying to eliminate Gender Apartheid, but they also see it as a tool for Western countries to intervene in Afghanistan and destroy Islamic ideology. The poor relationship between Western countries and Islamic countries has given rise to various prejudices. History records that interactions between the West and Islam, and vice versa, are often filled with suspicion and even hatred. In various Western media, there is also prejudice that has emerged against Islam, reflecting Western dissatisfaction with the presence of Islam, which is often considered a marginalized entity. This has led the Taliban to doubt the credibility of Amnesty International, which is seen as one of the institutions originating from the West (Amnesty International, 2023).

Amnesty International is known as a supporter of liberal values such as individual freedoms, including freedom of speech, religion, and expression. The organization also



consistently supports human rights and democratic principles. Political parties that uphold liberal principles generally receive support from groups that agree with these ideas. On the other hand, the Taliban group adheres to strict Islamic conservatism. The strict Islamic conservatism implemented by the Taliban refers to an extreme and literal interpretation of sharia (Islamic law), which is combined with Pashtun customary norms. As a result, the resulting policies are very restrictive, especially for women and minority groups (Kamal, 2021).

As a supporter of liberalism, Amnesty International puts forward rational reasoning without considering the context in depth. Meanwhile, the Taliban group argues that the Islamic ideology they adhere to teaches the importance of seeking welfare, not just freedom that does not pay attention to common interests. For them, the products of international organizations from the West that contain liberal values are far from the essence of Islamic values that are oriented towards welfare as a whole, because liberalism is often understood only as a search for freedom alone (Ife et al., 2022).

V. Conclusion

Amnesty International faces challenges in carrying out its role, which are divided into internal and external challenges. Internally, the organization seeks to protect local activists and journalists who help collect data on human rights violations under the Taliban, particularly those affecting women. However, many local partners experienced abuses from the Taliban, which hindered

information gathering. Financial limitations were also a challenge, as reliance on individual donations made it vulnerable to unstable economic situations.

External challenges are more complex, with a lack of support from major countries that sometimes manipulate human rights issues for political gain. Nevertheless, reports of human rights violations are important for influencing foreign policy. Afghanistan's cultural and religious complexities complicate Amnesty International's advocacy efforts, where a universal approach often conflicts with the Taliban's strict interpretation of Islamic law. In addition, the Taliban see international organizations including Amnesty International as a threat to their rule, adding to the difficulty in carrying out the organization's mission.

The efforts made by the Taliban group are difficult to define as effective or not. On the one hand, Amnesty International has been successful in terms of international advocacy and raising public awareness. However, the organization has limitations in creating direct change in Afghanistan, with the Taliban's ideology and lack of mechanisms to enforce change and the political and security situation also hindering intervention.

However, the pressure from Amnesty International is meaningful to keep the world's attention on women's rights violations which is important for future measures. Amnesty International played a key role in raising the issue of Gender Apartheid internationally, even without the power to pressure the Taliban. As evidenced in Amnesty International's 2023 Report, more than 50% of women in Afghanistan are experiencing a



women's rights crisis (Gender Apartheid), better than the previous years which reached 78% in 2021 and 60% in 2022. In addition, Amnesty International also successfully encouraged the UN special rapporteur to consider the Taliban's treatment of women as "crimes against humanity". Although the Taliban's stance remains unchanged, international pressure has resulted in many countries refusing to officially recognize the Taliban as a legitimate government.

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