



PRESS INFORMATION

THE EUROPEAN UNION SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE IN AFGHANISTAN
THE EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION TO AFGHANISTAN

We expect every single minister to provide Afghan women with equal opportunities

Providing women with equal opportunities is not only a matter for the Ministry of Women's Affairs. It must be at the top of the agenda of every single of the new ministers, says EU Ambassador Franz-Michael Mellbin.

Kabul, 15 January 2015

Only two days after her nomination as Minister for Ministry of Women Affairs, Ms. Najiba Ayubi yesterday joined the First Lady of Afghanistan, Mrs Rula Ghani, Dr. Sima Samar and Afghan Olympic athlete Tahmina Kohistani at a reception at the European Union Compound in Kabul, to mark "The Year Head for Afghan Women".

The reception was hosted by the European Union Special Representative in Afghanistan and Head of the European Union Delegation to Afghanistan, Ambassador Franz-Michael Mellbin, who commended President Ashraf Ghani for his initiative – for the first time in Afghan history – to form a 30 women strong council to advise him on women's rights and participation in essential areas of the Afghan society, such as economy, education, politics, peace and security.

"The establishment of such a council along with other National Unity Government initiatives to involve Afghan women in society acknowledges their prodigious potential. We must see more of this potential unfold when the newly nominated Cabinet Ministers soon take office. Afghanistan needs stronger representation of women in all sectors of the government and indeed in the private sector, on which the Afghan economy will be increasingly depending", stated Ambassador Franz-Michael Mellbin in his address.

"Enabling and empowering women to contribute to the rise of this nation is not only a matter for the Ministry of Women's Affairs. It must be a priority for all ministries. It must be at the top of the agenda of every single minister – male or female – to provide Afghan women with equal opportunities. This is what we expect. Nothing less", concluded Ambassador Mellbin

Afghan Olympic Athlete Tahmina Kohistani encouraged the younger generations of Afghan women: "Since I was a child, I had a dream to become an athlete. I followed my dream. I trained hard and gave the best I could to pursue my future in sports. I dreamt of going to the Olympics. I trained harder and I made it. I want to encourage all Afghan girls to follow their dreams. Take control of your life and responsibility for your future – and your dreams can come true as well", she said.

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