

# **ALO at the UN Human Rights Council – HRC59: Strengthening Global Action for Afghan Women, Girls, and LGBTIQ+ Communities**

From **June 15 to June 25, 2025**, the Afghanistan LGBTIQ+ Organization (ALO) carried out an intensive advocacy mission in Geneva during the **59th Session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC)** and the **CEDAW review of Afghanistan**. ALO's team engaged directly with UN mechanisms, delivered formal statements, organized high-level events, and met with key Member States and Special Procedures to ensure that the rights of Afghan women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ communities remain central to international attention.

ALO delivered **seven formal oral interventions** across the HRC and CEDAW sessions, raising urgent concerns about **gender persecution**, restrictions on education and employment, the persecution of LGBTI women and girls, and the systemic violence targeting LGBTIQ+ Afghans. These statements also emphasized the need for stronger international accountability, calling for support to the **ICC investigation**, a potential **ICJ case** on Afghanistan's grave gender-based violations, and the creation of an **independent international investigative mechanism (IIM)**. ALO further engaged in private briefings and public discussions, ensuring that the lived experiences of LGBTI women, LGBTIQ+ refugees, and human rights defenders informed UN reporting and state responses.

During HRC59, ALO organized **two major side events**. On **June 17**, ALO co-hosted the official HRC side event on **Accountability, Gender-Based Crimes, and Rights Violations in Afghanistan**, which drew strong participation from Member States and highlighted the urgent need for a victim-centered accountability process. On **June 25**, ALO co-organized an event at the Geneva Graduate Institute on **LGBTIQ+ Refugees and Asylum Seekers**, featuring the UN Independent Expert on SOGI. This event focused on the risks facing displaced LGBTIQ+ Afghans and the gaps in protection across transit and destination countries, reinforcing ALO's leadership in refugee-focused advocacy.

ALO also held **nine bilateral meetings** with Member States, UN mandates, and working groups to advance key priorities. During these engagements, ALO raised concerns related to public floggings, summary executions, the persecution of LGBTI women, threats to human rights defenders, and the urgent protection needs of LGBTIQ+ refugees in neighboring countries. ALO advocated for inclusive language in HRC resolutions, stronger integration of SOGI and disability analysis in UN reporting, and increased support for accountability efforts. ALO also met with the UN Independent Expert on SOGI, the Special Rapporteurs on Summary Executions, Human Rights Defenders, Education, Disabilities, and the Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls—emphasizing coordinated action, joint statements, and improved monitoring of SOGIESC-based violations.

In addition to high-level advocacy, ALO's team strengthened their technical capacity by participating in a **three-day IWRAW Asia Pacific training** focused on CEDAW engagement. This training enhanced ALO's long-term ability to contribute to treaty body processes and upcoming UN cycles with grounded, survivor-informed evidence.

ALO's work during HRC59 significantly elevated the visibility of gender persecution, gender apartheid, and SOGIESC-based violence in UN conversations on Afghanistan. Through strategic engagements, public interventions, and expert-driven documentation, ALO reinforced the urgent need for international accountability, victim-centered protection, and meaningful participation of Afghan women, LGBTI individuals, LGBTIQ+ refugees, and marginalized communities in shaping Afghanistan's future.