

ALO at the UN Human Rights Council – HRC60

In **September 2025**, the Afghanistan LGBTIQ+ Organization (ALO) engaged in a series of high-level advocacy activities during the **60th Session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC)**. ALO's Executive Director, **Artemis Akbary**, represented the organization throughout the session, delivering multiple interventions, participating in expert discussions, and meeting with UN mandate holders to highlight the urgent human rights situation facing Afghan women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ communities.

During the session, Artemis delivered a formal **oral statement in the Interactive Dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan**, outlining the escalating persecution of LGBTIQ+ people under Taliban rule, including targeted violence, arbitrary detention, torture, and worsening restrictions on LGBTIQ women and girls. He emphasized the need for stronger accountability mechanisms and urged Member States to respond to the deepening gender-based repression in the country. Artemis also spoke during the **General Debate**, where he delivered a powerful statement on the situation of Afghan refugees and the mass deportations occurring in **Iran**, highlighting the severe protection gaps, abuse at borders, and heightened risks facing LGBTIQ+ refugees.

ALO co-organized a significant **side event on the impact of global funding cuts on human rights in Afghanistan**, where Artemis spoke about the disproportionate consequences of these cuts on marginalized populations, particularly LGBTIQ+ Afghans. He emphasized that reductions in international support disrupt documentation efforts, protection pathways, and essential community services that many rely on for survival. Artemis also participated in another side event on the **Torture Index in Afghanistan**, organized by OMCT, where he discussed torture practices and conditions inside Taliban detention facilities, including criminal prisons and General Directorate of Intelligence (GDI) centers, where many LGBTIQ+ detainees face extreme violence.

In addition to public interventions, Artemis held bilateral meetings with several UN mandate holders, including the **Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders (HRDs)** and the **Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development**. These meetings focused on reprisals against LGBTIQ+ human rights defenders, the targeting of family members inside Afghanistan, the barriers faced by exiled defenders in accessing support, and the need for inclusive development policies that recognize the specific vulnerabilities of persecuted LGBTIQ+ communities.

ALO's engagement at HRC60 reinforced the organization's vital role as a refugee-led actor providing accurate, community-informed evidence and shaping international responses to Afghanistan's human rights crisis. Through strategic advocacy and direct engagement with UN mechanisms, ALO continues to elevate the experiences of LGBTIQ+ Afghans and push for stronger global action.