

Ladies and Gentleman salam,

I have come from a country that if I say is almost mountainous would not be exaggeration. From Afghanistan, that due to mountainous situation and lack of facilities its citizens tolerated many kind of difficulties.

In many countries around the world, mountains are used as the natural resources and people using the technology comes together and utilize the life.

But in my country the mountains have been used as a space for violence and arm resistance. There is an expression among Afghans who say “having not my requirements meet, I will be compelled to climb the mountains”.

So, it is better to say what roles the mountains have played in afghan women’s life in order to get rid down to business or get the point.

According to the afghan govt. departments’ statistics, almost the afghan villagers have been living around the mountains or have been affected by them.

The health affairs ministry of Afghanistan says in many parts of the country, villages have mountainous location which difficult the people’s especially women’s access to health services. It has increased the women and children mortality.

A survey of UNICEF inside Afghanistan shows that due to inaccessible health services 16 thousand of one hundred thousand pregnant women die per year.

More than 300 publications right now are active in Afghanistan which include daily newspapers, weeklies and monthly journals and with which the women play a positive and productive role, but certainly this role concludes in Kabul and big cities like Herat, Balkh, and Parwan.

But mostly Afghan women journalists face many more difficulties than men journalists in my country.

The women journalists many times have been threatened by armed men, local warlords and Taliban militants.

In many cases, some of the Afghan women journalists were compelled to leave their job, but because such cases happen in provinces of Afghanistan yet has not been a wide reflex among the people and mass media.

There are many women journalists who wear Burqa and report the events and developments in Afghanistan.

The Afghan government although, has supported the journalists but many critics that the governmental institutions has not done enough for the activities of women journalists and even some reports say that the local officials don't have supportive idea about journalists.

Many factors driving the increase in death toll of pregnant women which aside from inaccessible health services includes the mountainous situation of Afghanistan and the difficulties it has created.

According to afghan officials the worst and difficult time for Afghans is in winter when with having snow and floods the roads are blocked.

While I am speaking with you, in central parts of Afghanistan for several months in the heavy snow, roads which connect the villages are blocked and mostly even there is no news of them.

Following the fall of the radical regime of Taliban in Afghanistan, new windows opened for afghan women.

But mostly women, who lived in big Afghan cities, used the opportunity, provided to them by the international society, specially the United States of America. Women living in villages and mountains are still facing difficulties and are barely able to get advantage of the attempts amid to secure their freedom.

The Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, which is responsible to provide assistance to rural areas in the country, says thousands of women living in rural villages, either directly or indirectly, are getting advantages of the projects ran by the ministry, but still tens of thousands of women in these areas are in need to more cooperation, in order to secure their economic

independence, which is indeed a key to political and social freedom.

Hopes to reach these women fade when heavy snow and lack of transportation facilities add to the government's problems on the way to secure women's freedom in rural villages and mountains. Of course this affects the attempts to feed women with education in countryside.

In rural villages and mountainous parts of the country, the level of education among men is down and women do not even have access to schools and educational centers. Indeed lack of education is the main element, which causes lack of healthcare workers.

Beside all these problems, women are also doing hard works, such as collecting wood from mountains to support themselves and their families financially. It is southeastern provinces such as Paktia, Paktika and Khost, where collecting wood is an occupation for villager women. In Noorestan women have shepherds.

Finally, I am here to benefit of your experiences and in this conference learn how to help the afghan women living in mountains and would it be possible for Afghans to use the wide-ranging advantages of mountains the same as you.