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Folder Title:

Vital Voices, Global Partnership

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|--------------|--------|---|-------|------------|----------------|
| 001 | Letter | [Thank You] - To: FLOTUS - From: Susan Safi-Rafiq | 1 | 12/05/2001 | P6/b6; |
| 002 | Letter | [Thank You] - To: FLOTUS - From: Shahla Popal | 1 | 12/06/2001 | P6/b6; |

COLLECTION TITLE:

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1443

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December 6, 2001

President and Mrs. George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President and Mrs. Bush:

We are writing to express our great appreciation for your leadership on behalf of Afghan women. Your administration's extraordinary support and your personal commitment has made it clear to the rest of the world that the U.S. stands for justice, freedom, and democracy for all Afghans.

Mrs. Bush, we are especially grateful for your gracious welcome to the White House of the Afghan women in the Vital Voices leadership training program last week. Your words of encouragement and solidarity brought your powerful radio address to life. Your kindness will fortify these Afghan women in the coming months and years as they work to rebuild their homeland.

We at Vital Voices Global Partnership look forward to continued work with your administration to support women democracy-builders all around the globe.

Respectfully,

Sincerely yours,

Melanne Vermeer
Chair of the Board

Theresa Loar
President

Mary Daley Yerrick
Vice-Chair

Donna McLarty
Vice-Chair

Dec 07 01 12:00p

Vital Voices

202-452-8898

P. 4

December 5, 2001

The Honorable Laura Bush
First Lady of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mrs. Bush:

Thank you very much for hosting me and the other Afghan women on November 27 at the White House with such an open heart and mind.

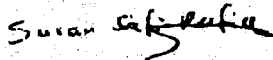
The sincere and consistent commitment of you and your husband to the plight of Afghan women has finally made us visible. It has opened the eyes of the world to the struggle of the women of Afghanistan. Hearing the voices of Afghan women through the White House was such a powerful, indescribable feeling.

As First Lady carrying out the responsibilities of a caring teacher, I appreciate your concern and interest in helping us restructure the educational infrastructure of a my beloved homeland Afghanistan, that has been destroyed through 23 years of a devastating and unjust war.

Without the trainings of the Vital Voices Global Leadership Institute our delegation would not have been able to present our message so clearly and to promote the vital cause of Afghan people, especially Afghan women and Afghan children.

Thank you again for your kind support to helping us raise the innocent voices of Afghan women through such a powerful and just tool of communication, the White House.

Sincerely,



Susan Safi-Rafiu

(b)(6)

Dec 07 01 12:01p Vital Voices
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202-452-8898
FAX:7035289118

P. 5
PAGE 1

Shahla Popal

(b)(6)

December 6, 2001

The Honorable First Lady, Laura Bush:

On behalf of my fellow Afghan women and myself, I would like to express our heartfelt thanks for meeting with us last week. It was indeed an honor. Your warmth and kindness made us feel very comfortable. Allowing us to share with you our dreams for women in Afghanistan gives us hope for the future. We appreciate your support very much.

I would like to also mention that we are incredibly grateful to Vital Voices for their very effective Afghan Women's Training Program. We are fortunate to have been given this educational opportunity as well as the chance to meet you and other high-ranking government officials.

Thanks, again, for your gracious hospitality. I hope to see you again in the future. God Bless America.

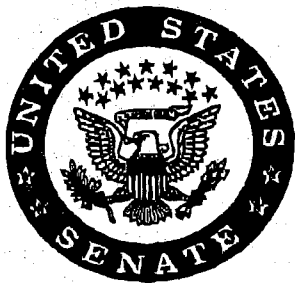
Sincerely,

Shahla Popal

Shahla Popal

DEC. 5.2001 6:20PM

NO. 656 P. 2



KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON

United States Senator • Texas

For immediate release: December 7, 2001
Contact: Lisette Mondello 202-224-9767

SENATOR HUTCHISON PRAISES ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS TO INCLUDE WOMEN IN FUTURE OF AFGHANISTAN

(Washington, DC)—Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, author of the Afghan Women's and Children's Relief Act, today lauded the Administration's efforts to ensure that women have a role in the future governing of Afghanistan.

"Not only did women have a place at the table in Bonn, but the interim government will include women in key positions," Sen. Hutchison said. "President Bush and the First Lady have prioritized the inclusion of women in Afghanistan's future. Their leadership will assure that women will have a role in government and the voice to bring women back into the classrooms and hospitals."

Sen. Hutchison's legislation passed Congress last month and is scheduled to be signed by the President next week. The legislation would ensure that any U.S. aid to Afghanistan be provided to women and children as well as men.

"The Administration and Congress have worked together to shine a spotlight on the deplorable situation facing Afghan women and children under the Taliban. And we are working together to make sure their plight is addressed," Sen. Hutchison said.

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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For Immediate Release
December 6, 2001

For More Information Contact:
Cesar Cardenas: (202) 225-3931

**Ros-Lehtinen Praises Agreement Reached in Bonn and
Commends Bush Administration's Efforts on Afghanistan**

Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Chair of the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, stated today that: **"The agreement reached in Bonn yesterday establishing an interim government in Afghanistan is a testament to the courage and determination of the Afghan people to free themselves from the Taliban's oppression and secure a future for their country where respect for human rights, particularly women's rights, are the crux of a new government."**

Ros-Lehtinen added that: **"The Bonn agreement also demonstrates how the U.S. leadership helped galvanize the international community behind the timely resolution of a process years in the making. The Bush Administration, particularly the personal efforts of President and Mrs. Bush, were instrumental in making known to the world the egregious situation facing Afghanistan, especially its women under Taliban rule, and in supporting the process by which Afghanistan can become a free and democratic state."**

"It is also important to thank the men and women of the U.S. armed forces who have made the ultimate sacrifice to make the world safe from terrorism and who selflessly worked to assist the Afghan people in their struggle for freedom and liberty," Ros-Lehtinen emphasized.

The result of the Bonn agreement yesterday coincides with the introduction of the Afghanistan Freedom and Reconstruction Act being filed today by Congressman Tom Lantos and Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen. This bill ensures the United States' support for an interim government in Afghanistan and the eventual development of a freely elected government in that country, linking this support to the promotion and protection of human rights, particularly the rights of women.

Ros-Lehtinen summarized: **"today is a historic moment for the U.S., as we begin to solidify an alliance in the pursuit of freedom around the world with our new partner— a liberated Afghanistan. U.S. policy demonstrates this Congress', this Administration's and this country's solidarity with the Afghan people in establishing a government of their making."**

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News from the Office of

Congresswoman Deborah Pryce

Serving Ohio's 15th District

☆☆☆

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 7, 2001CONTACT: Michele Apostolos
PHONE: 202-225-2015**PRYCE PRAISES ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORT TO PROMOTE
INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN NEW AFGHAN GOVERNMENT**

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Representative Deborah Pryce (R-OH-15) today praised President Bush and his Administration's efforts to encourage the inclusion of women in the new government developing in Afghanistan.

"President Bush and the First Lady are committed to helping women in Afghanistan," Pryce said. "This Administration's influence in the arena of women's affairs in Afghanistan has been vital and we are encouraged by the recent first steps taken in Bonn, Germany with the inclusion of two female delegates in the Interim Authority."

"It is crucial that the new government in Afghanistan restore the female voice to government and other parts of their society," Pryce added. "In order for the new government to be effective, it must be fully representative. This is not a new concept in Afghanistan, nor is it something that will be re-achieved easily. I am pleased this Administration has shown it will continue to work tirelessly toward restoring women's rights in Afghanistan."

###



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**AFGHAN WOMEN TO ADDRESS SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND
GEORGETOWN FORUM ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN REBUILDING
AFGHANISTAN**

While deliberations continue about the future of Afghanistan, and the role that women will play in building it, a group of Afghan women leaders will be in Washington, D.C. this week to address senior government officials, participate in a public forum at Georgetown University, and receive training at the Vital Voices Global Leadership Institute to help make their voices heard in rebuilding and running their country. Many of these women are refugees who fled the Taliban, and are now poised to lead again when they return. Participants include:

BELQUIS AHMADI

Forced to leave Afghanistan in 1996, Belquis Ahmadi came to the US as a refugee in 1999. A leading voice on the rights of Afghan women, she currently works in the Women's Rights Advocacy Program of the International Human Rights Law Group in Washington, D.C. In addition to her work on the WRAP Pakistan project for Afghan refugee women, Ms. Ahmadi works to build networks with women's rights groups in Asia and the Middle East. Before joining the Law Group in 1999, she worked with the International Committee of the Red Cross (Afghanistan), CARE-International (Afghanistan), and the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (Pakistan).

Ms. Ahmadi is also one of the three-member founders of the Afghan Women's Network in Kabul. When she had to leave Afghanistan for Pakistan in 1996, she continued to work for the rights of Afghan women as the Coordinator of Afghan Women's Network in Peshawar. She has worked with Afghan women refugees on issues of domestic violence, conflict resolution, and community outreach. Ms. Ahmadi has published a number of articles in the area of the Afghan women's rights, and has also raised the issue of violence against Afghan women before the UN Commission for Human Rights, and other international policy fora. She is currently working on issues related to refugee women and violence against women during armed conflict.

JAMILA (She cannot use her last name, or show her face on TV)

Currently residing in Peshawar, Pakistan, Jamila worked as a women's rights activist for 13 years. Currently, she is the Director of Afghan Women Welfare Development (AWWD), a non-governmental organization dedicating to providing women with educational and job opportunities, basic health care, and vocational training. In addition, the organization seeks to facilitate the participation of women in the national

affairs of their country by giving them the chance to take part in international meetings. She completed her education from the Faculty of Science in Kabul, Afghanistan, and is also a member of the Afghan Women's Network (AWN).

SARA AMIRYAR

Ms. Amiryar is a leading activist in the Afghan community in the United States. Originally from Kandahar, she was raised in Kabul. She received her Master's Degree from Georgetown University in International Affairs and is now the Associate Director of Affirmative Action Programs for Georgetown University.

Ms. Amiryar has been very active in humanitarian work. She has independently visited and assisted refugees in refugee camps in Pakistan, participated in hearings on the abuse of women in Afghanistan, worked with USAID and the Red Cross on humanitarian aid issues, and lobbies on behalf of Afghan women and their rights in the United States. She also counsels Afghan women with family problems in a confidential setting, helps Afghan families seek asylum, and helps Afghan women with their job searches. Ms. Amiryar served as the president of the Afghan Association for Solidarity and Cooperation from 1994-1996, serves on the Advisory Committee to the Undersecretary of State for Diplomacy and Public Affairs, is a member of the national Association of Americans with Disability Act Coordinators and has been the Vice President of the Central Asia Research and Development Center since 1994.

SADOOZAI PANAH

Ms. Panah left Afghanistan six months ago and has been living in exile in the United States. Currently, she is the Managing Director for Women's Development for Afghanistan, where she coordinates offices throughout Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the United States. She works with eight refugee camps in Afghanistan to help women develop income-generating skills, provide girls access to educational opportunities, and improve public health. Ms. Panah is also a member of the Board of Directors for the Afghan Development Organization, Afghan Women Welfare Development (AWWD), and the Afghan Health Development Services. In addition, Ms. Panah serves on the Board of Directors for the Afghan NGO Coordination Bureau, which oversees 113 NGOs.

SHAHLA POPAL

Ms. Popal is a women's rights activist. Originally from Kabul, she was forced to leave her home in 1992. At an early age, Ms. Popal began her life as an activist. When she was thirteen years old, she was put in jail for protesting the communist government. Recognized as an outspoken young leader, the government pressured her to join them. Ms. Popal left Afghanistan for Pakistan in 1989 as a result of intensified pressure from the Afghan government to work on their behalf. As a refugee herself, she worked for one and half years as a dentist with Afghan women refugees in refugee camps. In 1992, she came to the United States to attend various conferences and cultural activities to work for the cause of Afghan women. Ms. Popal worked for the Association of Peace and Democracy for Afghanistan for four years, and in 1996 she joined the Afghan radio

station in Virginia which is broadcast throughout Virginia, Maryland, Washington DC, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. In the past she worked with WAFB with Zieba Shorish-Shamely. She continues to work for human rights issues and serves as an advisor to various women's associations in addition for working with the movement for Democracy and Human Rights for Afghanistan. She currently lives in Virginia, and is committed to rebuilding her home country.

FARIDA AZIZI

Farida Azizi came to the United States as a refugee in 2000. As a peace activist, Ms. Azizi has worked to promote the human rights of Afghan women through her work within the aid community, and through her advocacy at the international level. While a Program Officer for the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) Afghanistan Program from 1996-2000, Ms. Azizi supervised the women's program, implemented by NCA's twenty partner organizations. Her responsibilities included capacity-building programs for Afghan women in the peace-building and rehabilitation of Afghanistan. Her regular travel inside Afghanistan put her in close contact with Afghan women in diverse regions, including Kabul, Ghazni, Wardak, Khost, Paktia, Logar, Laghman, Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat.

Ms. Azizi was one of the founding members of the Cooperation for Peace and Unity, a network committed to developing peace capacities at the grassroots level. She is also a member of the Afghan Women's Network, based in Peshawar, Pakistan. Ms. Azizi completed a certificate course in Peace Building at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. She has also advocated for Afghan women's rights in various international conferences and meetings in Bangladesh, India, and the United Kingdom.

HASSINA SHERJAN SAMAD

Ms. Samad is the Executive Director of Aid Afghanistan; Vice President of Public Affairs for the Afghanistan Information Center, and has traveled extensively throughout the region to participate in Afghan women's rights conferences, conduct surveys of local development conditions, and assess education systems. In 1999, Ms. Samad sought Taliban cooperation in Kabul for the establishment of a girls' education program. When the Taliban refused, Ms. Samad opened five clandestine classes for girls that are still privately funded. Ms. Samad has also interviewed Ahmad Shah Massoud, the leader of the Northern Alliance opposition to the Taliban, and has reported on both his trip to France and the former Afghan King Zahir Shah's peace process meeting in Rome, Italy. Prior to her current position, Ms. Samad was Executive Director of "Children's Voice," a non-profit organization providing educational and humanitarian aid to displaced Afghans in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

SUSAN SAFI RAFIQ

Susan is a women's rights activist who is currently working to establish the Atlanta Afghan Women's Association Widow Relief Fund, a non-profit organization that will focus primarily on the humanitarian conditions of women and widows in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Her work began even as an elementary school student in her home of Southern Afghanistan. With her passion for the advancement of women's rights, she organized and coordinated the speakers who came to her school to discuss women's issues. Ms. Safi Rafiq went on to participate in demonstrations against the Soviet invasion, where she was caught and imprisoned. Facing a death sentence, Ms. Safi Rafiq was forced to flee Afghanistan for West Germany, where she studied public health for three years. While completing her studies at a German university, she established the first Afghan Club in Aachen, West Germany to raise awareness about the conditions faced by women in Afghanistan. She also worked with the Afghan Culture Center as a community outreach worker, holding community education classes for Afghan newcomers.

In 1991, Ms. Safi Rafiq moved to Northern California where she helped to found Afghan Women Association International, a non-profit organization dedicated to defending the rights of Afghan women. She has also worked as a community outreach worker, conducting community and health education workshops that provide translation services and referrals to government agencies. Continuing her struggle for women's rights, she helped to found the Afghan Health Education Project, a community health and mobilization project that provides health education classes and translates health education information to Afghan women in Northern California.

NAFISA ROUHANI

Nafisa Rouhani is a founder of the Afghan Center in California. She has worked with the Center for the past sixteen years, providing social services, English as a second language classes, employment, immigration and naturalization services, Women Leadership Training, Youth Leadership Training, housing development, and housing assistance to refugees and immigrants from Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and other Middle Eastern countries.

In partnership with the Chabot College, Ms. Rouhani also founded a primary school for refugees and immigrant children in Hayward, California. She developed the curriculum which was later incorporated into the Hayward Unified School District working with refugees and immigrants. The school graduated 1,200 students in two years. Ms. Rouhani also organizes the Afghan New Year which attracts over 10,000 people from all over California. She has ensured that Afghan women can participate in the organization of this event, thus promoting the Afghan women's cause and creating a safe forum for discussion.

In 1998, Ms. Rouhani organized one of the largest humanitarian projects for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, primarily benefiting Afghan refugee women and children. She has appeared as a panelist at San Francisco State University, State Advisory Council of California, St. Mary's University in Oakland, and other private and public organizations, speaking about social adjustment of refugees and the human rights violations faced by Afghan women. She received an award from the Afghan Center in

1988 for her leadership role in organizing one of the largest humanitarian aid efforts to Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

In addition, Ms. Rouhani has received several awards from Alameda County Board of Supervisors, and the Governor's Citizenship Award for her outstanding contribution to strengthening local communities.

HADISA SAFI

Hadisa Safi came to Georgia in 2000 as a refugee, having worked extensively in child development and children's advocacy in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Ms. Safi served as a community-based social work trainer for six years for Swedish Save the Children in Peshawar, Pakistan. While working at Save the Children, Ms. Safi also promoted children's rights to basic health, and community-based rehabilitation. Prior to Save the Children, Ms. Safi was the General Director of Kindergartens for the Department of Education in Kabul, Afghanistan. She supervised all kindergartens, nurseries and daycare centers in the city. She also supervised teachers and staff, formed and managed the parent committees, and established partnerships with area primary schools. Ms. Safi has received many awards and commendations, and has participated in the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi, Kenya, and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. She is fluent in Pashto and Persian, and has written numerous articles on the issues of women and children, including children's responses to trauma. Ms. Safi is a trained nurse and midwife, and currently teaches at the Children's World Learning Center in Georgia.

MARY CHOPAN ALAMSHAHI

Mary Chopan Alamshahi was born in Northern Afghanistan and went on to attend the School of Medicine University of Kabul. She was later forced to leave Afghanistan for the US, where she obtained a nursing degree from San Francisco State University in 1990. She worked as a registered nurse for several years, and then obtained a graduate degree at Sacramento State University. Since 1994, she has worked as a nurse practitioner specializing in internal medicine.

Ms. Alamshahi has also worked to support the cause of oppressed Afghan women, and is seeking a role for women in the upcoming Afghan government. She supports the principle of democracy through the convening of a Loya Jerga or Afghan Grand Assembly, a grassroots effort empowering the Afghan people to determine their own future. She currently resides in Roseville, California.



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Vital Voices Global Leadership Institute 2001
Women's Leadership to Rebuild Afghanistan

Washington, DC

A Critical Need

The United States, the U.N. and other nations are currently engaged in discussions to create a post-Taliban coalition government in Afghanistan. Prior to the takeover by the Taliban, women played a leadership role in Afghan society. They served as lawyers and judges, educators, physicians and government leaders. It is crucial that women take their rightful place in the new Afghan government. VVGP is working to bring the issue of women's participation to the attention of decision-makers.

When a new regime emerges in Afghanistan, women must be represented in significant numbers in decision-making bodies to ensure that the ideals of democracy, civil society, and freedom prevail over the forces of extremism and repression. Thousands of Afghan women have been violently and abruptly removed from positions of authority. These women need confidence building and communications skills to empower them to represent their interests in the coming weeks and months to U.S. government officials and members of the international press.

Program

The Vital Voices Global Partnership will host a three-day leadership and communications workshop for emerging women leaders of Afghan citizenship. The workshop is part of the Vital Voices Global Leadership Institute at Georgetown University, a collaboration based in the Georgetown Public Policy Institute and includes participation from the Schools of Law, Business, and Foreign Service. The program will provide Afghan women with the unprecedented opportunity to:

- Develop their leadership skills in communication and advocacy;
- Meet with decision-makers in the U.S. government, on Capitol Hill, and at the U.S. Department of State to influence US policy initiatives to rebuild Afghanistan;
- Shape a larger on-going program at the Leadership Institute and in Afghanistan by helping to develop curriculum for future training of emerging women leaders in civil society development and democracy building.

These trainings will counter the destructive forces of terrorism and repression by empowering Afghan women to play a role in building a stable, democratic society.

VVGP Capabilities

Members of the VVGP leadership team have been leading advocates for US diplomatic and humanitarian support for Afghanistan women and girls suffering since the Taliban moved into Kabul in 1996. Under their leadership at the White House and the State Department, the United States government developed innovative projects for girls' education, and capacity building for Afghan women refugees. VVGP has been in regular contact with Afghan women living in the U.S. as well as other parts of the world and has forged alliances with senior U.N. officials, international organizations and foreign leaders to continue to address the needs of women in Afghanistan.

On November 1, 2001, the Vital Voices Global Partnership (VVGP) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) hosted a public forum at the United Nations: "Women's Voices to Rebuild Afghanistan." The panel featured UNIFEM Executive Director Noleen Heyzer, VVGP President Theresa Loar and leading Afghan women activists.

The Afghan panelists represented a larger group of Afghan women who are working to promote women's rights in their country. The Afghan women leaders highlighted the need for Afghan women to play a leading role in the current deliberations on the future of Afghanistan and in decision-making bodies in any future government. The panelists discussed their need to develop a substantive dialogue with key U.S. policy-makers, equip Afghan women with leadership skills, and building a network of those Afghan women leaders living in exile around the world.

**Vital Voices Global Leadership Institute 2001
Leadership and Communications Workshop for
Afghan Women
November 26-30
Washington, DC**

Monday, November 26

Participants arrive in Washington, DC

6:00 p.m.

Welcome at the Jury's Hotel
1500 New Hampshire Ave., NW

Tuesday, November 27

Vital Voices Global Partnership
1050 Connecticut Ave., NW 10th Floor
Washington, DC

8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Communications Training

Ann Lewis

Former White House Communications Director and
Professor, Brandeis University

10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Media Training

Lisa Lederer, President, PR Solutions Inc.
Gretchen Wright, VP, PR Solutions Inc.

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Leadership Training

Mahnaz Afkhami, President, Women's Learning
Partnership

4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Discussion and Training

Dennis Wholey, Host, *This is America*

Wednesday, November 28

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Hands-on Media Training

Susan Davis, President, Susan Davis International
1000 Vermont Ave., NW
Washington, DC

Jill Schuker, SVP and Managing Director,
International Operations and Global Strategy, The
Kamber Group
1920 L St., NW Ste. 700
Washington, DC

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Meetings with policy-makers TBD

4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Public Forum at Georgetown University
Co-sponsored by Georgetown's School of Foreign
Service and the Vital Voices Global Partnership
Moderated by **Carol Lancaster**, Board Member,
Vital Voices Global Partnership and Director of the
Graduate School of Foreign Service, Georgetown
University
Bunn Intercultural Center, Georgetown University

6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

*Special invitation to the National Democratic
Institute for International Affairs Annual Dinner*
in honor of **Kofi Annan**, U.N. Secretary General

Thursday, November 29

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

*Roundtable discussion on future curriculum for
training emerging Afghan women leaders in civil
society development and democracy building*
Welcome by **Carol Lancaster**, Board Member,
Vital Voices Global Partnership and Director of the
Graduate School of Foreign Service,
Georgetown University
Facilitated by **Joan Winship**, Advisor for Strategic
Alliances, Vital Voices Global Partnership
Bunn Intercultural Center, Georgetown University

1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Coalition Building, Next Steps, and Wrap-up

2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Senate Briefing

5:00 p.m. to 6:30 pm.

Reception in Honor of Afghan Women Leaders
hosted by **Donna McLarty**,
Vice Chairperson of the Board of Directors,
Vital Voices Global Partnership

Friday, November 30

Participants depart



1050 Connecticut Ave., NW, 10th Floor Washington, DC 20036 Tel: (202) 772-4162 Fax: (202) 772-2353 www.vitalvoices.org

VVGP Global Leadership Institute at Georgetown University

What is it? The Vital Voices Global Leadership Institute at Georgetown University is a certificate training program for emerging women leaders from around the world. It was created to respond to the requests from emerging women leaders themselves. Groups of women come to Georgetown University to receive leadership training, hands-on experience, and valuable and enduring partnerships with U.S. and international leaders in one of three critical areas: civil society and political participation, business and entrepreneurship; and human rights, particularly trafficking in persons. The collaboration has its academic base in the Georgetown University Public Policy Institute and includes the participation of the Schools of Law, Business, Foreign Service and the Office of International Programs.

What do women learn? VVGP is working closely with experts in the region to develop appropriate curricula and ensure participants are able to effectively apply their training when they return home. Each curriculum track is developed and taught by members of the Georgetown faculty as well as outside experts in the field. The program provides for interaction with Georgetown students in order to facilitate cross-cultural dialogue and provide additional networking opportunities.

The courses focus on leadership skills, including oral and written communications, organizational development, project management, developing effective partnerships, and utilizing technology. Specialized coursework includes skills building in either civil society and political participation (e.g., drafting legislation, lobbying, coalition building, issue advocacy); business and entrepreneurship (accessing capital, writing a business plan, marketing); or human rights, especially trafficking in women and children (public awareness campaigns, crafting legislation, prevention and protective services, effective prosecution). Vital Voices is tailoring each training to the needs of the participants.

How are participants chosen? Vital Voices utilizes our extensive network in countries across the globe to identify the best candidates for training at the Global Leadership Institute. First and foremost, selection is field driven. Vital Voices elicits recommendations from partner organizations, U.S. Embassies, and international institutions to identify emerging women leaders who will have a significant impact in their home countries.

What happens after graduation? In the year following the training, Vital Voices will assess whether the participants have met the goals they set, as well as their future needs. The VVGP network will play a role in designing follow up trainings on the ground in their home countries and in building regional and country specific alumnae associations of the Vital Voices Institute. Over time, Vital Voices will use the Global Leadership Institute as a model to establish affiliated training programs at other academic institutions or through other programs in the targeted countries.



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"My involvement with Vital Voices gave me the support I needed to raise national attention to the issue of trafficking in women and girls in the Ukraine. The skills and credibility I gained through Vital Voices helped me to get legislation passed to combat this modern-day form of slavery."

--Oksana Gorbunova, NGO leader in Ukraine

In Northern Ireland, a woman runs for the new Assembly, hoping to be a voice for peace and prosperity in a place that has waited too long for both. In Russia, a woman creates an association of crisis centers to coordinate efforts to aid victims of domestic violence. In Cambodia, a woman launches a microcredit program so that hundreds of women are now able to start their own businesses – and support their own families. What do these three women have in common? They are all emerging women leaders who are part of the nonprofit Vital Voices Global Partnership (VVGP).

What is VVGP? VVGP is a worldwide non-governmental organization of women leaders building democracies, strong economies, and peace. Its work focuses on three critical areas: expanding women's roles in politics and civil society; increasing successful women's entrepreneurship; and fighting human rights abuses, such as the trafficking in women and children.

Who is involved? VVGP has a staff with vast expertise in global women's issues and a strong bipartisan board that includes Discovery Communications President Judith McHale; Carnegie Corporation President Emeritus David Hamburg; former World Bank U.S. Executive Director Jan Piercy; Chair of Susan Davis International Susan Davis; Boeing Vice President for Europe Ambassador Craig Johnstone; and Director of the Georgetown Foreign Service Program Carol Lancaster. The Honorary Co-Chairs are Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Nancy Kassebaum Baker. VVGP has affiliated chapters and thousands of advisory council and network members throughout the world – from Russia to Venezuela. It is working in partnership with leading corporations, universities, non-profits, foundations, and governments.

How did it all begin? VVGP grew out of the United States government's successful Vital Voices Democracy Initiative, which was established after the UN 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing to promote the advancement of women as a U.S. foreign policy goal. Now, it is building on that record by providing skills, networking, and other support to women around the world, whether they are working for the right to vote in Kuwait or entrepreneurship in Vietnam.

What is VVGP doing? Its innovative programs include:

- **The Vital Voices Global Leadership Institute at Georgetown University:** Leadership training programs for women around the world in public policy, entrepreneurship and human rights.
- **Anti-Trafficking Initiative:** Prevent trafficking abroad and work with social service centers, counselors, and the legal community to provide assistance to the 50,000 girls and women who are shipped like drugs to the U.S. and enslaved here every year.



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