

## Panel 1 - Humanitarian Crisis in Afghanistan: Measuring Canada's Response



### SARAH KEELER

Advocacy and Engagement Manager,  
Canadian Women for Women in  
Afghanistan

Moderator

Sarah is a passionate advocate for human rights, intersectional feminism and participatory development. She has two decades of global experience supporting women affected by conflict and violence, and has worked with agencies including USIP, DFID, and the International Organization for Migration. She has managed projects on women's health, food sovereignty, economic empowerment and gender based violence for refugee organizations in Canada and Europe, and in East and Central Africa, Mexico, Turkey and Iraq, where she lived for two years, helping to found Iraqi Kurdistan's first public English language university, and coordinating peace training initiatives with Iraqi NGOs and UNAMI. She studied International Development, Refugee Studies, and holds a PhD in Anthropology and Peace and Conflict Studies.



### WAZHMA FROGH

Co-Founder, Women and Peace Studies Organization

Panelist

Wazhma Frogh is a woman in peacebuilding practitioner from Afghanistan with over 20 years of community engagement and local peacebuilding interventions. Based in Canada, Wazhma continues to provide strategic leadership to Women & Peace Studies Organization (WPSO -Afghanistan) working with over 200 women activists in the country as part of the organization she founded to integrate women into national and local peace processes since 2012. WPSO implements local community-based peacebuilding and other community development initiatives in Afghanistan led by women working with the Local Women Peacebuilders Network across the country.

Since 2012, Wazhma worked with the country's High Peace Council to mediate the peace negotiations with the Taliban, and the President appointed her on the Council in 2017. She along with other key mediators initiated the first National Dialogue in Afghanistan that contributed towards the historical three-day ceasefire by the Taliban. disputes around water, land and other resources between communities.

The 2017 Women Peacebuilding Fellow at the Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, Wazhma collaborated on a localization initiative to institutionalize women's perspectives around UNSCR 1325 & WPS agenda with local women groups and international partners, at the University of San Diego in California. She has been extensively trained in dialogue and mediation at the Uppsala Department of Peace and Conflict in Sweden, Folke Bennoditte Academy of Women Peacebuilders & Mediators, practiced along with the peacebuilders and mediators from Philippines and Cambodia in Seam Reap, Cambodia and later in Nepal. Her focus has been on women's engagement in mediation and peacemaking at the Women & Public Policy at the School of government at Harvard University. As a member of the Women Waging Peace Network and Women's Alliance for Security

Leadership, she engages with global mediation practices along with other women peace builders.

Wazhma has worked extensively with women organizations and networks on legislative advocacy including the Elimination of Violence against Women Law, prevention of sexual harassment at workplace in security agencies and led several national and international campaigns supporting women's voices from Afghanistan. She has focused some of her field work on Traditional Dispute Resolution Mechanisms along with Human Rights Watch and documentation of the local conflicts in Afghanistan that provided the context & foundation for the government's first Traditional Dispute Resolution Mechanisms Law. Wazhma has written extensively on Afghanistan peace and negotiations challenges and dynamics. From 2016-2018, She was elected co-chair of the Women, Peace and Security Working Group for the implementation of the National Action Plan on U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325, a joint platform of UNWOMEN, international community & Afghan government for 2 consecutive terms. She participated in Afghanistan-Pakistan track 1 and 2 dialogues as part of the Afghanistan Peace process.

Wazhma is a post graduate of International Law from the University of Warwick in England and the American University of Afghanistan.



## SHINKAI KAROKHAIL

Former Afghan Ambassador to Canada

Panelist

Miss Karokhail is a well-known women's rights activist who served as a member of the Afghan parliament for 15 years. Then appointed as Afghan ambassador to Canada. She was also the Director of the Afghan Women's Education Center (AWEC) for four years, besides being a member of the Afghan Women's Network (AWN). Shinkai Karokhail initiated a nation-wide campaign, "Let's Fight Against Cancer", along with other prominent figures and medical professionals in Afghanistan. Her efforts, with the support of Afghanistan's first lady, Mrs. Rula Ghani, resulted in establishing the first Afghanistan Cancer Foundation (ACF), and an Oncology Ward at Jamhooriat Public Hospital in Kabul, October 2016.

During her tenure as a parliamentarian, Miss Karokhail, with the help of her colleagues and women's rights activists, established the Women Parliamentary Caucus. Their collective efforts made it possible to have the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) approved by the government. Also, she was part of a team drafting the Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) Law which was ultimately enacted by a Presidential Decree in 2009. Likewise, Shinkai Karokhail was behind major amendments to 50 articles related to the Shiite Personal Status Law.

Miss Karokhail has received several prestigious awards from national and international organizations for her efforts to advance women's rights since 1990. She received an award from the first lady of Afghanistan and the Ministry of Public Health in relation to fighting against cancer in October 2016. In May 2014, Miss Karokhail received the Malalai Kakar Human Rights Award from Queens-based Women for Afghan Women organization. Also in August 2014, the Afghan American Women's Association (AAWA), based in Virginia, granted her a Humanitarian Award for the promotion of women's rights in Afghanistan. In September 2012, EastWest Institute, a U.S.-based NGO presented a joint award to Value-based Leadership to Miss Karokhail and Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan. Moreover, on the International Anti-Corruption Day, the Civil Society Coordination Center (CSCC) bestowed Miss Karokhail with an Anti-Corruption Award in December 2015. Her outstanding efforts for the promotion of women's rights were also appreciated by several media outlets, including a famous TV channel, AREZO in the north of Afghanistan in 2013.

Finally Miss Karokhail became a member of parliament for the third time from Kabul province.

She is also the chairperson and founder of Afghan parliamentary women caucus 2007 and 2019.



## LAURYN OATES

**Executive Director, Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan (CW4WAfghan)**

Panelist

Dr. Lauryn Oates is the Executive Director of Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan and a lifelong advocate for gender equality and the rights of Afghan women. She holds a BA Honours in International Development from McGill University, an MA in Human Security and Peacebuilding from Royal Roads University, and a PhD in Language and Literacy Education from the University of British Columbia. She has worked with a variety of development organizations, multilateral agencies and governments designing, planning, evaluating or implementing programming in education and in gender equality, particularly in war-affected countries. She is the recipient of several awards and distinctions, including a Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal awarded by the province of BC.



## IQRA KHALID

**Member of Parliament for Mississauga—Erin Mills**

Co-Host and Moderator

Iqra Khalid was first elected in the October 2015 federal election, taking on the role of Chair of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights during the 43rd Parliament.

Khalid's private member's motion M-103 condemning Islamophobia became a lightning rod for discussion about tolerance in early 2017. She steadfastly defended the motion, which divided the House. In prior media interviews Khalid has suggested that she — as a minority woman, immigrant and millennial — is the future face of politics. She was decisively re-elected in 2019.

Khalid is the founder of the Mississauga-Erin Mills Women's Council, a group that advises on women's issues and also holds town halls regularly in order to discuss topics such as community safety and mental health.

Khalid's family moved from Pakistan to England. When she was 12, they relocated to Mississauga. She has media and communications experience from her position as Media Relations Ambassador at York U, Reporter for the Pakistan Post, and Communications Coordinator at the Council for the Advancement of Muslim Professionals.

## **Panel 2 - Pathways to Safety, Resettlement and Integration for Afghan Women: Barriers and Opportunities**



### **SALMA ZAHID**

**Member of Parliament for Scarborough Centre and Chair of the House Standing Committee on Immigration and Citizenship**

Co-Host and Panelist

Salma Zahid began her political career lobbying to keep full-day kindergarten in Ontario during the late 1990s. Her victory returns this traditionally Liberal riding to the fold. Prior to gaining her seat, she worked for the Ontario government as a senior advisor to the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Trade. Her policy and governance work in Ontario extends to healthcare, infrastructure, and tourism, culture and sports.

Zahid immigrated to Canada in the late 1990's and is one of two women of Pakistani origin elected to Parliament in 2015. She and her family have been long-time residents of Scarborough. In February 2018, Zahid took medical leave following a non-Hodgkin's lymphoma diagnosis. She started chemotherapy on February 20, 2018.

Zahid has a history of community involvement with organizations in Scarborough and Toronto, particularly on youth and women's issues. She served as Chair of the Regent Park Duke of York Public School Parent Council and has worked with local food banks. Her community engagement has brought her significant recognition in the form of the Diamond Jubilee Medal for meritorious service to the community.

Zahid's parliamentary roles include sitting as Chair of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration and Member of the Liaison Committee and the Standing Committee on Afghanistan.



### **ADEENA NIAZI**

**Executive Director, Afghan Women's Organization Refugee & Immigrant Services**

Panelist

Formerly a lecturer at Kabul University, Afghanistan, Adeena Niazi arrived in Canada in 1988 as a refugee. In 1990, she founded the Afghan Women's Organization (AWO). Under her leadership, the organization has been active in supporting newcomer women and their families, especially refugees who have experienced war and violence. The AWO, as one of only a few settlement agencies in Canada that are also a sponsorship agreement holder, has sponsored and successfully settled 1000s of refugees. Adeena has managed the AWO for over 27 years, first as president of the working board and then as Executive Director. She served as an elected member of the NGO/Government Committee on Private Sponsorship for 4 years and as a board member on organizations serving newcomer communities including: Refugee Law office, Culture Link, Women in Transition, Afghan Association of Ontario, Women Intercultural Network, Women in Transition, Canadian Centre for Victims of torture, Canadian Council for Refugees, and Better Living Health and Community Services.

Adeena is a strong and dedicated advocate for women and children in Afghanistan. During the Taliban regime, she traveled to Afghanistan regularly to establish and manage educational programs, create home-based trainings, income-generating initiatives, and to open an orphanage for young girls. In partnership with a group of prominent Canadian women, she founded the National Coalition in Support of Afghan Women, and has advocated for the human rights of Afghan women at international conferences. Adeena contributed to the

drafting of the Brussels Proclamation during the Brussels summit of Afghan Women Leaders.

For her years of service and dedication to humanitarian work, Adeena has received numerous awards. She was honoured with the Order of Ontario (2008); was one of two Afghan Canadians elected to Afghanistan's Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) to vote on the transitional government in Kabul (2002), and made McLean Magazine's Honor Roll as one of Ten Canadians Who Have Made a Difference (2002). Adeena has also been awarded with:

- Leading Women, Building Communities Award, Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012)
- Contribution to Civil Society Award, Rehma Community Services (2012)
- Humanity, Social Justice and Equality Award, National Ethnic Press & Media Council of Canada (2011)
- Skills for Change New Pioneers Award (2010)
- International Women's Day, Embassy of Afghanistan (2007)
- YWCA Women of Distinction (2004)
- Legal Education Action Fund and Women's Intercultural Network's Persons Day Award (2003)
- York University's Centre for Refugee Studies, Vincent Kelly Award (2003)

Adeena was featured as one of nine distinguished Muslim women in the Canadian Council of Muslim Women's book, *At My Mother's Feet*.



## THE HONOURABLE MARYAM MONSEF

**Former Cabinet Minister on Women and Gender Equality and Member of Parliament for Peterborough—Kawartha**

Panelist

Maryam Monsef is the Founder and CEO of ONWARD. As a speaker, facilitator, convener and advocate, she continues to advance her vision for a world where women and their families are thriving.

Maryam has led public policy files at the highest levels of Government. She has spent thousands of hours delivering powerful speeches, and giving media appearances, from Davos, the G7, G20 and the UN, to hot seat political shows, classrooms and workplaces.

In 2015, Maryam was elected as Member of Parliament for Peterborough-Kawartha and chosen to serve in Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Cabinet. Between 2015 to 2021, she served as President of the Queen's Privy Council, Minister for Democratic Institutions, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister of International Development, Minister of Rural Economic Development and established Canada's first full department for Women and Gender Equality as its Minister. Across these portfolios, she was tasked with driving social and economic justice files for the Government both in Canada and around the world.

Under her stewardship, Canada was recognized as a world leader in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, investments in domestic and international grassroots women's organizations, and for its intersectional response to COVID-19.

In 2018 and 2019, Monsef was recognized by Apolitical as one of the Top 20 global influencers on gender equality, along with Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Michelle Obama and Malala.

A global traveller who loves exploring different cultures, her homebase is Peterborough, Canada. She chairs the Women United Campaign with the United Way Peterborough & District, is part of the Trent University community, and works with Afghan women human rights defenders and other high-impact teams locally, nationally and globally to deliver strong results.



## **RAIHANA AZAD**

**Former Member of Parliament, Afghanistan**

Panelist

Raihana Azad was born on 6 December 1982 in the Daykundi Province of Afghanistan. Her father, Ishaq Azad (AKA) Ustad (teacher), as a well-known teacher and an education activist, relentlessly and passionately worked for the improvement of education in Daikundi for more than two decades.

Raihana Azad did her schooling in Daykundi; she graduated from Kateb University in Kabul with a bachelor's degree in politics and international relations in 2014.

Ms. Azad began her first official mission with the United Nations as a civic educator in Uruzgan Province in 2001. Later on, she worked as a team leader with UNOPS and afterward as supervisor of literacy programs for women with CCA in Daykundi Province.

After working for a few years with NGOs, Raihana Azad competed to win a seat in the provincial council elections from Daykundi province in 2005. She won a seat with thumping victory and served in Daikundi Provincial Council for four years.

In 2010, braving all security challenges, she ran for Wolesi Jirga (lower house of the Parliament) elections from Uruzgan province. She was the first woman to be ever elected as a representative in the Parliament from the said constituency. She served as a representative of Uruzgan province in the Parliament from January 2011 to October 2018. In a much delayed and overdue parliamentary election, Raihana contested a seat from the Daykundi constituency in the 2018 Parliamentary election. She secured the highest number of votes among women in Afghanistan and defeated a male contender. From early 2019 up until 15 August 2021, she served as Daikundy representative in the lower house of the Parliament.





## THE HONOURABLE MARILOU MCPHEDRAN

Senator

Co-Host and Moderator

Marilou McPhedran was appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in 2016. She is a member of the Independent Senators Group.

Born and raised in rural Manitoba, Senator McPhedran is a lawyer and educator who specialized in teaching and developing systemic and sustainable change mechanisms to promote equality and diversity. She co-founded several internationally recognized non-profit Canadian organizations, such as LEAF - the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, which has conducted constitutional equality test cases and interventions for 30-plus years, METRAC - the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children, and the Gerstein Crisis Centre for homeless discharged psychiatric patients.

Senator McPhedran founded the International Women's Rights Project in 1998 and the Institute for International Women's Rights at Global College in 2009. As CEO of a Federal Centre of Excellence based at York University, she directed staff and programs that included a cyber research network on women's health and rights. Senator McPhedran has developed human rights courses online and in the classroom and has chaired three independent inquiries into the sexual abuse of patients (1991-2015), co-investigated and co-authored applied research.

Senator McPhedran chaired the 2006 International Forum on Women's Activism in Constitutional Reform, held the Ariel F. Sallows Chair in Human Rights at the University of Saskatchewan College of Law, was appointed Chief Commissioner of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission in 2007, and was Principal (Dean) of The University of Winnipeg Global College in Manitoba from June 2008 to July 2012, then served as the Human Rights Fellow in the UNFPA Geneva Liaison Office.

From 2008 to 2019, Senator McPhedran was a tenured full professor at the University of Winnipeg. She was the founding director of the Institute for International Women's Rights at Global College from 2009 to 2016 and the creator / director of the annual 'Human Rights UniverCity' summer institute based at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights from 2011 to 2018. Senator McPhedran was named a Member of the Order of Canada in 1985.

### **Panel 3 - Mobilizing the International Community: the Future of Advocacy for Afghan Women**



## **RINA AMIRI**

**US Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls and Human Rights**

Panelist

Rina Amiri is currently the U.S. Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls, and Human Rights. Under the Obama Administration, she served as a senior advisor to the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Ms. Amiri brings over two decades of political expertise, advising and working with governments in various conflict settings in West and the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, Central and South Asia, and Europe. Her areas of focus are peace and security, with a specialization in inclusion in mediation processes. Ms. Amiri has served in the United Nations in several capacities including as a Senior Mediation Expert and as a member of the United Nations' Special Representative of the Secretary General's political team in Afghanistan during the implementation of the Bonn Agreement. She has held senior and leadership positions in a variety of universities and think tanks, including the Women in Public Policy Program at Harvard's John F. Kennedy's School of Government; Princeton University's Innovations for Successful Societies; and New York University's Center for Global Affairs and The Center on International Cooperation where, as a Senior Fellow, she led the Afghanistan and Regional Policy Initiative. She has championed the rights of Afghan women and girls for decades and is a founding member of Inclusive Security, a global women's initiative advocating for the inclusion of women in peace processes.



## **RICHARD BENNETT**

**UN Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan**

Panelist

Mr. Bennett has served in Afghanistan on several occasions in different capacities including as the Chief of the Human Rights Service with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). He has previously played a role in the promotion and protection of human rights in Afghanistan and supported the United Nations on a number of human rights issues, such as protection of civilians, transitional justice, child rights, rule of law, rights of people with disabilities, protection of human rights defenders and a range of economic, social and cultural rights.

Mr. Bennett also served with the United Nations as the Representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and head of the human rights components of peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, and South Sudan as well as twice in Afghanistan (2003-07 and 2018-19). He has been a long-term adviser to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.

From 2007 to 2010, Mr. Bennett was the Representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal and head of OHCHR's office there. He has also been Chief of Staff for the UN Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Sri Lanka and Special Adviser to the Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights in New York.

Mr. Bennett worked for Amnesty International from 2014 – 17 initially as its Asia-Pacific Program Director and later as head of Amnesty's United Nations Office in New York. From mid-2019, he worked as a consultant on UN human

rights assignments in Afghanistan, Myanmar and New York.



## TOMAS NIKLASSON

EU Special Envoy to Afghanistan

Panelist

The MP's bio goes here. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Metus dictum at tempor commodo. Venenatis cras sed felis eget velit aliquet sagittis id. Id ornare arcu odio ut sem. Enim neque volutpat ac tincidunt vitae. Lobortis elementum nibh tellus molestie nunc non blandit. Integer quis auctor elit sed vulputate. Faucibus purus in massa tempor nec feugiat nisl pretium. At erat pellentesque adipiscing commodo elit.

Et molestie ac feugiat sed. Suspendisse ultrices gravida dictum fusce ut. Euismod quis viverra nibh cras pulvinar mattis nunc sed. Netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas integer eget aliquet. Massa vitae tortor condimentum lacinia quis vel. Eros in cursus turpis massa tincidunt. Suspendisse sed nisi lacus sed. Pellentesque elit ullamcorper dignissim cras tincidunt lobortis feugiat vivamus at.



## ALISON DAVIDIAN

Country Representative a.i. for UN Women in Afghanistan

Panelist

Alison has over fifteen years of experience in development, gender equality, and peace and security policy and programming. She is currently the representative for UN Women in Afghanistan and previously, she worked as the Deputy Country Representative. Prior to this, she worked as a Programme Management Specialist on Governance, Peace and Security with UN Women's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (2017-2019), supporting implementation of over \$USD 20 million in governance, peace and security programmes with a focus on preventing violent extremism, anti-trafficking, access to justice, and gender sensitive infrastructure. From 2013-2017, she was a Policy Specialist in the Peace and Security Unit at HQ where she managed the Transitional Justice portfolio and led the creation of the Preventing Violent Extremism portfolio for UN Women. From 2011-2013, she managed the Access to Justice programme for UN Women in Uganda.

Before her time at UN Women, she worked for organizations including the International Center for Transitional Justice in the Democratic Republic of Congo, UNDP in Somalia, and the Refugee Advice and Casework Service in Australia. She has a BA (Government) and an LLB from the University of Sydney, and an LLM from Harvard.



## BOB RAE

**Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN in New York**

Panelist

Bob Rae is the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations in New York.

Mr. Rae served as Premier of Ontario from 1990-1995, and interim Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada from 2011-2013. He was elected to federal and provincial parliaments 11 times between 1978 and 2013.

Mr. Rae received his Honours B.A. in Modern History from the University of Toronto, an M.Phil in Politics as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, and graduated from the University of Toronto Faculty of Law in 1977. He was named a Queen's Counsel in 1984.

As a lawyer in private practice, Mr. Rae led the restructuring of the Canadian Red Cross, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and chaired the board of the Royal Conservatory of Music. He also wrote "Lessons to be Learned" on the Air India bombing, and "Ontario a Leader in Learning" - a study of the Ontario higher education system. He was also named to the Security and Intelligence Review Committee by then Prime Minister Chrétien.

Mr. Rae's return to Parliament for the constituency of Toronto Centre in 2008 led to his appointment as Foreign Affairs spokesman for his party, and to his election as interim Leader in 2011. Between 2013 and 2020 he taught law and public policy at the University of Toronto, and was a partner and senior counsel to the law firm OKT LLP, specializing in indigenous law and constitutional issues.

In 1997, Mr. Rae became a founding board member of the Forum of Federations. He went on to serve as Chairman and President of the Forum, and advised many governments and groups on issues of constitutional change, the rule of law, federalism and devolution. He remains a Senior Fellow of the Forum

Mr. Rae is also a Senior Fellow at Massey College, and the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights. He served as the Chief Negotiator for the 9 First Nations that are members of the Matawa Tribal Council in Northern Ontario between 2013 and 2018.

In October 2017, Mr. Rae was appointed as Canada's Special Envoy to Myanmar. In this role, he engaged in diplomatic efforts to address the crisis in the country's Rakhine State and wrote the report "Tell Them We're Human" in 2018. In March 2020, he was named by Prime Minister Trudeau to be Canada's Special Envoy on Humanitarian and Refugee Issues. This led to his report "A Global Pandemic Requires a Global Response", which was made public shortly before his appointment as Ambassador to the UN.

Bob Rae is a Privy Councillor, a Companion of the Order of Canada, a member of the Order of Ontario, and has numerous awards and honorary degrees from institutions in Canada and around the world. In addition to several government reports, he is the author of five books. Along with music, reading, and writing, he loves tennis, golf, and fishing. He is married to Arlene Perly Rae, writer and public advocate on issues affecting women and children. They have three daughters and five grandchildren.



## **NARGIS NEHAN**

**Former Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum in Afghanistan**

Moderator

Nargis Nehan has served public offices as Director General of the Treasury Department at the Ministry of Finance, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Education, and Advisor to the Minister of Higher Education. During her service, Ms. Nehan initiated several reform projects and implemented them successfully. Centralization and computerization of government revenues and expenditures, establishment of Treasury Single Account, establishment of the Grants Management Unit in the Ministry of Education and facilitating development of the Strategic Plan for the Ministry of Higher Education are her major achievements. Ms. Nehan during her service in the public sector earned the reputation of a patriot and a reformist woman.

Ms. Nehan after seven years of service in the public sector felt her routine jobs are not satisfying her passion, soon she left the government and founded EQUALITY for Peace and Democracy (EPD) a civil society organization for empowering women and youth. As of now EPD is working in 16 provinces of Afghanistan. During this time Ms. Nehan also served as a member of the Supreme Council of Afghanistan Central Bank.

Ms. Nehan, after establishment of the National Unity Government once again joined the government, serving as Advisor to President for two years and Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum for almost three years. Her major achievements in the Ministry of Mines were development reform strategy, adoption of new minerals law and regulation, restructuring the ministry in line with the roadmap which resulted in downsizing more than 500 extra positions, computerization of revenue and cadaster management systems and making all mining contracts publicly available through a transparency portal for scrutiny. Currently besides advocating for women's rights, she is a freelance consultant working for international organizations and firms.

Ms. Nehan is a role model in Afghanistan demonstrating capacity, commitment and dedication of Afghan women with a vision and determination.