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Europa



26/02 20:28 CET

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27 February 2007

Afghanistan

Video Islamists still keeping women down in Afghanistan

Afghan women are asking for European help in fighting for basic human rights in their country, more than five years after the ultra-conservative Taliban regime was ousted. The Women's Rights Committee of the European Parliament has organised a public hearing in Brussels, seeking to outline specific ways women can help consolidate peace and lead reconstruction.

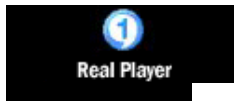
A representative from the Afghan foreign ministry, Djemila, said while structures had been built, in many cases they could not be used. She said: "School buildings are there, but access is barred in some provinces; Some people don't want girls to be educated. That's why we're asking for EU help."

MEP Veronique de Keyser said that despite progress since 2001, women in Afghanistan continue to face significant obstacles: "It's a country where everything remains to be done for women - to be conquered. Safety is particularly fragile, the further you get away from Kabul. Then there is the level of education, health, women dying in labour... And the rate of infant mortality is one of the highest in the world."

Television and radio stations trying to introduce modern ideas into a mostly illiterate society risk a backlash from conservatives. Islamists in the ministry of culture are driving for more restrictive media laws. They say there are too many women on television and too many Indian films that do not respect Islamic morality.

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