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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Government Task Force for Combating Violence Against Women Releases 3-Month Workplan**

**Kabul, July 18 2005** – On July 10, 2005, the Inter-Ministerial Task Force on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (VAW) finalized and endorsed a three-month workplan to address violations of women's rights. The workplan identifies deficiencies in Afghanistan's justice system and mandates action different agencies and government ministries must take by October 12, 2005 to improve the judicial and law enforcement systems.

The workplan requires, among other things, that officials in the courts, Attorney General's office, and police departments receive training on interacting responsibly with women, that marriage and divorce be registered and formalized, and that women's rights under Islam be secured. The implementation of the workplan will be supervised by the VAW Task Force and the Ministry of Women's Affairs' Legal Department, with technical support from UNIFEM.

The Task Force is made up of high-level officials from the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Afghan Women Judges Association, Supreme Court, Attorney General's Office, and Ministries of Women's Affairs, Pilgrimage, Information and Culture, Public Health, Foreign Affairs, Refugees, Interior, and Education, and anticipates the contribution of UN agencies in its work. The Task Force was created by presidential decree on June 6, 2005.

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