



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Judges Announced for Historic People's Tribunal for Women of Afghanistan

Madrid, Spain – 22 September 2025 — The People's Tribunal for Women of Afghanistan, convened under the auspices of the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal (PPT), has finalized the distinguished panel of judges who will preside over its hearings in Madrid from October 8–10, 2025.

The Tribunal will hear the prosecutors' statement, together with testimonies from Afghan women survivors and expert evidence, to examine the Taliban's system of gender persecution and assess it under international law. Led by Afghan civil society organizations — **Rawadari**, **AHRDO (Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization)**, **DROPS (Organization for Policy Research & Development Studies)**, and **HRD+ (Human Rights Defenders Plus)** — this initiative provides a vital platform to document violations, amplify survivors' voices, and press for accountability.

The panel brings together eminent jurists, academics, and advocates from across the world. Among them are constitutional lawyers, international law professors, human rights experts, Islamic scholars and journalists who have dedicated their careers to advancing gender justice, defending human rights, and giving voice to those silenced by conflict and repression. Their combined expertise covers transitional justice, international criminal law, minority rights, freedom of the press, and women's rights at national and global levels.

The confirmed judges are:

**Araceli (Arancha) García del Soto (Spain)** – Psychologist and human rights expert in psychosocial and trauma-informed approaches.

**Elisenda Calvet-Martínez (Spain)** – International law scholar specializing in transitional justice and genocide studies.

**Emilio Ramírez Matos (Spain)** – Lawyer and academic with expertise in civil law, heritage law, and human rights.



**Ghizaal Haress (Afghanistan)** – Constitutional lawyer and former Ombudsperson of Afghanistan.

**Mai El-Sadany (Egypt/United States)** – Human rights lawyer and Executive Director of the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy.

**Marina Forti (Italy)** – Journalist and writer focusing on environment, rights, and international affairs.

**Rashida Manjoo (South Africa)** – Professor Emeritus of Law, University of Cape Town; former UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women.

**Kalpana Sharma (India)** – Journalist and author recognized for her work on gender, development, and media accountability.

In addition to the judges, a team of Afghan prosecutors will present the indictment, framing the legal analysis of gender persecution under international law.

At the close of the hearings, the judges will issue a preliminary statement reflecting on the evidence presented. The Tribunal affirms that the testimonies of Afghan women must not remain within closed doors but should be carried into the global public sphere — resisting erasure, demanding justice, and building solidarity.

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