The European Union welcomes amendments of the Criminal Procedure Code

Small, amendments to the law will allow family members of victims of domestic violence to testify as court witnesses.

Kabul, 25 February 2014

The European Union welcomes the Afghan Government's decision to amend the wording of Article 26 of the Criminal Procedure Code to avoid misinterpretation as to the rights of the relatives of an alleged abuser to testify in court.

In its previous form the article was unclear and could have prohibited relatives of alleged abusers from appearing as prosecution witnesses in court. This would have been a serious backward step in the justified and legitimate struggle for the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan.

"We welcome the clarification provided through these amendments and reiterate that promotion and protection of Human Rights – in particular those of women and girls – remains a priority for the European Union. They stands as one of the fundamental principles guiding our actions in Afghanistan and elsewhere", says the European Union Special Representative Franz-Michael Mellbin, commenting on President Karzai's decision to issue a Presidential Decree amending the Criminal Procedure Code.

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