

## **When men fail so profoundly, responsibility falls to WOMEN!**

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### **Countries 'wasting money and blood' in Afghanistan**

A politician who has been described as "the bravest woman in Afghanistan" says that military intervention is not the way to find democracy in her war-torn country.



***Malalai Joya***

Malalai Joya gained international attention for standing before Afghanistan's constitutional grand assembly and accusing her country's leaders of war crimes, human rights violations and supporting the Taliban.

She spent most of her childhood in refugee camps and as a young woman she worked as a women's rights activist under the Taliban.

She ran underground classes and clinics that would have resulted in her torture and execution had she been caught.

In 2003 the secular Muslim made a fearless and emotional public appearance at a constitutional assembly in Kabul.

"War lords are responsible for our country's situation," she said in the speech.

"Afghanistan is the centre for national and international conflicts. They oppress women and have ruined our country. They should be prosecuted.

"They might be forgiven by the Afghan people, but not by history."

Her remarks were met by uproar from the 300 delegates, most of them former Mujaheddin commanders and ex-Taliban officials.

In 2007 she was suspended from parliament for comparing it to a "stable or zoo" and later called the other members of parliament "criminals" and "drug smugglers".

"When I got into parliament, the war lords didn't allow me to talk. They turned off my microphone," she said.

"They beat me by throwing bottles of water at me and threatened to rape me inside the parliament. But they couldn't make me silent."

### **In hiding**

Since then, Ms Joya has survived several assassination attempts and spent the last five years in hiding, never spending 24 hours in the same house.

But this hasn't silenced her. She has written a book, titled Raising My Voice, about her life and experiences as a female politician who dares to speak out.

"I have had five assassination attempts that you can read about in the book I have written on behalf of the 'war generation' and on behalf of innocent people," she said.

"The reason I accepted to write a book was first, to expose the mask of these war lords to the great people around the world and also to tell the truth, as mainstream media is always trying to put dust in the eyes of the people around the world by telling lies.

"Also... the pain and sorrows of my people are reflected in this book. I hope this book will open the minds and the eyes of more people around the world of this catastrophic situation that we are living in."

The book is currently being launched in Australia and is set to be published in 14 countries.

"One thing I am sure of is that not only my people, but people all around the world love the truth and what I did in this book is I said the truth," she said.

"Hopefully one day the truth will find its deserved place."

### **Intervention the 'wrong policy'**

Ms Joya says she is disappointed in the United States' involvement in Afghanistan. She says her country needs to find its own way to democracy without military intervention.

"Everyone is always talking about what would happen if these troops leave us - a civil war will happen in Afghanistan - but nobody is talking about the civil war of today," she said.

***"Unfortunately Australia has followed the wrong policy of the US, which is a mockery of democracy and mockery of the war on terror, and it is quite a war crime that they are doing there."***

"We are between two powerful enemies. From the ground, the Taliban and the northern allies are continuing to commit crimes and fascism against women and men in our country.

"From the sky these ***occupational forces are bombing and killing the civilians.***"

She says she wants people to stand up to their governments against the "wrong policy" of military intervention in Afghanistan.

"These countries are wasting their money and blood in Afghanistan and I, on behalf on my people, pay my condolences to those people who lost their sons, their loves, their husbands in Afghanistan and have been killed," she said.

"They should raise their voices against the wrong policy of their governments."

## **Election**

Ms Joya does not believe the upcoming election, scheduled to be held in August, will make any difference to the unrest and says it will just be **"one puppet replaced with another puppet"**.

**"The next president will be certainly selected behind closed doors at the White House. Our people will have no say in the selection,"** she said.

She says the system is corrupt and there is no justice.

"On behalf of my people I am risking my life so that one day, together with my people, we will bring these criminals to the national and international criminal court, which is a prolonged and risky saga," she said.

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**US diplomacy in Afghanistan**

<http://abc.com.au/news/stories/2009/07/03/2616020.htm>

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