

Biography

H.E. Dr. Zalmay Rassoul

**Former Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of
Afghanistan and Candidate for the Presidency of the 76th
Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 2021-2022**



His Excellency Dr. Zalmay Rassoul is a renowned statesman with vast experience in diplomacy, international affairs, governance, and politics. Throughout his career, and namely while serving as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan from January 2010 to October 2013, he played an important and consequential role in strengthening and expanding Afghanistan's bilateral relations with countries of the region and the world. Under his able leadership, significant progress was made towards promoting cooperation with Afghanistan's neighbors in its region, international partners, and multilateral organizations. Among his major achievements, he initiated and led the launch of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process in 2011, establishing what has become one of the key Afghan-led platforms for sincere and results-oriented regional cooperation.

Furthermore, during his tenure as the Foreign Minister, Afghanistan expanded its engagement in key regional platforms, including the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) which it joined as a member, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which it joined as an observer - both in 2012. Dr. Rassoul was actively engaged with global issues at the United Nations and represented Afghanistan in many UN high-level meetings, including high-level sessions of the UN General Assembly. Notably, he was the head of the Afghan delegation to the 66th session of the UNGA in 2011 and the 68th session in 2013.

Moreover, Dr. Rassoul made strong efforts to maintain and improve international consensus in support of Afghanistan's peace and development efforts. Under his leadership, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan hosted in 2010, for the first time, an international conference on Afghanistan in Afghanistan's capital, Kabul. This international Kabul Conference marked the beginning of the “Kabul Process” and revolutionized the three-sided partnership between the Afghan Government, the United Nations, and the International Community.

Prior to his appointment as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Zalmay Rassoul served as the National Security Advisor of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan since June 2002. As the National Security Advisor, Dr. Rassoul played a constructive role in coordinating activities of the Afghan security institutions in line with Afghanistan's foreign policy. In that role, he closely monitored and provided guidance on the establishment of the Afghan National Army, the Afghan National Police, and the Counter-Narcotics Office. His numerous responsibilities also included conducting the National Threat Assessments and developing the National Security Policy.

Before he was appointed as the National Security Advisor, Dr. Rassoul was nominated as the Minister of Civil Aviation and unanimously approved by the Cabinet in March of 2002. Under his able leadership, Afghanistan's aviation sector was revived after years of abandonment and sanctions under the Taliban's rule. Notably, Dr. Rassoul played an important role in Afghanistan's readmission to the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Preceding his service in the Afghan Government, Dr. Rassoul served as a delegate to the historic December 2001 Bonn Conference. Following the Bonn Conference, he returned to Kabul to participate in the inauguration of the Afghan Interim Administration.

For several decades, Dr. Rassoul has been intensely active in the political struggle for the rights of the Afghan people to live in peace and decide their future in accordance with their free will through democratic processes. Since 1998, Dr. Rassoul, who was at the time working as the Director of the Secretariat of His Majesty Mohammad Zaher Shah —the former King of Afghanistan, devoted his full attention to the convening of an Emergency Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) to achieve a political settlement to the decades-long war in the country. Under Dr. Rassoul's leadership, the Secretariat in Rome played a crucial role in the future political transition of Afghanistan.

Dr. Rassoul was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, and attended Istiqlal French High School, where he graduated as the valedictorian. Subsequently, he traveled to France to study on a scholarship at the Paris Medical School and received his M.D.

A multilinguist, he is fluent in Pashto, Dari, English, French, and Italian and has a working knowledge of Arabic. He has over 30 publications in European and American medical journals and was a member of the American Society of Nephrology.

Decorations:

- Commendeur de la legion d'honneur (France)
- Grande Ufficiale, Solidarieta Italiana, (Italy)
- Wazir Akbar Khan medal. (Afghanistan)