



Nsw Service for the Treatment
and Rehabilitation of Torture
and Trauma Survivors

IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

STARTTS TO CO-HOST FIRST HAZARA HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM WITH
WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY (OPEN FORA) - MARKING THE 20TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE MAZAR-I-SHARIF MASSACRE



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Hazara Human Rights Forum

STARTTS is proud to be co-hosting the very first Hazara Human Rights Forum on Wednesday, 15 August with Western Sydney Open Fora (Western Sydney University) Kateb Hazara Association Inc., Human Care Welfare and SSI to coincide with the 20th Anniversary of the Mazar-i-Sharif Massacre that occurred on 8th August 1998.

Equity and Diversity Open Fora explore a range of social issues of relevance to Western Sydney University and the Greater Western Sydney community.

This free public Forum will explore and discuss the history and current state of the human rights abuses of Hazara people in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran and the impact of the abuses on the Hazara community in Australia, featuring a range of experts as well as voices of Hazara community members.

Forum host, Dr. Sev Ozdowski AM FAICD, Director of Equity and Diversity, Western Sydney University said on the anniversary of the Mazar-i-Sharif Massacre (8 August 2018):

“Australia has welcomed many Hazara’s escaping Afghanistan.”

“They sought refuge because of the stated Taliban policy to exterminate the Hazara people as the Taliban Leader Maulawi Mohammed Hanif, said at the time of the Massacre.”

"Hazaras are not Muslim. You can kill them. It is not a sin." - Mullah Manon Niazi, Governor of Mazar-e Sharif said after the Taliban took over Mazar-i-Sharif City 20 years ago.

According to Human rights watch at least 8000 Hazaras were killed then with an unknown amount displaced.

“Next Wednesday we are holding at Parramatta Campus the Hazara Human Rights forum so that these atrocities are not forgotten and can be prevented #hazararightsnow”, said Dr. Ozdowski.

Joining the Hazara community are guest speakers: **Jorge Aroche**, CEO STARTTS, **Dr Niamatullah Ibrahim**, Deakin University; **Professor William Maley**, Asia Pacific College of Diplomacy, ANU; **Associate Professor Jake Lynch**, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney and **Mr Ahmad Shuja Jamal**, Editor in Chief Georgetown Public Policy Review Georgetown University.

A Q&A will be facilitated by **Dr. Sev Ozdowski AM**, with closing remarks by **Yamamah Agha** (SSI), followed by refreshments.

The expected outcomes of the Forum are to raise awareness of the human rights situation of Hazara people, explore the root causes of Hazara refugee movements and highlight the impact of human rights abuses on Hazara individuals, families and community in Australia. It will also aim to propose solutions relevant to the Australian and international context.

The Forum will be held at Janice Reid Pavilion, Building EEA, Parramatta Campus of Western Sydney University. Event registration at: https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/equity_diversity/equity_and_diversity/open_fora/rsvp

For further information visit: <http://www.hazara.net/persecution/mazar.html>

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The Hazara Human Rights Forum is organised by a working group that is composed of Hazara people representing a number of Hazara organisations and supported by the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), Settlement Services International (SSI) and Western Sydney Open Fora (Western Sydney University).

STARTTS is a specialist, non-profit organization that for 30 years has provided culturally appropriate and cutting-edge psychological and psychosocial treatment and support to help heal the scars of torture and refugee trauma and rebuild their lives in Australia. Since its establishment in 1988, STARTTS has become the peak body in the research, development and dissemination of innovative approaches for the rehabilitation of psychic trauma.