



PRESERVING HEALTH & HUMANITY NOW:

A FESTSCRIPT IN HONOR OF LAWRENCE O. GOSTIN

Dr. Sima Samar

A Nobel Peace Prize nominee, renowned human rights advocate and an identified global influential female figure, Dr. Sima Samar has dedicated her life to public service, humanitarian work and women's empowerment. Since 2002 -2019 she has been the Chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) which holds human rights violators accountable and sets the human rights agenda in Afghanistan. Alongside this, Dr. Samar is the Chairperson of the Commission for the Prevention of Torture and was the Chairperson of Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) for short period.

Prior to her appointment as the chair of AIHRC, she was the Vice President of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan and the first Minister of Women's Affairs for six months. Dr. Samar served as the United Nation's Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Sudan between 2005 and 2009 and in 2019 has been appointed as a member of the United Nation's Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation. Samar also served as member of High Level Panel for Internal Displacement, 2020 –September 2021.

Her commitment to her community is evident through her NGO Shuhada Organization's work in operating 55 middle and high schools for girls and boys in Afghanistan, and three schools in Quetta, Pakistan for Afghan refugees. In addition to this Shuhada operates 12 clinics and three hospitals in Afghanistan and one hospital in Quetta for refugees, dedicated to providing education and healthcare, particularly focusing on women and girls. Shuhada organization was also training women on different skills and promote their empowerment to enable them to stand on their own feet including midwives' female nurse and a lot of income projects. Shuhada organization continue the work and building schools in remote parts of the country where no other organization goes there.

Dr. Samar has continuously advocated for the world's under-represented and marginalized groups such as women, children and minorities, with the firm belief that respect for human rights and human dignity, equality between the people and access to justice will change the reality in the ground and reduce the conflicts.



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She is also the author of her memoir *OUTSPOKEN*, which is about my fight for freedom and human rights in Afghanistan.