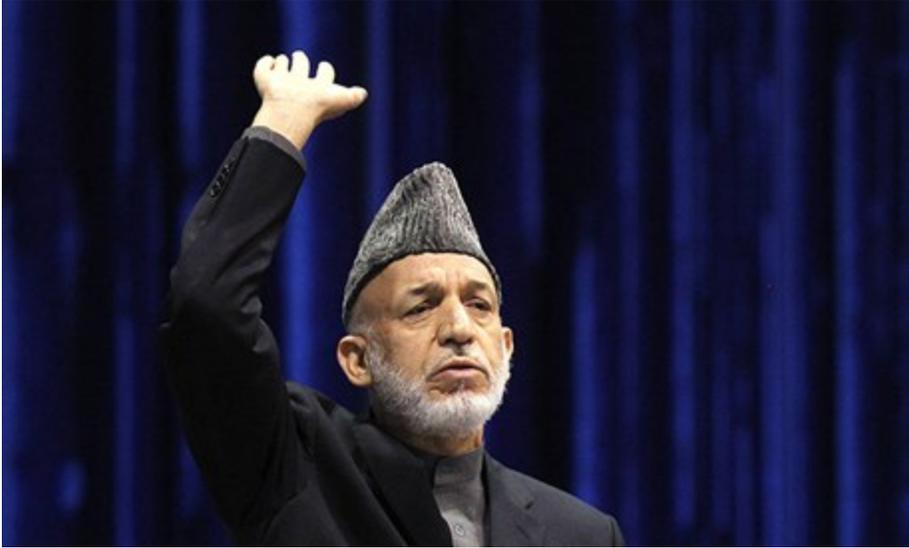


[Afghanistan considers reintroduction of public stoning for adulterers](#)

Proposal to bring back one of the most repugnant symbols of Taliban regime is in draft revision of country's penal code



Hamid Karzai has been urged to 'demonstrate a commitment to human rights and reject this proposal out of hand'. Photograph: Omar Sobhani/Reuters

Afghan government officials have proposed reintroducing public stoning as a punishment for adultery, [Human Rights](#) Watch said, even though the practice has been denounced both inside and outside the country as one of the most repugnant symbols of the Taliban regime.

The sentence for married adulterers, along with flogging for unmarried offenders, appears in a draft revision of the country's penal code being managed by the ministry of justice.

There are several references to stoning in a translated section of the draft seen by the Guardian, including detailed notes on judicial requirements for handing down the sentence.

"Men and women who commit adultery shall be punished based on the circumstances to one of the following punishments: lashing, stoning [to death]," article 21 states. The draft goes on to specify that the stoning should be public, in article 23.

News that the government is contemplating bringing back a much-reviled punishment is unlikely to go down well with the western governments that back Kabul.

"It is absolutely shocking that 12 years after the fall of the Taliban government, the Karzai administration might bring back stoning as a punishment," said Brad Adams, Asia director at [Human Rights Watch](#).

"President Karzai needs to demonstrate at least a basic commitment to human rights and reject this proposal out of hand."

The penalty violates international human rights standards that ban torture and cruel and inhuman punishment, the rights group said in statement.

When a video surfaced a year ago of a [21-year-old woman being stoned to death in an insurgent-controlled village](#) just a few dozen miles from Kabul, it was strongly condemned by government officials as well as rights groups and diplomats.