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Petition Calls For War Crime Trials In The Hague

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A petition has been filed by families of civil war victims, who have pointed fingers at certain factions, including Gulbuddin Hekmatyar-led Hizb-e-Islami, for their involvement in war crimes and called on the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague to prosecute offenders.

They called on the ICC to launch an investigation into the crimes committed by warring factions during the civil war in the country.

In a petition to the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in Kabul, they requested justice for the victims of crimes allegedly committed by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar-led Hizb-e-Islam group during the civil conflict.

UNAMA has said that the petition is being reviewed, said a member of Green Trend Movement who prepared the petition.

In response, Hizb-e-Islami has said that the petition was prepared by those who are opposed to peace in the country.

“If a transparent international institution acceptable to all is formed for the assessment of these issues, Hizb-e-Islami is prepared to give answers to the nation,” said Hizb-e-Islami spokesman Nadir Afghan.

Afghan Gul, 48, is a resident of Kabul who lost her 12-year-old son during the civil war.

“We were living in a Hindu family's house, a rocket hit the house, my son and several of our neighbors were killed,” she said.

“It is not the question of forgiveness, they (warring factions) killed thousands and it is not only about myself,” she added.

Afghan Gul is one of those who signed the petition sent to UNAMA, requesting the investigation of crimes allegedly committed by Hizb-e-Islami during the war.

“Unfortunately justice has been sacrificed in Hekmatyar’s impunity deal,” said Taimoor Shah Bashar, a member of Green Trend.

August 1992 is believed to have been the bloodiest of months during the civil war and in a report issued by the UN in November that year stated that in August, two thousand rockets hit Kabul. Eighteen thousand civilians were killed and thousands more were wounded. However a report by the Human Rights Watch (HRW) says that the missiles were fired by Hizb-e-Islami.