



# NEST DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES

## *The Taliban's Impact on Afghanistan's Legal Landscape: Undoing Two Decades of Progress*

This discussion aims to highlight the human cost of the Taliban's return to power and the dramatic shifts in Afghanistan through the lens of those most affected: women who have been forced out of public life, youth deprived of education, activists striving to operate in an increasingly shrinking society, judges and lawyers forced into hiding, and journalists risking their lives to report the truth. The conversation will also explore the broader implications for governance and human rights, raising important questions about the global community's role in addressing the crisis in Afghanistan.

**Friday, February 7, 2025 - 2:00-3:30pm - SSC 6210**

### **Ghizal Haress** **York University**



Ghizal Haress is a distinguished constitutional lawyer and scholar who has dedicated her two-decade career to promoting constitutionalism, the rule of law, and institutional accountability. As Afghanistan's first Ombudsperson, she led critical investigations into corruption and misconduct at the highest levels of government despite facing significant challenges. She also served as a parliament-confirmed Commissioner for the Afghanistan Independent Commission on Overseeing the Implementation of the Constitution, where she directed efforts to ensure government compliance with constitutional principles. She is an Assistant Professor at the American University of Afghanistan, where she chaired the Law Department for three years.

Ghizal is presently a Visiting Professor at Osgoode Hall Law School at York University and an Adjunct Professor at the University of Toronto. Previously, she was a visiting scholar at the Faculty of Law and Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy and a Resident Visiting Scholar at Massey College University of Toronto (2022-24). She serves as the Program Director for the Afghan Women's Fellowship Program at Massey College, which provides academic support to Afghan women whose educational opportunities have been denied by the Taliban. Her research focuses on legal pluralism, constitution building, and the rule of law in developing and post-conflict societies. Ghizal holds an LLM from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London.