

BALMUN Security Council- Research Report

“Easing tensions between opposing forces in Afghanistan in order to prevent the spread of terrorism”

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I. Introduction:

In 1999, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution, creating the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee and resultantly, NATO and the US got involved in the Afghan conflict. Due to the resolution these parties and other major countries could justify their activities in the Middle east, turning the war on terror into proxy war.

After the withdrawal of NATO and US troops from Afghanistan in August 2021, marking the end of the 20-year long war in Afghanistan, the Taliban conquered huge regions of Afghanistan. Until the middle of August the most influential cities like Kabul were taken over. The president of Afghanistan Ghani left the country after confessing that the Afghan government was defeated. The Taliban thereafter confirmed to not take revenge. In this way a peaceful change of power was assured.

Since the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban in August 2021, the people in Afghanistan now live in fear. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reports that the citizens and former government employees are severely suppressed by the militant group. It is stated that the population is harassed by arbitrary arrests, house searches and the brutal killing of innocent people. More women than ever report domestic violence. Prisoners are tortured and children assaulted.

The situation in Afghanistan could now have reached an all-time low. It is now in our hands to find ways to end this horrifying war and create freedom and peace for the people.

II. Definition of Key Terms:

a. Taliban:

Known as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, the Taliban are a Deobandi Pashtun Islamist military and political organization, currently in control of Afghanistan. The ideology of the group combines a form of Shariah Islamic Law, which is based on Deobandi Fundamentalism, militant Islamism and Pashtun social and cultural norms. It was founded as an illegal drug trade, which produced and shipped narcotics like Heroin. The Taliban are also known as a group that started reaching their goals with kidnap, ransom, and extortion.

b. Terrorism:

According to Oxford's dictionary, Terrorism is defined as "The calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear. Terrorism is intended to coerce or intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological." It is the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.

c. Deobandi Fundamentalism:

Also referred to as Deobandism, it is a conservative, orthodox movement within Sunni Islam, that follows the Salafist model and aims to emulate the life and times of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and therefore Deobandis believe that they have the sacred duty to protect Muslims in any given country. The Deobandi philosophy was founded in Darul Uloom Madrasa in India in 1867, it has become widely spread in Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan.

d. Shariah / Islamic Law:

In Arabic, Sharia literally means "the clear, well-trodden path to water". Sharia law is a religious law that lays down governing principles for spiritual, mental, and physical behaviour that must be followed by Muslims. It is derived from the religious precepts of Islam and is based on the sacred scriptures of Islam, particularly the Quran and the Hadith. It provides a basic code of guidance for Muslims regarding all aspects of their lives.

e. Salafi Jihadism:

Salafi jihadism is an international, hybrid religious-political ideology, seeking a global caliphate, advocacy for military jihadist and Salafist concepts of returning to what adherents believe to be the "true Islam". Salafi jihadism was founded in the 1960s, resulting from prison-writings of the Egyptian theoretician Sayyid Qutb.

III. General Overview:

Over half a year from the less-than-successful retreat of the Western coalition from Afghanistan, the country and its people remain affected by bouts of extreme violence. Only on the 19th of April, several children were killed in an attack on their school in Kabul.

Justified fears of the consequences of a full Taliban takeover of Afghanistan dominated national and international news in the summer of 2021. In the meantime, Afghans who had experienced the violence between Taliban, Afghan, and foreign troops hoped for a silver lining: Maybe, the Taliban would be able to finally bring security not just to the large cities, but also the countryside which, largely outside the purview of journalists and the state, had been ravaged by the ongoing clashes.

The hopes were in vain. Sectarian terrorist attacks perpetrated by IS-K, the branch of the Islamic State active in Afghanistan, continue to take lives and undermine the Taliban's image as guarantors of security. The humanitarian situation is dire: Over half the population face acute food insecurity, more than a third of those at an emergency level, according to the UN World Food Program.

Alleviating the acute danger to people's lives and livelihoods caused by food insecurity must take priority. However, the danger does not stop there. Without an alternative perspective, the offer made by terrorist organizations to young Afghans can seem enticing. Growing membership of IS-K and other groups would entail further violence within Afghanistan and in neighboring states, a fear shared in the capitals of the region. Improving the livelihoods of all Afghans and offering a perspective for a shared, safe future in Afghanistan is thus the most promising way to alleviate the risk of terrorism in the country.

IV. Major parties involved:

a. United Nations:

The United Nations (UN) is an intergovernmental organisation whose purpose is to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations among nations, achieve international cooperation, and be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations. It was founded in 1945 after the second World War, its main purpose was to maintain international peace and to secure Human Rights. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is a UN Special Political Mission established to assist the state and the people of Afghanistan in laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development. UNAMA was established on 28.03.2002 by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1401.

b. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

After the invasion of the United States in Afghanistan in 2001, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was established in 2004, when a huge area of the country was captured from Taliban-led Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan. It lost control of the majority of the country to the Taliban in August 2021, culminating in the loss of Kabul on 15.08.2021.

c. NATO:

NATO Allies are closely monitoring the situation in Afghanistan, where they had deployed military forces for almost two decades under a United Nations Security Council mandate. The current situation remains very difficult and unpredictable. As of August 2021, the focus is to ensure the safe departure of personnel from Allied and partner countries, and of at-risk NATO-affiliated Afghans. Around 2000 working for NATO and their families were evacuated from Afghanistan in August. NATO is working with allies to provide housing, care, and support while arrangements are made for follow-on movement to allied nations.

d. Al-Qaida:

Officially known as “Qaedat al-Jihad” is multinational militant Sunni Islamic extremist, network composed of Salafist jihadists. It was founded in 1988 by Osama Bin Laden, Abdullah Azzam, and several other Arab volunteers during the Soviet-Afghan War. During the time of the Afghan Civil War, Al-Qaeda supported the Taliban along with thousands of fighters from Pakistan, Central Asia and Arab countries. After 9/11 the Taliban offered to hand over Bin Laden to a neutral country if the US provided proof of Bin Laden’s involvement in the attacks. However, soon thereafter, the US invaded Afghanistan along with its allies and with the assistance of Afghan Northern Alliance, removed the Taliban government, and as a result a number of Al-Qaeda and Taliban camps were destroyed in Afghanistan.

V. Timeline of events:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
1996 – 2001	The Taliban are ruling over about 90% of Afghanistan after seizing control in the post-Soviet times which were marked by a power whole following the fall of the Soviet Union. The Regimes characteristics were a strict following of Islamic rules and procedures in the most brutal and ideological ways.
September 2001	Ahmad Shah Mossoud is murdered by al-Qaeda forces by the order of Osama Bin Laden on 9 th September. Mossoud was one of the major enemies of the Taliban at the time. This is considered as the event which motivated the Taliban to protect Bin Laden after 9/11. The killing of Mossoud is therefore often called a "curtain raiser" for 9/11.
September 2001	Al-Qaeda launches its attack on New York and Washington D.C., killing 2977 people on 11 th September. Both imitating other terroristic attacks and multiple wars, mostly led by the USA followed the event. Western views and thinking radically changed due to 9/11.

- 2001 – 2003 Following 9/11, US President Bush signs a resolution authorizing the use of force against those responsible of 9/11. This led to a war on al-Qaeda and the Taliban and an invasion of Afghanistan. The most important forces supporting the USA are Afghan forces and the UK. However also Germany, France and Canada aid the US in its war. In May 2003 Donald Rumsfeld, at the time secretary of defence for the US declared major combat to be over. The Taliban regime collapsed and Afghanistan was under control of the US.
- 2002 – 2021 Under the support of the US, UN and NATO-Forces the construction of a new Afghan government and society is attempted. US President Bush compared this organisation to the Marshall Plan. The new constitution is democratic and features a stronger implementation of women rights than ever before in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the war still took place as the Taliban were never actually defeated. Therefore, there was military presence by NATO member states during this phase.
- September 2021 US and NATO withdraw their troops from Afghanistan in a manner which many described as "chaotic". In the same speed as the troops leave, the Taliban retake territories. On 15th August, Taliban take over the capital Kabul and reclaim their rule of Afghanistan.

VI. Previous and possible Solution

Obviously, the previous try to permanently bring peace to the country of Afghanistan fundamentally failed. The moment western forces left; the terrorist Taliban were able to take over the country again. The current situation in Afghanistan is unacceptable for the UN, as many Human Right violations occur regularly. Therefore, we need to think of new solutions with new ideas and overthink what went wrong in the first try.

a. **Military**

I. War

Attacking terrorists indeed does, if executed correctly and with enough financial recourses, reduces their influence on a region remarkably.

However, as seen in the example of the war on the Taliban by the USA, this effect can be only of short time.

II. Military Presence

Even when not actively fighting, the mere presence of forces does put pressure on possible terrorists and might prevent war before it even happens. Nevertheless, this solution poses a risk to provoke an arms race.

b. Social

I. Campaigns

After western forces left the country, the Taliban were able to quickly take over Afghanistan. One of the reasons for this is, that the Afghan population did not yet fully accept democracy and the new government. To prevent this, campaigns on a greater scale, showing the benefits of democracy may be necessary.

II. Education

Education has always been a key factor to solve conflicts and to improve the life quality in lower developed countries. This was also tried when Afghanistan was under the occupation of the USA.

III. Media

Access to media to objectively inform oneself about current political processes provided to every citizen is necessary for a working democracy. Therefore, efforts must be taken to build infrastructure making this possible.

c. Economical

I. Sanctions

A direct and simple way of pressuring the leaders of a country in order to do something. This can also be applied on the Taliban leaders to achieve a more humanitarian way of leadership in Afghanistan.

III. Strengthening social structures

Whether executed by NGOs or government officials, solid social structures are a need for a working society with a good humanitarian status. If one wants to safeguard the humanitarian situation, one therefore needs to strengthen the social structures first. However, this solution poses the risk of indirectly financing the terrorist organisations controlling Afghanistan.

d. Political

I. Diplomacy

States must stay in diplomatic contact with the Taliban in order to have an open way of communication to safeguard the humanitarian situation in the country.

VII. Conclusion

The situation in Afghanistan is far from being acceptable for the international community. However, the same goes for the previous try to free the country of the islamistic regime of the Taliban. The invasion of Afghanistan initiated by the USA simply lacked support from the population and therefore was not able to achieve long term effects.

When looking at the topic today, we therefore need to learn from the mistakes made and adjust our strategies accordingly. We must find ways to improve the humanitarian situation in the country. These measures however must be taken while still finding a way to urge the Taliban to adapt their way of rule in a way better fitting the human rights decided by the UN. Finding solutions for this dilemma will be the main goal of the conference.

VIII. Questions to Consider:

- Would foreign intervention help alleviate tensions, or rather create even more?
- To what extent can the UN support a totalitarian regime to better the humanitarian situation?
- How do individual member states' connections to and history with Afghanistan affect their policy?
- How has your country been involved the last 20 years?
- What has your country's reaction to the Afghan war been?
- What was your country's reaction to the takeover in Kabul in 2021?

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