ENUGU STATE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

Volume 7 Number 1, 2022

THE ROLE OF USA IN COMBATING TERRORISM IN AFGHANISTAN, 2016-2020

Netchy Mbaeze
Department of Political Science
Enugu State University of Science and Technology

Abstract

Events throughout history have been necessitated some response from humankind. One of such major events that appear to have changed the global security scene was the September 11, 2001 attack on the US by an Afghan based terrorist group. This study thereby sets out to study the role of US in combating terrorism in Afghanistan. The set objectives are to examine the impact of terrorism on the political development of Afghanistan; to examine US responses in combating terrorism in Afghanistan. The researcher made use of ex post facto research design. Documentary method of data collection and content analysis were also adopted. The study was anchored on strategic theory. Findings revealed that terrorism has impacted negatively on the political development of Afghanistan. Terrorist activities in Afghanistan have not just destabilized the political system but also made them largely dependent on external forces for their protection. It also revealed that the US response helped in combating terrorism in Afghanistan by dislodged terrorists from major cities thereby reducing incidences of human right abuse. Among others, the researcher recommends an increased international pressure on the Taliban regime to run an all-inclusive government to help stabilize the political system.

Keywords: *Afghanistan, humanity, human rights, protection, terrorism,*

Introduction

Background of the Study

Throughout history, events that impact on humanity have necessitated diverse responses by mankind in an attempt to forestall recurrence or minimize its repercussions. Occurrences of this nature engender unilateral, bilateral or multilateral actions to deal with them. There are many examples of these events and the resulting responses. In the first half of the Twentieth Century, the First and the Second World Wars are examples of events that have drawn global responses. Due to the massive loss of life and the untold hardship the First and the Second World Wars caused, the world responded by forming the League of Nations and the United Nations (UN) respectively to prevent futures wars of such magnitude.

In contemporary times, one event has drawn international reaction and seems to have changed the international security system, arguably since the end of the Cold War. The US-led intervention in Afghanistan in late 2001 and the subsequent international peace-building and peacekeeping effort marked a significant shift in the pattern of international military intervention, reflecting the changed international circumstances of the post -11 September 2001 world. During the 1990s there was much debate on the subject of humanitarian intervention. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, East Timor, Somalia and Yugoslavia, major powers undertook military interventions motivated in significant part by humanitarian concern to prevent or end large-scale loss of life and human suffering. Arguably, this represented a significant shift away from more traditional military interventions motivated by narrow

national interests and towards what became known as humanitarian intervention. The legitimacy of such interventions, however, remained controversial as was the extent to which they might become part of a significant longer-term trend in international politics.

Many countries responded by initiating measures to bolster their internal and external security systems against terrorism. In the United States (US) for instance, responsibility for airport security screening was swiftly put under the US Transportation Security Administration (TSA), with US airports carrying out hundred percent screening of checked baggage for explosives and passengers subjected to much more thorough screening procedures. Many countries also adopted similar procedures, including all the major European countries. Yet, there were major terrorist attacks in Afghanistan as well as in Iraq, Pakistan, London and Madris.

Africa has also had its share of major terrorism prior to and post-September 11, 2001. Kenya and Tanzania suffered simultaneous terrorist attacks in 1998 when car bombs destroyed the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, the capitals of Kenya and Tanzania respectively. These attacks killed at least eighty people and injured over 1600 others. Post-September 11, Kenya, especially, has suffered other terrorist attacks, including a major attack on the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi which lasted from September 21 to 24, 2013. The attack was claimed by Al-Shabaab, a Somali militant group, killed sixty-seven people and injured 175 more. These attacks in various parts of the world and in Africa appeared not to have triggered the required response from most West Africa countries. However, recent events have dramatically changed the situation. The emergence or indeed, the resurgence of terrorism has brought the threats of terrorism to the attention of governments, corporate bodies, civil societies and ordinary citizens alike.

In the wake of the terrorist attacks on the United States, the US-led coalition in Afghanistan was motivated more by extended national interests than by humanitarianism. The rationale and the formal legal basis for the US-led intervention were self-defense. However, the coalition involved goals that were radically different from those of most past interventions the dismantlement of an international terrorist network and the removal of the regime that had given support to that network. Despite the reluctance of the USA to engage in what it termed nation building, the US-led intervention quickly led to a parallel international peace-building and peacekeeping effort in Afghanistan motivated in part by humanitarian concerns but at least as much by the fear that instability in Afghanistan could all too easily reproduce the circumstances that had allowed the country to become a base for international terrorism. The international intervention in Afghanistan has thus been characterized by the distinctive combination of parallel, separate but interrelated counter-terrorist and peace-building/peacekeeping operations. The longer-term impact of this intervention, and in particular the success or failure of its peace-building and peacekeeping component, remains to be seen.

Statement of the Problem

The comparatively weak security in some countries, worsened by weak economics makes issues of security a great concern. The security sector of most African countries is characterized by ill-equipped security agencies, inadequate collaboration among the various agencies, poor communication network and general lack of logistics support. Low budgetary allocation for training, poor intelligence sharing mechanisms and outmoded concept of security has compounds the situation. More so, the emerging security threats appear to be mostly transnational in nature. Meanwhile, the international borders of most countries are porous. The

porosity of the frontiers is exacerbated by the Economic Community of West Africa State's (ECOWAS) Protocol on free movement of people goods and services.

Terrorists could therefore operate across borders easily, making all countries susceptible to terrorist attacks. Additionally, it could facilitate terrorists and criminal gangs to also elude apprehension, as has been demonstrated by Boko Haram to a large extent. For instance, the activities of Boko Haram are not limited to only Nigeria. Boko Haram has also carried out attacks and abductions in Chad as well as in Cameroon, including the abduction of the wife of the Cameroonian Deputy Prime Minister on July 27, 2014. So far, Boko Haram has successfully carried out their operations and gotten away as reported by the media almost daily. For instance, December 1 and 5 2014, a number of attacks were carried out by Boko Haram without any of the militants being apprehended, as reported by the Muscat Daily Newspaper. Another area that makes most countries, including Afghanistan, vulnerable to terrorism is the fact that terrorists do not need to travel across borders to attack a country like Afghanistan. There are people in Ghana who share similar ideology like those espoused by groups like al-Qaeda. The emerging threats of terrorism are therefore a danger to the security and economic development not only for the countries experiencing activities of terrorists. Nonetheless, the obvious security implications of disclosing U.S response preparedness, a cursory look at the existing structures, including the training doctrines of key agencies such as the US Special Operations Forces (SOF), U International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) appear to suggest some guidelines this direction and help in combating it.

Research Questions

1. How has terrorism impacted on the political development of Afghanistan state?

2. How has the U.S response helped in combating terrorism in Afghanistan?

Objectives of the Study

The study censoriously examined the issue of terrorism in the Afghanistan and the role of Untied State in combating them from the specific year of 2016-2020.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the impact of terrorism on the political development of Afghanistan state.

2. To examine the U.S responses in combating terrorism in Afghanistan

Significance of the Study
The study has both theoretical and practical significance.

Theoretically, this study will add to the knowledge of existing literature on terrorism, the role of US in the fight against terrorism and the mechanisms required to fight against terrorism in Afghanistan.

Practically, this study brings to fore the measures and preparation that are required by the states, through its security agencies, other state/non-state organs and civil society to help deal with the emerging threats of terrorism. It also proposes measures that the country could adopt, in collaboration with other sub-regional and regional agencies, to prevent or minimize terrorist attack against Afghanistan.

Literature Review

Background to the Intervention in Afghanistan.

The principal objective of U.S. policy in Afghanistan since the 9-11 attacks has been and appropriately continues to be to ensure that the country does not become a haven for virulent Salafi (radical anti-Western jihadi) terrorist groups like al Qaeda. The premise underlying this policy subsequent to the toppling of the Taliban regime in 2001 is that if any part of the liberated territory once again comes under the control of Salafi groups or a Taliban sympathetic to such groups, their capacity to increase the lethality and frequency of their terrorist attacks including against U.S. assets will increase since they will be able to use the safe-havens to plan and train for their operations and more easily escape retaliation by the United States and the international community.

The last few years have seen the rise in interest on matters relating to terrorism in Africa. This has partly arisen from the frequent occurrences of terror attacks, the extreme violence involved and the increasing number of terrorist groups in different parts of the world. Some of the common concerns that has generated a range of literature include the causes of terrorism, how to end the current spate of terrorism and measure to prevent terrorism in other parts of the country. There are various views by scholars and commentators to achieve these goals. These views are nearly as diverse as the number of writers and commentators who have tried to make sense of this new and compounding challenge confronting the entire sub-region.

In his article, *Nigeria's Troubled North: Interrogating the Drivers of Public Support for Boko Haram*, Akinola Olojo examines the key drivers of public support for Boko Haram in northern Nigeria. The paper suggested that in addition to the generally held view that the underlying causes of terrorism in Nigeria are internal factors including poverty, age-old economic inequality and structural violence, there is a growing believes that the Boko Haram insurgency has an international dimension. This assertion stems from the strategy and extreme violence, including suicide bombing, that Boko Haram has adopted in the conduct of their terrorist activities. According to Olojo, this strategy is typical of international terrorists elsewhere and this type of terrorism is unprecedented in Nigeria. Olojo argued that in spite of their violent activities, Boko Haram has been able to win support among the uneducated, unemployed and impoverished young people in areas where they are based.

The paper alluded to the influence of politicians and elite interest in the insurgency of Boko Haram. It also highlighted the manner in which Boko Haram has taken advantage of providing social services to the poor in the community to alienate the people against the state for the latter's failure to meet the needs of the former. This goes to affirm the general believe that where the state fails in its responsibility to provide the basic needs of the masses, other non-state actors may fill the gap, and if such actors have extreme views, they could easily influence the masses against the state.

The role of non-state institutional leadership at the local, national and state levels in resolving the Boko Haram issue is addressed by the paper. The paper focuses on the role of religion and how it is manipulated by Boko Haram to generate mass appeal among the people in the North-eastern part of Nigeria. It also assesses the linkages that exist between Boko Haram and other terrorist groups in West Africa and beyond. The paper also discusses some measures that could be adopted by the Nigerian authorities to resolve the Boko Haram crisis.

Olojo suggests effective formulation and implementation of a proactive counter-terrorism strategy. He proposes an incisive understanding of the political, socio-economic and religious/ideological drivers of public support for the group to help stem the group's ability to elude counterterrorism efforts. Since the Boko Haram crisis in Northern Nigeria seems to challenge conventional approaches to addressing violent conflicts, Olojo advocates the need for a bold mix of interventions and partnerships that combine elements of both hard and soft power.

Edward Newman in his article *"Exploring the Root Causes of Terrorism"* classifies the causes of terrorism into root causes and precipitant causes. The root causes are the main focus of his paper in which he argued that "certain conditions provide a social environment and widespread grievances that, when combined with certain precipitant factors, result in the emergence of terrorist organizations and terrorist act." The article attempts to clarify what is meant by "root causes". The paper also considers if the analysis of root causes helps to explain how, where and why terrorism occurs.

The author identified factors such as poverty, demographic factors, social inequality and exclusion, dispossession and political grievances as being some main underlying causes of terrorism. Newman further grouped the underlying causes into Permissive Structural Factors and Direct Root Causes. With respect to the former, Newman noted poverty, demographic factors and urbanization. The paper looked at poverty at the individual and state levels, with the author arguing that at the individual level, "poverty can breed resentment and desperation and support for political extremism". At the state level, the paper suggested that, "poor societies often make for weak states, which may not have the capacity to prevent terrorist activity or recruitment. They also lack the capacity for the type of educational programmes that might help reduce support for terrorism." Under the demographic factors, Newman says that issues such as rapid population growth, particularly among the male population and skewed distribution of this male population across diverse ethnic groups may contribute to the start of hostility. Newman believes that urbanization, compounded by poverty and worsened by unemployment, can adversely influence dissatisfied society. This disaffection could then be exploited be extremists' groups to enable them recruit and mobilize in deprived urban communities.

Newman argues that the root causes of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism is attributable to the "clash of values." According to Newman, leadership, funding, state sponsorship and political upheaval are just precipitant factors. They are only catalysts that trigger terrorism. He therefore argues that emergence of terrorist groups and their activities could be viewed as being dependent upon the root causes. The paper concludes with the view that no matter how prepared a society is militarily, it will not be immune from terrorism until the sources of terrorism are appreciated and appropriate mechanisms put in place to combat them.

U.S. Counter-terrorism and other Interests in Afghanistan

While al Qaeda has been severely degraded, it has lost none of its zeal to strike Western countries and undermine governments in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. The group continues to look for opportunities to exploit and territories to colonize, even if only vicariously through proxies, such as in Western and Eastern Africa, even if some of its local alliances are only fleeting and unreliable. In Afghanistan, the terrorist group has also experienced a resurgence in territories where the presence of the Afghan government and international

military forces is limited and weak. The Islamic State in Afghanistan, a newer terrorist group in name, consisting of various Taliban splinter elements and other relabeled militant groups, is also a prime U.S. target.

However, U.S. interests in Afghanistan go beyond terrorism. An unstable Afghanistan risks also destabilizing Pakistan, and as a result, the entire region of Central and South Asia. Pakistan's tribal areas as well as Baluchistan and other areas deep in Pakistan, including Karachi, for example, have been host to many of the salafi groups, and the Afghan Taliban and its vicious Haqqani branch use these areas as safe-havens. Thus, Pakistan's cooperation is crucial for effectively countering terrorism in Afghanistan, even if as yet largely not forthcoming. But the reverse is also true: If Afghanistan is unstable and contains salafi groups that leak over into Pakistan, Pakistan itself becomes deeply destabilized and distracted from tackling its other crises, including militancy in the Punjab and a host of domestic calamities, such as intense political contestation, a distorted economy, widespread poverty, and a severe energy crisis. A disintegration of the Afghan state or an outbreak of a full-blown civil war will be a great boost to salafi groups throughout the world: once again, a great power will be seen as having been defeated by the salafists in Afghanistan. From a strategic *perceptions'* standpoint, few areas are as important as Afghanistan. The view that the United States has been defeated does not require that the Taliban retake over the country. From the salafi perspective, merely a gradual, but steady crumbling of the Kabul government, with a progressively greater accretion of territory and power by the Taliban, would be sufficient to claim victory.

The U.S. reputation and self-regard as a country that can be relied upon to honor its commitments are at stake in Afghanistan. In mobilizing support for Operation Enduring Freedom, the mission to topple the Taliban regime in the wake of 9-11, the United States made a pledge to the Afghan people to help them improve their difficult condition and not abandon them once again. Although often caricatured as anti-Western, anti-government, anti-modern, and stuck in medieval times, Afghans crave what others do – relief from violence and insecurity and sufficient economic progress to escape dire, grinding poverty. But on its own, the altruistic concern for the people of Afghanistan is not sufficient for the U.S. to undertake or to perpetuate what has turned out to be an immensely costly effort. Nor should the tyranny of sunk costs determine U.S. policy in Afghanistan. To paraphrase U.S. strategist George Kennan's counsel to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations about the U.S. war in Vietnam, the hallmark of a great power is to know when to liquidate unwise commitments. However, U.S. engagement in Afghanistan, including our deployment of adequate military force, still advances key U.S. interests and provides a crucial lifeline for the Afghan government and the country's pluralistic post 9-11 political dispensation. Moreover, once the United States made its initial decision to intervene, consideration for the elemental needs of the Afghan people whose lives we have altered so profoundly must matter.

Background on Terrorism Threats from Afghanistan

In February 2020, the U.S. government signed a peace deal with the Afghan Taliban to withdraw U.S. forces from Afghanistan. This landmark pact intended to end the United States' longest war against the insurgency of the Afghan Taliban. It centered on an agreement to withdraw U.S. troops in return for guarantees by the Taliban that Afghan territory will not be used for mounting international terrorism. For much of the negotiation process, American negotiators pushed the Afghan Taliban to commit that it would not adopt the same policies as before the 9/11 attacks in the United States seeing those policies as the cause of the terrorist attacks. Back then, the Afghan Taliban provided refuge to al-Qaeda, who in turn reportedly

paid up to $20 million a year for the haven to the Taliban. Al-Qaeda used the sanctuary in Afghanistan to set up training camps, where it trained a large army of foreign jihadists. Within these camps, it created a dedicated covert faction to engage in international terrorism operations. It also devoted some capital to a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear operation in Afghanistan.

The U.S. government's insistence on guarantees from the Taliban against al-Qaeda was not misplaced. Despite intense U.S. counterterrorism pressure in the years after 9/11, the Afghan Taliban maintained a strong alliance with al-Qaeda. As per multiple accounts, al-Qaeda helped the Afghan Taliban in organizing the insurgency against U.S. forces, especially in the east of the country. In this period, al-Qaeda only maintained a nominal presence of its own organization inside Afghanistan and instead supported the Taliban's insurgency with strategic advice and material aid from bases in Pakistan's tribal areas. The most significant al-Qaeda operation inside Afghanistan was located in the eastern province of Kunar. But this balance changed after 2014, when al-Qaeda shifted much of its Pakistan-based operation to Afghanistan's eastern and southern provinces In the early years of the insurgency, Taliban leaders embraced and publicized their alliance with foreign jihadists, such as al-Qaeda. Even as late as 2010, Taliban leaders espoused a commitment to the ideology of transnational jihad and sought to mobilize the support of jihadist constituencies in the Middle East. At the same time, despite this, some in the Taliban ranks showed discomfort with support of al-Qaeda. This view can even be traced to the pre-9/11 years. Select leaders argued that association with al-Qaeda was not in the early years of the insurgency, Taliban leaders embraced and publicized their alliance with foreign jihadists, such as al-Qaeda.16 Even as late as 2010, Taliban leaders espoused a commitment to the ideology of transnational jihad and sought to mobilize the support of jihadist constituencies in the Middle East

. At the same time, despite this, some in the Taliban ranks showed discomfort with support of al-Qaeda. This view can even be traced to the pre-9/11 years. Select leaders argued that association with al-Qaeda was not worth the wrath of the U.S. government and the loss of what the Taliban had before the 9/11 an "Islamic emirate." Starting in the late 2000s, possibly under internal pressure as well as U.S. battlefield pressure, the Afghan Taliban sought to conceal its ties with groups of foreign fighters in Afghanistan, including alQaeda. This appears to have been done in consultation with al-Qaeda, as its top central and region leadership continued to publicly pledge a religious oath of loyalty called the Bay'ah to the Taliban. Al-Qaeda ideologue Atiyyat Allah al-Libi is reported to have informed al-Qaeda members on the Taliban's public stance toward the group: "Of course, the Taliban's policy is to avoid being seen with us or revealing any cooperation or agreement between us and them. That is for the purpose of averting international and regional pressure and out of consideration for regional dynamics. We defer to them in this regard." In line with expectations of a continued alliance, the U.S. government regularly found evidence of battlefield cooperation between alQaeda and the Taliban, including al-Qaeda camps and leadership in the security of or proximate to the Taliban's insurgent rankand-file. In addition to Afghan Taliban and al-Qaeda, since 2014, another armed actor grew in salience: the Islamic State. Following the emergence of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in 2014, the Islamic State started obtaining pledges in eastern Afghanistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan. The group's Iraq-based leadership appointed Hafiz Saeed, a former leader of the Pakistani insurgent group TTP, as the first leader of the movement, with a purview of both Afghanistan and Pakistan. This branch was known as the Islamic State's "Khorasan Province." Saeed built on Salafist enclaves in the east of Afghanistan and successfully poached fighters from various jihadist groups in the region, such as the Afghan Taliban, the TTP, and al-Qaeda.

In the initial years after its founding, the Islamic State gained in eastern and select parts of northern Afghanistan, making major inroads in the provinces of Jowzjan, Kunar, and Nangarhar. In the east, the group gained control of large swathes of territory. It also set up state-like institutions, modeling itself on the caliphate in Iraq and Syria. The group attracted a stream of foreign fighters, primarily from South and Central Asia, and regularly conducted attacks against military and civilian targets in major urban areas. Among civilians, the Islamic State prioritized targeting of vulnerable religious and ethnic minorities.

In 2014, the U.S. government, along with Afghan security forces, launched a targeted campaign against the Islamic State in Afghanistan. This campaign was a part of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The Taliban also mounted separate military operations to target the Islamic State.

Gap in Literature

It was perhaps the effort to come to terms with the awful security dilemma presented by the so called fourth generation warfare-terrorism that has led to the impressive spawning of literature about its nature, causes and global implications as well as the the role of U.S in combating terrorism in Afganistan. The extant literature focuses on the conceptualization, history, and causalities of terrorism.

From the literature review, it was found that there are extensive literature in the field of terrorism and counter - terrorism, most of it written after 1968. However, most of these works either fall into the trap of being ideologically biased (Wilkinson, 1987; Krueger, 2001; Krueger & Maleckova, 2002), purely psychological (Crenshaw, 1990; Black 2004; Silke, 2004). Furthermore, the bulk of the research is dedicated to conceptual or definitional problems (Senechal de la Roche, 1996; Black, 2004; Kimmel, 2003; Eckstein, 1972; Gurr, 1970; Skjolberg, 2000) and only limited effort was put into systematic, empirical work. Thus, the existing literature suffers from lack of good empirically grounded research on the role U.S played in combating terrorism with reference to Afganistan.

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a scheme for adopting or applying the assumptions, postulations and principles of a theory in the description and analysis of a research problem. However, the confines and focus of a research influence the choice of the theoretical framework to be adopted in a particular study. Hence, for appropriate examination of role of the United States of America in combating terrorism in Afghanistan Strategic theory was adopted.

Strategic Theory

Strategic theory, over the course of 40 years, permeated the domain of International Relations and Political Science through the works of Thomas Schelling and Colin Gray and has been increasingly used and acknowledged as a tool to assist in the comprehension of decision making (Yarger, 2006).

Henry Eccles (1979) one of the strategic theorists described strategy as the comprehensive direction of power to control situations and areas in order to attain objectives. This description captured much of the essence of strategy. It provides direction, its purpose is control, and it is fundamentally concerned with the application of power.

In this context, strategy is the employment of the instruments (elements) of power (political/ diplomatic, economic, military, and informational) to achieve the political objectives of the state in cooperation or in competition with other actors pursuing their own objectives.

Assumptions of Strategic Theory Include:

1. States and other competitive entities have interests that they will pursue to the best of their abilities. Interests are desired end states such as survival, economic well – being, and enduring national values. The national elements of power are the resources used to promote or advance national interests.

2. There is a deployment of available resources to gain any objective and this is an endeavour to relate ends to means.

3. Political actors are the central unit of analysis. Therefore, understanding the political actors value system and preferences are imperative.

4. There must be a study of how the political actors construct their interests, which, thereby, inform the objectives they strive for and the manner in which they seek to attain them.

5. The actor behaves rationally in pursuit of its aims. That is, an actor's decisions are made after careful cost – benefit calculation and the means chosen seem optimal to accomplish the desired end.

Strategic theory is the most appropriate theory to explain this research work. The application of this theory was done using the ends (objectives), ways (strategic concepts/ courses of action) and means (resources) paradigm of the theory.

United States of America has a clear cut objective in the Middle East which is to combat the rising terrorist activities. The strategic theory states that political actors formulate objectives that are guided by interest. Consequently, Byman and Moller (2016) opined that the following are the interests of U.S.A in the Middle East: To ensure the free flow of oil at a stable price; Champion non-nuclear proliferation course; Guarantee the security of Israel and foster democracy in the Middle East. Unfortunately, these interests in the Middle East are threatened by the rampaging catastrophic terrorist activities. Hence, USA has devised some courses of action (ways) which are political (diplomatically), military, economic and social to combat these terrorist activities. Consequently, USA has deployed resources (means) to pursue the greater end. These means are both tangible and intangible in nature, they comprised: deployment of systematic air campaigns against the terrorists (strategy of aerial bombardment); training, advising and supplying of equipment to local allied forces; global partnership against terrorism.

Hypotheses

    1. Terrorism has impacted on the political development of Afghanistan state

    2. The U.S response has helped in combating terrorism in Afghanistan

Research Design

This is the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. This research work had a qualitative orientation. This means that it collected and worked with non – numerical data and sought to interpret meaning from these data.

Explanatory research design was utilized in the present study. Explanatory research is used to identify any causal link between the factors or variables that pertain to the research problem. Explanatory research focuses on explaining the aspects of a study in a detailed manner. It allowed the researcher to explore the research with a varying level of depths; connect different ideas; understand the different reasons, causes and the effects of variables.

While exploring the explanatory research design, the researcher narrowed down the very broad field of the research - the activities of ISIS in the Middle East - into two easily researchable case studies which were (the ISIS activities in Iraq and Syria). This helped the researcher to understand and tackle the problem more efficiently by dealing with the carefully selected cases of the phenomenon.

Method of Data Collection

Documentary method of data collection was employed. Contents of documentary materials with literature related to the subject matter such as text books, newspapers, magazines, conference papers, bulletin, published and unpublished articles, official gazettes online materials were examined.

Method of Data Analysis

This study employed content analysis as the method of data analysis. This helped in making replicable and valid inferences by interpreting textual materials and systematically evaluating them. In line with this, there was thematic selection and focus on qualitative data to address our research questions and hypotheses.

Using this method of analysis, meaning were extracted and based on logical chains of evidence, inferences were drawn upon and conclusion made.

Terrorism has impacted on the political development of Afghanistan state

Taliban, Al Qaeda and Is-K in Afghanistan

The Taliban have reassured the global community that they will forbid terrorist groups, especially Al Qaeda and the IS-K (The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant – Khorasan Province), from committing terrorist acts in other countries. Al Qaeda is neither as strong nor as influential as it was in 2001. However, many fears Al Qaeda's revival under the Taliban regime, considering the latter still defends Osama bin Laden and denies his involvement in the 9/11 attacks. Al Qaeda's leadership also recently issued a statement congratulating the Islamic Emirate (read: Taliban) for its victory in Afghanistan. An excerpt from the statement noted: On this historic occasion, we would like to offer our congratulations to the leadership of the Islamic Emirate, specifically Haibatullah Akhundzada. It is worth noting that Ayman al Zawahiri, in the past, has given "bay'ah" (or pledge of allegiance) to all Taliban heads, including Mullah Omar, Mullah Akhtar Mansur and Hebatullah Akhundzada. This statement and the group's pledge also mean that Al Qaeda does enjoy a working relationship, however, due to

international pressures and prior commitments, the Taliban may allow Al Qaeda to carry out limited tacit activity within Afghanistan; which may be limited to recruitment or social media propaganda.

As for the IS-K, the group remains a problem for the Taliban. The Kabul airport attack on August 26, 2021, which claimed nearly 200 lives (mostly Afghans), brought into perspective the seriousness of the IS-K threat in Afghanistan. China quickly called on the Taliban to take stern action against the IS-K after the attack, with Chinese spokesperson Zhao Lijian claiming that the Taliban had assured Beijing of not allowing any forces to harm China through incursions made via Afghanistan. On paper, statements from the Taliban suggest that the group intends to act against the IS-K. When it comes to action, the practicalities of such actions are both vague and complex. In their local media talks, Taliban spokespersons have hoped that the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, which marks an end of foreign occupation, will encourage IS-K fighters to stop conducting terrorist attacks. Such statements sound more like wishful thinking than a pragmatic policy layout.

Afghan Taliban's Relationship with Al-Qaeda: The Ties That Bind

As part of the agreement with the U.S. government, the Afghan Taliban has pledged to break from al-Qaeda and ban the use of Afghan territory for terrorism against other countries. But important senior U.S. officials continue to be skeptical. For example, CENTCOM chief McKenzie recently stated: "…we believe the Taliban actually are no friends of ISIS and work against them. It is less clear to me that they will take the same action against al-Qaeda." For now, the evidence points to no significant break in the relationship between the Afghan Taliban and al-Qaeda. The U.N. recently reported that al-Zawahiri personally negotiated with senior Afghan Taliban leadership to obtain assurances of continued support. To the extent this information is correct, these talks appear to have been successful; the Afghan Taliban has neither publicly renounced al-Qaeda nor taken any discernible action to crack down against it. Representatives of the Afghan Taliban who interact with the press also remain evasive when asked to clarify their position on al-Qaeda. In select instances, the Taliban insist that there are no foreign fighters in Afghanistan.

Scholars of al-Qaeda pointed to the history between the two groups, which can be traced back to the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Union. Some argue that alQaeda and an important sub-group of the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, are bound by ties of marriage among families of key leaders. Al-Qaeda also remains popular among the rank-and-file of the Taliban. Per some accounts, the experience of fighting together against a common foe, like the United States, has brought them closer. While all these factors are important, there appears to be a firm political basis for the relationship. Both groups fit into each other's ideology-based political projects. Al-Qaeda sees the Afghan Taliban as an able ideological partner in its stewardship of global jihad a group whose virtues al-Qaeda can extol before the Muslim world. It also potentially sees the Taliban as a powerful ally, whose resurgence in Afghanistan offers major political and material advantages. Among political gains, the Taliban's continued rise validates that jihadist victories against powerful states like the U.S. are realistic and viable. Among material gains, the relationship provides the opportunity to move leadership and personnel from Syria, Iran, Pakistan, and Jordan to Afghanistan. In the medium term, al-Qaeda may look to establish a base in Afghanistan for a global jihadist movement. The Afghan Taliban's perception of alQaeda is more complex but, on balance, favorable.

The Afghan Taliban likely views he group through the lens of its ideological vision drawing on the Hanafi school of Sunni Islamic theology, the centrality of jihad in its interpretation of Islamic theology, and its role and status as guardians of Islam in Afghan society. Despite some tensions and theological differences, alQaeda aligns with key parts of the Taliban's project. One major source of alignment is al-Qaeda's jihadist project, which fulfills a major perceived religious obligation. Significantly, al-Qaeda pursues its jihadist project by subordinating its Salafist ideology, at least in rhetoric, to the Taliban's status as the final arbiter on matters of theology. This contrasts with the Taliban's opposite perception of the ISIS's ideological project, which is dismissive of both the Taliban's Hanafi precepts and its status as guardians of Islam in Afghanistan.

Consequently, even in the face of major costs, important Afghan Taliban leaders, such as deputy leader Siraj Haqqani and senior military Chief Ibrahim Sadr, remain sympathetic to al-Qaeda. Based on propaganda releases and the rhetoric of Taliban leaders, there may also be some sympathy for al-Qaeda's grand strategy of bringing about an American downfall. However, it remains unclear which of the Afghan Taliban leaders who sympathize with al-Qaeda are supportive of direct attacks against the United States. For example, staunch former supporters and sympathizers of al-Qaeda in the Taliban, like the leader of the Haqqani Network Jalaluddin Haqqani, did not appear to approve terrorism against the U.S. before 9/11, even if they did little to stop it. At the same time, it is important to note that parts of the Afghan Taliban are wary of a relationship with al-Qaeda. Some have lobbied against the relationship altogether, both before and after 9/11. Others have come to oppose al-Qaeda due to the costs of the U.S. government's coercive policies since the American invasion. It appears that the size of the constituency opposed to al-Qaeda inside the Taliban has grown, but its political status within the group is uncertain.

Defeating the Taliban and Al-Qaeda: Operation Enduring Freedom

Almost immediately after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, the USA and other states identified al-Qaeda as the likely perpetrators. In his 20 September address to the US Congress and the American people, President George W. Bush said: 'Who attacked our country? The evidence we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al-Qaeda'. The British Government subsequently published evidence linking al-Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden to the attacks. It also claimed that: 'There is evidence of a very specific nature relating to the guilt of bin Laden and his associates that is too sensitive to release'. In his 20 September address, Bush demanded that Afghanistan's Taliban regime:

> *Deliver to United States authorities all the leaders of al-Qaeda who hide in your land. Release all foreign nationals . . . Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country. Close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan and hand over every terrorist, and every person in their support structure, to appropriate authorities. Give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating. He added that 'These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists or they will share in their fate.*

The USA received unprecedented international support. On 12 September the UN Security Council unanimously expressed its unequivocal condemnation of the terrorist attacks,

stated its determination 'to combat by all means threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts', reaffirmed the 'inherent right of individual and collective self-defence' and expressed 'its readiness to take all necessary steps to respond to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001'. On the same day, the UN General Assembly also strongly condemned the attacks and called for international cooperation to bring the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors to justice.

The Collapse of the Taliban

By the end of October 2001, a number of factors caused a decisive turn in the war, resulting in the collapse of the Taliban on the battlefield in November and December. First, there was growing concern in the West about the conduct of the war. Despite nearly a month of bombing by the coalition and its complete control of Afghanistan's airspace, the Taliban remained in control of most of Afghanistan and no major gains had been made on the ground. On 29 October General Tommy Franks, Commander of the United States Central Command (CENTCOM), was forced to deny that the war was in 'stalemate'. At the same time, little progress was being made in efforts to broker agreement on a possible post-war regime for the country. Hopes of the emergence of significant Pashtun opposition to the Taliban or widespread defections from the Taliban were also proving overly optimistic. On 26 October the Taliban captured and executed Abdul Haq, further undermining the prospects for the emergence of opposition to the Taliban and al-Qaeda in the south of Afghanistan. The USA therefore appears to have decided to escalate the air war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda and to increase its support for the Northern Alliance.

At the end of October and beginning of November the USA carried out 'carpet bombing' of Taliban and al-Qaeda front-line positions north of Kabul and in Mazar-i-Sharif and Taloqan in the north of the country. On 30 October General Franks met with Northern Alliance Commander-in-Chief General Mohammed Qassem Fahim in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, resulting in an agreement to improve cooperation between the USA and the Northern Alliance. In particular, agreement was reached on doubling the number of US Special Operations Forces (SOF) working with the Northern Alliance on the ground. The SOF played a key role by using laser target designators to enable US and coalition aircraft to target Taliban and al-Qaeda forces on the front line with a high degree of accuracy. Russia's supply of equipment to the Northern Alliance also played a very important role. Russia also reportedly equipped Uzbek and Tajik special forces who were integrated into the Northern Alliance forces, and Russian soldiers commanded the tank and helicopter forces that attacked Taliban front lines. Although at this stage Taliban and al-Qaeda forces remained numerically stronger than the Northern Alliance, the combination of intensified US air strikes, the use of US SOF operating alongside the Northern Alliance on the ground to guide those air strikes, and Russian equipment and support triggered a rout of Taliban forces in November. The withdrawal of the Pakistani InterServices Intelligence (ISI) agency, which had played a central role in moulding the Taliban into an effective fighting force and coordinating its successful military campaigns in the late 1990s, may also have greatly weakened the Taliban in military terms. The initial focus was the northern town of Mazar-iSharif, strategically important because it provided control of access to the Friendship Bridge between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan—a key means of bringing military supplies and humanitarian aid into the country.

In the week to 9 November, two-thirds of all US munitions dropped on Afghanistan fell on the Taliban forces in Mazar-i-Sharif. In the face of this onslaught Taliban defences collapsed and Northern Alliance forces took Mazar-i-Sharif on 9 November. Once Mazar-i-Sharif had fallen, the Taliban began to unravel as a political and military force. In the next few days

Northern Alliance forces took towns across northern and central Afghanistan, including Samangan, Bamian, Taloqan, Baghlan, Pul-e Khumri, Herat and Shindand. In many cases, rather than fight, Taliban forces fled, surrendered, negotiated deals with the Northern Alliance or simply swapped sides. The USA supplied significant funds to 'buy off' Taliban commanders and soldiers, helping to alter the political and military situation on the ground. By this point Northern Alliance forces had reached the areas north of Kabul and US air strikes were putting pressure on the front-line Taliban positions there. Under pressure from the USA and Pakistan, the Northern Alliance agreed not to enter Kabul until the details of a new government had been agreed.

However, on 12 November the Northern Alliance reneged on its commitment and 2000 of its troops entered Kabul, taking control of key buildings as Taliban and al-Qaeda forces fled. On 15 November the eastern town of Jalalabad also fell to the Northern Alliance. Two major concentrations of Taliban and al-Qaeda forces remained—the northern city of Kunduz and the Taliban's home city of Kandahar in the south. At Kunduz about 20 000 Taliban/al-Qaeda soldiers remained, including several thousand foreign fighters considered to be among the hard core of the most committed Taliban/al-Qaeda members. By mid-November Kunduz was surrounded by Northern Alliance forces under the command of General Dostum and the USA was undertaking heavy bombardment of the city. Northern Alliance forces held talks with the Taliban/al-Qaeda fighters, giving them a deadline to surrender, but no agreement was reached. On 22 November Northern Alliance forces initiated military action in Kunduz, taking control of the city over the next few days, amid reports of summary executions and atrocities. The majority of Taliban forces surrendered or swapped sides but the foreign fighters put up sustained resistance. Several thousand Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters were taken prisoner. After the fall of Kunduz on 24 November, attention shifted to Kandahar, with US aircraft continuing to bomb Taliban forces in the city. By the beginning of December, Northern Alliance forces were approaching Kandahar from the north but were far from their bases of support there. At the same time, various groups of Pashtun forces loyal to different leaders had re-emerged in the south and/or defected from the Taliban, and tensions were emerging over who would regain control of Kandahar. On 26 November about 1000 US marines established a forward airbase, Camp Rhino, south-east of Kandahar, bringing in transport helicopters, attack helicopters, vertical take-off and landing jet aircraft and armoured personnel carriers - the largest deployment of US ground forces in the conflict up to that point. In this confusing context, Pashtun leaders-initiated negotiations with the Taliban.

The Taliban surrendered and withdrew from Kandahar on 7 December 2001, with Gul Agha Sherzai, the governor of the city until the Taliban took control of it in 1994, reappointed as governor under an agreement between the various local Pashtun factions. Despite the USA's insistence that Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar be detained, and the presence of US marines nearby, Omar appears to have escaped from or been permitted to leave Kandahar at this point. The surrender of Kandahar was the fall of the last significant city under Taliban control. The regime had therefore totally collapsed. The situation in the south of the country, however, remained chaotic. As one observer put it, 'This is no-man's-land, controlled neither by the Taliban nor the Northern Alliance, a lawless place where anything goes and fact is difficult to distinguish from fear'. With the Taliban regime removed from power, the Taliban and al-Qaeda leadership and the remaining core of Taliban/al-Qaeda fighters became the USA's priority. About 1200 fighters, believed to include bin Laden and possibly Mullah Omar, were reported to be hiding in a complex of caves and tunnels near Tora Bora and Khost in the

White Mountains close to the Afghan border with Pakistan. In December 2001, the USA initiated heavy bombing of the Tora Bora cave complex with B-52 bombers, including the use of highly destructive fuel-air explosives. The USA also formed alliances with local factions, mobilizing a force of about 1500 soldiers to attack the Taliban/al-Qaeda fighters.

The operations proved more prolonged and difficult than expected, with the Taliban/al-Qaeda fighters retreating higher into the mountains and the local allies of the USA proving militarily ineffective and politically unreliable. Reports suggest that negotiations between the USA's local allies and the Taliban/ al-Qaeda fighters may have allowed some of the latter to escape. The USA succeeded in detaining more than 500 Taliban/al-Qaeda fighters, 300 of whom were subsequently sent to the US military base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. However, the US forces and their allies failed to completely encircle the Taliban/al-Qaeda fighters, allowing many of them, reportedly including bin Laden, to escape across the border into Pakistan.41 The battle for Tora Bora was thus a significant failure in the USA's campaign to capture or kill the remaining core of Taliban/al-Qaeda fighters and key leaders, including bin Laden. It soon became clear that the Taliban and al-Qaeda had not been entirely defeated. In March 2002 over 1000, mainly Arab, Taliban/al-Qaeda fighters regrouped in the Shahi-kot valley in north-eastern Afghanistan, near the city of Gardez. The USA's response, Operation Anaconda, was again to use heavy air strikes while working alongside local Afghan allies on the ground. An initial assault at the beginning of March by about 1000 local Afghan forces and 60 US soldiers proved unsuccessful. Three Afghans and one US soldier were killed. Fighting escalated as the USA deployed nearly 1000 troops in what the US Central Command described as a 'fight to the death'.

There were an estimated 100–200 Taliban/al-Qaeda casualties. Seven US soldiers died when their helicopter was shot down. By mid-March the USA had gained control of the Shahi-kot valley. Reports suggest that US troops were dissatisfied with the performance of their local allies, holding them responsible for the failure of the initial assault and the subsequent need to call in a much larger US ground force and intensify air strikes. With the USA concerned about the danger of further Taliban/al-Qaeda attacks and doubtful of the military effectiveness of local allies, it sought increased assistance from its coalition partners. Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, New Zealand, Norway and the UK all deployed special forces in March 2002 to help in the fight against remaining Taliban/al-Qaeda forces. The UK sent a force of 1700 marines to support US operations. After Operation Anaconda, the USA and allied forces failed to find further concentrations of Taliban/al-Qaeda forces, creating differences between the USA and some coalition members, in particular the UK, over the scale of the threat and the necessity to maintain the special forces in Afghanistan. In June the UK announced that it would be withdrawing its marines at the beginning of July, leaving the USA to take over most combat duties in Afghanistan. After June 2002 the scale of US and coalition combat operations against Taliban/al-Qaeda forces were gradually wound down.

In November a US Department of Defense spokesman acknowledged that 'we are going through a new phase where it is less about combat and more about stabilization. The efforts in this phase are about 75 per cent reconstruction and humanitarian, and 25 per cent security and combat operations. This compared with a roughly even split between the two types of operation three months earlier. In late 2002 and early 2003, attacks on US forces, international representatives and the Afghan Government increased. Reports suggested that a new alliance had emerged between warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and remnants of the Taliban in order to oppose the USA and the central government. In January 2003, US forces and their Afghan allies came under fire at Spin Boldak south of Kandahar, near the Pakistan border.

The USA responded to the escalating attacks on its forces with a series of operations against Hekmatyar and the Taliban's forces (including Operation Valiant Strike in March 2003, which involved 1000 US soldiers supported by helicopters and armoured vehicles).

The US response has helped in combating terrorism in Afghanistan

International Peace-Building Efforts in Post-Taliban Afghanistan

The nature of the international intervention in Afghanistan has evolved considerably over the last 42 years, evident by significant changes in international strategy intended to address the deteriorating security situation, a growing insurgency, and deepening grassroots dissatisfaction with the overall political, economic and security environment. The roles of different international actors have varied greatly during these war from 2001 to 2014, as have their perspectives on the goals of the intervention and notions of local ownership. Nonetheless, coalitions with local actors have been present from the very beginning of the intervention when the US relied on anti-Taliban militias as allies in the war effort. These initial partnerships have shaped the overall state building effort and have complicated subsequent attempts to broaden local participation in security and development efforts. If warring parties can reach an incentive-compatible, bargained settlement, then all have much to gain from the cessation of ongoing hostilities. Beyond benefiting parties within Afghanistan, a stable Afghanistan would benefit neighboring states and the international community, who have dealt with the negative externalities of Afghanistan's civil conflicts. It is widely recognized that a political settlement among Afghan parties is the most practical way to end the fighting and attain lasting stability. Given the large risks associated with Afghanistan's civil conflict continuing, the United States should assess the viability of an international peace-keeping operation (PKO) that may alleviate Government of Afghanistan (GOA) uncertainties in negotiations with the Taliban and support compliance with an eventual intra-Afghan peace settlement. This chapter presents the peacebuilding, aids provided for Afghanistan focusing on the Peace-keeping Operation (PKO), so-called Bonn peace process and the formation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

Regional Cooperation

Since my previous report, relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan have remained strained. Nevertheless, dialogue continued, including on economic cooperation. President Ghani met the Adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz, on the margins of the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan. Pakistan pledged $500 million in economic assistance to Afghanistan and was publicly thanked by both the President and Mr. Abdullah. However, several members of the lower house of the National Assembly, as well as demonstrators in Paktika Province on 7 October, called upon President Ghani to reject the assistance from Pakistan and accused Pakistan of supporting terrorism, calling for its cessation. President Ghani condemned the attack in Quetta, Pakistan, on 24th October, during which at least 61 Pakistani police cadets were killed, and reiterated his call for regional cooperation against terrorism.

Afghanistan and India continued their close cooperation: on 14 and 15 September President Ghani visited New Delhi, where he and the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, called upon those concerned to cease providing support and safe havens to terrorists, including those who target Afghanistan and India. The Government of India pledged an additional $1 billion in development assistance to Afghanistan and renewed its commitment to the trilateral

Islamic Republic of Iran - Afghanistan-India transit corridor through the Iranian port of Chabahar. On 16 September, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan reiterated concerns that Afghanistan was increasingly being used by "a neighbour" for subversive activities inside Pakistan. On 21 September, a trilateral meeting was held between Afghanistan, India and the United States in New York, during which the countries reaffirmed a shared interest in advancing peace and security in the region and countering terrorism. On 4 October, the European Union hosted a dinner with international partners and countries, including those from the region. The European Union stated that common ground existed for regional political support of peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan undertook efforts to deepen engagement with Gulf States, including on a peace process and cooperation on counter-terrorism. Mr. Abdullah visited Saudi Arabia from 17 to 19 October and received pledges from King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud for supporting a peace process, countering terrorist financing and providing development assistance. On 25 October, President Ghani travelled to Qatar, whose leadership committed to supporting the peace process and announced plans to open an embassy in Kabul.

Infrastructure development and security cooperation continued between Central Asian countries, Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. On 7 September, construction began on the Afghan section of a railway linking Herat in western Afghanistan to the Iranian rail network. Trade and connectivity were also the focus of a visit to Herat on 30 October by the Governor of Khor asan-e Razavi Province in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Turkmenistan and Afghanistan inaugurated a rail sector connecting the Atamyrat-Imamnazar railway in Turkmenistan to Aqina in Afghanistan on 30 October. Regional cooperation on addressing security challenges and initiatives to strengthen regional economic cooperation featured at the centre of discussions at the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process Senior Officials Meeting held in New York on 23 September. The need to link infrastructure development with regional policy cooperation was further emphasized during the Regional Economic Cooperation side event held on 4 October on the margins of the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, during which regional countries welcomed five regional connectivity projects on the movement of goods, energy and data identified as priorities by Afghanistan. On 2 and 3 November, at a meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Abdullah called for support for the full membership of Afghanistan in the Organization, describing it as an important platform for regional security cooperation.

Afghanistan and Uzbekistan increased their engagement during the reporting period. President Ghani discussed bilateral economic cooperation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan, Abdulaziz Kamilov, on 4 October, on the margins of the Brussels Conference. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Mr. Rabbani, visited Tashkent to attend the forty-third session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on 18 and 19 October. During his visit, he signed an extradition treaty with Mr. Kamilov, who reaffirmed his country's commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation and to participating actively in all international meetings and conferences on Afghanistan.

Assistance of Peace-Keeping (PKO)
The US–Taliban settlement, signed on 29 February 2020, provides a starting point for intra-Afghan talks and a conditional exit strategy for remaining US and NATO forces. If the Taliban continue negotiations with GOA (Government of Afghanistan), maintain a reduction in violence, and uphold their commitment that Afghanistan will not be used as a terrorist safe haven, then all US and NATO forces could be completely withdrawn from Afghanistan by

2021. Increasing US domestic pressure to end the 19-year US military mission is impacting political decision making, and it is unlikely that US/NATO forces will remain in Afghanistan for the long term, despite the Taliban's continuing offensives against the GOA. Widespread uncertainty remains regarding the possibility of a bargained settlement between the Taliban and the GOA, as evidenced by the latter's May 2020 announcement that Kabul would continue large-scale offensive operations against the Taliban. Uncertainty over an intra-Afghan settlement is manifested in two primary forms.

First, it is unknown if warring parties can reach a feasible settlement, especially without US/NATO forces maintaining coercive pressure to compel the Taliban to negotiate with the GOA. Potential impacts to Afghanistan's political structure, legal system, security forces, disarmament, reintegration, and civil liberties all remain unknown, and there is deep, mutual mistrust. Second, if a settlement is reached, there is significant uncertainty as to whether internal parties would comply with the settlement's provisions, especially without a credible enforcement mechanism to deter violations. If intra-Afghan parties do reach a bargained settlement, the historical record and conflict research suggests there will be incentives to cheat or spoil the peace process among Afghanistan's numerous armed groups, complex tribal networks, and regional power brokers.

Further, given Afghanistan's rugged terrain, remote villages, and the GOA's limited reach, covert defections will likely go unobserved, increasing incentives to cheat. Non-cooperative bargaining models in civil conflict settings provide helpful starting points for analyzing these complex problems. These models advance information asymmetries and commitment problems as driving factors resulting in bargaining failures. If unaddressed, these problems may prevent combatants from reaching settlements or lead to relapsed fighting after a settlement is reached. Conflict research also suggests monitoring and verification mechanisms may offer partial relief from commitment and information problems and incentivize compliance with peace settlements. Given the US strategic interest in fostering long-term stability in Afghanistan, the US government should advocate for a proven monitoring and verification mechanism in post-conflict environments an international PKO. While the United States cannot direct other states to contribute to a PKO, Washington can leverage US diplomatic and economic power to identify willing contributors, secure financial donors, and shepherd the process through the UN Security Council (UNSC). Two critical scope conditions are required for a PKO to be a viable option in Afghanistan.

First, the Taliban and the GOA must successfully negotiate an incentive-compatible, intra-Afghan peace settlement. Second, Afghan parties (including the Taliban, the GOA, opposition, and civil society leaders) and the future Afghan government must consent to an international PKO. Objectively, these scope conditions seem improbable given ongoing violence and the Taliban's insistence on the complete withdrawal of foreign forces. However, it is also improbable that 150,000 Taliban could decisively defeat the GOA's 300,000 soldiers and take over Afghanistan. As ongoing fighting imposes large costs on the GOA, it also imposes costs on the Taliban costs that may not be sustainable in the long run. To end a costly status quo and gain desired reforms, the Taliban may willingly accept a short-term, consent-based PKO in the future, in exchange for bargained concessions that produce an incentive-compatible agreement. If the United States and the international community lay the groundwork for a credible PKO and it becomes a viable option during intra-Afghan negotiations, then it may offer both sides relief from information asymmetries and commitment problems and incentivize settlement compliance during the implementation phase. Since an Afghanistan PKO has not been seriously discussed, this article analyzes the conditions where

a PKO may become viable and provides initial analysis for a hypothetical PKO's ideal composition and disposition. This article proceeds as follows. First, I review contemporary research on non-cooperative bargaining in civil conflicts and how PKOs can alter conflict dynamics. Leveraging historical lessons, I then review the 1988–1990 UNGOMAP to explain why that PKO was unsuccessful in creating stability in Afghanistan following the Soviet withdrawal. I close with policy recommendations, where I explore several possible PKO options and analyze their potential for incentivizing compliance with a future peace settlement. If designed properly and paired with an incentive-compatible intra-Afghan settlement, an Afghanistan PKO can fill a critical monitoring and verification capacity and bolster Afghanistan's prospects for long-term stability.

The Light Footprint Approach of the Bonn Process

Unlike the intrusive trend towards transitional administration that entrusts executive and legislative powers to the United Nations or specially created external institution, the international community in Afghanistan adopted a "light footprint, or a minimalist approach, which emphasized local ownership" and Afghan sovereignty". It put a premium on bolstering local capacity and stressed the need for increasing "Afghanization" of both security and reconstruction efforts over time. In doing so, it limited the role of the United Nations and multinational forces to supporting and assisting a sovereign and independent Afghanistan, with few external factors involved, thereby leaving a light external footprint. In order to give Afghans, the lead role and legitimate the international engagement, the Bonn Agreement laid out a process to develop the political and democratic infrastructure of the country but entrusted it to an interim.

Ironically, however, this approach exemplified the failure to listen to many ordinary Afghans who, at that time, believed a heavier footprint was necessary, particularly in providing a security shield for the internationally supported peace-building effort and implementing transitional justice. In 2001, the international community and US had failed to appreciate that the country had endured nearly thirty years of war that had significantly destroyed social trust and capital. The international community, namely the United Nations, was in fact, the only popular and legitimate authority in the country, and had come in with high expectations from the population. For instance, one community elder in northern Afghanistan suggested that the international community should have taken initial formal responsibility for the development of Afghanistan:

> For fifty years, we have had three T's: Tariak (poppy); Tufang (gun); Taraj (robbery/thieving). We have always had violations…over the last eight years, we have been promised justice but this has failed. So, we need to make a new world and create new human beings. This is the only way of solving problems. The Afghan government should have been in the hands of the international community, directly through the United Nations. They shouldn't be occupiers; they should be there by agreement, not force. This needs a five-to-ten-year process and during this period, our new generation will emerge and will be educated and skilled so commanders will tire and leave. Then the new power of Afghanistan will emerge. (Theros, 2016. p 12)

A complicating factor has been the continuation of the American led military effort – Operation Enduring Freedom, which fights remaining Taliban and Al-Qaeda operatives on Afghan soil, without a status of forces agreement. This marked the contradiction inherent in

the US-led approach that began at the Bonn Peace Agreement: a light political footprint that entrusted national sovereignty and political development to an unelected and unpopular set of Afghan elites, paired with a heavy military strategy acting without a clear mandate from that national sovereign government. Consequently, the Bonn Agreement has never been fully realized: the country's new overly centralized political institutions became dominated by a set of factional leaders who quickly established networks of nepotism, bribery, and corruption. Their continued relationships with international actors, namely the US, further reinforced a personalized style of politics in the country, rather than promote the institutions and processes necessary to broaden participation and engender accountability and good governance.

Bonn Agreement—Bonn 2001

The Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions, or Bonn Agreement, was signed in Bonn, Germany, on December 5, 2001. It was endorsed by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1385 (2001). Under U.N. auspices, Afghan participants met to outline a process for the political transition in Afghanistan. The Bonn Agreement established an Afghan Interim Authority (AIA) on December 22, 2001, which was made up of 30 members and headed by Chairman Hamid Karzai. An Emergency "loya jirga" (traditional Afghan assembly) held in June 2002 replaced the AIA with a Transitional Authority (TA). The TA brought together a broad transitional administration to lead the country until a full government could be elected. A constitution, considered the most progressive in Afghan history, was approved at a "constitutional loya jirga" in January 2004. Hamid Karzai was elected president in October 2004, and parliamentary and provincial elections were subsequently held in September 2005. The Bonn Agreement also called for the establishment of a Supreme Court of Afghanistan and a Judicial Commission. It requested the U.N. Security Council to consider authorizing the deployment of a U.N.-mandated security force, outlined the role of the United Nations during the interim period, and referred to the need for cooperation with the international community on a number of issues, including reconstruction, elections, counter-narcotics, crime, and terrorism. The Bonn Agreement was fully implemented in 2005.

UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

This section shows the strategic review of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) with the goal of assessing the Mission's efficiency and effectiveness in order to optimize the division of labour to ensure better cooperation between United Nations-related organizations.

The United States and the international community continue to rely on the central role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) as coordinator of international donor activity and assistance. Within a broader, ongoing debate focused on U.S. and other assessments of efforts to stabilize Afghanistan, UNAMA's role has been emphasized in different contexts, particularly in the past several years. For example, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1806 (2008) significantly expanded UNAMA's authority. The Declaration of the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan, which took place in Paris in June 2008, also underlined UNAMA's role in leading all aspects of civilian coordination. Since the establishment of UNAMA, the Mission's role has been defined by its support for the transition process outlined in the Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re -establishment of Permanent Government Institutions, signed in Bonn, Germany, in December 2001, also referred to as the Bonn Agreement. The implementation of the Agreement was premised on the transition to a post-conflict environment, with an armed opposition acting

against rather than as a serious hindrance to the achievement of peace and prosperity. In subsequent years, the adoption of a constitution, expanded protection for human rights and civil liberties, democratic elections for the President and parliament and the establishment and growing effectiveness of government and State institutions have been seen. All of those processes were closely supported by UNAMA. Despite progress in those areas, the Taliban-led insurgency began to gain ground, particularly after 2006. Against that backdrop, Afghanistan entered a new phase in 2014 with the peaceful transition from one elected President to another and the transfer of security responsibilities from the International Security Assistance Force, led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), to the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.

The role of UNAMA evolved as the situation in Afghanistan changed, and the Mission's mandate and scope of activities expanded. Following a phase of expansion, the Mission's strength has been contracting since 2011. In recognition of the sovereignty of Afghanistan and as Afghan State institutions continued to gain capacity, UNAMA increasingly played a supporting role in alignment with the priorities of State institutions. However, real and meaningful progress notwithstanding, the Afghan State currently continues to rely heavily on the international community, both financially and in terms of security support. More than 60 per cent of the Government's budget is financed by foreign donors, and despite immense resources spent on institution-building, at moments of crisis Afghan institutions are at times perceived to be insufficiently effective at mediating between powerful interests and factions that retain autonomous capacities for violence.

These internal political rivalries take place in a context in which the legitimacy of the State is contested by the Taliban insurgency. During the early years of the implementation of the Bonn Agreement, it was predicted that the insurgency could be contained or diminished. Subsequent developments proved contrary to that assumption.

A political settlement is therefore required. Efforts to begin negotiations towards that end have been made over the past few years, but so far have gained little traction. It is this overall environment defined by a fragile political consensus among those who recognize the constitutional order and an increasingly violent and sustained insurgency by those who reject that order in which the United Nations is now operating. Doing so demands a reorientation of its activities.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was created at the request of the Afghan government and is a political mission of the United Nations (UN) in Afghanistan. UNAMA aims to help lay the groundwork for peace and sustainable development in Afghanistan. UNAMA was established on March 28, 2002 by the UN Security Council through Resolution 1401. The mandate of the UN Security Council is renewed annually depending on the needs of the beneficiary countries. Based on information from the official UNAMA website, UNAMA carries out various forms of activities such as political assistance, humanitarian assistance, human rights, and regional cooperation. The main objective of UNAMA is to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan. UNAMA has been involved in efforts to bring about peace in various fields. UNAMA has also played an important role in helping Afghanistan through the political transition and rebuilding Afghanistan's integrity.

In carrying out its mission, UNAMA has 2 operational pillars. The first pillar is political affairs. This pillar is the part that deals with political issues. This field is divided into several work units such as government units, law enforcement units, election assistance units, military advisory units, and police advisory units. The second pillar is the part that deals with the

reconstruction process and the restoration of infrastructure stability in Afghanistan. This section is an area that assists in coordinating all agencies working to rebuild Afghanistan. This section is also assisted by several work units, such as the human rights unit, the coordinating unit for aid providers, special advisors in the field of development, and other important departments. In addition, UNAMA is also assisted by other working bodies, such as the human rights sector, the security sector, and the communications and publications section.

UNAMA Work Program in Afghanistan UNAMA which is engaged in the field of human rights is the main field that supervises and implements preventive and repressive actions in the event of things that violate human rights. UNAMA makes every effort to "instill human rights values in Afghanistan" or human rights at all times and for all people". The team from UNAMA attempted to implement this strategy through, subject, reporting, advocacy, and collaborating with colleagues and discussing with the government, military, community groups and international groups. In achieving its goals, UNAMA sets 4 priority areas of work such as protection of civilians, protection of women from violence, peace and reconciliation, and detention.

In an armed conflict, the belligerent parties are likely to ignore the rules of international humanitarian law (IHL), particularly regarding the protection of civilians. Protection of Civilians UNAMA and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) consider that the armed conflict in Afghanistan is not an international armed conflict. UNAMA considers that the conflict is a conflict between the government and international military forces that are pro-government against anti-government groups. Anti-government groups consist of all individuals and groups consisting of various backgrounds, motivations, and command structures which generally come from the Taliban Group, the Haqqani network, Hezbi Islami, and Al-Qaida groups such as the Uzbekistan Movement, the Islamic Jihad Association, Lashkari Tayyiba and Jaysh Muhammad. All groups belonging to the pro-government group are obliged to minimize the impact of the actions of anti-government groups on the civilian population and civilian infrastructure. Article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions establishes the minimum standards for groups to understand a non- international armed conflict. Article 3 also extends humanitarian law to situations involving territory that is the sovereignty of a state and binds not only states but also non-state actors involved in the conflict.

In 2009, UNAMA recorded as many as 2,412 civilians died. A total of 1630 of them were caused by anti-government groups and another 596 victims were caused by pro-government forces. Meanwhile, as many as 186 other victims died as a result of gunfire, or were killed by explosions. The conflict that occurred in Afghanistan continued into the following years. The death toll in 2010 increased when compared to the previous year. UNAMA reported that as many as 2,777 people died during 2010. A total of 2,080 of them were caused by anti-government forces. Anti-government forces used suicide bombing and bombing with homemade bombs as their main strategy against the government which caused 1,141 deaths or 55 percent of the total number of deaths caused by antigovernment groups. During 2010, what was quite worrying was the increasing number of clandestine killings by anti-government groups. A total of 462 civilians were secretly killed.

Protection of Women Against Violence against women in Afghanistan is very common. The freedom of Afghan women is severely restricted, including the possibility to enjoy human rights. The conflict that lasted for almost 3 decades characterized by the absence of law, insecurity, and weak government has had a significant impact on the status and situation of women in Afghanistan in their efforts to achieve their emancipation. During the period of the

Mujahideen group from 1992 to 1996, various wars occurred that damaged various aspects of Afghan society's life. Women's human rights are severely restricted. They even received unfair treatment such as in the legal field, were tortured, experienced sexual violence, kidnapped, forced into marriage, and trafficked. This period describes the darkest period in the history of women's lives in Afghanistan. The emergence of the Taliban actually worsened the condition of women in Afghanistan.

The Taliban with their harsh and ideocentric interpretation of Sharia law actually makes women even more marginalized. Based on a distorted Islamic rule, the Taliban seeks to establish absolute rulership in Afghanistan. In April 2009, a spokesman for the Taliban group claimed responsibility for the killing of Sitara Achakzai. She is a member of the provincial legislature who seeks to inspire women to work and fight for their rights in Kandahar. This incident certainly reduces the participation of women in the Afghan parliament. From April to May 2009, 3 gas explosions were reported at various schools in Afghanistan. An explosion occurred in Parwan province in April which led to many girls being rushed to hospital for inhaling an unhealthy odour. A few days later, another explosion occurred in Parwan, sending 61 girls and a teacher to hospital. In May, an explosion occurred in Kavisa province which caused 90 girls aged 8 to 12 to be rushed to hospital from poison gas. In August 2009, the Afghan government adopted the Law on Elimination Violence Against Women (EVAW law). EVAW law is a collection of laws that seek to eliminate customs, traditions, or practices that can cause violence against women that are contrary to Islamic teachings. This law prohibits contract marriage, forced marriage, marriage before the age, forced isolation, prohibits women from obtaining education, work, and access to health services, and other discriminatory practices. The EVAW law is a major step in making official rules to protect women's human rights.

Peace and Reconciliation Since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, Afghans have hoped the war would end. However, although the acts of violence are decreasing, the war is not over. Beginning in 2006, the security situation has only worsened. One third of Afghans continue to live in poverty and more than 3 million Afghans are refugees in Iran and Pakistan. One of UNAMA's roles in creating peaceful and conducive conditions is to support The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP). This program is a program led and implemented by the Afghan government in order to create peace in Afghanistan. This program began with a Presidential decree issued in June 2010. The fighters, UNAMA supports the process of mobilizing and strengthening community groups and women's groups. UNAMA works with Afghan social groups to strengthen their participation in discussions on politics, peace, reconciliation and reintegration. UNAMA together with other fields seeks to provide technical assistance to APRP, Peace Council, and other relevant actors. UNAMA to integrate human rights practices into peace and reconciliation processes.

Establishment of the International Security Assistance Force

ISAF was created in accordance with the Bonn Conference in December 2001. Afghan opposition leaders attending the conference began the process of reconstructing their country by setting up a new government structure, namely the Afghan Transitional Authority. The concept of a UN-mandated international force to assist the newly established Afghan Transitional Authority was also launched on this occasion to create a secure environment in and around Kabul and support the reconstruction of Afghanistan. On 11 August 2003, NATO assumed leadership of the ISAF operation, bringing the six-month national rotations to an end. The Alliance became responsible for the command, coordination and planning of the force, including the provision of a force commander and headquarters on the ground in Afghanistan.

At this conference, 21 countries offered forces. The United Kingdom, after evaluating the offers, preferred 17 countries to deploy troops alongside the UK forces as part of ISAF. Major General John McColl, from British Army, was designated force commander.

ISAF provided support to the Afghan government and international community in security sector reform, including mentoring, training and operational support to the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP). The aim was to build professional, independent and sustainable forces that were able to provide security to the Afghan people throughout the country. This work was carried out jointly by the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) and ISAF's Joint Command (IJC), together with the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan) and other important national actors. NTM-A focused on training initial recruits and building the institutional training capability of the ANSF, while the IJC was responsible for developing fielded ANSF units through advice and assistance.

Mandate of ISAF

ISAF was first deployed in 2001 on the basis of a request for assistance by the Afghan authorities and a United Nations (UN) Security Council mandate, which authorised the establishment of the force to assist the Afghan government in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas in particular to enable the Afghan authorities as well as UN personnel to operate in a secure environment. At that time, the operation was limited to the Kabul area, and its command was assumed by ISAF nations on a rotational basis.

In August 2003, on the request of the UN and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, NATO took command of ISAF. Soon after, the UN mandated ISAF's gradual expansion outside of Kabul. While not technically a UN force, ISAF was a UN-mandated international force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Eighteen UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) related to ISAF, namely: 1386, 1413, 1444, 1510, 1563, 1623, 1707, 1776, 1817, 1833, 1890, 1917, 1943, 2011, 2069, 2096, 2120, and 2145. A detailed Military Technical Agreement agreed between the ISAF Commander and the Afghan Transitional Authority in January 2002 provided additional guidance for ISAF operations.

UN Security Council Resolution 1386

The UK formally informed the Security Council that it was willing to become the initial lead nation for ISAF with a letter dated 19 December 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the UK to the President of the Council. According to the letter, the responsibility for providing security throughout Afghanistan resides with the Afghans themselves, and ISAF would assist the IA in maintaining security. On December 20, 2001, the Security Council, determining the situation in Afghanistan constituted a threat to international peace and security, passed Resolution 1386 authorizing the establishment of the ISAF, for six months, to assist the IA in maintaining security in Kabul and surrounding areas. It also welcomed the UK's offer to take the lead in organizing and commanding ISAF.45 Being voted unanimously, Resolution 1386 passed under chapter VII of the UN Charter and authorized participating countries to "take all necessary measures" in carrying out their responsibilities. It called on Member States to contribute personnel, equipment, and other resources to the Force. It also called upon ISAF to work in close consultation with the IA and the Special Representative of the Secretary General.

Resolution 1386 also called on all Afghans to cooperate with the Force. It welcomed the commitment of the parties to the Bonn Agreement to "do all within their means and influence" to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of all UN and other

international personnel in Afghanistan. Resolution 1386 urged the Afghans to withdraw all military units from Kabul in cooperation with the ISAF. Member States participating in ISAF were called on to help the IA in the establishment and training of new Afghan security and armed forces.

The Military Technical Agreement

Major General John McColl, with a reconnaissance unit, went to Afghanistan to meet and determine the details of ISAF with the members of the IA. There occurred several points of disagreement. The most important issue was the size of ISAF. The Afghans, in particular Defense Minister General Fahim Khan, insisted on a force no larger than 1,000, while Western leaders wanted a force 5,000-6,000 strong. They also insisted that ISAF would be restricted to a static security role, guarding key buildings and political figures, while patrolling the city would remain under the responsibility of Afghan police and military personnel. This reflected Fahim's view that the presence of ISAF on the streets would undermine his control of the city. On the contrary, ISAF's view of the task was for a force that was able to patrol freely throughout the city, in many cases as a joint activity with the Afghan police, but with no restriction on its freedom of movement. After intense negotiations, McColl and the IA signed a Military Technical Agreement (MTA) on January 4, 2002.

The MTA set out the relationship between ISAF and the IA. It gave ISAF the powers it required to operate freely and without hindrance, and defined the legal status of ISAF, its deployment, authority, and the support that the IA would provide. It also specified the location of barracks in Kabul to which Afghan forces would be confined. Moreover, it clarified what the ISAF would do and where it would operate. After the MTA was signed, the participation of TCNs was formalized through the signing of a "Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)" in London. The MOU set out the arrangements, responsibilities, general principles, and procedures by which the TCNs would implement. This represented the final step in agreeing on the structure of ISAF for its period under UK leadership.

Role of ISAF effort in Afghanistan

ISAF operates separately from other forces operating in Afghanistan under OEF. The character of OEF is different from that of ISAF. OEF is best described as a combat-focused mission aiming to counter Taliban and Al Qaeda threats. Nevertheless, the end state for both missions is the same: to bring peace and stability to Afghanistan under the auspices of an elected and democratic government. Therefore, ISAF and OEF have to work together to achieve their objectives. To prevent overlap between ISAF and OEF forces and for reasons of effectiveness, it has been agreed that U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) activities would take precedence and CENTCOM would have operational authority over ISAF. In addition, the OEF forces have provided logistical, communications, and intelligence support to ISAF, and have been ready to act as a quick-reaction force to rescue ISAF units if they get into trouble. ISAF is a UN authorized mission, but it is neither a UN mission nor is it led by the UN. It is a "coalition of the willing" and has been deployed under the authorization of the UN Security Council. Therefore, it operates separately from the UNAMA. However, UN Security Council Resolution 1386 called upon ISAF to work in close consultation with the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General, who leads UNAMA. Moreover, a "Joint Coordination Body (JCB)" was set up on January 13, 2002 to ensure close cooperation between the IA, ISAF and the UN on matters related to the security issues. The JCB has met on a bimonthly basis, and included the Ministers of Defense and Interior of Afghanistan, the COMISAF and the Special Representative of the Secretary General.

Human Rights and the Future of Afghanistan under the Taliban Regime

Concerns for human rights particularly gender rights in Afghanistan arise from the Taliban's harsh treatment of women in the 1990s. Then, the Taliban imposed a ban on women's education and proactively discriminated against women by allowing them to work outside their homes. Today's women in Afghanistan, who have until now enjoyed relative freedom, equal rights and access to education and work are reminded of the suffering, restrictions and curbs of the 1990s when they see the Taliban patrolling streets and governing the country. Therefore, since the Taliban's takeover, a common sight in Kabul has been the protests carried out by young Afghan women against the Taliban. The Taliban have deliberately remained vague in their response when it comes to their policy direction on women, with the women's ministry more or less also disbanded. When asked to clarify their policy on the matter, the Taliban's generic answer is their "support for women's rights under the Sharia law". No further explanation is provided on what that means in practice. In a recent interview with the BBC, Taliban leader Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai had clearly indicated that "women will not be in the cabinet or top government positions (in their government). But they could work at a lower level". This statement reaffirms that the Taliban's perception of women in Afghanistan has not changed. They see women as 'incapable' of holding senior or decision-making roles. This is a problematic hyper-masculine understanding of women's role in society, particularly in Afghanistan.

Conclusion

In terms of its immediate goals, the US-led intervention in Afghanistan from 2016-2021 was in many ways a remarkable success. The study offers analytic guidance on where key actors stand and their plausible trajectory in light of the U.S. posture of withdrawal and the gradual rise of the Afghan Taliban. While the findings of this report are important in their own right, they should also be considered in the broader political context of Afghanistan. Furthermore, the USA achieved this without deploying large numbers of US ground forces, being drawn into a quagmire or suffering significant casualties. Although figures on Afghan casualties remain contentious, the most pessimistic forecasts for civilian casualties proved inaccurate and the predicted region-wide humanitarian disaster was avoided. The defeat of the Taliban also brought an end to its extreme form of Islamic rule and, arguably, an improvement in the lives of most Afghans. It is widely assumed that these successful aspects of the intervention in Afghanistan encouraged the USA to attempt a similar regime change operation in Iraq in April 2003.

For one, with the intra-Afghan negotiation process underway, Afghanistan appears to be at a crossroads. There is reason to believe that Afghanistan is looking at a difficult but realistic path toward peace. The ongoing process is especially significant as major warring parties have struggled to meaningfully engage in peace talks over four decades of conflict. Given the enormous generational suffering of Afghan civilians, this pathway deserves sustained support of and prioritization by the U.S. government and the international community. If the intra-Afghan talks are not given a chance, the country can descend into another long cycle of violence. At the same time, the terrorism challenge remains multifaceted and likely to endure. This requires new frameworks of management by the U.S. government, its allies, and other key regional countries. The precise makeup of the country's armed landscape and the role of terrorist groups of international concern in that context remains challenging to predict.

However, it is realistic to assume that a number of groups with varied local, regional, and transnational aims will find ways to persist. In turn, their presence will generate regular risks for Afghan civilians, the region surrounding Afghanistan, and Western countries. Members of Islamic State stand alongside their weapons, following their surrender to the Afghan government in Jalalabad, Nangarhar Province, on November 17, 2019.

UNAMA, which is an extension of the United Nations in Afghanistan, has made various efforts to realize a peaceful and conducive condition in Afghanistan. In achieving its objectives, UNAMA moves through two areas of work, namely the field of political affairs and the field of recovery and reconstruction. In an effort to protect human rights in Afghanistan, UNAMA established a special unit for human rights. This unit works all over Afghanistan. Since UNAMA's involvement in Afghanistan, UNAMA has worked hard to protect the human rights of people in Afghanistan. This effort was carried out in several ways, such as providing protection for human rights for civilians, providing protection for women, assisting the reconstruction and reconciliation process, and providing protection against violence for detainees. In addition, UNAMA is also considered to have succeeded in attracting the sympathy of other countries to help in the recovery of the Afghan condition. This is evidenced by the involvement of ISAF, other UN humanitarian missions, and major countries as donors for the Afghanistan reconstruction process such as the United States, Japan, Britain, Germany, and other donor countries to cooperate in restoring conditions in Afghanistan.

Summary of Findings

1.Terrorism has impacted negatively on the political development of Afghanistan. Terrorist activities in Afghanistan have not just destabilized the political system but also made them largely dependent on external forces for their protection. Afghan government have reached several agreements with the West led by the US for military assistance.

Beyond this, fear has made a lot of people distance themselves from Afghan politics as they became the targets of these terrorists. Again, terrorism have strained Afghan's regional cooperation starting with its neighbor Pakistan.

2. The US response has helped in combating terrorism in Afghanistan. With the US led military operation in Afghanistan, terrorists were dislodged from major cities. Terrorist activities such as illegal execution, beheading of individuals and other punishments by these terrorist groups were greatly reduced as a result of the presence of US (and NATO) forces in Afghanistan.

Recommendations

1. There should be an increased international pressure on the Taliban regime to run an all-inclusive government. The pressure should also extend to incorporation and adherence of human rights in the Afghan constitution as this will help stabilize the political system.

2. The US and the international community should play a role in the stabilization of the state by not withholding their support and assistance for the socio-economic well-being of common Afghans. In the long run, the 20-year achievements, under the US and coalition forces, in education, healthcare and the economy need to be consolidated and protected in order to avoid a humanitarian crisis in the country. The World Bank has estimated the gross domestic product (GDP) of Afghanistan to be around USD 19.87 billion in 2020; compared to 4.055 billion in 2002.17 Annual growth averaged 9.4 per cent between 2003 and 2012, driven by a booming aid-driven services sector, and strong agricultural growth.18 Aid flows decreased from around 100 per cent of GDP in 2009 to 42.9 per cent of GDP in 202019. Now that the Taliban are in control of Afghanistan and the foreign aid to Afghanistan has dried up, this could cause a serious economic and humanitarian crisis in the country including the possibility of refugee influx to other countries. A policy layout on aid provision, for the long-term well-being of the Afghan people, is therefore urgently required.

References

Emily, W. (2010). *The State of Transitional Justice in Afghanistan*. Discussion Paper.

Essel, S. T. (2012). CITI's Compliance Training Seminar, Accra, on October 25, p. 5.

Willis, D. (2001). The USA and the UK began military operations on 7 Oct. 2001. Australia also provided combat forces. *Air Forces Monthly,* Nov. 2001, pp. 35–50.

Olojo, A. Nigeria's Troubled North: Interrogating the Drivers of Public Support for Boko Haram," *ICCT – The Hague Research Paper*, October 2013: pp. 1 – 18

Anthony, D. (2001). Stability in View. *Jane's Defence* Weekly 36(25):17.

Edward Newman, Exploring the Root Causes of Terrorism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism,* Vol. 29, no.8 (2006): pp. 749 –772.

Kimberly, Z. Marten, W. (2002), Defending against Anarchy: From War to Peacekeeping in Afghanistan. *The Washington Quarterly* 26(1): 35-52.

Kenneth S (2010). The Enforcement Problem in Coercive Bargaining, *International Organization* 64, no. 2 (2010): 281–312

Barbara, F. W. (2009). Bargaining Failures and Civil War, *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 245–46.

Virginia, P. F. and Lise M. H. (2008). Pitfalls and Prospects in the Peacekeeping Literature. *Annual Review of Political Science 11*, 283–301;

Iselin, H. L. (2010). *UNAMA in Afghanistan Challenges and Opportunities in Peacemaking State building and Coordination*: The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs.

James, D. etal (2019). *Consequences of a Precipitous Withdrawal from Afghanistan Santa Monica*: RAND Corporation.

John, B. and Steven, S. (2001). *The Globalization of World Politics; An Introduction to International Relations*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Wheeler, N. J., (2000). *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society.* New York: Oxford University Press.

MacFarlane, S. N. (2002). *Intervention in Contemporary World Politics.* Oxford: University Press.

Yordan G. (2021). *Pertanggungjawaban Indonesia dalam Pencemaran Asap Lintas Batas*. Negara: Yogyakarta

Anne, S. (2017*). Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Thomas, B. (2010). *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History Princeton*, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Aimen, D., Paul, C. and Tim, L. (2018). *Nine Lives: My Time As MI6's Top Spy Inside AlQaeda*. New York City: PATH

Virginia P. (2004). Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace After Civil War. *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 2 269–92

Kenneth, S. The Enforcement Problem in Coercive Bargaining. *International Organization* 64, no. 2 (2010): 281–312;

Asfandyar, M., (2018). What Explains Counterterrorism Effectiveness? Evidence from the U.S. Drone War in Pakistan. *International Security* 43, no. 2 pp. 45–83, doi:10.1162/ISEC_a_00331.

Paul, S., Asfandyar, M. and Sameer, L. (2018). Politics and Threat Perception: Explaining Pakistani Military Strategy on the North West Frontier. *Security Studies* 27, no. 4, pp. 535-574, DOI:10.1080/09636412.2018.1483160/.

Anne, S.(2017). Thirty Years After Its Foundation – Where is al-Qaeda Going? Perspectives on Terrorism, *Terrorism Research Initiative*. 12

Thomas, J. (2020) Analysis: AQAP's New Emir Reaffirms Allegiance to Zawahiri, Praises Taliban. *Long War Journal*, no 12(4)

Mallet, V. and Wolffe, R.(2001). Taliban to give up Kandahar. *Financial Times*, 7 Dec.

Pannett, R. (2021). Taliban spokesman says 'no proof' bin Laden was responsible for 9/11 attacks. *The Washington Post*. Accessed 1 September, 2021

Baker, P. (2001). With Taliban gone, warlords and bandits battle in lawless south. *International Herald Tribune*, 12 Dec.

Clover, C. and Wolffe, R. (2002). US in fresh attack on al-Qaeda forces*., Financial Times,* Mar, p. 6.

Green, G. and Clover, C. (2002). Seven US troops die in Afghan operation., *Financial Times*, 5 Mar. 2002, p. 1

Ricks, T. E. (2002) US puts ground troops in thick of battle. *International Herald Tribune,* 6 Mar., p. 1.

Wesley, M., (2016). Al-Qaeda Leader U.S. Targeted in Afghanistan Kept a Low Profile but Worried Top Spies. the *Washington Post.*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/ checkpoint/wp/2016/10/28/al-qaeda-leaderu-s-targeted-in-afghanistan-kept-a-lowprofile-but-worried-top-spies/.

Clover, C. (2002). US soldiers suffer bloodiest battle in region. *Financial Times*, 11 Mar., p. 4;

Clover, C. (2002). US claiming victory in Shahi-kot. *Financial Times*, 13 Mar., p. 6.

Groom, B. and Alden, E.(2002). UK sending 1700 troops to seek hardcore al-Qaeda. *Financial Times*, 19 Mar., p. 1.

McGregor, R.(2002). US military set to take over most combat duties in Afghanistan. *Financial Times,* 24 June , p. 4.

Elizabeth, T. (2020), Reading Between the Lines of Afghan Agreements. https://www.lawfareblog.com/readingbetween-lines-afghan-agreements. Accessed 12 December, 2021

Financial Intelligence Centre (n.d) www.fic.gov.gh/?q=node/11, 2021. Accessed 12 January, 2022

Simon C. and S. (2013). On Abu Khabab al-Masri, who operated the cell,
see: Souad Mekhennet and Greg Miller, "Bloodline," Washington Post, August 5, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/national/2016/08/05/bombmaker. Accessed Dec 12, 2021

Tricia, B. (2018). Deadly Cooperation: The Shifting Ties Between Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. War on The Rocks. https://warontherocks.com/2018/09/deadly-cooperation-the-shifting-ties-betweenal-qaeda-and-the-taliban. March 11, 2022

Al Jazeera, (2015). Al-Qaeda's Zawahiri pledges allegiance to Taliban head. https://www.aljazeera.com/ news/2015/08/13/al-qaedas-zawahiripledges-allegiance-to-taliban-head/. Accessed 22 April, 2022.

Franz, M. (2020). The Taliban Say They Have No Foreign Fighters. Is That True? The Diplomat. https://thediplomat.com/2020/08/ the-taliban-say-they-have-no-foreign-fightersis-that-true. Accessed Aug 10, 2021

Bruce, R. (2020). The U.N. exposes the limits of the Trump peace plan with the Taliban. Brookings Institution. https://www.brookings. edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/06/08/the-u-n-exposes-the-limits-of-the-trumppeace-plan-with-the-taliban. Accessed Aug 10, 2021

Stefanie, G.(2020). Resurgent Taliban Bode Ill for Afghan Peace Foreign Policy., https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/07/ taliban-al-qaeda-afghanistan-united-statespeace-deal-resurgence. Accessed Aug 10, 2021

International Crisis Group (2020). Taking Stock of the Taliban's Perspectives on Peace. https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/311-taking-stock-of-taliban-perspectives.pdf. Accessed Aug 10, 2021

Borhan, O. (2017).AAN Q&A: Taleban Leader Hebatullah's New Treatise on Jihad Afghanistan Analysis Network. https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/reports/war-andpeace/aan-qa-taleban-leader-hebatullahsnew-treatise-on-jihad. Accessed 16 March, 2022.

Jack, M. (2016). Al-Qaeda's Zawahiri Calls on Supporters to Reject ISIS and Support Taliban. https:// www.newsweek.com/al-qaedas-zawahiricalls-supporters-reject-isis-and-supporttaliban-492337. Accessed 16 March, 2022.

Fazelminallah Q.(2020). The Man Who Drove the US Out of Afghanistan. Asia Times Online.https://asiatimes.com/2020/07/the-man-whodrovethe-us-out-of-afghanistan. Accessed 16 March, 2022.

Neta C. C. (2016)Update on the Human Costs of War for Afghanistan and Pakistan, 2001 to mid-2016. Costs of War Project, Brown University. : https://watson.brown.edu/. Accessed Aug 10, 2021

BBC News Online (2001). Kandahar rivals broker deal , 9 Dec., URL. <http"//news/bbc.co.uk/hi/south_asia/1700082.stm>Accessed Aug 14, 2021

Sarah, D., Susannah, G., and Dan, L.(2020).Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan between the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan which is not recognized by the United States as a state and is known as the Taliban and the United States of America. https://www.washingtonpost.com/. Accessed Aug 14, 2021

Reinhart, R.J. (2018). U.S. Views Mixed on War in Afghanistan. https://news.gallup.com/; J. Baxter Oliphant, "After 17 years of war in Afghanistan, more say U.S. has failed than succeeded in achieving its goals," Pew Research Center, 5 October 2018, https://www.pewresearch.org/ Accessed Dec 20, 2021

David, Z. and Fahim, ATaliban Kill 24 Afghan Troops, With Insider Help. New York Times https://www.nytimes.com/ . Accessed Aug 10, 2021

Sharif, H. and Susannah, G. (2020). Brutal attack on mothers and newborns prompts Afghanistan to resume offensive operations against Taliban. Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/. Accessed Jan. 14, 2022

Washington, DC (2017). The National Security Strategy of the United States of America: The White House., https://www.whitehouse.gov/. Accessed 3 Nov. 2021

Abdul, Q.S. and Orooj, H.(2020).Afghan government announces 'inclusive' team for talks with Taliban. Reuters. https://www.reuters.com/.
Accessed 3 Nov. 2021

Borhan, O. and Anand, G.(2020). Taliban Views on a Future State.New York: New York University Center on International Cooperation. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ Accessed Aug 10, 2021

Neta, C. C.(2018)Human Cost of the Post-9/11 Wars: Lethality and the Need for Transparency. Costs of War Project, Brown University. https://watson.brown.edu/. Accessed 7 Nov. 2021

Geoff, H. (2002). International Security Assistance Force for Kabul. Statement in the House of Commons, available at http://news.mod.uk/news/press/news_press_notice.asp?newsItem_id=1336 Accessed 3 Nov. 2021

UN Security Council Press Release (SC/7248)(2001).Security Council Authorizes International Security Assistance Force for Afghanistan. available at.

http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sc7248.doc.htm Accessed 3 Nov. 2021 Accessed 3 Nov. 2021

BBC (2021). Afghanistan: Taliban asked if there will be a place for women in new government. BBC News. Accessed 4 September, 2021, from https://www.bbc. com/news/av/world-asia-58407424 Accessed 7 Nov. 2021

US White House (2001) Address to a joint session of Congress and the American people. Office of the Press Secretary.

British Government report (2001). Responsibility for the terrorist atrocities in the United States, 11 September 2001. Office of the Prime Minister.

U.S. government report (2002). Terrorism: Amount of Money It Takes to Keep al-Qa'ida Functioning.

UN Security Council Resolution 1386 (S/RES/1386), December 20, 2001, para. 1.

UN Security Council Resolution 1386 (S/RES/1386), December 20, 2001, para. 5.

Central Intelligence Agency Analytic Report (n.d) https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/368986- 2002-08-07-terrorism-amount-of-money-ittakes-to.html.

United Nations (2014). Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. https://www.un.org/.