

US Presence in Afghanistan and its Impact on Central Asia

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Preface

The US war in Afghanistan and the controversial attack on Iraq and insurgency are examples of contemporary globalization. The US and her allies have made their presence not only in Afghanistan but different parts of the world are under siege. The US initiated military action in Afghanistan with two aims: firstly, to defeat al-Qaeda and their Taliban allies, and secondly, in concert with the Afghan people and the international community, to facilitate the creation of democratic conditions which would thwart the terrorist sanctuaries within Afghanistan. The overarching US government strategy for winning the war on terrorism and rebuilding the state of Afghanistan is predicated on six lines of operation that include: a) improving governance ; b) defeating the terrorist threat; c) improving political stability; d) enhancing economic and social development; e) implementing regional and donor strategies; and f) integrating the US government actions.

The US led coalition in Afghanistan was strong with forty countries involved in so-called Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and NATO's International Security Assistance Force. The US military had nearly 30,000 troops under Enduring Freedom, and about 20,000 coalition troops from 18 nations, the total was over 25,000.

By the US presence in Afghanistan the security dynamics of Central Asia witnessed a great impact. It has certain important regional implications, such as; a) a huge number of people left Afghanistan and took shelter in neighbouring Central Asia; b) the huge number caused greater domestic repression in Central Asia especially in Uzbekistan; c) some Islamic militant groups retaliated from both inside and outside the region; and d) the tension increased among all the Central Asian states regarding the stability on Afghanistan. US presence in Afghanistan and its growing ties with Afghanistan also creates particular problems for China. The US military presence in Afghanistan and its immediate neighbours is seen as eroding Chinese influence in those countries. For this reason China has been more active in cultivating the all-weather bi-lateral ties with the concerned countries. In nutshell, all the neighbouring states of Afghanistan remain isolated from the aftershocks of major developments in the region since the attacks on US. It affects these states in a multidimensional way, impacting the ongoing insurgencies, fight for self-determination, efforts for revolutionizing society on their soil, struggles for autonomy, their economies, trade, foreign investment and their perceptions towards US. Now US has decided to withdraw her troops partially

from Afghanistan in 2015, it has become an issue of discussion for scholars throughout world whether Afghanistan will manage to continue democratic institutions established by US or she may again fall in civil war. But in November 2014 Obama has signed a Bi-Lateral Security Agreement with Afghanistan to keep her troops there for the year 2015 as well.

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CHAPTER I

The conflict in Afghanistan has been fanned first by the geopolitical rivalry between Russia and Great Britain that lasted for more than a century, and later, by the rivalry between the Russia and US. The US interests in Central Asia in general and Afghanistan in particular are comparatively of recent origin. US policy towards Afghanistan was basically reactive and limited to the policy of containing Russia so that it did not spread its influence beyond Afghanistan towards the oil-rich Gulf States. Throughout the 1980's the US tried its best to organize a jihad against the communists in Afghanistan. It deliberately raised a highly militant culture among the Afghan refugees and, even went to the extent of making an international Islamic axis possible by recruiting mujahideen from all over the Muslim world. Once Russia pulled out their troops from Afghanistan, US left the scene and quietly allowed these forces to regroup under Taliban. Not only the Taliban but also al-Qaeda came into existence under the leadership of Osama bin Laden.

Following the 9/11 attacks on US, Bush administration launched anti-terrorist coalition which provided opportunity to Afghanistan to thwart the Taliban threats. These incidents changed the whole security scenario of the world. Afghanistan initially supported and welcomed US military presence in fighting against terrorism but later, she showed her disillusionment against the US. The US military presence in Afghanistan had a profound impact on the security dynamics of Central Asia. It affected these states in different ways, for instance, insurgency in some Republics like Uzbekistan, or struggle for more and more autonomy to some Republics, their economies, trade, foreign investment and their perception towards US.

Geo-Strategic Importance of Afghanistan

The case of Afghanistan, both in its historical and present context, is a complex mixture of social, political and geographical determinants which have shaped the development of Afghan society, Afghanistan has been located at the crossroad of British and Russian rivalry which resulted in Three Anglo-Afghan wars in the 19th and early 20th century.¹ In a state where there would be absence of sincere leadership and solid vision, there is loss of identity and direction for that nation. Once the direction is lost, outcome is lost and when the outcome is lost, the very purpose for that nation's existence being lost. A quick glance at Afghan history shows all these things. This is one aspect which cannot be neglected while talking on Afghanistan. Another positive aspect is partly due to difficult geopolitical conditions and the independent mood of the populations, Afghanistan managed to maintain most of its sovereignty and autonomy throughout these imperialist wars and World War II, in which she remained neutral.²

Since its inception, the great powers have always tried to disturb Afghans due to its geographical location. Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan was one chapter of such mission. The soviet decision to intervene in Afghanistan was hardly accidental, but based on quite thorough advance preparation.³ The Soviet leaders apparently had fairly reliable information on the developments in Afghanistan because of the presence of some thousands of Soviet military and technical experts in the country and because of the high level missions which were sent out to explore the prevailing situation.⁴ Probably after a relatively difficult process of decision-making the stakes were finally considered so high that the dilemma was resolved by resort to military means. It was no doubt expected that the operation would result in some tangible costs, but in the light of later developments, in

¹ Raimo Vayrynen, *Geopolitics of Afghanistan*, "Journal of Peace Research," Special Issue on Imperialism and Militarization, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1980, Sage Publications Ltd. p.93.

² Raimo Vayrynen, *Geopolitics of Afghanistan*, "Journal of Peace Research," Special Issue on Imperialism and Militarization, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1980, Sage Publications Ltd., p.94.

³ The decision to intervene was taken by the geriatric Soviet leadership, headed by the drug-dependent Leonid Brezhnev. Martin McCauley, *Afghanistan and Central Asia, A Modern History*, Pearson Education Limited, Britain, 2005, p.16.

⁴ See *The Economist*, London, January 3, 1980, pp.25-26.

particular regarding US policy, they were probably under-estimated. US behaviour before the intervention obviously did not give reason to anticipate so tough a reaction.⁵

The Soviet policy in Afghanistan is based on geopolitical thinking, which appears to have a sort of renaissance in international relations in general. The Soviet Afghan border is some 12,00 km long; and south of this border an unstable and unpredictable state was about to emerge. This created considerable anxiety in Moscow, especially among the military elite. Fears that Muslim nationalism might spread to the Soviet Union were less central in this context. Soviet thinking appears to be based on an idea of 'maximum security'; not only real but also potential threats to the security of the Soviet Union have to be removed.⁶ At the same time the Muslim opposition was gaining strength, partly because of the economic and military support which they received from outside the country. It is a fairly well-established fact that the Arab states and, to varying degrees, Pakistan, China, Iran and the United States, have supported Muslim rebels in Afghanistan who were also able to operate over the Afghan-Pakistan border.⁷

The US attitude to the Soviet role in Afghanistan was extreme in the sense that they were desirous to contain erstwhile Soviet Union.⁸ The decision-makers in the United States were unhappy about the growing Soviet role in Afghanistan, but partly because of their own problems in Iran they did not want to take any drastic measures. During the summer of 1979, the policy of the Carter Administration became, partly due to factors connected with the forthcoming presidential election campaign tougher, means to utilize economic and military coercion were considered. In addition, the US response has also been based on

⁵ On the boycott measures undertaken by the US, see the statement by President Carter on January 4, 1980, published in *'Survival'* vol. 3, No.1580, pp.66-68.

⁶ It was well-known that Hafizullah Amin, the ruler of Afghanistan at that time, was rapidly losing support, both among the people and within the army, and to maintain power he was resorting to more brutal means. Raimo Vayrynen, *Geopolitics of Afghanistan*, "Journal of Peace Research," Special Issue on Imperialism and Militarization, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1980, Sage Publications Ltd., p.97.

⁷ In the State of the Union Address to the US Congress on January 23, 1980, President Carter stated that; an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States. And such an assault will be repelled by use of any means necessary, including military force. Z. Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard, American Primacy and its Strategic Imperatives*, Basic Books, New York, 1997, p. 16.

⁸ Martin McCauley, *Afghanistan and Central Asia, A Modern History*, Pearson Education Limited, Britain, 2005, p. 26.

geopolitical approach which is visible in the declaration by the Carter administration that the Persian Gulf now belongs to the immediate US, sphere of interest.⁹

Geopolitics and spheres of interests are practically always detrimental to the interests of smaller powers which prefer peaceful and equitable relations with major powers.¹⁰ Same is the case with Afghanistan, which is economically very weak and has no economic importance. Its importance lies in its geopolitical location as already said. Russia may be fashioning a strategic alliance with India and Iran to keep Pakistan China out of Afghanistan. There is another reason why Moscow would like to include Islamabad. The later would like to tap into Central Asian oil and gas. Supplies would come through pipelines across Afghanistan. If Moscow can prevent these pipelines from becoming reality, Central Asian hydrocarbons will have to pass through Russia to reach the outside world. America can no longer rely on Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states for oil supplies. Within five years Russia and Central Asia can supply America with the oil it gets at present from the Gulf.¹¹ The Soviet Union obviously wanted in Afghanistan a government which leans rather heavily to Moscow or at least understands her security concerns. It is perhaps too easy to make use of the argument that the Soviet motive is and has been to defend its interests in Afghanistan against the intrusion by other leading powers, such as Great Britain in the past.¹²

It is, however, difficult to believe that the motives of Soviet operations would have extended beyond Afghan borders too, for example, the shores of the Indian Ocean or the oil fields of the Persian Gulf. The Soviet military operations in Afghanistan apparently aim at giving support to the Afghan troops to clear the country of opposition elements inimical to the Babrak regime and to the Soviet Union, since these elements potentially threaten-

⁹ Halliday, "Revolution in Afghanistan", *New Left Review*, No.1, 1978, USA, pp.10-14.

¹⁰ Arnold Fleicher, *Afghanistan: Highway of Conquest*, New York, 1965, pp.213-215.

¹¹ Martin McCauley, *Afghanistan and Central Asia, A Modern History*, Pearson Education Limited, Britain, 2005, p. xvii.

¹² Gregorian Vatron, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, Politics of Reforms and Modernization*, Standard Publication, New York, 1969, pp. 91-108.

so much alone but rather in coalition with other great power interests- the security of the Soviet Union's Southern regions.¹³

After 1989, Najibullah continued in power. He stayed with the communist government until it fell in 1992. Then he joined mujahideen forces commanded by Ahmad Shah Masoud.¹⁴ Pakistan's Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) suspects that he organized the attack on the Pakistani embassy in Kabul, in 1996. He was then the chief of security of the Northern Alliance (an anti-Taliban Afghan military coalition) when it ruled the Afghan capital from 1992 to 1996. Moscow backed the Northern Alliance in its attempts to be recognized as the government of Afghanistan. The then Defence Minister of Russia, Sergei Ivanov, called the Northern Alliance the 'legitimate government of Afghanistan'. Hence Moscow does not appear to have much interest in a broad-based coalition government in Kabul wielding real power. The Northern Alliance and Russia have much to gain from close collaboration. On the other hand, Pakistan is the main supporter of the Pashtuns. Russia is forging a new India-Iran-Russia strategic partnership, the object of which is to encircle Pakistan. The later was the main sponsor of the Taliban which caused so many security threats for Moscow. Pakistan hopes to gain access to Central Asian oil and gas supplies, a tangible reward for backing the US. The new partnership is attractive to Iran as it increases security on its eastern border and affords some influence over the evolution of Afghanistan.¹⁵

After 9/11 almost all the states changed their foreign policies. The old geo-strategic patterns of relations with regional countries, including Afghanistan's immediate neighbours, are redefining their interest's vis-à-vis Afghanistan. This would most likely set the mode of their respective future relations with Afghanistan, which presently is also re-orientating its foreign relations with the regional and neighbouring countries. Much depends on how

¹³ Gregorian Vatan, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, Politics of Reforms and Modernization*, Standard Publication, New York, 1969, p.110.

¹⁴ An asset to the Russians because of his intelligence and military links but also because he appears to be deeply hostile to Pakistan. Martin McCauley, *Afghanistan and Central Asia, A Modern History*, Pearson Education Limited, Britain, 2005, p.158.

¹⁵ Martin McCauley, *Afghanistan and Central Asia, A Modern History*, Pearson Education Limited, Britain, 2005, p.159.

neighbouring and regional countries redefine their own foreign policy imperatives with the then Afghan interim government. Other key players are the US, England and other western countries.¹⁶

US involvement in Afghanistan is not for the sake of staking itself; the strategic aim was to penetrate the Heartland. After 9/11 it seems that US may entrench itself in the Iran-Afghanistan-Pakistan or IRAFPAK zone.¹⁷ The chance the history has given the country for the first time was too good to be missed: “American foreign policy must remain concerned with the geopolitical dimension and must employ its influence in Eurasia in a manner that creates a stable continental equilibrium, with the United States as the political arbiter.”¹⁸ The America in Eurasia should fight the forces of turbulence and plant geopolitical pluralism (only US cannot get success to curb them) in this vast region.¹⁹ There is neither a straightforward nor a mechanical process: the Heartland can only be reached through the countries adjacent to Russia. Reliance on “key states,” Uzbekistan in the first place, is the solution.

Geopolitics

‘Geopolitics’²⁰ examines the political, economic and strategic significance of geography, where geography is defined in terms of the location, size, function and relationships of places and resources. Different scholar’s have different connotations regarding the term ‘geopolitics’. In 1890 Alfred Thayer Mahan wrote a book entitled ‘*The Influence of Sea Power upon History*’ in which he discussed, sea power was necessary to facilitate trade and peaceful commerce. Therefore, Mahan believed that the country that

¹⁶ Musa Khan Jalalzai, *The Foreign Policy of Afghanistan*, Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore, 2003, pp.339-340.

¹⁷ Z. Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard, American Primacy and its Strategic Imperatives*, Basic Books, New York, 1997, p.xiv.

¹⁸ www.eurasianet.org/opinion/afgh.html

¹⁹ Z. Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard, American Primacy and its Strategic Imperatives*, Basic Books, New York, 1997, p.10.

²⁰ Geopolitics means the impact of geography on politics. The term was coined by Rudolf Kjellen, a Swedish political scientist, at the beginning of the 20th century. Kjellen was inspired by the German geographer Friedrich Ratzel, who published his book ‘*Politische Geographie*’ (Political Geography) in 1897, popularized in English by American diplomat Robert Strausz-Hupe, a faculty member of the University of Pennsylvania. It is the study that analyses geography, history and social science with reference to spatial politics and patterns at various scales (ranging from home, city, region, and state to international and cosmopolitics). Friedrich Ratzel, *Political Geography*, London, 1897, pp. 4-8.

could control the sea would possess power.²¹ Thus, the development of a strong navy was an essential ingredient to a powerful state as was the country's location. He believed that the country with the most power would be one whose relative location was accessible and connected with a long coastline and good harbours.²²

The doctrine of geopolitics gained attention largely through the work of Sir Halford Mackinder in England. His proposal has become the most widely discussed concept of geopolitical studies. Mackinder was interested in political motion and he observed that the spatial distribution of strategic opportunities in the world was unequal.²³ Advances in technology were forcing a re-evaluation of spatial concepts and military strategies. With the advent of rail roads, countries no longer depended on the navy to move large armies. Thus, Mackinder believed that the focus of warfare would be shifted from the sea to the hinterland (interiors).²⁴ Later in 1904, he developed and formulated a Heartland Theory.²⁵ He says, *He who controls the 'Heartland' controls the World Island (Eurasia and Africa); He who controls the World Island, controls the world.*²⁶

Cold War policy makers of US and USSR used the Rimland Theory as justification for the policy of containment of the spread of communism. In America, geopolitics was simplified and distorted to serve political ends.²⁷ The world was seen as being composed of two blocs with no overlapping areas (Western and Eastern blocs or Russian or American bloc).

Throughout the study of geopolitics, the Middle East has always been a region of strategic importance as it connects Eurasia and Africa. Whether part of Mackinder's World Island or Spykman's Rimland, the Middle East has always been seen as a region of strategic

²¹ Guy Ankerl, *Co-existing Contemporary Civilizations: Arabo-Muslim, Bharti, Chinese and Western*, Geneva: INU Press, 2000, pp.1-5.

²² Mahan saw power as belonging to north of the Suez and Panama Canals.

²³ Sir Halford Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, London, 1904, pp.1-6.

²⁴ He developed a "Pivot Area" which was the northern and interior parts of the Eurasian Continent where the rivers flow to the Arctic or to salt seas and lakes. He believed that with the advent of railroads, this area would be pivotal as it would be easy to defend and hard to conquer. Sir Halford Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, London, 1904, p.7.

²⁵ Mackinder called the pivot area the "Heartland" and devised his famous Heartland Theory.

²⁶ Sir Halford Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, London, 1904, pp.1-7.

²⁷ For these Geopoliticians geography meant distance, size, shape and physical features that were all static.

importance. In Cohen's model, the Middle East is a shatter belt where the maritime realm meets the continental realm. Once, a powerful region of great empires and an important trade region, the Middle East found itself susceptible to foreign influence in the form of colonial domination and as a pawn in an international chess game between the Soviet Union and the United States. The tri-continental position of the Middle East will always be important geographically. It is unclear if the Middle East will be able to overcome its economic and social difficulties to be able to re-establish itself as an important region of trade and culture. Or if it will continue to be a shatter belt caught between colliding external cultural and political forces.

Review of the Sources

Afghanistan has become geopolitically very significant state, and has become a laboratory for research. There is no dearth of material or literature on Afghanistan. There is, infact, a plenty of material on history, geopolitics and interventions conducted by outsiders in Afghanistan. A lot of material is, however, in the shape of books, articles etc. Authentic data is scarce because of political transition in Afghanistan after 9/11 incidents.

Having all these loopholes in mind, the investigator followed prescribed observational and analytical methods with multi-disciplinary approach, and went through the primary and the secondary sources which include books, periodicals, journals, newspapers, internet, etc. The other limitations for this work were that the investigator could not organize field survey nor could consult the available literature in Afghanistan because of financial constraints, language barrier and the time limit. Nevertheless, information on the subject, scattered here and there, was compiled to construct a total view of the US presence in Afghanistan after 9/11. Moreover, the information available in the following works was extensively scanned for drawing reasonable inferences on the subject. But again the limitation of time and space restricts us to take cognizance of just a few indispensable works.

Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy", *Congressional Research Service, USA, December 2, 2014.*

The author is of the opinion that Afghan security forces have lead security responsibility throughout the country, and the United States and its partner countries are in the process of transitioning to a smaller post-2015 mission consisting mostly of training the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF). The number of US forces in Afghanistan, which peaked at about 100,000 in June 2011, has been reduced to just over 20,000. President Barrack Obama announced in May 2014 that the United States plans to keep 9,800 US forces in Afghanistan during 2015 mostly as advisers and trainers, with that number, shrinking to 4,900 in Kabul and at Bagram Airfield during 2016. September 2014 US President has announced that they have not completed their mission in Afghanistan, so their troops will remain there for another year that is 2015. US forces will be joined by about 3,000 partner forces from various NATO and other countries. The author highlights that the post-2016 US force is to be several hundred military personnel, under US Embassy authority. Still, doubts about the ability of the ANSF to operate without substantial international backing have led to recent US alterations of the post-2015 US rules of engagement and debate over the post-2016 force. The post-2015 force was contingent on Afghanistan's signing a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) with the United States. A dispute over alleged fraud in the June runoff presidential election resulted in a US-brokered solution under which Ashraf Ghani became President and Dr. Abdullah Abdullah was appointed to a new position of Chief Executive Officer of the government. Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah took office on September 29, 2014 and the US-Afghan BSA was signed on September 30, 2014. A similar document was also signed between Afghanistan and NATO.

Ahmad Rashid, *Pakistan on the Brink: The Failure of America, Pakistan and Afghanistan*" Penguin Books, Reprint Edition, Feb. 26, 2013.

Ahmed Rashid, one of the world's leading experts on the social and political situations in Pakistan and Afghanistan, offers a highly anticipated update on the possibilities and hazards facing the United States after the death of Osama bin Laden and as Operation Enduring Freedom winds down. With the characteristic professionalism that has made him

the preeminent independent journalist in Pakistan for three decades. Rashid asks the important questions and delivers informed insights about the future of US relations with the troubled region. His most important book to date, *Pakistan on the Brink* is the third volume in a comprehensive series that is a call to action to the nation's leaders and an exposition of this conflict's impact on the security of the world.

Ahmad Rashid, *Afghanistan Revealed: Beyond the Headlines*, Kindle Edition, Crux Publishing Ltd November 30, 2012.

Afghanistan Revealed offers the reader an incisive view into a country that has held the world's attention for more than a decade. Hardly a day goes by without Afghanistan making news in the media – but behind the headlines, what is really known about this complex and enigmatic country, its people, its culture and most importantly, its future? This book takes us beyond the media focus on politics and war into the lives of the Afghan people, and the forces that have shaped their individual and collective history.

A range of distinguished specialists shed light on Afghanistan, from the earliest Aryan migrations and the emergence of Islam, through the country's role as a key Central Asian trade centre, the Anglo-Afghan wars and the Soviet invasion, to the emergence of a post-Taliban state. We are reminded of how the Afghans have suffered in centuries of violent conflict and have stubbornly resisted all efforts to invade and dominate their land. We are presented with the tasks Afghanistan faces after the 2015 withdrawal of NATO-led combat troops, specifically the need to rebuild the country, create jobs, provide education, tap into its huge economic potential, and provide political and social harmony.

Readable and accessible, *Afghanistan Revealed* is essential background for anyone wishing to understand why peace and stability in the region have been so elusive. It is also an indispensable tool for foreign and Afghan policymakers who play a role in determining Afghanistan's future.

Ahmad Rashid, “Why are We Abandoning the Afghan's”, *New York Times Review of Books*, University of Akron Press 30 Amberwood Parkway Ashland, May 22, 2012.

The author in this article says that Afghanistan will look like a free state from foreign occupation which will take all the responsibilities on her shoulder after 2014. Ahmad Rashid highlights that the US president Obama has said that the promise to end combat operation by the summer 2014 and withdraw all western troops by 2014 is irreversible. The US and NATO long ago abandoned any pretense that they are trying to build a modern, democratic state in Afghanistan. But Barrack Obama and newly elected president of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani signed an agreement in October 2014 which puts forth that US troops have not completed their mission in Afghanistan. As per agreement they have to stay there for one year more.

Anthony Gregory, *What Price War? Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Costs of Conflict*, The Independent Institute, 100 Swan Way, Oakland, CA, June 2011.

The author in this book highlights that in the decade since 9/11, the US government has pursued a national security policy that has been exceedingly costly in blood and treasure. Even before, US defense spending was high by world standards, due in part to frequent interventions beyond the nation's borders, and after 9/11 the spending and casualties have mounted precipitously. The book throws light on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. These wars have been the most expensive and deadly for the United States since the Cold War and in particular since Vietnam. Many Americans saw this as a consequence of the particular policy approach taken by the George W. Bush administration, and many expected that the trajectory of US foreign policy, especially in Iraq but also in general terms, would change incontrovertibly, if not completely, once Barack Obama became president and had time to implement his changes. Now, more than two years into Obama's presidency, it is time to examine the new administration's record in Iraq and Afghanistan and its general approach to foreign policy and the war on terrorism. In doing so, political analysts may compare what has happened to what was promised, as well as to what was undertaken during the last administration.

David Ray Griffin, “Did 9/11 Justify the War in Afghanistan?” *Global Research Center, USA, 2010.*

The article highlights that although there are many similarities between the two wars of 1978 and 2001, there is also a big difference. This time, there is no draft. If there were a draft, so that college students and their friends back home were being sent to Afghanistan, there would be huge demonstrations against this war on campuses all across this country. If the sons and daughters of wealthy and middle-class parents were coming home in boxes, or with permanent injuries or post-traumatic stress syndrome, this war would have surely been stopped long ago. People have often asked: Did we learn any of the “lessons of Vietnam”? The US government learned one. If you’re going to fight unpopular wars, don’t have draft-hire mercenaries.

There were many other questions that have been, and should be, asked about this war, but in this essay, the author focuses on only one: Did the 9/11 attacks justify the war in Afghanistan? However, what can be designated the “McChrystal Moment” – the probably brief period during which the media are again focused on the war in Afghanistan in the wake of the Rolling Stone story about General Stanley McChrystal, the commander of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan, which led to his resignation provides the best opportunity for some time to raise fundamental questions about this war. Various commentators have already been asking some pretty basic questions about the effectiveness and affordability of the present “counterinsurgency strategy” and even whether American fighting forces should remain in Afghanistan at all. But the author seems interested in an even more fundamental question, whether this war was ever really justified by the publicly given reason, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Amy Belasco, “Troop Levels in the Afghan and Iraq Wars, FY2001-FY2012: Cost and Other Potential Issues”, *Congressional Research Service, USA, July 2, 2009.*

The article deals that in February and March 2009, the Obama Administration announced its plans to increase troop levels in Afghanistan and decrease troop levels in Iraq. In Afghanistan, 30,000 more troops are deploying this year while in Iraq; troops will gradually decline to 35,000 to 50,000 by August 31, 2011 with all troops to be out of Iraq by December 31, 2011. The most commonly cited measure of troop strength is “Boots on the Ground” or the number of troops located in Afghanistan and in Iraq. Based on average monthly Boots on the Ground figures, the number of troops in Afghanistan and Iraq increased from 5,200 in FY2002 to a peak of 187,900 in FY2008 primarily because of increases in Iraq beginning with the invasion in March 2003. In FY2009, total troop strength is expected to remain the same as planned increases in Afghanistan offset declines in Iraq. By FY2012, overall troop strength for the two wars is likely to decline to 67,500 when the withdrawal from Iraq is expected to be complete.

The author says for Afghanistan, troops in country grew gradually from 5,200 in FY2002 to 20,400 in FY2006. Between FY2006 and FY2008, average strength there jumped by another 10,000 to 30,100. Under the Administration’s plans, Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates that average monthly Boots on the Ground in Afghanistan may increase to 50,700 in FY2009 with a further increase to 63,500 the following year once all new units are in place. Currently, additional increases have not been approved.

M. L. Roi, G. Smolyne, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Groups, USA 2008.

The book throws light on US diplomacy and nation-building in different states in Asia and Europe, especially in Eurasia for exploitation of natural resources. It also covers whole strategy of NATO in Afghanistan during the military campaign against al-Qaeda and the Taliban with the objectives of the US in subsequent years after 9/11. The book concludes that the limited aims in the initial campaign have been replaced by a set of more ambitious objectives. The book also concludes despite significant progress in political reform and socio-economic improvements in many regions of the country, as of the end of 2007, allied

strategy in Afghanistan may not be viable without considerable increases in resources. The book has not highlighted the event of 9/11 and its impact on the Muslim world especially Afghanistan.

Carey Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007.

Yet this is another very useful book for the scholars of Afghan problem. It is a collection of several articles which have taken different aspects of Afghanistan into cognizance. The book highlights narcotics trade in Afghanistan and US policy towards the smuggling of narcotics. Drug-trafficking has become significant factor in Afghanistan's fragile political and economic order over the last twenty-five years. The book discusses the post-war governance, security and US policy. Afghanistan's political transition was completed with the convening of a parliament in December 2005, but since then insurgent threats to Afghanistan's government have escalated to the point that some experts are questioning the future of US stabilization efforts. The book highlighted that the fall of the Taliban has stabilized the region. It is also believed that some neighbouring governments are attempting to manipulate Afghans factions to be their advantage, even though six of Afghanistan's neighbours signed a non-interference pledge on December 23, 2002. The author in the book does not deal with the event of 9/11 and its aftermath.

Martin McCully, *Afghanistan and Central Asia; A Modern History*, Britain 2005.

This is the most important book which has been compiled after an exhaustive survey of Afghanistan and Central Asia. The book discusses history of both the regions and compares it with present scenario. Both the regions have been great empires themselves and have been fought over by great empires. The book elaborately discusses the role of the great leaders of Afghanistan and Central Asia in their history. The war in Afghanistan after the Communist regime radicalized Islam worldwide and led to the emergence of al-Qaeda. But the book does not touch a very important aspect of foreign invasions especially of US.

Rizwan Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, Ashgate Publishing United, England/USA, 2005.

This is yet another comprehensive and melodramatic book on the two neighbours, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The primary objective of this book is to examine the historical relationship between the regions that form contemporary Pakistan and Afghanistan. In this context, it gives a sketch of the Indian subcontinent's interaction with Afghanistan from the pre-colonial era to the creation of Pakistan. The book also gives an overview of India's relationship with Afghanistan from the era of Islam's ascendancy in the region to the time of partition in 1947. It focuses on the nineteenth century geo-strategic rivalry between Britain and Russia- the 'Great Game' that played an important role in facilitating the establishment of Afghanistan as a 'buffer' state separating two colonial empires. The book also examines the course of Pakistan- Afghanistan relations from 1947-77. Most significantly, the book evaluates the Pashtunistan issue which became a factor in enabling the Soviet Union and the United States to enhance their influence in the region. The book also analyses the unique nature of the Pakistani state which influenced the evolution of the Pak-Afghan relationship. It also examines the impact of the Bhutto regime's policies on Pakistan-Afghanistan interaction after the secession of East Pakistan (presently Bangladesh) in 1971. It also concentrates on evolution of Pakistani policy that influenced events in Afghanistan. The global, regional and domestic facets of the Afghan conflict are highlighted. In this context, it analyses the role of Afghanistan in Pakistani security perceptions. Moreover, special attention was paid to the connection of the Taliban phenomenon with Pakistani domestic politics. Lastly, the book examines the policy of the United States vis-à-vis Pakistan and the Taliban within the South Asian regional context. But the lacuna in the book is that it has not dealt with the whole scenario of international politics after the attacks on the US and the US response to the attacks.

Patrich Hayden, Tom Landsford, Robert P. Watson, *Americas War on Terror*, Ashgate England 2004.

The book consists of several articles which throws light on different events including 9/11 and Afghanistan. The book sketches a framework for thinking about the US government's response to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. In particular, it examines the moral and legal rules that apply to the US-led fight against terrorism, and articulates the appropriate limits to wagging the so-called 'war on terrorism'. Following the violent attacks of 11 September by al-Qaeda operatives, one of the fundamental questions faced by the administration of George W. Bush as well as by the broader international community, was how best to respond to the threat and reality of terrorism. The author does not analyze properly the September 11 incidents which seem a sort of prejudice towards the al-Qaeda by the US.

Musa Khan Jalalzai, *The Pipeline War in Afghanistan, Oil, Gas and the New Energy Great Game in Central Asia*, Sange-Meel Publications, Chowk Urdu Bazar, Lahore Pakistan 2004.

The book deals with the interests of US and its allied states in Afghanistan and its neighbours like Central Asian Republics (CAR's). The book provides information about six international companies which are very active in Central Asia. The government of Turkmenistan formed Central Asia Gas Pipeline, Ltd, (CENTGAS) in formal signing ceremonies. The group was developing a project to build a 790-mile (1,271-km) to link Turkmenistan abundant proven natural gas reserved with growing markets in Pakistan and India. The book also deals the origin of warring factions, and foreign involvement in Afghanistan, and Taliban and the new oil and gas war in Afghanistan. No doubt the book has touched some important aspects about the Afghan problem but lacks some important things, for instance, the interests of US military presence in Afghanistan, its objectives etc.

Amlendu Misra, *Afghanistan*, Polity Press, USA/ UK, 2004.

This is yet very important book written after the events of 9/11. It discusses clearly the US war on terror, set against the backdrop of Afghanistan, the Taliban and al-Qaeda. It throws light on various aspects of this undertaking. Furthermore, it enquires whether the US administration, by recourse to international law and by using the failed state logic

against an amorphous enemy, has further widened the division between Muslims and non-Muslims. It also highlights 'Intervention' in international affairs. The author in the book does not refer to a situation of communication between actors replaced by some form of external deployment of force in the internal affairs of this particular state. This deployment of force could be in the social, economic, political, religious or military domain.

Stephen Tanner, *The Wars of the Bushes, A Father and Son as Military Leaders*, Casemate Philadelphia 2004.

The book highlights the different wars of America on different countries of the world. It also deals with the policies of two former presidents of US who invaded Panama, Iraq or Gulf region. It also throws light on the fall of the first George Bush and coming of Bill Clinton as the president of US. The book points out George Bush's war on Afghanistan after the attacks on US and provides a clear picture of Afghanistan in history and the creation of Taliban and Osama bin Laden (Chief of al-Qaeda). It also highlights the reaction of US against the attacks on 11 September 2001. But the book is silent about the objectives of US presence in Afghanistan.

Dr. Nabi Misdaq, *Afghanistan, Political Frailty and Foreign Interference*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, New York 2003.

The book furnishes the political frailty and outside interference in Afghanistan. The book also provides the whole social and historical events of the past two and a half centuries which laid a great impact on Pashtuns and the various minority ethnic groups in the country, and how this socio-historic and political interplay landed these groups in the Soviet war and subsequent vicious civil war, resulting in the loss of thousands of lives and the almost total destruction of the country and collapse of its infrastructure. After 9/11 Afghanistan was interfered by yet another superpower, the US. It also tried to shed light on why events took such a course, one which saw a shift in the US role from helping to liberate Afghanistan from the clutches of the Soviet Union to becoming the occupier itself. The final part of the book examines why and how the US reached such a conclusion in policy, how it

has been handling its occupation and what its consequences are, not only for Afghanistan but also the United States. The book deals with some significant aspects in Afghan imbroglio but does not provide proper information regarding the September 11 events and its impact on the whole world in general and muslim world in particular.

Ahmad Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, Penguin Group (USA) Incorporated, 2003.

Ahmed Rashid, whose masterful account of Afghanistan's Taliban regime became required reading after September 11, turns his legendary skills as an investigative journalist to five adjacent Central Asian Republics - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan - where religious repression, political corruption, and extreme poverty have created a fertile climate for militant Islam. Based on groundbreaking research and numerous interviews, the author explains the roots of fundamentalist rage in Central Asia, describes the goals and activities of its militant organizations, including Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda, and suggests ways of neutralizing the threat and bringing stability to the troubled region. A timely and pertinent work, *Jihad* is essential reading for anyone who seeks to gain a better understanding of a region mostly overlooked by the readers.

Tom Landsford, *A Bitter Harvest, US Foreign Policy and Afghanistan*, Ashgate Publishing Limited, USA 2003.

At its core, this book is an examination of the nexus between US foreign policy and conflict in Afghanistan. The work seeks to answer questions about the role of the world's last remaining superpower in initially fostering Islamic extremism in the region, and later Washington's role in efforts to suppress the terrorist activities of radical groups such as al-Qaeda. The work begins with an introduction to the stratified ethnic community that inhabits the country – a community whose tribal rivalries and strife have historically only been ameliorated by the presence of an outside invader. Second, the impact of Afghan history is examined in the context of its continuing influence on the people and political geography of the country. Third, the middle chapters of the book explore the legacy of US

foreign policy towards Afghanistan by highlighting the opportunities that were missed and those that were taken advantage of as Washington engaged in the bipolar conflict following World War II. Fourth, the book provides a means with which to reconcile the legacy of Afghanistan's troubled past with the contemporary events surrounding the 11 September attacks and the resultant US-led campaign in the country and against global terrorism. Finally, the role of the United States in the future of Afghanistan forms the central theme of the conclusion to this book. The final chapter concentrates on the potential benefits of continued US engagement in Afghanistan and explores the dangers of a US withdrawal. The book is a good piece of work on Afghanistan but has not highlighted what impact US military presence laid on the regional powers and the Central Asian Republics.

Christine Noellekarimi, Conard Schetter, Reinhard Schlegintweit, *Afghanistan – A Country without a State*, Vanguard Press, Lahore/ Karachi/ Islamabad, 2002.

The book takes our attention towards the role of outside actors in the Afghanistan conflict. The United States and Russia, who engaged in a proxy war for the soil of Afghanistan in the 1980's, have finally found common ground in their opposition to what has been created in the intervening period, the Pakistan - backed ultra-orthodox Islamic Taliban militia. The book also highlights the summit held in June 2000, in which two superpowers, America and Russia agreed on the need to contain the Taliban as a perceived source to support for the spread of 'Islamic Militancy' and 'International Terrorism'. This was a development, which also resonated well with India, Iran, the Central Asian Republics, China and the European Union, all of which have grown apprehensive of the Taliban for varying reasons. The book does not clearly indicate the Pakistan's full and unwavering military support, flow of human support from Pakistan's religious groups and schools as well as by the revenue that the militia generates from illicit dealings, including heroin production and drug-trafficking.

Dr. Rifat Hussain, J. N. Dixit, and Julie Sirrs (ed.), *The Anatomy of a Conflict, Afghanistan and 9/11*, Lotus Collection, New Delhi 2002.

The book is based on the collection of several articles. The book furnishes the whole event of 9/11 that shook the world. It also highlights the role of Taliban and their strict rules of Islam. The book mainly focuses on the Pakistan's Afghan policy after the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington. Washington categorically told Islamabad to decide whether it was 'with the United States or against it'. Pakistan withdrew its strategic and diplomatic support with the Taliban regime in Kabul after America launched military action against the Taliban and bin Ladens terrorist network on 7 October 2002. The book also deals with inauspicious beginning in the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Primarily because of Kabul's refusal to recognize the Durand Line as a legitimate international boundary between itself and the new state of Pakistan, Afghanistan not only cast its solitary vote against Pakistan's admission to the United Nations but also called for the establishment of Pashtunistan at the expense of its Muslim neighbour. Despite all the aspects touched by the author in the book, it does not deal with the aims and interests of US in the area. The book also throws light on political and economic reconstruction of Afghanistan but it remains silent on the attacks on the US and afterwards.

William Maley, *The Afghan Wars*, Palgrave, Macmillan, 2002.

The book outlines the events which followed after 9/11 and conclude by offering some reflections on the challenges which Afghanistan will have confront as a result of over two decades of war. It is divided into four sections. The first gives a brief overview of bin Laden, his links with the Taliban, who became increasingly radical as a result of his influence. The second traces the military campaign by which the Taliban were obliterated as a political and military force and discuss the factors which contributed to their rapid collapse at very time when some observers were predicting a prolonged campaign and warning that the US could find itself trapped in a new Vietnam. In third, the book examines the Bonn agreement of 5 December 2001, which defined a path for the establishment of new political arrangements in Afghanistan and led to the inauguration of a post-Taliban

Interim administration on 22nd December. The final section highlights some of the challenges with which the Afghan people will have to deal. The book also focuses out at length challenge for Afghan people to stable themselves in economic and political stability. The book does not point out the impact of US presence on neighbouring states of Central Asia.

Phil Scraton, *Beyond September 11, An Anthology of Dissent*, Pluto Press, London, Sterling, Virginia 2002.

This book is again a collection of several articles which throws light on different aspects; for instance, terrorism in history of origins of Americas jihad, war against terrorism and democracy. The book also discusses the President Bush's message to the world after the attacks on US. The picture of the world after 9/11 has been clearly depicted in the book. The atrocities of September 11 are widely regarded as a historic event. In the book the author tried to investigate whether 9/11 is a reality or myth. The book throws light on western values and military interventions in different instable states, and also the problem of Palestine. The book differentiates between Palestine groups such as Fatah, Hamas and Hezbollah, who see themselves as resistance fighters, and the al-Qaeda terrorists. The book does not deal with the role of the regional powers in Afghanistan.

K. Warikoo, *The Afghanistan Crises: Issues Perspectives*, New Delhi 2002.

This work consists of 26 articles which have touched different aspects on Afghanistan. The book deals with historical, cultural, political and economic aspects of Afghanistan. It also highlights that Afghanistan is dominated by place names derived from Sanskrit. One whole chapter also highlights Pak-Afghan relations in different perspectives. The author in the book talks about the dissolution of former USSR and says that a new era of global geopolitics commenced which pronounced in the Afghan-Pak cauldron. Circumstances along with global alignment have changed since 1991. The book further points out that it is no longer Afghanistan that provides the supposed strategic back up to the Taliban. The book deals with regional problems affecting India, the Central Asian Republics, parts of Russia but

it does not deal with the role of US in Afghanistan which is very important aspect of the problem.

Vijay Prashad, *War Against the Planet, the Fifth Afghan War, Imperialism, and other Assorted Fundamentalisms*, Leftword, New Delhi 2002.

This is the very comprehensive book which has touched important aspects regarding Afghanistan. The book deals with the wars in Afghanistan and discusses that Americans were passive in all those wars. The author in the book talks about the former allies of the US, the 'Afghan Arabs', who lost their shelter and therefore, lost their ability to conduct acts of terror against US targets. The book also deals briefly with the 9/11 events that transpired in the United States on 11 September 2001, and afterwards. While analyzing the book it seems that the author blames Osama bin Laden for the mastermind of the events of that day. However, the book does not explain the real events of September 2001.

Ahmad Rashid, *Taliban, the Story of the Afghan Warlords*, London, 2000-2001.

The book highlights the Pakistan's support to Taliban whether financial or military. Senior bureaucrats scuttled between the two ministries and the Prime Ministers Secretariat with bulging briefcases full of files that needed signatures from various ministers. The book also discusses that in 1997-98 Pakistan provided the Taliban with an estimated US \$30 million in aid. The book clearly gives information about funds provided by the Pakistani government to Taliban in order to have a friendly government in Afghanistan which will help it to reach the warm waters of Central Asia. During the 1980's the ISI had handled the billions of US dollars which had poured in from the west and Arab states to help the Mujahideen. The book does not propose that Taliban leaders were well connected to the Quetta mafia. Initially, the Quetta mafia gave the Taliban a monthly retainer but as the Taliban expanded west wards they demanded more funds.

Ahmad Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil, and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, Thorndike Press, 2000.

The most extreme and radical of all Islamic organizations, the Taliban, inspires controversy and especially fear in both the Muslim world and the West. Rashid explains how the growth of Taliban power has created severe instability in Russia, Iran, Pakistan, and five Central Asian Republics. He describes the Taliban's role as a major player in a new "Great Game" competition among Western countries to build oil and gas pipelines from Central Asia to Western and Asian markets. Discusses the controversial changes in American attitudes toward the Taliban - from early support to bombings of Osama Bin Laden's hideaway and other Taliban-protected terrorist bases -- and how they have influenced the stability of the region.

Sreedhar, *Afghan Turmoil: Changing Equations*, Himalayan books, New Delhi 1998.

The author in this book clearly blames Pakistan for its active involvement in Afghanistan's turmoil. The international media personal present in Kabul at that time, the book claimed, were surprised to see, along with gun wielding Taliban, "Urdu speaking" Afghan mujahideen on the streets of Kabul on the morning of 27 September 1996. The book also indicates that the Pakistan's role in this affair gives an indication that Islamabad is following a two-track policy in Afghanistan. At one level the Pakistan Foreign Office speaks in terms of broad-based government in Afghanistan to bring peace and stability. At another level the Pakistani Intelligence Agency (ISI) pursues a policy of supporting the Taliban at every stage with men and material to achieve its military objectives. At the end the book highlights that Pakistan's policy towards Afghanistan is another miss advantage like its policy towards India. By a series of policy initiatives, which were not in tune with the ground realities, Pakistan lost its clout in Afghan politics. However, the book does not point out the Pakistan government's talk of bringing all parties in the Afghan civil war to the conference table, therefore, has not been taken seriously by readers.

Sreedhar, (ed.), *Taliban and the Afghan Turmoil; The role of USA, Pakistan, Iran and China*, Himalayan Books, New Delhi 1997.

The book deals with the creation of Taliban and the role of USA and other regional powers. The book clearly implied that the Pakistan armed forces organized the whole assault on Kabul with the Taliban as a front. The book also outlines Pakistan's strategic interests in Afghanistan. It also examines Pakistan's strategic interests after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in February 1989. Foremost would be the troubled border. The Durand line dispute has come into the open through Afghanistan's refusal to accept the "internationally recognized" boundary between the two countries and the Afghan demand for the integration of all Pathans either in Afghanistan or in an autonomous or perhaps independent Pashtunistan. There are different aspects of the Afghan problem which the author has left, for instance, geopolitical rivalry in Afghanistan.

Besides these works, some journals and encyclopedias like *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *Encyclopedia Americana*, and *Europa Year Book* etc., were pursued during the present work. Likewise, important inputs were drawn from the most prestigious Journals available on the subject; *Central Asian Survey* (Oxford), *Asian Survey* (UK), *Eurasian Studies* (Harvard), *Contemporary Central Asia* (New Delhi), *Central Asian Studies* (USA), *Dialogue* (New Delhi), *USI Journal* (New Delhi), *Foreign Affairs* (New York), *Journal of the School of International Studies* (Los Angeles/London/ New Delhi/ Singapore), *Strategic Analysis* (New Delhi), *World Focus* (New Delhi) etc. They cover a diverse range of subjects related to the economy, polity, culture, history, ethnicity, religion, foreign relations, etc. The related programs on *BBC*, *VOA* (Voice of America) and newspapers published across the world were consulted during the present study.

While, therefore, the available literature is diverse in make and objective, it provided a deep insight to the investigator in analyzing the different contours of US presence in Afghanistan after 9/11. In the above mentioned works, different dimensions of the study have been touched but nothing has been carried out regarding the assigned problem. Keeping in view this whole scenario an attempt has been made to analyze the nature of US military presence in Afghanistan which laid a great impact on whole Central Asia. Ultimately

an attempt has been made to fill the research gap. The present work has been carried out within the outlined objectives.

Data Collection and Methodology

In the light of objectives aforementioned and to have a meaningful discussion on the subject inter-disciplinary approach has been followed, taking insights from history, geography and current international affairs. The comparative methods were also employed for the understanding of different issues related to the subject. Since the study is based on theoretical material as such all sources of information- books, official records, journals, periodicals, newspapers and UN Documents etc. on the research area were taken into account. Data was also collected from different websites of the internet and by contacting different personalities personally who worked on the subject. An interview method has been employed through internet, and different scholars have been consulted throughout the world especially from Afghanistan, India and Central Asian Republics. Keeping in view the contemporary relevance of the assigned work, the researcher visited the libraries and research centres outside Jammu and Kashmir especially in New Delhi like *Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi)*, *Institute of Defence and Strategic Analysis (New Delhi)*, *EXIM Bank Library*, *Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA)*, *Teen Murti Bhawan*, *Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Museum*, *Jammu University*, *American Centre*, *Central Secretariat Library*, *Third World Academy*, *Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)* and I also visited the Embassy's of US and Afghanistan in New Delhi. It was a great experience and eye opener to have interaction with the faculty members of the above mentioned institutes and centres.

CHAPTER II

The September 11 attack was a series of coordinated attacks upon the United States on September 11, 2001.²⁸ 9/11 was a turning point in the presidency of George W. Bush and US foreign policy, leading directly to US support for the overthrow of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, where al-Qaeda was based.

Then President of US George W. Bush termed the men or terrorists as Evil. He dismissed any attempt to understand the social forces that compels people to such actions.²⁹ Random acts of terror do not change anything for the better; indeed they increase the suffering of ordinary people. After the incidents of September 11, 2001, US Pundits began to compare it to Pearl Harbour, the attack of the Japanese armed forces on 7th

²⁸ The attack, according to US sources was carried out by members of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda terrorist organization, occurred on September 11 (9/11), 2001. On Tuesday, 11 September 2001, nineteen members of the extremist group al-Qaeda perpetrated a devastating, deadly assault on the United States, crashing airplanes into the Pentagon and the World Trade Center, killing thousands. The attacks shattered Americans' sense of security, threw the nation into a state of emergency, and triggered a months-long war in Afghanistan and an extended worldwide "war on terrorism." On the morning of 11 September, four teams of terrorists hijacked jetliners departing from Boston; New York, New Jersey; and Washington, D.C. Once airborne, the terrorists, some of whom had gone to flight school in the United States, murdered the planes' pilots and took control of the aircrafts. At 8:46 a.m., the first plane flew directly into the north tower of the World Trade Centre in southern Manhattan, tearing a gaping hole in the building and setting it ablaze. Seventeen minutes later, a second plane flew into the center's south tower, causing similar damage. At 9:43 a.m. a third plane plunged into the Pentagon in Virginia, smashing one wing of the government's military headquarters. The fourth plane appeared headed for Washington, D.C., but at 10:10 a.m. it crashed in western Pennsylvania, apparently after passengers, who had learned of the other attacks through conversations on their cellular phones, rushed the terrorists. Compounding the horror, the south and north towers of the Trade Center, their structures weakened by the heat of the blazes, collapsed entirely, at 10:05 and 10:28 a.m., respectively. The attack was seen as an act of war, likened to Japan's 1941 attack on Pearl Harbour that brought the United States into World War II. Almost 2,819 people died (because of confusion and difficulty in tracking down individuals, early estimates put the toll at more than 6,000). Thousands more suffered severe physical injury or psychological trauma. According to evidences some 3,000 innocent civilians were killed in the attack. As Washington, D.C., coped with a national crisis, New York City faced an unprecedented urban emergency. Ahmad Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, Penguin Group (USA) Incorporated, 2003, pp. 50-55.

²⁹ Vijay Prashad, *War against the Planet; The Fifth Afghan War, Imperialism, and other Assorted Fundamentalisms*, Leftword Books, New Delhi, 2002, pp.7-9.

December 1941 that brought the US into World War II. The then president of US Franklin D. Roosevelt called that a “day of infamy” and many people used this word to describe 9/11. But, as Russian social scientist Boris Kagarlistsy put it, the more apt apology for 9/11 is the burning of the Reich Stag (the 1933 Nazi pretext for Hitler’s seizure of power over the German state).³⁰

US believed that it is Osama bin Laden who is guilty of planning the horrendous events of 9/11. Here the question arises, why did the US-UK target Afghanistan in the attacks when the state did not itself participate in the events of 9/11? What has the Taliban to do with bin Laden, and should any state now be capable for the acts of those who take refuge there.³¹

Indeed, the US government has had a very ambivalent relationship with the Taliban prior to 9/11. Shortly after the Taliban took power in Kabul on 27 September 1996 the US state department offered the following assessment; According to Glyn Davies, *Taliban leaders have announced that Afghans can return to Kabul without fear, and that Afghanistan is the common home of all Afghans. The Taliban’s entry into power seemed, even in Afghanistan as a harbinger of peaceful times.*³²

Terrorism and International Law

There is neither an academic nor an international legal consensus regarding the proper definition of the word terrorism. Terrorism is characterized, by the use of violence. This tactic of violence takes many forms and often indiscriminately targets non-combatants. The purpose for which violence was used was the watershed where most of the

³⁰ Quoted by Bob Woodward in his book, *Bush at War*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000, pp. 314-317.

³¹ Ahmad Rashid, *Pakistan on the Brink: The Failure of America, Pakistan and Afghanistan* Penguin Books, Reprint Edition, Feb. 26, 2013, pp-68-72.

³² Vijay Prashad, *Vijay Prashad, War against the Planet; The Fifth Afghan War, Imperialism, and other Assorted Fundamentalisms*, Leftword Books, New Delhi, 2002, pp. 12-13.

disagreements about terrorism begin.³³

➤ **Combating Terrorism**

States plagued by transnational terrorism responded individually and collectively to combat the phenomenon during the cold war. These responses ranged in scope and effectiveness and included passing anti-terrorism laws, taking preventative security measures at airports, and creating special operations counter-terrorism forces.³⁴ A normative approach to tackle the problem, founded on the principles of international law and collective action, was less successful. Attempts to define and proscribe transnational terrorism in the United Nations bogged down in the General Assembly over semantics (it is the study of meaning. It focuses on the relation between signifiers like words, signs and symbols and what they stand for, their denotation) but other cooperative initiatives were successfully implemented.³⁵ These included the conventions adopted through the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to improve information sharing and legal cooperation, such as the Hague Convention for the suppression of unlawful seizure of aircraft.³⁶ Another collective response to improve information sharing and collaborative action was the creation of the Public Safety and Terrorism Sub-Directorate within Interpol in 1985. However, most initiatives and responses throughout this decade were largely unilateral, regional or ad hoc in nature.³⁷

Theories regarding 9/11

There are a lot of theories regarding 9/11. Some theorists say that al-Qaeda was involved in the attacks on World Trade Centre and Pentagon in US whereas some are of the opinion that the rogue elements in US government were culprits of the event. Some others

³³ Historically, the term terrorism described state violence against citizens during the *French Revolution*. Over the past half century, however, terrorism has come to mean the use of violence by small groups to achieve political change. Myra Williamson, *Terrorism, War and International Law; the Legality of the Use of Force against Afghanistan in 2001*, Ashgate Publishing, New York, 2009, p.38.

³⁴ A. Acharya, "A Holistic Paradigm", *Security Dialogue* 35, September 2004, USA, pp. 355-356.

³⁵ A. Acharya, "Promoting Human Security: Ethical, Normative and Educational Frameworks in South East Asia," Paris: United Nations Scientific, Cultural and Educational Organization, 2007, p.314.

³⁶ T. Barkawi, "On the Pedagogy of Small Wars," *International Affairs*, New York, 2004, 80 (1), pp.19-38.

³⁷ T. Barkawi, *Globalization and Warfare*, London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006, p.39.

say that foreign governments and agencies like Mossad is involved the attacks. Let's briefly throw light on some of the theories.

➤ **Role of Foreign Governments in 9/11 Attacks**

The allegations have also been leveled on Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence (ISI). According to sources there are some rogue individual elements who may have played an important role in financing the attacks. There are also claims that other foreign intelligence agencies, such as the Israeli Mossad, had foreknowledge of the attacks, and that Saudi Arabia may have played a role in financing the attacks. Francesco Cossiga, former President of Italy from 1985 until his resignation over Operation Gladio³⁸ asserts that it is common knowledge among democratic circles in the US and Europe, and primarily in the Italian centre-left, that the 9/11 attacks were a joint operation of the Central Investigation Agency (CIA) and the Mossad.

The theory that such foreign individuals outside of al-Qaeda were involved is often part of larger “inside job” theories, although it has been claimed that, while al-Qaeda deserves most of the responsibility, the alleged role played by Pakistan, Israel or Saudi Arabia was deliberately overlooked by the official investigation for political reasons.

➤ **Reports of 9/11 Commissions**

The *9/11 Commission Report* disclosed prior warnings of varying detail of planned attacks against the United States by al-Qaeda. The report stated that the government ignored these warnings due to a lack of communication between various law enforcement and intelligence personnel. For the lack of inter-agency communication, the report cited bureaucratic inertia and laws passed in the 1970s to prevent abuses that caused scandals during that era. The report faulted the Clinton and the Bush administrations with “failure of

³⁸ Italian for Gladius, a type of Roman short sword. It is a code name denoting the clandestine NATO "stay-behind" operation in Italy after World War II, intended to continue anti-communist resistance in the event of a Warsaw Pact invasion of Western Europe. Although Gladio specifically refers to the Italian branch of the NATO stay-behind organizations, “Operation Gladio” is used as an informal name for all stay-behind organizations, sometimes called “Super NATO”. M. Bloom, *Dying to Win: The Allure Suicide Terror*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005, p. 87.

imagination”. Most members of the Democratic and the Republican parties applauded the commission's work.³⁹

Most of the 9/11 conspiracy theories generally originate from the dissatisfaction with the mainstream account of 9/11 attack. Less extensive theories allege that official reports have covered up incompetence or negligence from US personnel, or involvement of a foreign government or organization other than al-Qaeda. The most prevalent theories can be broadly divided into two main forms:

- LIHOP (“let it happen on purpose”) - suggests that key individuals within the government had at least some foreknowledge of the attacks and deliberately ignored them or actively weakened America's defenses to ensure the hijacked flights were not intercepted.
- MIHOP (“made it happen on purpose”) - that key individuals within the government planned the attacks and collaborated with or framed, al-Qaeda in carrying them out. There is a range of opinions about how this might have been achieved.⁴⁰

In suggesting motives for the US government to have carried out the attacks, Professor David Ray Griffin claims that a global “Pax Americana” was a dream held by many members of the George Bush Administration. This dream was first articulated in the Defense Planning Guidance of 1992, drafted by Paul Wolfowitz. It was on behalf of then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, in a document that has been called “a blueprint for permanent American global hegemony.”⁴¹

According to Matt Taibbi, the response has been “taken completely out of context”, and that the “transformation” referenced in the paper is explicitly stated to be a decades-long

³⁹ Some members of the *9/11 Commission* have criticized how the government formed and operated the commission, and allege omissions and distortions in the *9/11 Commission Report*. Commission co-chairs Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton wrote in their book *Without Precedent* that the 9/11 Commission was "set up to fail," and in an interview with CBC News, Mr. Hamilton complained of "poor access" and said that the Commission was unable to answer many of its questions about *Federal Aviation Administration* (FAA) and White House activity. Martin McCully, *Afghanistan and Central Asia; A Modern History*, Britain 2005, pp.34-36.

⁴⁰ www.idaho-observer.com

⁴¹ Andrew J. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, (44), 2004.

process to turn the cold war-era military into a “new and modern military”. This process could deal with more localized conflicts.⁴² He further says about this position by pointing out that, for this to be evidence of motive, that either those responsible decided to openly state their objectives. They should quickly laid the groundwork for the 9/11 attacks using it as inspiration.⁴³ In either case, he argues that this is a form of “defiant unfamiliarity with the actual character of America’s ruling class” and constitutes part of a “completely and utterly retarded” narrative to explain the attacks.

Different viewpoints regarding 9/11

The mainstream media and governments worldwide denounced the attacks. Across the globe, nations offered pro-American support and solidarity. Leaders in most Middle Eastern countries, and Afghanistan, condemned the attacks. Iraq was a notable exception, with an immediate official statement that “the American cowboys are reaping the fruit of their humanity”. Another publicized exception was the celebration of some Palestinians. Tens of thousands of people attempted to flee Afghanistan following the attacks, fearing a response by the United States. Pakistan, already home to many Afghan refugees from previous Afghan conflicts, closed its border with Afghanistan on September 17, 2001. Approximately one month after the attacks, the United States led a broad coalition of international forces in the removal of the Taliban regime for harboring the al-Qaeda organization.⁴⁴

The leaders of different states of the world disagreed on how best to deal with the current form of global terrorist violence. Much of the controversy relates to the nature of the threat and approach that should be taken to deal with it.⁴⁵ Some national leaders view the form of militant Islam as an intractable problem in which there can be no negotiation.

⁴² Taibbi Matt, “New York: Spiegel & Grau”, *The Great Derangement*, USA 2008, pp. 9-12.

⁴³ Taibbi, Matt, “New York: Spiegel & Grau”, *The Great Derangement*, USA 2008, pp. 148-166.

⁴⁴ Numerous countries, including the United Kingdom, India, Australia, France, Germany, Indonesia, China, Canada, Russia, Pakistan, Jordan, Mauritius, Uganda and Zimbabwe introduced “anti-terrorism” legislation and froze the bank accounts of businesses and individuals they suspected of having al-Qaeda ties. Law enforcement and intelligence agencies in a number of countries, including Italy, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines arrested people they labeled terrorist suspects for the stated purpose of breaking up militant cells around the world. The United States set up a detention center at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, to hold what they termed “illegal enemy combatants”. The legitimacy of these detentions has been questioned by, among others, the European Parliament, the Organization of American States, and Amnesty International. G. W. Bush, ‘Bush Announces Military Strikes in Afghanistan’, 2001, available online at: www.usinfo.state.gov, 2004.

⁴⁵ M. Laffey, “The Postcolonial Moment in Security Studies”, *Review of International Studies*, 32(2), London, 2006, pp. 329-335.

The leaders of the US, Great Britain, and Australia suggest that all states should cooperate in a global war on terror to deal with the threat.⁴⁶ The stakes in The Long War consist of the preservation of basic freedoms and a way of life. In order to defeat terrorism, individual states have a responsibility to protect civilian population while dealing with terrorist cells, supporters, and sympathizers within their own borders. Given the global, elusive and adaptive character of the militant extremist threat, the best approach for dealing with global terrorism is to pool resources together in a coalition of the willing, in which forces from the global north are seeking to improve the capabilities of specific partner states in the global South.⁴⁷ The end result will be the development of a Global Counter-Terrorism Network (GCTN) of states able to detect, track, and eliminate terrorist threats while non-military efforts address the root causes of terrorism.⁴⁸

There are other national leaders who are less comfortable with the concept of war against terrorism. In their view, actions by the military can only lead to terrorist reprisals or worse- the return of terrorism to its original connotation, the sanctioned use of terror by the state to repress its own citizenry. In their eyes, terrorism is a crime that is best dealt with through law enforcement methods.⁴⁹ By dealing with terrorism as a police problem, states uphold the rule of law, maintain the high moral ground, preserve democratic principles, and prevent the establishment of martial law.⁵⁰ Terrorism is best dealt with inside state borders and through cooperative international law enforcement efforts to arrest suspects and provide them with due process of law. The law enforcement approach to terrorism must balance taking enough measures against terrorist groups without crossing over into the realm of “Political Justice”, where the rules and rights enshrined in the principle of due process of law are either willfully misinterpreted or completely

⁴⁶ A. J. Bellamy, “Responsibility to Protect or Trojan Horse? The Crises in Darfur and Humanitarian Intervention after Iraq”, *Ethics and International Affairs*, 2005, 19(2), Palgrave: Basingstoke, pp. 31-40.

⁴⁷ M. Bloom, *Dying to Win: The Allure Suicide Terror*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005, pp. 105-107.

⁴⁸ A. Bohlen, “The Rise and Fall of Arms Control”, *Survival* (Autumn) New York, 2003, pp.7-20.

⁴⁹ K. Booth and T. Dunne, *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, pp. 303-305.

⁵⁰ Military force should only be used in extreme circumstances and even then its use may have negative consequences. K. Booth and T. Dunne, *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p.308.

disregarded.⁵¹ If the states will do a little against domestic or global terrorism, in the name of upholding the rule of law, offering terrorist groups a sanctuary and the security of rights and laws which may become great risk for the security of the citizens.⁵²

The opinion of a number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's), members of blogs, and webmasters has also been critical of the war on terrorism. Conspiracy theorists suggest that the war in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere is the first stage in the establishment of an Orwellian System⁵³ that is constantly in conflict with the terrorists to justify continued violation of personal privacy.

Still disagreements exist over how best to deal with terrorism philosophically, pragmatically the largest problems reside in locating terrorists and isolating them from their means of support.⁵⁴ Locating and identifying terrorists is a difficult and time consuming process that requires collecting, and analyzing information collected from a range of sources. Information technologies associated with globalization have been useful in assisting this process.⁵⁵ The finances of terrorists finances and organizations are evaluated through internet links which is being used to construct a more comprehensive picture of the how terrorist elements interact. In addition, huge volumes of information can be reduced and exchanged electronically between departments, agencies, and other governments, or made available on secure servers whose capacities are measured in terabytes.⁵⁶

⁵¹ A. J. Bellamy, "Responsibility to Protect or Trojan Horse? The Crises in Darfur and Humanitarian Intervention after Iraq", *Ethics and International Affairs*, 2005, 19(2), Palgrave: Basingstoke, pp. 89-91.

⁵² O. Bosch and P. Van Ham (eds), *Global Non-Proliferation and Counter-Terrorism*, Washington, D. C: Brookings Institute Press, 2007, pp.320-322.

⁵³ *Orwellian System or Nineteen Eighty Four* by George Orwell is a dystopian (a society characterized by human misery) novel about Oceania, a society ruled by the oligarchical dictatorship of the party. Life in the Oceanian Province of Airstrip One is a world of perpetual war, pervasive government surveillance, and incessant public mind control, accomplished with a political system named English Socialism, which is administered by a privileged Inner Party elite. *www.usinfo.state.gov*, 2004.

⁵⁴ More objective communities of practice and NGO's, such as Human Rights Watch, routinely provide monitoring and online reporting of suspected government human rights and civil liberties abuses. One example is the persistent attention paid to the status of terrorist detainees held in US custody at Guantanamo Bay. O. Bosch and P. Van Ham (eds), *Global Non-Proliferation and Counter-Terrorism*, Washington, D. C: Brookings Institute Press, 2007, pp.717-718.

⁵⁵ Such technologies allow identification of terrorist patterns before and after attacks, with systems capable of performing calculations measured in the trillions per second (floating point operation, or flops). K. Booth and T. Dunne, *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p.78.

⁵⁶ Discovering terrorist cells, however, has much to do with luck and pursuing non-technical leads. States bureaucracies can impede or negate technical and resources advantages over terrorist groups. A. Bohlen, "The Rise and Fall of Arms Control", *Survival* (Autumn) New York, 2003, pp.89-90.

There are a lot of 9/11 conspiracy theories as already mentioned, which claim that the September 11 attack in 2001 was either intentionally allowed to happen or was secretly orchestrated by elements within the United States government. One of the most prominent claims is that the collapse of the World Trade Center was the result of a controlled demolition. Another prominent claim is that the Pentagon was hit by a missile launched by elements from inside the US government or that a commercial airliner was allowed to do so via an effective stand down of the military.⁵⁷

There are other theories which claim that 9/11 attack was part of an international Jewish conspiracy. One of the more popular claims in these theories is that 4,000 Jewish employees skipped work at the World Trade Centre on September 11. This was first reported on September 17, 2001 by the Lebanese Hezbollah-owned satellite television channel Al-Manar and is believed to be based on the September 12 edition of the *Jerusalem Post*. Both turned out to be incorrect, the number of Jews who died in the attacks is variously estimated 270 to 400. The lower figure tracks closely with the percentage of Jews living in the New York area and, various surveys have shown that Jews were killed in a huge number. The US State Department has published a partial list of seventy-six in response to claims that fewer Jews died in the WTC attacks than should have been present at the time. Five Israeli citizens died in the attack.⁵⁸

According to the Anti-Defamation League, 9/11 conspiracy theories that blame the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad or the Israeli government for the September 11 attacks have become widespread around the world, and are contributing to a new form of global anti-Semitism.⁵⁹ The Anti-Defamation League has published papers⁶⁰ addressing these conspiracy theories.

⁵⁷ The common alleged motives are the use of the attacks as a pretext to justify overseas wars, to facilitate increased military spending, and to restrict domestic civil liberties.

⁵⁸ Several websites of the 9/11 Truth Movements have worked to debunk the anti-Semitic claims and expose websites and individuals engaging in anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial. On the internet, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri has indignantly denied the rumor and attacked Shias, Hezbollah and Iran for spreading it, claiming, “the objective behind this lie is to deny that the Sunnis have heroes who harm America as no one has harmed it throughout its history.” and that Iran's aim is to cover up its involvement in the invading of Iraq and Afghanistan. http://www.adl.org/main_Anti_Semitism_Domestic/9_11_conspiracy_theories.htm.

⁵⁹ It is prejudice, hatred and discrimination against Jews as national, ethnic, religious or racial group.

⁶⁰ According to these papers, 9/11 conspiracy theories are increasingly popular among both left- and right-wing extremists, and among white supremacists, but have not gained mainstream acceptance in the West as they have in the Muslim world. 9/11

NATO held an emergency meeting of the alliance's ambassadors in Brussels. The secretary general, Lord Robertson, promised the United States that it could rely on its allies in North America and Europe for assistance and support, and pledged that those responsible would not get away with it.

➤ **Viewpoint of different world leaders**

Almost all Muslim political and religious leaders condemned the attacks. The leaders vehemently denouncing the attacks included the leaders of Egypt (Hosni Mubarak), the Palestinian Authority (Yasser Arafat), Libya (Muammar Gaddafi), Syria (Bashar al-Assad), Iran (Mohamed Khatami) and Pakistan (Pervez Musharraf).⁶¹

Renowned Muslim scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi denounced the attacks and the unprovoked killings of thousands of American civilians as a “heinous crime” and urged Muslims to donate blood to the victims. He did, however, criticize the United States’ “biased policy towards Israel” and also called on Muslims to “concentrate on facing the occupying enemy directly”, inside the Palestinian territories. The alleged Hezbollah “spiritual mentor” and Lebanese Shia cleric Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah condemned the attacks.

Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of Hamas, said he was not interested in exporting such attacks to the United States; however he criticized the “unfair American position”. Afghanistan’s Taliban rulers condemned the attacks, but vehemently rejected suggestions that Osama bin Laden, who had been given asylum in Afghanistan, could be behind them. Huge crowds attended candlelit vigils in Iran, and 60,000 spectators observed a minute's silence at Tehran football stadium.⁶²

Anti-Semitic Conspiracy Theories Still Abound”, O. Bosch and P. Van Ham (eds), *Global Non-Proliferation and Counter-Terrorism*, Washington, D. C: Brookings Institute Press, 2007, pp.320-322.

⁶¹ <http://mepc.org/articles-commentary/articles-hub>.

⁶² Iran is the only Muslim country in the world which is against the US policies but on this day of grief Iran also felt the pain, and remained very vocal against terrorism. Rest of the Muslim countries are puppets and allies of US.

The Sahrawi national liberation movement or Polisario Front⁶³ condemned the “criminal attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in the USA and, particularly, against defenseless innocent civilians”. Annette Krüger Spitta of the ARD's (German public broadcasting) TV magazine *Panorama* states that footage not aired shows that the street surrounding the celebration in Jerusalem is quiet. Furthermore, she states that a man in a white T-shirt incited the children and gathered people together for the shot.

There was also rumour that the footage of some Palestinians celebrating the attacks was stock footage of Palestinian reactions to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. This rumour was proven false shortly afterwards, and CNN issued a statement to that effect. A poll conducted by the Fafo Foundation in the Palestinian Authority in 2005 found that 65% of respondents supported the September 11 attacks.⁶⁴

But at the same time some renowned scholars and analysts condemned US by saying that the attacks were carried out US herself. Let's have a birds view on some analysts. The September 11, 2001 attacks in the US were a *false flag* operation carried out jointly by the US, Israel and Saudi Arabia with *Zionists playing the lead role*, an analyst tells Press TV. On Thursday, a US federal court ruled that relatives of people who died in the 9/11 attacks can sue Saudi Arabia, reversing a lower court ruling in 2002 that had found the kingdom immune from lawsuits.

The complaint states that much of the funding for the al-Qaeda terrorists involved in the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon came from Saudi Arabia. Dr. Kevin Barrett, a member of the Scientific Panel for the Investigation of 9/11, rejects the official narrative, saying Saudi Arabia is a *puppet of the US and other Western governments*. He also said that, *There were no hijackers, there were no hijackings, this has been proved in many, many ways, ten of the 19 guys they blamed were still alive after 9/11.*⁶⁵

⁶³ It works to end Moroccan presence in the Western Sahara. It is an observer member of the socialist international.

⁶⁴ A. Bohlen, “The Rise and Fall of Arms Control”, *Survival* (Autumn) New York, 2003, pp.92-94.

⁶⁵ Justin Raimondo, *The Terror Enigma: 9/11 and the Israeli Connection*, Universal Press, London, 2003, pp. 23-26.

Rather, he said, *Saudi intelligence was used by the real perpetrators of September 11 to create a legend, to set up the patsies who would be blamed for this event.* A “suppressed” report by the Congressional Joint Inquiry of 2002 would shed light on the true perpetrators of the attacks, should it become public. The controversial document, however, has remained classified to this day. Former Sen. Bob Graham who chaired the inquiry at the time has stated that the document includes information “implicating a foreign government.” He further added *but there has been such a cover-up.*⁶⁶

Francesco Cossiga, President of Italy between 1985 and 1992, declared in the daily *Corriere della Sera* on November 30 2007: “From areas around the Palazzo Chigi, nerve centre of direction of Italian intelligence, it is noted that the non-authenticity of the video is supported by the fact that Osama bin Laden in it ‘confessed’ that al Qaeda was responsible for the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers in New York.⁶⁷ However, all of the democratic states of America and of Europe, with the Italian center-left in the forefront, know fully that the disastrous attack was planned and executed by the American Central Investigation Agency (CIA) and Mossad with the help of the Zionist world to falsely incriminate Arabic countries and to persuade the Western Powers to intervene in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Alan Sabrosky, former professor at the US Army War College and the US Military Academy, did not hesitate to proclaim his belief that September 11 is a *classical operation orchestrated by Mossad* carried out with accomplices within the United States government, and his voice has been forcefully echoed by some US army veterans sites who are disgusted by the vile war that they were forced to wage on behalf of the September 11 lie or that of the weapons of mass destruction of Saddam Hussein.⁶⁸

To sum up, there are different theories regarding 9/11 and an extensive debate has taken place throughout the world on this event. Some say that foreign terrorists were

⁶⁶ Christopher Ketcham, “What Did Israel Know in Advance of the 9/11 Attacks?” *Counter Punch*, USA, 2007, vol. 14, pp. 1-10.

⁶⁷ Christopher Ketcham, “What Did Israel Know in Advance of the 9/11 Attacks?”, *Counter Punch*, USA, 2007, vol. 14, pp. 1-10.

⁶⁸ See Youtube “Dancing Israelis, our purpose was to document the event.”

responsible for this heinous act whereas some are of the opinion that US intelligence herself was involved in these attacks. Some scholars say that Saudi intelligence was used by the real perpetrators of September 11 to create a legend, to set up the patsies who would be blamed for this event. But the view which is very close to reality is Anti-Semitism theory which blames the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad or the Israeli government for the September 11 attacks and has become widespread around the world, and is contributing to a new form of global Anti-Semitism. As per this theory 9/11 was a myth, Afghanistan a staying place and Pakistan and other regional powers target. Almost all the scholars consider this theory as more close to truth.

CHAPTEER III

The events of 11 September 2001, probably more than any other single event, brought home just how globalised the contemporary world is? The subsequent war in Afghanistan (2001-02) and the particularly controversial attack on Iraq in 2003, and the subsequent insurgency and civil war, are further clear examples of what it means to call the current era globalised – they involved international coalitions and international violent networks in conflicts that linked events in seemingly un-related parts of the world.⁶⁹ Before coming on the US presence in Afghanistan, it is worthwhile to throw light on the meaning and theory of intervention in international relations.⁷⁰

What is Intervention?

According to one view intervention takes place only when there is a dictatorial interference by one state in the affairs of the other. This view is held by Lawrence Oppenheim. According to Lawrence, “the essence of intervention is force, or the threat of

⁶⁹ Steve Smith, John Baylis, Patrica Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics, An Introduction to International Relations 4e*, Oxford University Press, New York, New Delhi, 2008, p.2.

⁷⁰ Anthony Gregory, *What Price War? Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Costs of Conflict*, The Independent Institute, 100 Swan Way, Oakland, June 2011, pp. 12-13.

force, in case the dictates of the intervening power are disregarded. There can be no intervention without the presence of power, naked or veiled on the one hand, and the absence of content on the part of the combatants on the other.”⁷¹

On the other hand in view of scholars like Thomas, Max Beloff and others, intervention includes any act of interference by one state in the affairs of another. According to Thomas, “Intervention occurs when a state or group of states interferes, in order to impose its will, in the internal or external affairs of another state, sovereign and independent with which peaceful relations exist and without its consent, for the purpose of maintaining or altering the condition of things”. According to Max Beloff intervention is an attempt by one state to affect the internal structure and external behaviour of other states through various degrees of coercion.⁷²

Theories of Intervention

For the purpose of present study the theoretical aspect of intervention in international relations can be studied under various heads but the most relevant one is:

Political theory of Intervention⁷³

Intervention as a practice has been widely adhered to in international relations since World War II. To decide whether the practice of intervention in international relations is permissible, the issue has triggered a controversial debate. It is widely acclaimed that intervention is, however, contrary to the norms of international relations as its practice amounts to violation of states sovereignty, it may be justified under certain circumstances.⁷⁴ Although the US-led intervention in Afghanistan was a war of self-defence, the US president nevertheless felt the need to make a humanitarian argument to support his case. He was justifying the attacks in these words whereas world was well aware about the intention of

⁷¹ Hans J. Morgantheau, *Politics Among Nations*, New York, London, 1995, pp.63-64.

⁷² Hans J. Morgantheau, *Politics among Nations*, New York, London, 1995, p.65.

⁷³ Most of the interventions are politically motivated. The super power rivalry promoted each super power to intervene in others sphere of influence and thus enhance its own influence. The German crises, Korean crises, Vietnam, Indo-China peninsula are certain problems where intervention by either world power was politically motivated. Prakash Chandra and Prem Arora, *International Relations*, (Sixth Edition), Cosmos Bookhive (P) Ltd., Delhi, Mumbai, Chandigarha, Jaipur, 1999, pp.402-03.

⁷⁴ Prakash Chandra and Prem Arora, *International Relations*, (Sixth Edition), Cosmos Bookhive (P) Ltd., Delhi, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Jaipur, 1999, p.404.

US. He told Afghans that, *the oppressed people of Afghanistan will know the generosity of America and its allies. As we strike military targets, we will also drop food, medicine and supplies to the starving and suffering men and women and children of Afghanistan.*⁷⁵ It seems political intervention as US tried to enhance its influence in Afghanistan. During Cold War the American involvement in Afghanistan was mostly on ideological grounds.

International Terrorism

Terrorism practiced in a foreign country by terrorists who are not native to that country. It is the calculated use of violence against civilians in order to attain goals that are political or religious or ideological in nature. This is done through intimidation or coercion or instilling fear.⁷⁶

Terrorism has been practiced by a broad array of political organizations for furthering their objectives. It has been practiced by right-wing and left-wing political parties, nationalistic groups, revolutionaries, and ruling governments.⁷⁷ An abiding characteristic is the indiscriminate use of violence against noncombatants for the purpose of gaining publicity for a group, cause, or individual.⁷⁸

➤ Al-Qaeda and its role in International Terrorism

Al-Qaeda, founded by Osama bin Laden between August 1988 and late 1989, is a broad-based militant Islamist organization. It works as a network comprising different groups for the purpose of global jihad against US and its allies.⁷⁹ Different countries of the world like US, UK, the UN Security Council, the European Union and NATO have declared al-Qaeda a “terrorist organization”. According to US and other countries al-Qaeda has attacked civilian and military targets in various countries, such as the September 11 attacks, 1998 US

⁷⁵ Ahmad Rashid, *Afghanistan Revealed: Beyond the Headlines*, Kindle Edition, Crux Publishing Ltd., November 30, 2012, pp. 102-104.

⁷⁶ See FreeDictionary.com

⁷⁷ Terrorism, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, p.3.

⁷⁸ Charles L. Ruby, *The Definition of Terrorism*, 2002, pp. 23-25.

⁷⁹ Moises Naim, “The Five Wars of Globalization”, *Foreign Policy* (134), USA, January/February 2003, pp. 28-37.

embassy bombings and 2002 Bali bombings. The US government responded by launching the War on Terror. Al-Qaeda has continued to exist and grow through the decade and a half.⁸⁰

Characteristic techniques employed by al-Qaeda include suicide attacks and the simultaneous bombing of different targets. Activities ascribed to it may involve members of the movement who have made a pledge of loyalty to Osama bin Laden, or the much more numerous “al-Qaeda-linked” individuals who have undergone training in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq or Sudan. Al-Qaeda ideologues envision a complete break from all foreign influences in Muslim countries, and the creation of a new worldwide Islamic caliphate. Among the beliefs ascribed to al-Qaeda members is the conviction that a Christian–Jewish alliance is conspiring to destroy Islam. As Salafist jihadists, they believe that the killing of civilians is religiously sanctioned. Al-Qaeda also opposes what it regards as man-made laws, and wants to replace them with a strict form of sharia law.⁸¹

Al-Qaeda is also responsible for instigating sectarian violence among Muslims. Al-Qaeda leaders regard liberal Muslims, Shias, Sufis and other sects as heretics and have attacked their mosques and gatherings. Examples of sectarian attacks include the Yazidi community bombings, the Sadr city bombings, the Ashoura Massacre and the April 2007 Baghdad bombings. Since the death of Osama bin Laden in 2011 the group has been led by Egyptian Ayman al-Zawahiri⁸².

➤ **International Response to US War on Terror**

When the invasion began in October 2001, polls indicated that about 88% of Americans and about 65% of Britain’s backed military action in Afghanistan.⁸³ Out of the

⁸⁰ Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism Verses Democracy: The Liberal State Response*, Routledge, 2011, p.136.

⁸¹ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*. Knopf, 2006, p. 246.

⁸² James Blitz, "A threat transformed". *Financial Times*, January 19, 2010.

⁸³ A large-scale 37-nation poll of world opinion carried out by Gallup International in late September 2001; found that large majorities in most countries favoured a legal response, in the form of extradition and trial, over a military response to 9/11. http://www.aei.org/publications/filter.all,pubID.22819/pub_detail.asp

thirty-seven countries surveyed – in the United States, Israel, and India majority of the people favour military action in Afghanistan. In 34 out of the 37 countries surveyed, the survey found many clear and sizeable majorities that did not favour military action, in the United Kingdom (75%), France (67%), Switzerland (87%), Czech Republic (64%), Lithuania (83%), Panama (80%), Mexico (94%), and other countries.⁸⁴

An Ipsos-Reid poll conducted between November and December 2001 showed that majorities in Canada (66%), France (60%), Germany (60%), Italy (58%), and the U.K. (65%) approved of US airstrikes while majorities in Argentina (77%), China (52%), South Korea (50%), Spain (52%), and Turkey (70%) opposed them.⁸⁵

US presence in Afghanistan

Almost thirteen years ago, the US initiated military action in Afghanistan, with two aims: firstly, to defeat al-Qaeda and their Taliban allies, and secondly, in concert with the Afghan people and the international community, to facilitate the creation of democratic conditions which would thwart the terrorist sanctuaries within Afghanistan.⁸⁶ The overarching US Government strategy for winning the war on terrorism and rebuilding the state of Afghanistan is predicated on six lines of operation that include:

- a. improving governance;
- b. defeating the terrorist threat;
- c. improving political stability;
- d. enhancing economic and social development;
- e. implementing regional and donor strategies; and
- f. integrating and synchronizing United States government actions.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Carter, Sara A.; Gertz, Bill, "Afghan Commander's Aide Blames Deaths on Taliban", *Washington Times*, May 12, 2009, p.1.

⁸⁵ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, USA, 2006, p.246.

⁸⁶ Jagmohan Meher, *Afghanistan Dynamics of Survival* (ed.), Kalpaz Publications New Delhi, 2004, p.178.

⁸⁷ Nancy J. Powel, *Situation in Afghanistan*. Nancy was the Acting Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs; Testimony before the House Armed Service Committee, Washington DC, June 22, 2005.

In Afghanistan, the US is one of many bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors of aid helping to implement the Bonn Agreement.⁸⁸ After the attack the US administration realized that it was important to protect the interim government in Afghanistan. To that end in December 2001, the US convinced the United Nations to assemble the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) to stabilize Kabul. The US-led coalition in Afghanistan is strong with forty nations involved in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and NATO's International Security Assistance Force. The US military had nearly 30,000 troops under Enduring Freedom, and about 2000 coalition troops from eighteen nations, the total was over 35,000. Thirty six nations were providing forces to ISAF, which numbers over 10,000 troops. Coalition and NATO forces surged additional battalions during the Assembly election period as was done during the presidential elections in 2004. In November 2009, president Obama declared new Af-Pak Policy⁸⁹ in which he decided to send 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan. Even if the Taliban insurgency is defeated partially Afghan leaders say that they are in favour of US long term presence in Afghanistan, an outcome that US officials have not committed to.⁹⁰ On May 8, 2005, Hamid Karzai summoned about 1,000 delegates to a national consultation in Kabul on whether Afghanistan should host permanent US bases. Delegates reportedly supported an indefinite presence of international forces to maintain security but urged Hamid Karzai to delay the decision. On May 23, 2005 Hamid Karzai and President George W. Bush issued a "joint declaration" providing for US forces to have access to Afghan military facilities, in order to prosecute *the war against international terror and the struggle against violent extremism*. The joint statement did not give Hamid Karzai his

⁸⁸ Immediately after the fall of Kabul in November 2001, the UN invited the major Afghan factions, most prominently the Northern Alliance and that of the former Kin. But not the Taliban, to a conference in Bonn, Germany. On December 5 2001, the factions signed the "Bonn Agreement". It was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 1385 (December 6 2001). Text of Bonn Agreement at: <http://www.ag-afghanistan.de/files/petersberg.htm>.

⁸⁹ Af-Pak was a neologism used within the US foreign policy circles to designate Afghanistan and Pakistan as a single theatre of operations. The neologism reflects the policy approach introduced by Barrack Obama administration, which regarded the region of Afghanistan and Pakistan as having a single, dominant political and military situation that required a joint policy in the war on terror. After the rise of insurgent violence in Afghanistan, US president Barrack Obama weighed urgent military requests for up to 30,000 more US troops in Afghanistan during 2009. *Rising Kashmir*, "Taliban Violence Spreads in Afghanistan: US Report," February 4, 2009, p.10.

⁹⁰ Amy Belasco, "Troop Levels in the Afghan and Iraq Wars, FY2001-FY2012: Cost and Other Potential Issues", *Congressional Research Service*, USA, July 2, 2009, pp. 2-3.

request increased control over facilities used by the US forces.⁹¹ Some of the bases, both in and near Afghanistan, that were used to support combat in Afghanistan are:

1. **Bagram Air Base:** - This base, north of Kabul, is the operational hub of US forces in Afghanistan. At least 500 US personnel are based there. Bagram, along with thirteen other airfields in Afghanistan, handles the 150 US aircraft (including helicopters) in the country and substantial infrastructure is being added to it. A hospital was constructed on the facility; one of the first permanent structures was there. The FY 2005 supplemental provided a total of about \$52 million for various projects to upgrade facilities at Bagram, including a control tower and an operations centre, and the FY 2006 supplemental appropriation provided \$20 million for military construction there. It was expected that NATO will be using the base in conjunction with the handover of NATO security responsibilities in Afghanistan, and NATO might share operational costs for it.⁹²
2. **Kandahar Airfield:** - This airfield, just outside Kandahar, bases about 500 US military personnel. The FY 2005 supplemental provided \$16 million for an ammunition supply facility at Kandahar. Some US troops have been reduced from the base in 2012.⁹³
3. **Shindand Air Base:** - This base is 20 miles from the Iranian border. It has been used by US forces and combat aircraft since October 2004, after the dismissal of Herat governor Ismail Khan, whose forces controlled the facility.⁹⁴
4. **Karshi-Khanabad Air Base:** - This Uzbekistan base housed about 1,750 US military personnel (900 Air Force, 400 Army, and 450 civilian) in supply missions to Afghanistan.

⁹¹ Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.49.

⁹² Kent Harris, *Buildings Going up at Bagram Air Base as US Forces Dig in for the Long Haul*, Stars and Stripes, March 15, 2005.

⁹³ Pajhwok Afghan News (PAN) - *AAA begins flights for Kandahar*. November 30, 2014.

⁹⁴ John Walcott, "Iran Shows Downed Spy Drone as US Assesses Technology Loss," Bloomberg Business week, December 9, 2011.

US forces ceased using it in September 2005, following deterioration in US-Uzbek relations over May 2005 Uzbek crackdown on unrest in Andijon. The airport resides at an elevation of 1,365 feet (416 m) above mean sea level. It has one runway designated 07/25 with a concrete surface measuring 2,498 by 40 metres (8,196 ft × 131 ft).⁹⁵

- 5. Peter Ganci base Kyrgyzstan:** - This base at Manas airport has about 1,100 US military personnel as well as refueling and cargo aircraft. Leadership of Kyrgyzstan changed in April 2005 in an uprising against president Asker Akayev, but senior US officials reportedly received assurances about continued US use of the base from the new president, Kurman bek Bakiyev. However, in February 2006, Bakiyev said the US should pay \$200 million per year to use the facility instead of the \$2 million it was paying at that time. In July 2006, the dispute was resolved with the US agreement to give Kyrgyzstan \$150 million in assistance and base use payments over the coming year, pending congressional approval. In the year 2014 US gradually started to wipe out the base. On 3 June 2014 American troops vacated the base and it was handed over back to the Kyrgyzstan military.⁹⁶
- 6. Incirlik Air Base:** - Incirlik Air Base is a US Air Force base, located near Incirlik, Turkey. It is located 8 kilometers east of Adana, the fifth largest city in the country, and is 56 kms. inland from the Mediterranean Sea. The US Air Force and the Turkish Air Force are the primary users of the air base, although it is also used by the Royal Air Force. On April 21, 2005 Turkey's president said it would extend for another year an agreement allowing the US to use Incirlik air base to supply US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan (about 2,100 US military personnel are in Turkey).⁹⁷

Key Challenges to the Transition

⁹⁵ "US asked to leave Uzbek airbase", *BBC News*, July 30, 2005.

⁹⁶ Joshua Kucera. "US Formally Closes Its Kyrgyzstan Air Base", *Eurasianet*, 17 June 2014.

⁹⁷ Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, pp. 49-50.

The politics in Afghanistan proceeded, but Hamid Karzai's government had expanded its writ only in a few outlying regions near Kabul, and Afghanistan continued to face challenges especially after it assumed control of the entire country in October 2006. The confidence in Hamid Karzai on the part of Afghan people and of some European nations that contribute forces to Afghanistan was also waning. Because of government corruption and a lack of protection from robberies and other crimes, as well as some decisions that conflict with comprehensive reform.⁹⁸ The worsening security situation, especially in the south of the country, had prevented NATO member nations from contributing the extra troops needed in Afghanistan. Many countries were apprehensive in this regard particularly as there had been a marked increase in the Taliban-led insurgency in 2006.⁹⁹ From 2007 onwards, US increased her military strength in Afghanistan, keeping in view the increasing Taliban attacks; US forces got some success in curbing Taliban insurgents especially during the year 2009. At the same time, US decided to reduce her troop's level from Afghanistan in 2012. US President Barack Obama set an ultimatum for withdrawal of troops in the year 2014.

A key part of the US stabilization effort is to build the capacity of the Afghan government, an objective that has not to date succeeded in the southern provinces. During the year (2007), the commander of US-led forces in Afghanistan, General Carl Eikenberry, has worked to extend Afghan government authority by conducting visits to all provinces along with Afghan ministers to determine local needs and demonstrate the ability of the central government to act.¹⁰⁰ The United States and Afghan government tried to put democratic traditions in politics at the local level. At the national level, Afghan government's "National Solidarity Program" seeks to create and empower local governing councils to prioritize local reconstruction projects. Elections to these local councils have

⁹⁸ Fiona Zhu, "NATO to Handover Responsibility to Afghan Forces by 2008," *China View*, November 28, 2006, pp.28-30.

⁹⁹ Amina Khan, "NATO in Afghanistan: Post Riga", *Strategic Studies*, vol. xxvii, Spring 2007, No.1, Islamabad, pp.66-67.

¹⁰⁰ Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.40.

been held in several provinces, and almost 40% of those elected members have been women.¹⁰¹

Despite US and NATO claims of blunting the Taliban's threatened comeback offensive, the group had made a strong and steady comeback, proving to be "stern adversaries". They had re-organized themselves and had reemerged as a growing political and military threat, gained support from the masses in some areas. Despite the killing of almost forty commanders, and close to 2,000 fighters, including its most senior military commander, Mullah Dadollah in May 2007, the Taliban was stronger than before and appear to had no difficulty finding recruits to make up for their losses.¹⁰²

Although quite a few former Taliban members, including senior commanders and officials, have reconciled with the government, thousands of fighters joined the insurgency. There were claims that differences had arisen among the group, but they seem to be mere speculations as the Taliban have in fact proven that they are active and exert influence. Initially restricted to the south, the Taliban have managed to contest the government's control, extending their area of control from their traditional heartland in the south to the northern parts of the country.¹⁰³

Curbing regional warlords and militias

Hamid Karzai as well as numerous private studies and US officials carried some work on the subject stated that the regional and factional militias (including Taliban) as a major threat to Afghan stability because of their arbitrary administration of justice and generation of popular resentment. Some of these local militias have been accused of past human rights abuses in a report released in July 2005 by the Afghanistan justice project.¹⁰⁴ Some argue that Afghans have always sought substantial regional autonomy, but others say that easily

¹⁰¹ Zalmay Khalilzad (then US Ambassador to Afghanistan), "Democracy Bubbles Up," *Wall Street Journal*, New York, March 25 2004.

¹⁰² Amina Khan, "NATO in Afghanistan: Post Riga", *Strategic Studies*, vol. xxvii, Spring 2007, No.1, Islamabad, p.181.

¹⁰³ *Hamid Karzai Urges Taliban Talks after Scare*, www.reciters.com/article/featuredcrises/id_USSP143493.

¹⁰⁴ Amina Khan, "NATO in Afghanistan: Post Riga", *Strategic Studies*, vol. xxvii, Spring 2007, No.1, Islamabad, p.189.

purchased arms and manpower, funded by narcotics trafficking, sustains the local militias.¹⁰⁵ Suggesting that Hamid Karzai believes some militias can play a useful role in filling security gaps, in June 2006 he authorized some local tribal militias (arbokai) to help in local policing. Hamid Karzai said his assessment was that these militias would provide security and be loyal to the nation and central government and that arming them is not inconsistent with the disarmament programs.¹⁰⁶ In 2014, the situation is different, presidential elections were held and after a long controversy Ashraf Ghani was elected as the country's president. He signed a Bi-lateral Security Agreement (BSA) with US in October 2014. After the treaty US president Barrack Obama decided to extend the date of withdrawal of troops for one year more.

Hamid Karzai succeeded in marginalizing some major regional leaders. Herat governor Ismail Khan was removed by Hamid Karzai in September 2004 and was later appointed minister of Water and Energy. On the other hand, he was tapped by Hamid Karzai to help calm Herat after Sunni-Shiite clashes there in February 2006, clashes that some in Kabul believe were stoked Ismail Khan himself to demonstrate his continued influence in Herat. Abdul Rashid Dostam was appointed Hamid Karzai's top military advisor, and in April 2005, he resigned as head of his 'Junbish Melli' faction.¹⁰⁷ In July 2004, Hamid Karzai removed charismatic Northern Alliance Commander Atta Mohammad from control of a militia in the Mazar-e-Sharief area, appointing him as governor of Balkh province.¹⁰⁸ Two other militia leaders, Hazrat Ali (Jalalabad area) and Khan Mohammad (Kandahar area) were placed in civilian police chief posts; Hazrat Ali was subsequently elected to parliament. Hamid Karzai has tried to appoint some relatively young, pro- government technocrats in key governorships instead of local strongman.¹⁰⁹ The former Defense Minister Amin Fahim was

¹⁰⁵ Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.41.

¹⁰⁶ Zalmay Khalilzad, "Democracy Bubbles Up," *Wall Street Journal*, New York, March 25 2004.

¹⁰⁷ The National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan is an Uzbek political party in Afghanistan. It has been described as an organization heavily peopled with former communists and Islamists.

¹⁰⁸ For a detailed discussion and US funding on the issue, see CRS Report RL32686, *Afghanistan: Narcotics and US Policy*, by Christopher M. Blanchard.

¹⁰⁹ There are three examples of it, first Kandahar governor Asadullah Khalid, Paktika governor Mohammad Akram Khapalwak, and Paktia governor Abdul Hakim Taniwal. However, Taniwal was killed in a suicide bombing on September 10 2006. Cary

appointed by Hamid Karzai to the upper house of parliament. The move gave him a stake in the political process and reduces his potential to activate Northern Alliance militia loyalists. Amin Fahim has also turned almost all of his heavy weapons over to UN and Afghan forces as of January 2005 (including four Seud missiles).¹¹⁰

A cornerstone of the effort to curb regionalism was a program, run by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA whose mandate was extended until March 2007 by UN Security Council Resolution 1662 of March 23, 2006), to dismantle identified and illegal militias. The program which formally concluded on June 30, 2006 was the “DDR” program (Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration). The program was run in partnership with Japan, Britain and Canada, with participation of the United States.¹¹¹

The DDR program had initially been expected to demobilize 100,000 fighters, although that figure was later reduced by Afghan officials to just over 60,000.¹¹² The total cost of the program was \$ 141 million, funded by Japan and other donors, including the United States. Part of the DDR program was the collection and cantonment of militia weapons.¹¹³ Since June 11 2005, the disarmament effort has emphasized another program called “DIAG” (Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups).¹¹⁴ The program seeks to disarm, by December 2007, a pool of as many as 120,000 members of 1,800 different “Illegal Armed

Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.41.

¹¹⁰ Ahmad Rashid, *Pakistan on the Brink: The Failure of America, Pakistan and Afghanistan*” Penguin Books, Reprint Edition, Feb. 26, 2013, pp.70-72.

¹¹¹ The program got off to a slow start because the Afghan Defence Ministry did not enact mandated reforms (primarily reduction of the number of Tajiks in senior positions) by the targeted July 1, 2003, date. www.jca.apc.org

¹¹² According to UNAMA (United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan), a total of 63,380 militia fighters were disarmed by the end of the program. Cary Gladstone, *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2008, p.45.

¹¹³ According to UNAMA, at least 36,000 medium and light weapons were collected; of these, 13,400 pieces have been transferred to the ANA (Afghan National Army). In addition, about 11,000 heavy weapons (tanks, armored personnel carriers, and artillery pieces) were collected, nearly all of the heavy weapons believed controlled by militia forces. However, some accounts say that only poor quality weapons were collected. Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2008, p.42.

¹¹⁴ This program is run by the Afghan Disarmament and Reintegration Commission, headed by Vice President Khalili.

Groups” militiamen that were not part of recognized local forces (Afghan Military Forces, AMF) and were never on the rolls of the Defence Ministry.¹¹⁵

In 2010, Afghanistan’s New Beginnings Programme’s (ANBP) Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) project assisted the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) in disarming and disbanding illegal armed groups, supporting peace and reintegration activities undertaken by the Government of Afghanistan through the Disarmament and Reintegration Commission (D&RC), collecting weapons, and in delivering development projects to enhance socio-economic outcomes in targeted districts. In doing so, it contributed to community development, promoted stability and security, fostered disarmament, and enhanced good governance.¹¹⁶ In 2010 DIAG finished its task, and no annual report has come from 2010 onwards.

Combating narcotics trafficking

Narcotics’ trafficking is regarded as the most significant problem facing Afghanistan, generating funds to sustain local militias, Taliban and other insurgents, and criminal groups.¹¹⁷ The UNODC (United Nations Office on Drug Control) report also says since the ouster of the Taliban, opium-poppy cultivation¹¹⁸ in Afghanistan has increased “dramatically”. Narcotics account for an estimated \$ 2.7 billion in value – nearly half of Afghanistan’s GDP. In relatively pessimistic comments on August 22 2006, Hamid Karzai called for a focus on funding alternative livelihoods that would dissuade Afghans from growing and on targeting key traffickers, rather than an eradication of poppy fields.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Kapisa Province is considered a model for the program because 37 commanders believed receptive to disarmament attended a ceremony to formally inaugurate the DIAG program on May 1 2006. Other provinces are Takhar, Heart and Khost.

¹¹⁶ Annual Report Diag, 2010. www.undp.org/af

¹¹⁷ Amina Khan, “NATO in Afghanistan: Post Riga”, *Strategic Studies*, vol. xxvii, Spring 2007, No.1, Islamabad, p.87.

¹¹⁸ According to UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) report 2007, Afghanistan accounts for eighty seven percent of global opium production. Amina Khan in an article, published in *Strategic Studies* says it is 93%. See also Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, pp.41 and 89.

¹¹⁹ Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.42.

Poppy growing had been reduced or abandoned in four provinces – Nanghar, Badakhshan, Laghman and Baghlan.¹²⁰ Area under cultivation for poppies increased by 59% to 400,000 acres planted, up from 260,000 acres planted in 2005.¹²¹ The repercussions of Afghanistan's poppy crop for the future of the country and for ISAF operations are extensive and complex. The Afghan government lacked the law enforcement apparatus, including a well-functioning judicial system, to combat the narcotics trade successfully. Narcotics traffickers can exploit the country's primitive transportation network as an extensive road system is not needed to move opium to market; a small load of opium can yield a high financial return.¹²²

The Bush Administration at that time has taken new legal steps against suspected Afghan drug traffickers by indicting them and putting in place a legal machinery to have them extracted from Afghanistan if caught.¹²³ However, it was important to focus primarily on funding alternative livelihoods that will dissuade Afghans from growing poppy, rather than focusing only on eradication or interdiction.¹²⁴ Eradication of the industry without a substitute source of income would throw these farmers into destitution, and they violently resist any effort to destroy their crops. Allied officials believed that destruction of the poppy crop today could fuel an insurgency. The allies have decided against the destruction of poppy fields, but they provide training, intelligence, and logistics to Afghan army units and police who destroy opium labs.¹²⁵

There are significant variations, however, in the approach of the allies to the counter-narcotics campaign in Afghanistan. While the US policy has oscillated between avoiding forcible means like aerial spraying, NATO allies are reluctant to do so mainly for fear of

¹²⁰ Richard Norton-Taylor, "The Poppy; Helmands Biggest Problem," *Guardian Unlimited*, 11 December 2007.

¹²¹ Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.43.

¹²² Pankaj Mishra, "The Real Afghanistan," *New York Review of Books*, March 10, 2005, pp.44-48.

¹²³ In mid-April 2005, DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) operation successfully caught the alleged leading Afghan narcotics trafficker, Haji Bashir Noorzai, arresting him after a fight to New York. Another alleged Afghan trafficker, Baz Mohammad, was extradited from Afghanistan in October 2005. For further details see Christopher M. Blanchard, *Afghanistan: Narcotics and US Policy*, Washington DC, 10 December 2006.

¹²⁴ D. Suba Chandran, P.R. Chari (editors), *Armed Conflicts in South Asia 2008, Growing Violence*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London, New York, New Delhi 2008, pp.40-41.

¹²⁵ House International Relations Committee, hearing on, *US Counter-narcotics Policy in Afghanistan*, March 17, 2005; Pankaj Mishra, "The Real Afghanistan," *New York Review of Books*, March 10, 2005, p.46.

losing the 'hearts and minds' battle in Afghanistan. The British also believe that forcible eradication of the poppy crop might result in losing the hearts and minds campaign while broadening the support base of the insurgency. Moreover, while the drug menace looms large in Afghanistan, the counter-narcotics policies of the US and its NATO allies are deepening fissures and reinforcing instability in the southern provinces.¹²⁶

Afghanistan's economy continued to rely heavily on illicit drug trade. Lawlessness and a weak central authority were the most prominent reasons for the revival of the heroin trade in Afghanistan. The authorities should pursue vigorously the implementation of the multi-pronged anti-narcotics strategy, built upon eradication, interdiction, alternative livelihoods, and education. Only a successful implementation of this strategy could have substantial macro-economic consequences, as the growing importance of opium in the economy is straining the countries internal security and political stability.¹²⁷ The UNODC (United Nations Office on Drug Control) report blames corruption and lack of security in southern Afghanistan for the problem, and warns that efforts to control the opium crop in Afghanistan have not succeeded, thus highlighting that Afghan and British-led international efforts have failed.¹²⁸

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)

NATO/ISAF expansion in Afghanistan builds on December, 2002 US initiative to establish Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) military run enclaves that safe havens for international aid workers to help with reconstruction and to extend the writ of the Kabul

¹²⁶ D. Suba Chandran, P.R. Chari (editors), *Armed Conflicts in South Asia 2008, Growing Violence*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London, New York, New Delhi 2008, p.41.

¹²⁷ Jagmohan Meher (ed.), *Afghanistan Dynamics of Survival* (ed.), Kalpaz Publications New Delhi, p.185.

¹²⁸ The Ministry of Counter Narcotics is pleased to announce the publication of the Afghanistan Drug Report 2013. The report explores the impact of the illicit drug economy in Afghanistan and highlights conflicting trends of record levels of cultivation, increased arrests and convictions for trafficking and substantial reductions in levels of seizures. It highlights strengths and weaknesses of ongoing counter-narcotics efforts and outlines policy recommendations to refocus counter narcotics interventions. UNODC provided technical support for the publication. <http://www.unodc.org/afghanistan/en/frontpage/2014/successes-and-significant-challenges-in-counter-narcotics.html>

government.¹²⁹ NATO officials described PRTs as the “leading edge” of the allies’ effort to stabilize Afghanistan. Some allied governments believed that poor governance, rather than an insurgency was the principal problem impeding stabilization of the country.¹³⁰

Provincial Reconstruction Teams are intended to build trust among the population by participating in the reconstruction of the country, and providing a permanent presence and thereby security. By this principle of counter-insurgency protecting the population from the guerrillas and winning the support of the population in one limited area – the teams deprived insurgents of that same support.¹³¹ However, there were significant problems limiting the performance of PRTs in Afghanistan. For instance, national caveats in PRTs created a problem of coordination between and among PRTs. Most allies with high risk aversion were hesitant to actively engage with the Afghan population. With little or no idea of how their funds are managed and projects implemented, PRT projects were stymied by corruption and delays in Afghanistan and are viewed as a ‘mined bag’.¹³²

Each US run PRT was composed of US forces (50-100 US military personnel); Defence Department Civil affairs officers; State Department and other agencies; and Afghan government (Interior Ministry) personnel. Most PRTs, including those run by partner forces, had personnel to train Afghan security forces. Many US PRTs in restive regions were “co-located” with “forward operating bases” of 300-400 US combat troops.¹³³ While the performance of the PRTs were plagued, early in their existence, by a lack of funds, expertise, training and poor long -term planning of development projects, major criticisms have been levied against them for their weak inter-agency cooperation and the relations between their

¹²⁹ Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.52.

¹³⁰ Paul Gallis, “NATO in Afghanistan: A Test of the Transatlantic Alliance,” Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.88.

¹³¹ D. Suba Chandran, P.R. Chari (editors), *Armed Conflicts in South Asia 2008, Growing Violence*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London, New York, New Delhi 2008, p.42.

¹³² This inference was derived after a visit by Paul Gallis to PRT-funded projects in Herat, 8 June 2007 and discussions with locals in Mazar-e-Sharief, Kabul and Jalalabad in June 2007.

¹³³ Kenneth Katzman, “Afghanistan; Post War Governance, Security and US Policy,” Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.52.

military and civilian personnel, in terms of cooperation and leadership.¹³⁴ US PRTs also had the military capacity to respond any situation in which their personnel were endangered. While not overtly offensive military instruments, US PRTs were directed to provide security and respond aggressively to any threat.¹³⁵ Some European-led PRTs were minimally funded or provide little supervision of how their funds were managed and dispensed.¹³⁶ (See Annexure I)

Afghan National Army

US forces (Office of Security Cooperation, OSC-A), in partnership with French, British, and other forces, were giving training to the new ANA (Afghan National Army). As of November 2006, the ANA numbered about 35,000 troops in 40 battalions, (5 corps) of which 24 were combat battalions. That is about half of its total target strength of 70,000 that it reached in 2010. The target level was reiterated in the Afghanistan compact adopted in London on February 1, 2006, although some observers believe the goal might be scaled back to 50,000 because of the sustained costs to the Afghan government.¹³⁷ Afghanistan's Defence Minister says that even 70,000 is highly inadequate and believes that the target size should be at least 150,000. General Bob Durbin was the commander of the Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan (CSTC-A), entity that is building the ANA, he says that the ANA is growing by about 1,000 per month.¹³⁸ The United States has built four regional bases for it (Herat, Gardez, Kandahar and Mazar-e-Sharief). Despite the bases and all that Afghan security forces have attacked allied troops time and again and killed many of the troops. (See Annexure I)

The ANA has at least some presence in most of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, working with the PRTs and assisted by embedded US trainers (about ten to twenty per battalion).

¹³⁴ Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, "Afghanistan Continuing Violence," D. Suba Chandran and P.R. Chari, (ed.) *Armed Conflicts in South Asia 2008, Growing Violence*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London, New York, New Delhi 2008, p.62.

¹³⁵ *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan – An Interagency Agency*, Department of Defence, Washington DC, April 26 2006; Interviews of US officials, January-July 2006.

¹³⁶ Interviews of US officials, November 2005-July 2006, C.F. Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.103.

¹³⁷ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan; Post War Governance, Security and US Policy," Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.53.

¹³⁸ Major General Durbin, VOA News Briefing, July 13, 2006.

The ANA is earning mixed reviews. Some US and allied officers say that the ANA is becoming a major force in stabilizing the country and a national symbol. More can be done with the ANA. At the end of the day, the Afghans must claim responsibility for their own security. As the US counter-insurgency manual says:¹³⁹ *The ANA is moving in the right direction but has a long way to go.* Then Army Brigadier General Joseph Votel, Deputy Commanding General for Operations for Combined Joint Task Force 82, was optimistic: *Afghan national security forces remain the centerpiece of the comprehensive security strategy and constantly are improving their capacity to plan and conduct operations.*¹⁴⁰ But the then NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer was more sanguine. He said on Afghan TV: *NATO has, to some extent, fallen short in training and equipping the Afghan National Army. NATO needs to accelerate this process, and to do more for the national army of Afghanistan.*¹⁴¹ Many of the problems of the ANA can be solved with more finances, something that does not put the ISAF troops at risk.¹⁴²

Equipment, maintenance, and logistical difficulties continue to plague the ANA. Few soldiers have helmets; many have no armored vehicles or armor. In July 2006, the Administration announced it would be drawing down about \$ 2 billion worth of equipment for transfer to ANA.¹⁴³ According to a GAO (General Administration Office) report of June 2005, in addition to direct funding, the United States drew-down \$ 287 million worth of defense articles (including M-43 armored personnel carriers) and services for the ANA trucks and armored personnel vehicles. On June 16 2005, the president authorized an additional draw-down of \$ 161.5 million. In FY 2006, Afghanistan is eligible to receive grant

¹³⁹ “Success in Counter- Insurgency (COIN) operations requires establishing a legitimate government supported by the people and able to address the fundamental causes that insurgents use to gain support. Achieving these goals requires the Host – Nation (HN) to defeat insurgents or render them irrelevant, uphold the rule of law, and provide a basic level of essential services and security for the populace. Key to all these tasks is developing an effective host –nation security force”. Headquarters Department Army, “Counterinsurgency”, *Field Manual*, 24-03-2007, Kenneth Katzman, “Afghanistan; Post War Governance, Security and US Policy,” Cary Gladstone (ed.) *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.52. .

¹⁴⁰ John J. Kruzal, *Combined Forces Disrupt Insurgents*, Bolster Institutions in Afghanistan, January 8 2008, pp.45-47.

¹⁴¹ Open Source Centre, National TV Afghanistan, February 21 2008, (translated in Urdu by a Pakistani Journalist on *Voice of America* (VOA), Washington D.C.

¹⁴² Kenneth Katzman, “Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy”, *Congressional Research Service*, USA, December 2, 2014, pp. 14-16.

¹⁴³ Mike Blanchfield, “Lack of Troops Slowing Afghan Progress,” *Canwest News Service*, February 14, 2008.

Excess Defense Articles (EDA) under section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act. International donors (primarily East bloc nations), Defense Ministry weapons stocks,¹⁴⁴ and the DDR (Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration) program have previously furnished most of the ANA weaponry. International donors have also furnished \$120 million in cash for the Afghan National Police. In October 2005, Russia announced it would give the ANA four helicopters and other non-lethal military aid and equipment; it has already provided about \$100 million in military aid to post-Taliban Afghanistan. Egypt has made two major shipments of weapons to the ANA containing 17,000 small arms.¹⁴⁵

Afghan National Police

Some Afghan officials believe that building up a credible and capable national police force is at least as important to combating the Taliban insurgency as building the ANA. Some Afghans do not believe the ANA should have a role in maintaining internal security, and that this should be the role of the police. The US and Germany are training the Afghan National Police (ANP) force.¹⁴⁶ About 62,000 ANP are on duty, of which 58,000 are trained and 37,000 are both trained and equipped in 2006. The US inter-agency report on the ANP says:

*Nevertheless, ANP's readiness level to carry out its internal security and conventional police responsibilities is far from adequate; there are some obstacles to establish a fully professional ANP. Among them are: no effective field training officer program, illiterate recruits, a history of low pay and pervasive corruption, and an insecure environment.*¹⁴⁷ The Americans made a decision to support the ANA rather than the ANP. This appears

¹⁴⁴ Report to Congress Consistent with the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002, July 22 2003.

¹⁴⁵ To thwart and dissolve illegal armed groups, the Hamid Karzai administration began offering cash and vocational training to encourage members to join the army. NATO is expanding the Afghan armed forces to about 260,000 active personnel by 2015, a move supported and funded primarily by the United States Department of Defense. There were more than 4,000 United States armed forces trainers in late 2009 and additional numbers from other NATO member states, providing training to the Afghan armed forces. The majority of training of the ANA is to be undertaken in the newly established Afghan National Security University. As of July 2013, the entire country of Afghanistan is under Afghan control with ISAF playing training and supporting role.

¹⁴⁶ John J. Kruzell, *Combined Forces Disrupt Insurgents*, Bolster Institutions in Afghanistan, January 8 2008, p.77.

¹⁴⁷ Inspectors General, US Department of State and US Department of Defense, *Insurgency Assessment of Afghanistan Police Training and Readiness*, November 14, 2006.

increasingly to have been a mistake. The ANP remains largely unreformed and poorly trained. Theoretical training in Kabul on basics, groundage, does not make the ANP better able to conduct internal security. Rather the ANA model of embedding trainers with the units might work, especially if the local police is viewed more as paramilitary internal security forces. Some efforts could be made in this direction by taking something equivalent to Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) embedded with the ANA and uses them with the ANP.¹⁴⁸ Unfortunately, for many in ISAF, participating in such an OMLT would be even more dangerous and politically unattractive than embedding with the ANA.¹⁴⁹

There are seven police training centres around Afghanistan, which includes training in human rights principles and democratic policing concepts. However, the ANP work in the communities they come from, often embroiling them in local factional or ethnic disputes. The State Department has placed 30 US advisors in the Interior Ministry to help it develop the national police force and counter-narcotics capabilities. According to the State department, the US has completed training of the first unit of National Interdiction Unit officers under the counter-narcotics police of Afghanistan. US trainers are also building border police and highway patrol forces.¹⁵⁰ But both ANA and ANP forces have been targeted by insurgents and killed in good number. (See Annexure II)

As far as reconstruction is concerned, quite a lot has been done in secure areas, but reconstruction there is arguably beside the point. Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras are not likely to support the Taliban in any case. Germany may be proud of its efforts in the North of the country but they do not appreciably improve the overall security situation. What is needed

¹⁴⁸ NATO in Afghanistan, Operation Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) Program, (September 2007), www.nato.int/issues/afghanistan/factsheets/omlt.html.

¹⁴⁹ As of 2009, it is being trained by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) under NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan. Police officers in Afghanistan are largely illiterate. Approximately 17 percent of them tested positive for illegal drugs in 2010. They were widely accused of demanding bribes. Attempts to build a credible Afghan police force were faltering badly, according to NATO officials. A quarter of the officers quit every year, making the Afghan government's goals of substantially building up the police force even harder to achieve. Rod Nordland, "With Raw Recruits, Afghan Police Buildup Falters". *The New York Times*, 29 January 2014.

¹⁵⁰ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan; Post War Governance, Security and US Policy," Cary Gladstone (ed.), *Afghanistan, Issues, Security, Narcotics and Political Currents*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, New York, 2007, p.52.

is a clear-hold-build strategy in the South and many ISAF troops are happy with clear and have given up on hold.¹⁵¹ Once more, the problem has to do with resources. As US Senator Joe Biden said, *We have spent on Afghanistan's reconstruction in six years what we spend every three weeks on military operations in Iraq.*¹⁵² Moreover, we should all realize that even after all the fighting is done and under the best possible conditions, donors need to be engaged for 15 to 27 years before they can leave.¹⁵³

Achievements of US/NATO forces in Afghanistan

The US-led war on terror in Afghanistan completed thirteen years in October 2014. With every passing year it is becoming more and more pertinent to ask where the Afghan crises are heading.¹⁵⁴ The international community has made immense efforts to bring back peace and stability. The ISAF acted quickly to create a framework for a functional, democratic Afghan state. The legitimization of state structures in Afghanistan and a constitutionally chosen leadership have been among the most successful accomplishments. However, the provision of national institutions is only a starting point for effective governance and democracy. The Karzai administration had only slowly built capacity in its various ministries, and among other reasons, suffers from an inability to recruit qualified personnel.¹⁵⁵

For the time being, the presence of international influences can be expected to keep Afghanistan on a democratic course. The Afghanistan has an elected president (Ashraf Ghani) who is well-respected not only in Afghanistan but also in the international community. The country has a government that is legitimate and democratic, and is unprecedented in the international support that it garners. The international coalition

¹⁵¹ Michael Mihalka, "Pashtunistan, NATO and the Global War on Terror: "If you do not fight, you can not have peace in Afghanistan," *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, volume 6, no.1, (February 2008), p.78.

¹⁵² John Heilprin, *Biden Wars of Failure in Afghanistan*, Associated Press, February 25, 2008.

¹⁵³ Satish Chand and Ruth Coffman, "How Soon can Donors Exit from Post-Conflict States"? Center for Global Development, Working Paper No.141, February 2008, www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail.

¹⁵⁴ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy", *Congressional Research Service*, USA, December 2, 2014, pp. 14-16.

¹⁵⁵ United Nation Development Program, *Afghanistan: National Human Development Report*, 2004, p.124.

forces stand committed with signs of extended engagement for a few more years, though the national caveats prevent them from contributing positively and hinder NATO's mandate for Afghanistan.¹⁵⁶ The international community remains engaged through various UN agencies, foreign diplomatic missions, non-government organizations, donor agencies, and private sector entities, all of which make vital contributions towards the development and stability of Afghanistan. Yet, they are gripped with serious issues of poor coordination and overlapping responsibilities.¹⁵⁷

Since 2002 numerous developments have taken place in Afghanistan. Political participation has increased, public services have improved, infant mortality has declined, income per capital has increased two-fold and commerce with neighbouring countries is growing rapidly.¹⁵⁸ It is not also to deny that some construction has in fact taken place, such as the construction and reconstruction of roads, hospitals, and schools, a nascent banking sector with eight or more private banks now set up in Afghanistan. The countries growing industry has been the telecom industry, with more than 2.5 million Afghans using phones¹⁵⁹ (most of them mobile phones), a figure expected to double in the coming years.

The fast pace of the political process must be considered a success, though it is believed that the pace has been too fast for the good of Afghanistan and the long term strength of its political institutions. It is a positive achievement that a legitimate government has been set in place, acknowledged and recognized by the international community.¹⁶⁰ It is now obvious that success of the government depends on the smooth running of its structure, regulated coordination among the state branches, well thought

¹⁵⁶ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy", *Congressional Research Service*, USA, December 2, 2014, pp. 14-16.

¹⁵⁷ M. L. Roi, G. Smolynec, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Groups, USA 2008, p.36.

¹⁵⁸ Mariam Shafi, "Democracy and Afghanistan," *South Asia Defence and Strategic Review*, Dwarka, New Delhi, July/August 2008, p.38.

¹⁵⁹ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy", *Congressional Research Service*, USA, December 2, 2014, p. 23.

¹⁶⁰ Ahmad Rashid, "Afghanistan: Progress Since the Taliban," *Asian Affairs*, vol. xxxvii, no. 1, March 2006, London, p.31.

policies and established ways of dealing with problems counting on the cooperation of all.¹⁶¹ Despite continuing prodding by the American's and threats of withdrawal by the Canadians, Australians and Dutch, the other NATO countries are unlikely to do much more militarily and then only grudgingly as exemplified with the small German increase in the North. The reasons vary but can be summarized as follows. First, most of the European countries are not culturally disposed to military action. Second, it would be irrational for them to do more because they consider themselves first class race. Third, the US and Europe have different strategic visions. Fourth, to do more would contradict the European publics understanding of the situation in Afghanistan and the politicians would be risking defeat at the polls.¹⁶²

Robert Kagan wrote a notorious piece that received press asserting that the Americans are from Mars but Europeans are from Venus.¹⁶³ Most of Kagans argument was largely based on anecdotal evidence but opinion polls actually provide considerable support for his views. The (Annexure I) actually shows that the US differs from other countries in terms of attitudes towards the use of force. Fully 55 percent of the American public agrees strongly with the statement, 'under some conditions, war is necessary to obtain justice'.¹⁶⁴ Another 29 percent agree somewhat. Only 13 percent disagree. In contrast, 60 percent in France and Germany, 55 percent in Italy and 50 percent in Portugal. In contrast, 74 percent in UK agree, 60 percent in the Netherlands and 46 percent in Poland (a bare plurality). NATO troops from the UK, Netherlands and Poland all have combat troops in the South or East of Afghanistan. Moreover, the population in both the UK and the US are willing to bypass the UN if vital interests are at stake. Thus based on this evidence, the population of Northern European states seem more predisposed to use force than there southern counterparts. Not coincidentally, these are the same countries that are willing to help out in Southern

¹⁶¹ www.greaterkashmir.com/perspective/ 3.6.2007, p.8.

¹⁶² Julianne Smith and Michael Williams, "Threats from within: Four Challenges inside the NATO Alliance," *The International Spectator*, vol. 43, No. 3, September 2008, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Italy, p.21.

¹⁶³ Robert Kagan, "Power and Weakness," *Policy Review*, June/July 2002, pp.8-10.

¹⁶⁴ German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends 2003*, Topline Data, July 2003, p.12.

Afghanistan. The argument extends as well to countries that are culturally similar to the US such as the UK and Australia. (See Annexure I) ¹⁶⁵

Moreover, it is actually irrational for other NATO countries to do more. This argument stems from the fact that is US is providing a social good of global security by acting in Afghanistan in its own national interest.¹⁶⁶ Consider a rich merchant who builds a light house to protect his own ships out of self-interest. This merchant can not prevent the poorer merchants from benefiting from his efforts and each benefit's equally. These later conditions are called non-exclusion and non-rivalness. Under these circumstances, the poorer merchants have no incentive to contribute towards the construction or maintenance of the light house. In a similar manner the US went into Afghanistan out of its own self-interest. Indeed the US effectively ignored the NATO's offer to engage. Indeed NATO is there in the first place because Germany (and Canada) wanted others to bear the responsibility of the then UN mission around Kabul. Moreover, the US will continue the fight there because it believes that it is essential to curb Taliban and other threats. Thus, many European countries perceive that there is very little cost to them if they do not participate. Small wonder that the US has found it so hard to get others to participate.¹⁶⁷

In some parts of Afghanistan, situation is improving or at least not getting any worse. For example an analyst Andrew Cardesman says that the situation is improving in Afghanistan and security is good and reconstruction is improving day to day.¹⁶⁸ The security of the Afghan citizens improved a lot in 2014 as compared to 2004. So it comes again to the Americans. Unless they are willing to prosecute the war for the long haul, the long war, the Taliban will win yet again-at least in Pashtunistan. The US/NATO allies have lost faith in the struggle; their commitment only as good as the last parliamentary confidence vote.

Failures of US in Afghanistan

¹⁶⁵ German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends* 2008, February 20 2009.

¹⁶⁶ German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends* 2010, May 10 2011.

¹⁶⁷ Mahendra Ved, "Afghanistan Under Siege," *Journal of Peace Studies*, vol. 15, issue 1, January-March 2008, International Centre for Peace Studies, New Delhi, pp.14-15.

¹⁶⁸ Vishal Chandra, "Afghanistan: Divided Defenders of Democracy," *IDSAs Asia Strategic Review 2008* (edited by S.D. Muni) Academic Foundation, New Delhi 2008, pp.258-260.

After the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the international community has made immense efforts to bring back peace and stability. But it was not a Herculean task to expel fully Taliban and other warlords from Afghanistan.¹⁶⁹ The goodwill and enthusiasm that the Afghan people displayed between the expulsion of the Taliban in 2002 and the presidential elections of 2004 declined sharply after the elections were over. Universal complaints of governmental malfeasance, corruption, and abuses of power steadily reduced confidence in the Hamid Karzai administration in the absence of any serious steps to curb the abuses.¹⁷⁰

At the global level, the public is becoming increasingly disenchanted with the way the US has led the war on terror. As (Annexure I) shows countries in Europe have become increasingly disillusioned with the way the US is conducting the war on terror. In 2007, over 67 percent of the public favoured rather than opposed the US-led war on terrorism. By 2007, support had fallen sharply and the public of most European countries opposed the US approach. The perceived failure to achieve success in Iraq and Afghanistan seems to have factored heavily in this assessment. (See Annexure I)

In a similar manner countries have become increasingly disillusioned with US global leadership generally.¹⁷¹ Annexure I show marked declines in how desirable Europeans fight the prospects for strong US leadership in global affairs. Much of the damage occurred as a result of the Iraq war as the desirability of US leadership fell by an average of percentage points. But the decline continued through 2007 with an average decline of a further six percentage points.¹⁷² (See Annexure I) Even the value of NATO has been called into question. Perception in degree to which NATO is deemed essential for security has dropped by an average of 13 percentage points from 2002 to 2007 as can be seen in Annexure I. Only in the US has the perception of the value of the alliance increased.

¹⁶⁹ Laura Schuurmans, "Crises in Afghanistan and the need for a Comprehensive Strategy," *Regional Studies*, vol. xxv, No. 3, Summer 2007, Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad, p.88.

¹⁷⁰ Thomas Barfield, "The Roots of Failure in Afghanistan," *Current History*, December 2008, Philadelphia, p.414.

¹⁷¹ This is especially true after the 2003 intervention in Iraq.

¹⁷² German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends 2008*, February 20 2009.

A public that perceives the decline in the legitimacy of US leadership makes US calls for greater participation in Afghanistan much more difficult. This is especially true when they view that the mission in Afghanistan as a failure and that their government ought to decrease not increase their forces. Moreover, the continuing and open criticism that the Americans have made of European participation arguably has underestimated NATO itself.¹⁷³

Initially, Afghanistan was the good cause for US to extend its influence on South as well as Central Asia, and to contain China as well as keep watch on India. In 2003, 66 percent of Americans favoured extending the UN mission beyond Kabul and 67 percent thought that the US should contribute troops to that mission.¹⁷⁴ Americans supported this mission even though they were uncertain about the security situation there. Around 36 percent thought “Afghan warlords” were in charge of the country, 26 percent answered that the US military was, while only 25 percent responded “a central Afghan government”.¹⁷⁵

In 2004 most of the public approved of their troops being stationed in Afghanistan as can be seen Annexure I. Only Poland, Portugal and Turkey had pluralities that opposed stationing their troops there. In the US, 69 percent approved and in the Netherlands 66 percent, Germany 59 percent, Italy 56 percent and Spain a plurality of 48 percent. (See Annexure I)

Given this kind of support it is remarkable how the support has fallen. Now, the public of many of the major NATO countries with troops deployed in Afghanistan view the mission as failing and want their removal. Table 8 gives the results of July-August 2008 poll run by Angus Reid Monitor.¹⁷⁶ Around two-thirds of the public in Britain, France, Italy and Germany view the mission in Afghanistan as a failure. In Canada, almost half of the people had same

¹⁷³ Michael Mihalka, “Pashtunistan, NATO and the Global War on Terror: “If you do not fight, you cannot have peace in Afghanistan,” *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, volume 6, no.1, February 2008, pp. 55-57.

¹⁷⁴ “US Public Supports Expanding Afghanistan UN Peacekeeping Force Beyond Kabul,” *BBC News* July 8 2003.

¹⁷⁵ Michael Mihalka, “Pashtunistan, NATO and the Global War on Terror: “If you do not fight, you cannot have peace in Afghanistan,” *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, volume 6, no.1, February 2008, p. 58.

¹⁷⁶ “Europeans, Canadians see Afghan Mission as Failure,” Angus Reid Global Monitor: Polls and Research, August 27, 2008, Round Table, *VOA*, Washington at 10:45 pm.

view. Particularly significant is the percentage of the public who are not sure. This suggests that the respective governments have done a poor job of communicating the importance of the Afghani mission and the role played by their respective forces. (See Annexure I)

Not surprisingly the public of many of the countries want their forces withdrawn. Annexure I shows the percentage of the public that favours removal of the forces from Afghanistan in spring 2008.¹⁷⁷ In only the US and Britain do the public favour keeping their troops in Afghanistan. The public in both Spain and Italy significantly oppose retaining their forces in the country. Polls conducted in 2008 show an even greater margin of the German public wanting their forces to leave.¹⁷⁸ This was after three German soldiers had been killed there. In contrast, a February 2009 poll showed that 52 percent of the German public did approve the German mission in Afghanistan within the context of the current UN mandate but 80 percent opposed deploying German troops in the South.¹⁷⁹ (See Annexure I)

The US and other countries fighting in the South of Afghanistan were pulling considerable pressure on Germany to do more in the run up to the NATO defense ministers meeting in February 2008. Some polls show 81 percent favoured German troops withdrawing by the end of 2009. Moreover, roughly half rejected deploying troops in the South even if that put the entire NATO mission at risk. The polls also show that many Germans did not believe that their troops were properly prepared or equipped to conduct such missions in Afghanistan because German troops lost many lives in the Taliban attacks.

US Interests in Afghanistan

The US interests in Central Asia in general and Afghanistan in particular is comparatively of recent origin. As the relationship between the governing elite in Afghanistan and the communist regime in the then USSR warmed up during the 1970's, it rang the alarm bells in US. Since then till the recent discovery of oil in Central Asian

¹⁷⁷ Pew Global Attitudes Project: Spring 2008 Survey, *Washington Post*, February 13 2009, p.6.

¹⁷⁸ For example in May 2007, Stern magazine ran a poll that showed 63 percent of the German people wanted their forces withdrawn from Afghanistan. "Most Germans want to pull out of Afghanistan-poll," *Reuters*, May 18, 2007.

¹⁷⁹ Michael Mihalka, "Pashtunistan, NATO and the Global War on Terror: "If you do not fight, you cannot have peace in Afghanistan," *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, volume 6, no.1, February 2008, p.60.

Republics (CAR's), US policy towards Afghanistan remained reactive and limited to the policy of containing former USSR. So that it did not spread its influence beyond Afghanistan towards the oil-rich Gulf States. Throughout the 1980's the US tried its best to organize a jihad against the communists in Afghanistan. It deliberately raised a highly militant culture among the Afghan refugees and even went to the extent of making an International Islamic axis possible by recruiting mujahideen from all over the Muslim World. Once Soviet Union pulled out their troops from Afghanistan, US left the scene and quietly allowed these forces to regroup under Taliban and provide shelter to another Saudi mujahid Osama Bin Laden, who had chosen to turn against US as the principal enemy of Islam.¹⁸⁰

Oil and gas is not the reason the US has attacked Afghanistan, but Afghanistan has long had a key place in US plans to secure control of the vast and landlocked oil and gas resources of Central Asia.¹⁸¹ Much was at stake militarily, but the objectives of intervention in Afghanistan had not been defined coherently. The following were considered to be the key to ending the cycle of violence in Afghanistan and helping it emerge as a viable state: a) regime change, b) de-escalation of conflict, c) post-war reconstruction, d) democratization and good governance and, e) arms decommissioning.¹⁸²

Though the primary motivation was to destroy Osama Bin Laden sanctuary in Afghanistan, another, rather more pecuniary objective is also on the agenda, particularly in the search for an alternative government in Kabul. With the Taliban out of Kabul and the search for a new Afghan government on centre stage, one criterion on Washington's mind will be how best to make Afghanistan safe for a couple of billion-dollar pipeline investments.¹⁸³

In the case of the great natural gas and oil fields of Turkmenistan, immediately north of Afghanistan, the US government has for a decade strongly supported plans by US-led

¹⁸⁰ Michael Mihalka, "Pashtunistan, NATO and the Global War on Terror: "If you do not fight, you cannot have peace in Afghanistan," *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, volume 6, no.1, February 2008, pp. 72-72.

¹⁸¹ Shri Prakash, "US involvement in Afghanistan: Implications for the Future," *Journal of Peace Studies*, vol.10, issue 1, January-March 2003, New Delhi, p.23.

¹⁸² Vishal Chandra, "Taking Stock of Seven Years of War on Terror in Afghanistan", *Strategic Analysis*, vol. 32, no. 6, November 2008, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London, pp. 180-81.

¹⁸³ Amalendu Misra, *Afghanistan*, New Delhi, 2004, p.108.

business groups for both an oil pipeline from Turkmenistan to the Arabian Sea via Afghanistan and a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan across Afghanistan to Pakistan. Such pipelines would serve important US interests in a number of ways:

- a. drawing the Central Asian oil states away from the Russian sphere of influence and establishing the foundation for a strong US position;
- b. thwarting the development of Iranian regional influence by limiting Turkmenistan-Iranian gas links and thwarting a plan for a Turkmenistan-Iran oil pipeline to the Arabian Sea;
- c. diversify US sources of oil and gas, and, by increasing production sources, help keep prices low;
- d. benefiting US oil and construction companies with growing interests in the region;
- e. providing bases for much-needed economic property in the region, which might provide bases for political stability.¹⁸⁴

After the Taliban has been dethroned, there is intense external involvement in Afghanistan especially of US-led military campaign with three dimensions: first, the continuing campaign against al-Qaeda and Taliban cadres, second, providing security to the Afghan government and the Afghan state, and third, stabilizing the new Afghan political dispensation, and in parallel, providing across-the-board assistance for national reconstruction, economic development and the creation of stable democratic institutions.¹⁸⁵

For gas exporters, cost rises with length of pipeline. The shortest and cheapest export route for Turkmenistan oil and for its vast gas reserves is through Afghanistan, and serious planning for both oil and gas pipeline construction by its companies has long been in place. Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed in 1997 to build a large Central

¹⁸⁴ Mariam Shafi, "Democracy and Afghanistan," *South Asia Defence and Strategic Review*, Dwarka, New Delhi, July/August 2008, p.121.

¹⁸⁵ John J. Kruzell, *Combined Forces Disrupt Insurgents*, Bolster Institutions in Afghanistan, January 8 2008, pp.80-82.

Asian Gas pipeline through the less mountainous southern parts of Afghanistan to Pakistan, and then possibly on to the growing market of India. The Central Asian Gas Pipeline consortium was made up of UNOCAL (US, 47% share), Delta Oil (Saudi Arabia 15%), Government of Turkmenistan (7%), Itochu Oil exploration (Japan 6.5%), Hyundai Engineering and Construction (5%), and the Crescent Group (Pakistan 3.5%).¹⁸⁶

The more immediate objective of the US presence is to mop up remnants of Taliban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and north-western Pakistan. As envisaged by the major powers, the US-led coalition military force would focus on the anti-terrorist war. At the same time, a combined military force led by Britain, consisting of troops from western democracies, would function as peace keeping and internal security force the stabilization of Afghanistan.¹⁸⁷

The US and its allies have taken upon themselves the multi-fold tasks of helping to increase the size and capability of the Afghan security forces; strengthening the NATO force in Afghanistan; improving provincial governance and developing Afghanistan's rural economy; controlling the increase in poppy cultivation that is aiding the Taliban; assisting the Afghan government in fighting corruption and reforming the judicial system. Along with all of these, the US strategy in the tribal borderlands of Pakistan is also of extreme significance, keeping in mind the resurgent al-Qaeda operating inside Pakistan, launching attacks on government and US and coalitions targets within Afghanistan from across the border.¹⁸⁸ US-led operations in Waziristan and Bajaur in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan are a natural extension of the operations against the al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. However, that further has extended the scope of the Afghan involvement, to assist and support the then President Parvez Musharraf to defy immense internal opposition to these operations and ensure stability within the frontline state as well. The long trail of American commitments to fight the war against terror is only extending further

¹⁸⁶ Vishal Chandra, "Taking Stock of Seven Years of War on Terror in Afghanistan", *Strategic Analysis*, vol. 32, no. 6, November 2008, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London, p.946.

¹⁸⁷ J.N. Dixit, "Democratization of Polity: Will it work," *Afghanistan in Transition* (ed. by Sridhar), 2004, New Delhi, p.23.

¹⁸⁸ J.N. Dixit, "Democratization of Polity: Will it work," *Afghanistan in Transition* (ed. by Sridhar), 2004, New Delhi, p.27.

and American presence in the region is all set for a long haul, despite several quarters in Washington urging for expediting their exit.¹⁸⁹

During his visit to Afghanistan in April 2006 the then British Defence Secretary John Reid clearly ruled out counter-terrorism as a mission of British forces and instead claimed: *we should be perfectly happy to leave in three years and without firing one shot because our job is to protect the reconstruction.*¹⁹⁰ Later, in July 2006, on the eve of the NATO-led force taking over anti-Taliban operations in the southern provinces, the then British commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, Lieutenant General David Richards, admitted that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization ‘probably did not know what they were getting into.’¹⁹¹ NATO’s Afghan mission has since been full of contradictions and crippled by perpetual logistical deficiencies.

End of War in Afghanistan

During President Obama’s State of the Union Address in February 2014, he reasserted that nearly all troops will be removed from Afghanistan by year’s end and, with the exception of a small force that could remain to train Afghan forces and carry out counterterrorism operations subject to the signature of a security agreement. He also said that *“America’s longest war will finally be over.”* Despite the fact that 88% of Americans favored direct military action in 2001 (Gallup Poll, Oct 2001), the evolution of public opinion regarding the war in Afghanistan has resulted in some significant shifts after more than

¹⁸⁹ Seema Sridhar, “US Role in Afghanistan: Endless Road and Unknown Destination,” *World Focus*, August 2007, New Delhi, p.297.

¹⁹⁰ But President Barrack Obama has approved a significant troop increase for Afghanistan, Pentagon officials said. Obama said in a written statement, "This increase is necessary to stabilize a deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, which has not received the strategic attention, direction and resources it urgently requires." He also said "The Taliban is resurgent in Afghanistan, and Al-Qaeda supports the insurgency and threatens America from its safe haven along the Pakistani border." Another 5,000 troops will be deployed at a later date to support combat troops, bringing the total to 17,000 the Defense Department said. A senior administration official confirmed the total increase would be 30,000. In 2009 he decided to send 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan. See what *CNN's Barbara Starr* says about the increase on the AC360 blog.

¹⁹¹ ‘UK Troops “to target terrorists,” April 24 2006 at *BBC News* (Radio), 2007.

thirteen years of fighting and with a public increasingly focused on domestic issues over foreign affairs.

While a majority of Americans (51%) still believe it was the right decision to use military force in Afghanistan¹⁹² there has been a significant drop off from 2006, when 69% of Americans viewed force as the right decision. By comparison, only 38% of Americans currently agree using military force in Iraq was the right decision which is relatively unchanged from 2007 when 41% said it was the right decision demonstrating that the public's increased attitudes against military force in Afghanistan has been more gradual and later than in Iraq.

However, despite the fact that a slim majority of Americans still support the decision to use military force in Afghanistan, there has been a sharp decline since 2007 of whether the war has been worth fighting or not, considering the costs and benefits to the United States. The Annexure II demonstrates, two-thirds of Americans (66%) do not believe the war has been worth fighting, which is a substantial change from nearly seven years prior.¹⁹³

Though most Americans are not ready to cut and run, an increasing number, they are having second thoughts about US involvement in Afghanistan.¹⁹⁴ The poll finds the number saying the initial decision to use force in that country was the right one has fallen to 56%, 8 percentage points below the level recorded in January 2014. By the same token, it has been found that support among Americans for keeping US and NATO troops in Afghanistan until the country is stable stood at 50%.¹⁹⁵

Yet even as enthusiasm for American involvement in Afghanistan has faded, the public has assumed a warlike stance on another front, Iran. In a substantial 61% majority of

¹⁹² Pew Research Center, *USA Today*, Jan 2014.

¹⁹³ Paul Donaldson, ABC News, *Washington Post Poll*, Dec 2013, published on February 6, 2014.

¹⁹⁴ Pew Research Center's November 2014 poll.

¹⁹⁵ Despite the fact Major General Durbin t that fully three-in-four Americans see a Taliban takeover in Afghanistan as a major threat to the well-being of the United States.

Americans say that it is more important to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, even if it means taking military action. Far fewer 24% say it is more important to avoid a military conflict with Iran, if it means that the country may acquire nuclear capability. (See Annexure I)

Oil and gas are not the direct causes of the war in Afghanistan, but understanding the motives of long-term US policy towards that country is important. The pursuit of hydrocarbon interests has been a constant of US policy in the region for more than half a century.¹⁹⁶

Afghanistan stands at a critical juncture in its nation-building exercise. It is poised between hope and despair and only time will tell which one will triumph. Military operations against the Taliban and other anti-government elements continue, and violence has increased, resulting in a high number of civilian and military casualties. The killing of Afghan civilians in operations conducted by the NATO-led ISAF and US-led coalition forces has becoming a particularly sensitive issue for the Afghan government. NATO is probably the most confused component in the American counter-terrorism mission in Afghanistan.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ <http://www.centralasianews.net>

¹⁹⁷ It seems to optimize a military bloc with many nations, many missions rather than 'many nations one mission'. There seems an ambiguity in USA's mission in Afghanistan.

CHAPTER IV

The Old Rivalry

Afghanistan is located at the crossroads of Central and South Asia. This is the region which has always been important strategically. It has been a battlefield since the Aryan invasions six centuries ago. Afghanistan took its first step into the modern age in 1747, when its Pashtun tribes elected Ahmad Shah Abdali as its king, launching the Durrani dynasty that lasted until 1973.¹⁹⁸ During 18th century two mighty empires, British India and Tsarist Russia were pushed their frontiers towards Afghanistan. It was the start of what Rudyard Kipling dubbed “the Great Game”¹⁹⁹ for power and influence over the mountains of Afghanistan. A less intensive phase followed the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. In the post-Second World War post-colonial period, the term has continued in use to describe the geopolitical machinations of the Great Powers and regional powers as they vie for geopolitical power and influence in the area.²⁰⁰

As king Zahir Shah admitted, his country was like a grain of wheat in a flour mill waiting to be ground down by these two millstones. In 1837 Persians laid siege to Herat. This alarmed Britain which regarded the city as the key to India. The Great Game reached its end when Sir Mortimer Durand made a line between present Pakistan and Afghanistan. In

¹⁹⁸ Rizwan Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, England/USA 2005, pp.4-6.

¹⁹⁹ The Great Game was a term for the strategic rivalry and conflict between the British Empire and the Russian Empire for supremacy in Central Asia. The classic Great Game period is generally regarded as running approximately from the Russo-Persian Treaty of 1813 to the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. A less intensive phase followed the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

²⁰⁰ The term “The Great Game” is usually attributed to Arthur Conolly (1807–1842), an intelligence officer of the British East India Company's Sixth Bengal Light Cavalry. It was introduced into mainstream consciousness by British novelist Rudyard Kipling in his novel *Kim* (1901).

1978 Russia intervened in Afghanistan. On October 31, 1979 Soviet informants to the Afghan Armed Forces who were under orders from the inner circle of advisors under Soviet premier Brezhnev, relayed information for them to undergo maintenance cycles for their tanks and other crucial equipment. Meanwhile, telecommunications links to areas outside of Kabul were severed, isolating the capital. With a deteriorating security situation, large numbers of Soviet Airborne Forces joined stationed ground troops and began to land in Kabul on December 25 1979.²⁰¹ Simultaneously, Hafizullah Amin moved the offices of the president to the Taj beg Palace, believing this location to be more secure from possible threats. It was one of the important rounds of a game that had been going on for 200 years international reaction initially had more to do with the geopolitical effects of the Soviet invasion than with what it meant to Afghans or for Afghanistan. The main aim of Russians was to spread communism in third world countries. US president Jimmy Carter called the soviet action *“the most serious threat to world peace”* during his administration. US sent their troops to Afghanistan to train mujahideen.²⁰² After the soviet intervention Afghanistan fell in a civil war which partially ended in 1994, when a new group arose in the refugee camps and religious schools in Pakistan. The Taliban (means religious students) first emerged in the mid-1990 as a politico-religious movement which sought to rid Afghanistan of the worst excesses of the mujahideen warlords. They ruled Afghanistan up to 2001.²⁰³

End of Cold War

The cold war divided the world for over forty years, threatened humanity with instant destruction, and led to the death of at least 25 million people, most of these occurring in that highly contested zone that came to be referred to during the cold war (though less after) as the third world. Yet in spite of these dangers and costs, the cold war in its central core areas still managed to create a degree of stability that the world had not experienced

²⁰¹ Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*. Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 1994, pp. 1017–1018.

²⁰² Edward Ingram, *The Beginning of Great Game in Asia, 1824-1834*, London: Oxford University Press, 1979, pp.187-190.

²⁰³ Oscar Schlyter, *Impact of the Taliban Regime on Security in the Central Asian Region*. Ingolf Kiesow (ed), *From Taiwan to Taliban; Two Danger Zones in Asia*, February 2002, Scientific Report, Swedish Defence Research Agency, Stockholm, p.200.

since the early part of the twentieth century.²⁰⁴ For this reason many came to view the bipolar order after 1947 as something that was not merely the expression of a given international reality but something that was desirable and defensible too. Indeed, realists like Kenneth Waltz almost seemed to celebrate the superpower relationship on the grounds that a world in which there were two balancing powers limiting the actions of the other was likely to be a far more stable world than one in which there were several competing states.²⁰⁵

If one feature of the cold war was its bipolar structure, another was to organize the world society which was otherwise scattered. Yet for all its intensity the cold war was very much a managed conflict in which both sides recognized the limits of what they could and could not do. The cold war was fought within the framework of a set of informal rules. This in part helps explain why it remained 'cold'. Few scholars, however, would dispute the fact that whatever else may have divided the two superpowers – ideology, economics, and the struggle for global influence – they were in full agreement about one thing, 'the overriding need to prevent a nuclear war that neither could win without destroying the world and themselves.'²⁰⁶ This in the end is why the superpowers acted with such caution for the greater part of the cold war era.

One consequence of the end of the cold war was one-world economy operating under the same set of highly competitive rules, another was a measure resurgence of American self-confidence in a new international system where it seemed to have no serious rival. This was not only a development that few had foretold (in the 1970's and 1980's many believed that the USA was in decline), it was one that many had thought impossible (most realists in fact believed that after the cold war the world become genuinely multi-polar). It was also a situation that many feared on the grounds that an America with no obvious peer competitor would act more assertively and with less restraint which is not wholly true.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ C. K. Prahalad, "The World for Sale," *Foreign Policy*, May/June: 50, USA, 2009 pp.42-44.

²⁰⁵ Micheal C. Williams (ed.), *Realism Reconsidered*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 166.

²⁰⁶ Ahmad Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2000, pp.36-38.

²⁰⁷ C. K. Prahalad, "The World for Sale," *Foreign Policy*, May/June: 50, USA, p. 158.

That aside, all of the most obvious indicators by the late 1990's – military, economic, and cultural – seemed to point to only one conclusion: that as a result of the Soviet collapse, followed by the economic crises in Japan and Europe's manifest failure in former Yugoslavia, the United States by the turn of the century had been transformed from a mere superpower to what some people had termed 'hyperpower'.²⁰⁸

This new global conjuncture raised a series of important questions for both scholars of International Relations and US foreign policy-makers alike. The most central was how long could this position of hegemony actually endure? Most realists, unsurprisingly, took it as read that other great powers would in time emerge to balance the US. Others believed that because it enjoyed special advantage in nearly every sphere, the new US hegemony would last well into the 21st century.²⁰⁹ This in turn fed into a second debate concerning the exercise of US power under conditions of uni-polarity. Liberals in general tended to advise restraint and the embedding of US power into international institutions as the most effective and acceptable way of it exercising global hegemony. They also believed that the spread of democracy in an increasingly interdependent world economy would make the international system a safer place. Others of a more nationalist persuasion argued against such optimism and such constraint. They insisted that the USA had the power. It had always used it wisely in the past. But when light is being thrown on it wisely, USA has always misused its power by pressurizing and forcing some states for enriching energy and the like agendas. The US violated the rights of human beings for fulfilling their national interests.²¹⁰

The USA and its western allies have declared some states like Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Libya and Cuba as 'rogue states' and the constant threat of nuclear proliferation. However, it is only US which has supported terrorism militarily and financially during cold war in Afghanistan. So, the USA is and should be considered as a great global hegemon which turned every stone to fulfill her interests.

²⁰⁸ Ahmad Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2000, pp. 53-55.

²⁰⁹ Dr Makni, *The New Great Game: Oil and Gas Politics in Central Eurasia*, Raider Publishing International, 2008, pp.201-202.

²¹⁰ Oscar Schlyter, "Impact of the Taliban Regime on Security in the Central Asian Region", Ingolf Kiesow (ed), *From Taiwan to Taliban; Two Danger Zones in Asia*, February 2002, Scientific Report, Swedish Defence Research Agency, Stockholm, pp. 207-209.

Realism in US Foreign Policy

Realists have consistently held that the continuities in international relations are more important than the changes, but many find this to be increasingly problematic in the present age of globalization. But the importance of realism has not been diminished by the dynamics of globalization.²¹¹

US foreign policy has a split personality, between 1) realism-conservatism, the need for military power and political will to maintain friendly alliances to contain Soviet expansion, 2) idealism-liberalism, the need to perfect and spread democracy. These might be harmonized, by a foreign policy combining prudent realism with the universal appeal of 'inner aspirations' towards political accountability, economic opportunity and religious freedom. This will however, entail attention to the USA's own decadence in divorcing freedom from the responsibility to protect the values on which the USA was founded.²¹²

For realists such as John Gray and Kenneth Waltz, 9/11 was not the beginning of a new era in world politics so much as a case of 'business as usual'. What matters most, argues Waltz, are the continuities in the structural imbalance of power in the system and the distribution of nuclear weapons. According to realists 9/11 was never going to trigger a new era in governance: the coalition of the willing that was forged in the immediate aftermath was, in Waltz's terms, 'a mile wide', but only 'an inch deep'.²¹³ Furthermore, a costly military intervention followed by a lengthy occupation in the Middle East has weakened the USA's ability to contain the rising threat from China. In short, the Bush Presidency has not exercised power in a responsible manner. After Bush, people from different walks of life expected that Obama presidency would be fruitful for the whole world. But Barack Obama administration poured water on the people's expectations, and

²¹¹ It is not clear that economic interdependence has made war less likely. The state continues to be the dominant unit in world politics. Steve Smith, John Baylis, Patricia Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics, An Introduction to International Relations 4e*, Oxford University Press, New York, New Delhi, 2008, p.103.

²¹² James H. Billington, "Realism and Vision in American Foreign Policy," *America and the World*, 1986, pp. 234-236.

²¹³ How prophetic those words have proven to be. The war against Iraq was executed by the USA with the UK being the only significant diplomatic and military ally. Not only did most states in the world oppose the war, leading American realists were public in their condemnation. Steve Smith, John Baylis, Patricia Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics, An Introduction to International Relations 4e*, Oxford University Press, New York, New Delhi, 2008, pp.104-105.

proved a worst ever president of the USA who initiated different types of military actions on different countries.

Strategic importance of Central Asia

Central Asia has long been a geostrategic location because of its proximity to the interests of several great powers and regional powers. Central Asia had both the advantage and disadvantage of a central location between four historical seats of power. From its central location, it has access to trade routes, or lines of attack, to all the regional powers. On the other hand, it has been continuously vulnerable to attack from all sides throughout its history, resulting in political fragmentation or outright power vacuum, as it is successively dominated.

- To the north, the steppe allowed for rapid mobility, first for nomadic horseback warriors like the Huns and Mongols, and later for Russian traders, eventually supported by railroads. As the Russian Empire expanded to the east, it would also push down into Central Asia towards the sea, in a search for warm water ports. The former USSR would reinforce dominance from the north, and attempt to project power as far south as Afghanistan.
- To the east, the demographic and cultural weight of Chinese empires continually pushed outward into Central Asia. The Han, Tang, and Ming Dynasties would conquer parts of Fergana Valley and Tarim Basin, and the later Qing Dynasty of China consolidated Chinese control over this area. China would project power into Central Asia, most notably in the case of Afghanistan, to counter Russian dominance of the region.
- To the southeast, the demographic and cultural influence of South Asia is felt in Central Asia, notably in Tibet, the Hindu Kush, and slightly beyond. Several historical dynasties and powers of South Asia, especially those seated along the Indus River, would expand towards Central Asia. The post-Soviet era was characterized by India

and Pakistan in South Asia expanding their interests in the region. India's ability to project power into Central Asia has been limited due to being geographically being separated by Pakistan from Central Asia, and the cultural differences between Hindu India, and what would become a mostly Muslim Central Asia.

- To the southwest, Middle Eastern powers have expanded into the southern areas of Central Asia, usually Iran and Pakistan (when considered part of the "greater Middle East"). Several Persian empires would conquer and reconquer parts of Central Asia. Alexander the Great's Hellenistic empire would extend into Central Asia; two Arab Islamic empires would exert substantial influence throughout the region; and the modern state of Iran has projected influence throughout the region as well.²¹⁴

Besides regional powers, US is making her geopolitical designs in Central Asian Republics especially after 9/11 and, has established military bases in some of the Republics. US is more interested in controlling Central Asia's energy sources because the region is being considered very rich in energy.

Revival of 'Great Game' and the US

The New Great Game is a term used to describe the conceptualization of modern geopolitics in Central Eurasia as a competition between the US, and the United Kingdom and other NATO countries against Russia, China and other Shanghai Cooperation Organization countries for *"influence, power, hegemony and profits in Central Asia and Transcaucasus"*.²¹⁵ Many authors and analysts view this new "game" as centering regional petroleum politics. Now, instead of competing for actual control over a geographic area, "pipeline, tanker routes, petroleum consortiums, and contracts are the prizes of the new Great Game."²¹⁶

In the context of the US 'War on Terror', Central Asia has once again become the centre of geo-strategic calculations. Pakistan's status has been upgraded to a "major non-

²¹⁴ Martin McCauley, *Afghanistan and Central Asia, A Modern History*, Pearson Education Limited, Britain, 2005, pp. 44-50.

²¹⁵ Mohammad E. Ahrari, *The New Great Game in Muslim Central Asia*, University Press of Pacific, 2002, pp.4-5.

²¹⁶ Mohammad E. Ahrari, *The New Great Game in Muslim Central Asia*, University Press of Pacific, 2002, p.10.

NATO ally” because of its central role in serving as a staging point for the invasion of Afghanistan and for providing intelligence on al-Qaeda operations in the region.²¹⁷ After 9/11 US targeted Afghanistan to crush al-Qaeda and Taliban, and hence established military bases in the neighbouring countries like Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan, causing both Russia and China to voice their concern over a permanent US military presence in the region.²¹⁸

9/11 and the World

The September 11 attacks transformed the first term of the then President G. W. Bush and led to what he has called the Global war on Terrorism, or war against terrorism. The accuracy of describing it as a “war” and the political motivations and the consequence of it is the topic of strenuous debate. The US government increased military operations, economic measures and political pressure on groups it accused of being terrorists, as well as on governments and countries accused of sheltering them.²¹⁹ In October 2001 US launched first military action on Afghanistan in order to remove the Taliban regime (which according to US harboured al-Qaeda) and to capture al-Qaeda forces. The war, however, is going on, and it seems that America is failing on every front. US has not achieved the goals for which war was waged as terrorist attacks are growing in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and some extremist groups are becoming more and more active.

Critics point out that the Afghan conflict has contributed to the destabilization of neighbouring Pakistan²²⁰ and Afghanistan itself is far from at peace. Some scholars have even described Afghanistan as a “failed state”. As the government in Afghanistan is puppet in the hands of US, not only this but state lost the sovereignty as well.

The attacks had worldwide political effects. Many countries of the world introduced strict anti-terrorism legislation and took action to cut off terrorist finances. Law

²¹⁷ David Lewis, “High Times on the Silk Road: The Central Asian Paradox,” *World Policy Journal*, vol. 27 issue1, 2010, USA, pp.41-43.

²¹⁸ It is being observed by the western governments that the Russia, China and the former Soviet Republics have used the language of the ‘war on terror’ to quash minority separatist movements as well as some religious groups. Salim Kidwai, “US and Central Asia,” *Asia Pacific Panorama*, vol.6, no.2, December 2007, New Delhi, pp. 20-22.

²¹⁹ Matthew Edwards, “The New Great Game and the New Great Gamers: Disciples of Kipling and Mackinder”, *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 22(1), 2003, p.230.

²²⁰ Con Coughlin, “If We Win the War in Afghanistan, We Could Lose a Battle in Pakistan,” *BBC News*, 05-03-2009.

enforcement and intelligence agencies stepped up cooperation to arrest terrorist suspects and break up suspected terrorist cells around the world.²²¹ Reaction to the attacks in the Muslim world was mixed. Also, shortly after the attack, the media showed some countries in the Middle East were celebrating the event but on the other hand, media did not show properly the sympathy of some other states like Iran (which otherwise is totally against US policies) where candle lights were displayed.²²²

US and the Creation of Taliban

The Taliban movement traces its origin to the Pakistani-trained mujahideen in northern Pakistan, during the Soviet war in Afghanistan. When Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq became President of Pakistan he feared that the Soviets were planning to invade Balochistan, Pakistan so he sent Akhtar Abdur Rahman to Saudi Arabia to garner support for the Afghan resistance against Soviet occupation forces. In the meantime, the United States and Saudi Arabia joined the struggle against the Soviet Union by providing all the funds. Zia-ul-Haq has been labelled the "grandfather of global Islamic jihad". He aligned himself with Pakistan's Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam and later picked General Akhtar Abdur Rahman to lead the insurgency against the Soviet Union inside Afghanistan. About 90,000 Afghans, including Mohammad Omar, were trained by Pakistan's ISI during the 1980s.²²³ After the fall of Soviet-backed regime of Mohammad Najibullah in 1992, several Afghan political parties agreed on a peace and power-sharing agreement, the Peshawar Accord.²²⁴ According to Human Rights Watch, *The sovereignty of Afghanistan was vested formally in the Islamic State of Afghanistan, an entity created in April 1992, after the fall of the Soviet-backed Najibullah government. With the exception of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Islami, all the parties were ostensibly unified under this government in April 1992. Hezb-e Islami, refused to recognize the government for most of the period discussed in this report (Human Right Watch Report) and launched attacks against government forces and Kabul generally. Shells and rockets fell everywhere.*

²²¹ The attacks promoted numerous memorials and services all over the world. The people in France, Germany, Ireland showed their solidarity with the Americans, www.globalissues.com/articles/9/11.html.

²²² T. Barkawi, *Globalization and Warfare*, London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006, p.49.

²²³ Carlotta Gall, "At Border, Signs of Pakistani Role in Taliban Surge". *The New York Times*, 21-01-2007

²²⁴ The accord created the Islamic State of Afghanistan and appointed an interim government for a transitional period.

Gulbuddin Hekmatyar received operational, financial and military support from Pakistan. Afghanistan expert Amin Saikal concludes in *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival*, *Pakistan was keen to gear up for a breakthrough in Central Asia. Islamabad could not possibly expect the new Islamic government leaders... to subordinate their own nationalist objectives in order to help Pakistan realize its regional ambitions. Had it not been for the ISI's logistic support and supply of a large number of rockets, Hekmatyar's forces would not have been able to target and destroy half of Kabul.*²²⁵

In addition, Saudi Arabia and Iran – as competitors for regional hegemony supported Afghan militias hostile towards each other. According to Human Rights Watch, Iran assisted the Shia Hazara Hezb-i Wahdat forces of Abdul Ali Mazari, as Iran attempted to maximize Wahdat's military power and influence. Saudi Arabia supported the Wahhabite Abdul Rasul Sayyaf and his Ittihad-i Islami faction. Conflict between the two militias soon escalated. A publication by the George Washington University describes, *Outside forces saw instability in Afghanistan as an opportunity to press their own security and political agendas.*²²⁶

During civil war in Afghanistan horrific crimes were committed by criminals and individuals inside different factions. Rare ceasefires, usually negotiated by representatives of the Islamic state's newly appointed then Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Massoud, President Sibghatullah Mojaddedi and later President Burhanuddin Rabbani (the interim government), or officials from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), commonly collapsed within days. The countryside in northern Afghanistan, parts of which was under the control of then Defense Minister Massoud remained calm and some reconstruction took place. The city of Herat under the rule of Islamic State ally Ismail Khan also witnessed relative calm.²²⁷

Meanwhile southern Afghanistan was neither under the control of foreign-backed militias nor the government in Kabul, but was ruled by local leaders such as Gul Agha

²²⁵ Amin Saikal, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (1st ed.). London, New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2006, p. 352.

²²⁶ Neamatollah Nojumi, *The Rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan: Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and the Future of the Region* (1st ed.), Palgrave, New York, 2002, pp. 117-119.

²²⁷ Vanda Felbab-Brow, *Shooting Up: Counter-Insurgency and the War on Drugs*, Brookings Institution Press, 2010, p. 122.

Sherzai and their militias. In 1991, the Taliban²²⁸ also developed in Afghanistan as a politico-religious force. Mullah Omar started his movement with fewer than fifty armed madrassah students in his hometown of Kandahar. The most often-repeated story and the Taliban's own story of how Mullah Omar first mobilized his followers is that in the spring of 1994, neighbors in Singesar told him that the local governor had abducted two teenage girls, shaved their heads, and taken them to a camp where they were raped. Thirty Taliban men (with only 16 rifles) freed the girls, and hanged the governor from the barrel of a tank. Later that year, two militia commanders killed civilians while fighting for the right to sodomize a young boy. The Taliban freed him.

In the beginning the Taliban numbered in the hundreds, were badly equipped and low on munitions. Within months however 15,000 students arrived from the madrassas in Pakistan. The Taliban's first major military activity was in 1994, when they marched northward from Maiwand and captured Kandahar city and the surrounding provinces, losing only a few dozen men.²²⁹ When they took control of Kandahar in 1994, they forced the surrender of dozens of local Pashtun leaders who had presided over a situation of complete lawlessness and atrocities. The Taliban also took over a border crossing at Spin Baldak and an ammunition dump from Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. In the course of 1994, the Taliban took control of 12 of 34 provinces not under central government control. Militias controlling the different areas often surrendered without a fight. Omar's original commanders were “a mixture of former small-unit military commanders and madrassa teachers.”²³⁰

At the same time most of the militia factions (Hekmatyar's Hezb-i Islami, Dostum's Junbish-i Milli and Hezb-i Wahdat) fighting in the battle for control of Kabul were defeated militarily by forces of the Islamic State's Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Massoud. Bombardment of the capital came to a halt and the Islamic state initiated measures to restore law and order to the capital. Massoud furthermore tried to initiate a nationwide political process with the goal of national consolidation and democratic elections. Ahmad Shah Massoud, known as the “Lion of Panjshir”, had been named “the Afghan who won the Cold

²²⁸ A movement originating from Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-run religious schools for Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

²²⁹ David P Forsythe, *Encyclopedia of Human Rights* (Volume 1 ed.). Oxford University Press, 2009 p. 2.

²³⁰ Hall Gardner, *American Global Strategy and the 'War on Terrorism'*. Ashgate, 2007, p. 59.

War" by the *Wall Street Journal* and had defeated the Soviet Red Army nine times in north-eastern Afghanistan. Hoping for the Taliban to be allies in bringing stability to Afghanistan, Massoud invited the Taliban to join the consolidation process and to contribute to stability. Unarmed, Massoud went to talk to Taliban leaders in Maidan Shar to convince them to join the initiated political process, so that democratic elections could be held to decide on a future government for Afghanistan. The Taliban declined to join such a political process. When Massoud returned unharmed to Kabul, the Taliban leader who had received him as his guest was killed by other senior Taliban for failing to execute Massoud while the possibility had presented itself.

In a bid to establish their rule over Afghanistan, the Taliban started shelling the capital in early 1995. Amnesty International, referring to the Taliban offensive, wrote in a 1995 report: "This is the first time in several months that Kabul civilians have become the targets of rocket attacks and shelling aimed at residential areas in the city".²³¹

The Taliban, however, suffered a devastating defeat against government forces of the Islamic State under the command of Ahmad Shah Massoud. The Taliban's early victories in 1994 were followed by a series of defeats that resulted in heavy losses which led analysts to believe that the Taliban movement as such might have run its course. Pakistan, however, started to provide stronger military support to the Taliban. Many analysts like Amin Saikal describe the Taliban as developing into a proxy force for Pakistan's regional interests. On September 26, 1996, as the Taliban with military support by Pakistan and financial support by Saudi Arabia prepared for another major offensive, Massoud ordered a full retreat from Kabul to continue anti-Taliban resistance in the Hindu Kush mountains instead of engaging in street battles in Kabul. The Taliban entered Kabul on September 27, 1996, and established the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.²³² Subsequently, Taliban was ousted partially in 2001 and a government was formed under the leadership of Hamid Karzai. But in some parts of Afghanistan, insurgent attacks are taking place yet.

²³¹ Hooman Peiman, *Falling Terrorism and Rising Conflicts*, Greenwood 2003, p. 14.

²³² James E Harf and Mark Owen Lombard, *The Unfolding Legacy of 9/11*, University Press of America 2004, p. 122.

Impact on the Region

Iran

The US and Iranian efforts to bolster their strategic ties to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia are another significant aspect of US-Iran confrontation. This aspect of the competition between them is analyzed in detail in a report entitled *US and Iranian Strategic Competition: The Impact of Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Pakistan*. It shows US-Iranian strategic competition is limited in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia, although all the parties are interested in US and Iran. The segmented nature of the region means that neither country has a holistic strategy for the region, and instead pursues an independent foreign policy to account for their specific interests within each country. Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia do offer complex challenges for both the US and Iran, with many ethnic divisions, historical tensions, and a shared pattern of economic underdevelopment with the potential for large-scale unrest. The expected withdrawal of US forces in 2015 will have a major impact on regional policies. It is expected that Iran will attempt to expand its influence, while the US deliberates on what extent of material commitment is appropriate for its post-Afghan regional interests.²³³

Iran is a player in the equation. Many countries in the region are on its direct periphery, and the forces of instability, violence and criminality transcend regional borders. Iranian influence in the region has been positive, but growing US-Iranian competition can lead to negative competition predicated on emotion, rather than rational strategic interest. In Afghanistan, Iran has contributed to stabilization efforts in Western Afghanistan, but has also supported some attacks against US forces, and controls the main logistics route for the UN food effort. Iran is expanding its role in Afghanistan and will seek enhanced protection for

²³³ The US has many hard decisions to make, which will be driven by various issues including the war in Afghanistan, the growing instability in Pakistan, and whether the US should actively pursue strategic interest in Central Asia in the face of Russian and Chinese pressures and advantages.
http://csis.org/files/publication/120312_Iran_Chapter_X_AfPakCentAsia_AHC.pdf

Shiite minorities inside Afghanistan, and increased economic and political influence inside the country, not just in western Afghanistan, but also with the government in Kabul.²³⁴

Pakistan

It seems useful to begin with an assessment of where US interests in Pakistan are located. The success of Pakistan - that is, its emergence as a stable, modernizing, prosperous, pluralistic country, at peace with its neighbors and within its borders, and integrated economically in South and Central Asia - is important, even vital, not only to the United States but to the broader international community. The nuclear danger in South Asia alone argues for risk-taking investments in Pakistan's success. In addition, any durable American "exit strategy"²³⁵ from Afghanistan will depend upon the emergence of a stable Pakistan that is moving toward normalization with India and the reduction of extremism within its borders.

The United States today is a catalyzing power in this same, continual Afghan warfare. US actions in Afghanistan since 2001 have amplified the debilitating spillover effects of the Afghan war on Pakistan. To name a few examples, the lightly resourced, complacent US approach to Afghanistan following the ouster of the Taliban in late 2001 effectively chased Islamist insurgents into Pakistan, contributing to its destabilization. US diplomacy in the region failed to bridge the deepening mistrust among the Kabul, Islamabad, and New Delhi governments after 2001, or to challenge successfully the Pakistani military's tolerance of extremist groups, including the Afghan Taliban. In Pakistan itself, the US relied for too long and too exclusively on former President Parvez Musharraf and failed to challenge his marginalization of political opponents or his coddling of extremists. During these years, narrowly conceived, transparently self-interested US policies caused many Pakistanis to conclude, to some extent correctly, that the American presence in their region was narrowly conceived, self-interested, and ultimately unreliable.²³⁶

²³⁴ Mohammad E. Ahrari, *The New Great Game in Muslim Central Asia*, University Press of Pacific, 2002, p.100.

²³⁵ President Obama said he will reduce the number of US troops in Afghanistan to 9,800 at the end of 2014, but later he decided to extend it for one year more that 2015 and that all combat troops will be out of the country by the end of 2016.

²³⁶ A recent poll of Pakistani public opinion carried out by the Pew Global Attitudes Project found that only sixteen percent of Pakistanis have a favorable view of the United States. That discouraging number has been more or less consistent since 2001; the only time it spiked, to just above twenty-five percent, was in 2006, after the United States pledged \$500 million in aid to Pakistan and after it played a visible and significant role in an earthquake relief effort in Pakistani-held Kashmir. The Senate's recent unanimous passage of the Kerry-Lugar bill, providing \$1.5 billion in aid to Pakistan for each of the next five years,

In July 2014 a survey was conducted by Gallup and Al-Jazeera in which the people of different countries were allowed to give their opinion about the threat to the security of Pakistan. Fifty-nine percent answered that it was the United States, followed by eighteen percent who named India and only eleven percent who named the Taliban.²³⁷

The measure of American policy in Pakistan, of course, is not American popularity but Pakistan's own durable stability and peaceful evolution. However, the dismal view of the United States held across so many constituencies in Pakistan today - particularly the widespread view that US policy in Afghanistan and along the Pakistan-Afghan border constitutes a grave threat to Pakistan - is a sign that US policymakers must think much more deeply, about how the US-led campaign against al-Qaeda and the Taliban will reverberate in Pakistan during the next five to ten years.²³⁸

Broadly, the purpose of US policy in the region, including in Afghanistan, should be to strengthen Pakistani constitutional politics and pluralism; to invest in the Pakistani people and civil society; to enable the Pakistani military to secure the country while preserving and enhancing civilian rule; and most critically of all, to persuade the Pakistani military and intelligence services that it is in Pakistan's national interest to pursue normalization and economic integration with India and to abandon its support for proxy extremist groups such as the Afghan Taliban, Lashkar-e- Toiba, and others.²³⁹

One obstacle to the achievement of these goals is the deeply held view within the Pakistani security services that the United States will abandon the region once it has defeated or disabled al-Qaeda. Pakistani generals correctly fear that a precipitous American withdrawal from Afghanistan would be destabilizing, and that it would strengthen extremist radical networks, including but not limited to the Taliban, who are today destabilizing Pakistan as well as the wider region.

offers a foothold to begin shifting U.S. policy in a more rewarding direction. However, it would be a mistake to underestimate the depth of the resentments and sources of instability in Pakistan that now confront the United States. *The PEW Global Attitudes Project*.

²³⁷ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2013/12/20138910857878664.html>

²³⁸ There is no unitary, homogenized Pakistan for the United States to effect by its actions in Afghanistan. Instead, there are distinct Pakistani constituencies, some in competition with each other, which will be impacted in different ways by the choices the United States now makes in Afghanistan. These include the Pakistani military and security services; the country's civilian political leadership; its business communities and civil society; and the Pakistani public.

²³⁹ This is the strategic prism through which US policy choices in Afghanistan today should be evaluated.

Alternatively or concurrently, sections of the Pakistani military and civilian elite also fear that the United States may collaborate with India, naively or deliberately, to weaken Pakistan, by supporting governments in Kabul that at best are hostile to Pakistani interests or at worst facilitate Indian efforts to destabilize, disarm or even destroy the Pakistani state.

The presence and depth of these fears among the Pakistani elites implies that the United States should avoid taking actions in Afghanistan that reinforce this debilitating, self-defeating belief system within the Pakistani security services. It implies that Washington should, on the other hand, embrace those policies that are most likely to ameliorate or subdue such policies within Pakistan over time.²⁴⁰

Pakistan's historical, self-defeating support for the Taliban and similar groups is rooted in the belief that Pakistan requires unconventional forces, as well as a nuclear deterrent, to offset India's conventional military and industrial might. This logic of existential insecurity has informed Pakistan's policies in Afghanistan because Pakistani generals have seen an Indian hand in Kabul since the days of the Soviet invasion. They interpret India's goals in Afghanistan as a strategy of encirclement of Pakistan, punctuated by the tactic of promoting instability among Pakistan's restive, independence-minded Pashtun, Baluch and Sindhi populations.²⁴¹

Pakistan has countered this perceived Indian strategy by developing Islamist militias such as the predominantly Pashtun Taliban as proxies for Pakistan and as a means to destabilize India. As for the US role, Pakistani generals see it as inconstant and unreliable, based on the pattern of here-and-gone US engagement in the past, and they also tend to believe that the US is lashing itself, deliberately or naively, to Indian strategy in the region.

This paranoid style in Pakistani security doctrine has been reinforced in several ways by US actions in the region since 2001.²⁴² US policy in Afghanistan has failed to develop a robust strategy of political negotiation, reconciliation, and national reintegration that would provide a platform for Pakistan's genuine security concerns. Then, too, the failure of the US

²⁴⁰ A. Acharya, "A Holistic Paradigm", *Security Dialogue* 35, September 2004, USA, pp. 355-356.

²⁴¹ Salim Kidwai, "US and Central Asia," *Asia Pacific Panorama*, vol. 6, No. 2, December 2007, New Delhi, p.26.

²⁴² US diplomacy has made an insufficient priority in 2013 of attempting to build constructive links between Kabul and Islamabad and to take pragmatic steps to persuade the Pakistani military that it has a stake in a stable Afghanistan free from the threat of Taliban rule.

to invest deeply and broadly in Pakistani society, but to concentrate its aid in a narrowly based military government during the Musharraf period, only reinforced the assumption that the United States had once again hired out Pakistan as a regional “sheriff” and intended to disengage from South and Central Asia as soon as its mission against al- Qaeda was complete - just as the United States has done at comparable intersections in the past, including after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.

If the United States signals to Pakistan's military command that it intends to abandon efforts to stabilize Afghanistan, or that it has set a short clock running on the project of pursuing Afghan stability, or that it intends to undertake its regional policy primarily through a strategic partnership with India, then it will only reinforce the beliefs of those in the Pakistani security establishment who argue that nursing the Taliban is in the country's national interests.

If the United States undertakes a heavily militarized, increasingly unilateral policy in Afghanistan, whether in the name of “counterinsurgency,” “counterterrorism,” or some other abstract Western doctrine, without also adopting an aggressive political, reconciliation and diplomatic strategy that more effectively incorporates Pakistan into efforts to stabilize Afghanistan, then it will also reinforce the beliefs of those in the Pakistani security establishment that they need the Taliban as a hedge against the US and India.²⁴³

Between withdrawal signals and blind militarization there is a more sustainable strategy, one that people hope that Barrack Obama administration is in the process of defining to make it clear that the Taliban will never be permitted to take power in Kabul or other major cities. It would seek and enforce stability in Afghan population centers but emphasize politics over combat, urban stability over rural patrolling, Afghan solutions over Western ones, and it would incorporate Pakistan more directly into creative and persistent diplomatic efforts to stabilize Afghanistan and the region.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ If the United States adopts a “counterterrorism-only” policy in Afghanistan and substantially withdraws from Afghanistan, it will risk deepening instability along the Pakistan-Afghan border, and it will reinforce the narrative of its failed, self-interested policies in Pakistan during the Musharraf period and in earlier periods, undermining the prospects for a Pakistan that evolves gradually toward internal stability and a constructive regional role.

²⁴⁴ Nida Hameed, “Afghanistan in Shambles,” *Eurasia Review Journal*, USA, December 2014, p. 1.

That is the only plausible path to a modernizing, prosperous South Asia. It is a future within reach and it is a model for evolutionary political-military success already established in other regions of the world that recently suffered deep instability rooted in extremism, identity politics, and fractured civil-military relations, such as Southeast Asia and Latin America.²⁴⁵

The Obama Administration needs to make an even greater effort than it already has to communicate publicly about its commitment to Pakistan and to the broader long-term goal of regional stability and economic integration. There is in an emerging, bipartisan consensus within the Congress on Pakistan policy, as evidenced by the Senate's unanimous endorsement of the critically important Kerry-Lugar legislation. At the Pentagon and within civilian US policymaking circles there is a much deeper understanding than previously about the centrality of Pakistan to US interests and regional strategy, and about the need to engage with Pakistan consistently over the long run, nurturing that country's economic growth, healthy civil-military relations, civil society, pluralism, constitutionalism, and normalization with India. On Pakistan policy, US is doing that thing in which first priority is being given to their interests.²⁴⁶

Implications for India

India's efforts in Afghanistan are shaped by its commitment to build a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan that is bereft of extremist and radical ideologies. Its principal objective is to build indigenous Afghan capacity and institutions which cover almost all sectors. India's reconstruction and developmental programmes have been devised in a manner that supports the priorities of the Afghan government and its people.²⁴⁷ India has also

²⁴⁵ Nida Hameed, "Afghanistan in Shambles," *Eurasia Review Journal*, USA, December 2014, p. 2.

²⁴⁶ The Kerry-Lugar-Berman (KLB) Act, (2011), signed into law by President Obama more than three years ago, was intended to have a positive impact on the equation. But the US civilian assistance program funded by the act is now under fire in both countries. The Wilson Center's Asia Program convened a working group to reevaluate the aid program and recently released its findings in a report that calls for significant changes. And yet Kerry-Lugar should be seen as only a beginning. It is essential that the US national security bureaucracy find ways to act with a greater sense of urgency, creativity and unity on Pakistan policy. In Iraq and Afghanistan, because we are formally at war, American policy is often animated, appropriately, by a sense of urgency.

²⁴⁷ Besides the aid of over 2 billion US dollars, Indian companies are also in the process of investing 10 to 11 billion US dollars in the Hagijak iron ore mines and the connected ancillaries. India is investing in mineral, agricultural and other sectors to help build a sustainable economy.

been instrumental in encouraging other countries to invest in Afghanistan. Promoting Afghanistan as a regional hub for trade and commerce would not only help Afghanistan in integrating its economy with the region but it would also enable to earn adequate transit revenues to sustain its government's budget including that of the ANSF over the long term.

India had signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement with Afghanistan in 2011 which catered for providing Kabul with both military and non-military aid. India has been training ANSF personnel in its academies and military institutions.²⁴⁸ India also has told the US and other western countries to leave such equipment that enables the ANSF to perform their tasks efficiently before they withdraw. However, there is growing opinion amongst some strategic thinkers that India can afford to give some regiments of 105mm artillery guns which are being phased out. Similarly, some older versions of tanks can also be given though there might be some issues about their origin. Afghanistan has also requested for transport aircraft like AN-12 and some MI-17 helicopters which is within the capability of India to provide. Problems of some of the equipment and weapon systems being of Russian origin can be resolved after consultations with Moscow.²⁴⁹ The thaw between the US and Iran has opened up new opportunities for improving connectivity between India and Afghanistan and onwards to Central Asia and beyond. Development of Chabahar port in Iran and the connecting infrastructure to Afghan border can be expedited and mineral resources/finished products can be evacuated in variety of ways. Development of Afghanistan and consequential benefits to Afghan populace and government would help in stabilizing Afghanistan and improving its security environment.

US intervention and China's reaction

In Central Asia the US Policy since the mid-1990s shifted from earlier indifference to engagement. The United States recognized the independence of the Central Asian countries

²⁴⁸ Hamid Karzai had been pressing India to provide military equipment like artillery guns and tanks; India was keen to provide only non-lethal equipment. India's reticence in supplying such weapon system is possibly shaped by the likelihood of the same falling into the Taliban or even Pakistani hands.

²⁴⁹ Further, India has also agreed to provide trainers for the Afghan National Army academy that has been established by the UK and is modeled on Sandhurst. India is also likely to deploy technicians to run an old military hardware maintenance facility in Afghanistan. As part of its overall effort in strengthening the capacities of ANSF, a few light helicopters like Cheetah for reconnaissance purposes would also be delivered.

and started to focus on developing bilateral ties with Central Asia, beginning with the then Secretary of State, James Baker visit to the region in January 1992 and opening of diplomatic representation in all these countries. The multidimensional priorities of US in Central Asian region were the containment of the Islamic Fundamentalism. The former US Secretary of state, James Baker, publicly warned Central Asian leaders to stay clear of radical Islam and the influence of Iran.²⁵⁰ Secondly, Kazakhstan's possession of nuclear weapons sent an alarming signal at global level and US made an effort to put a cap on the proliferation of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. The US diplomacy resulted in the signing up of a treaty in May 1992, when the President of Kazakhstan agreed to sign the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-1), with the objective of elimination of one-third of Soviet and the US nuclear weapons. Thirdly the huge energy potential was seen as an alternative to the Middle Eastern oil resources for future.²⁵¹ In order to secure the energy resources, the US promoted the economic stabilization of the Central Asian states by encouraging US oil companies to participate in developing plans for marketing and transportation of oil that involved Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. The interest in oil reserves received impetus in 1994, after the release of a report by US Department of Energy, estimating the potential of Caspian Sea oil reserves to be around 200 billion barrels that made it comparable to Saudi reserves.

Fourthly, to promote democracy and human rights US followed a very guarded policy. On the one hand the US criticized the ruling regimes for human rights violations, but on the other the US declined to take concrete measures. For the promotion of democracy and human rights the US cultivated relations with countries in the region and actively supported the activities of various NGOs. It also granted subsidy to various projects and tactfully monitored the effective use of its funding through the United States Agency for International

²⁵⁰ Bijaya Kumar Das, "US Interests in Central Asia Since the Disintegration of Soviet Union", *Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol. 11, Issue 2, April-June, 2004, pp. 33-35.

²⁵¹ Shafiqul Islam, an economist has aptly stated that *The natural resources that has attracted the attention of American, Japanese and other foreign investors to Central Asia is energy oil, and natural gas.*

Development (USAID). It was also found that the leaders of these states have supported the involvement of World Bank, the IMF and other developmental agencies.²⁵²

The terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 on World Trade Centre and Pentagon has made a dramatic reconfiguration in the global politics as well as a shift in the ranking of American foreign and security priorities. The relocation of Central Asia from the periphery to the very centre of American strategic interest has fundamentally altered the balance of the three Great Players Russia, China and Iran. The current geopolitical chess game in Central Asia, referred to as Great Anti-terrorist Game, is different from the earlier geopolitical developments.

The war on terrorism has brought with it new dimensions and has profoundly involved the US in the region. The US government has acquired basing on transit rights for passage of war planes and military supplies from the countries in Central Asia, West Asia and their periphery, a projection of American power into the Center of Eurasian landmass that has no historical precedent. The Central Asian Republics support US led war against terrorism and the leaders of all the Republics after the 9/11 condemned the attacks in America and tendered their help. In the aftermath of 9/11, Uzbekistan's leader allowed its southern air base in Khanabad for the stationing of US troops, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan followed suit.

In a reflection of this concern, China launched research programmes concentrating on NATO and exhibited a new desire to establish direct contacts with NATO representatives.²⁵³ For China this threat is exacerbated today, in particular since the attacks of September 11, 2001 which led to a reinforcement of the military presence of the United States in Central

²⁵² Bijaya Kumar Das, "US Interests in Central Asia Since the Disintegration of Soviet Union", *Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol. 11, Issue 2, April-June, 2004, pp. 48-50.

²⁵³ For China, this was in fact very clearly an issue of an offensive by external forces that are attempting to control the security questions in the region. Nicolas Becquelin, "Criminalizing Ethnicity: Political Repression in Xinjiang", *China Rights Forum*, 2004, pp. 10-12.

Asia but also greater emphasis placed by US on the link it has established between regime change, democratization and security.²⁵⁴

This implantation of American bases in Central Asia after the September 11th attacks, without consulting the Shanghai Group, has thus represented for China a significant setback of its policy towards the Central Asian countries and has imposed the implementation of a new strategy of re-conquest, the result of which has not been perfectly satisfactory for China.

China attempted to regain the upper hand by aligning itself for an initial period with the seemingly common theme of the fight against terrorism. This theme in fact allowed China to distinguish itself from the countries of the “axis of evil”, to whom it was in reality very close, but at the same time to insist that its own analysis of the terrorist and separatist threat in Xinjiang be recognized. The success of this strategy can be found in the registering by Washington of ETIM (*East Turkestan Independence Movement*), a nevertheless very marginal movement, on its list of terrorist organizations.²⁵⁵

Countries in Central Asia, especially those with large hydrocarbon reserves and mineral deposits, have become premier investment destinations for China, given their geographic proximity and the opportunity they also offer to secure continental energy supplies, thus reducing China’s dependence on maritime routes. However, China-Central Asia policy transcends a mere quest for resources. The central goal of China’s diplomacy is to create a peaceful and stable international environment for its development. At the same time, through promoting economic development, China also aims to stabilize the Central Asian States, which are important for the security of the region, including the Chinese region of Xinjiang that borders former Soviet Central Asia.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁴ Dru Gladney, *Dislocating China: Muslim Minorities and other Subaltern Subjects*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2004, pp. 102-105.

²⁵⁵ Dru Gladney, *Dislocating China: Muslim Minorities and other Subaltern Subjects*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2004, pp. 110-111.

²⁵⁶ China’s *Central Asia Problem*, Asia Report No 244, International Crisis Group, 27 February 2013, p 11.

US Involvement in Central Asia – A Review

The US policy of broader engagement in the region has its roots in the Bush administration during Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. After the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991, the United States recognized the independence of all the former Soviet Union Republics and established diplomatic relations with each by mid-March 1992. But the relationship between the Central Asian Republics and US has passed through several phases.²⁵⁷ Although Central Asian Republics were interested in establishing close relationship with US but, initially Washington was not keen on asserting its influence in the region, acknowledging it as Russia's sphere of influence. This policy stemmed from a lack of knowledge and initiative as concerned the Caspian region, as well as a lack of realization of American interests there. During the initial years, the priorities of US in Central Asian region were:

1. To resolve the issue of Kazakhstan's nuclear weapons and to fend of the danger of proliferation by preventing the sale or otherwise transfer of nuclear material or technology to other countries,
2. To prevent the spread of radical Islam, to contain Iran, and promote Turkey's role as the main regional player,
3. To develop an appropriate and important role for the US in exploiting regions mineral resources, especially its oil and gas,
4. To anchor these countries within the western security and economic system,
5. To promote democracy and human rights.²⁵⁸

American military presence in Central Asia has also been justified in the name of boosting regional economic development and sustaining democratic reforms in the region. This argument was advanced by Elizabeth Jones, the then Assistant Secretary of state for European and Eurasian Affairs, in her testimony before the Foreign Affairs Committee in

²⁵⁷ Salim Kidwai, "US and Central Asia," *Asia Pacific Panorama*, vol. 6, No. 2, December 2007, New Delhi, p.16.

²⁵⁸ Poonam Mann, "Central Asia and US: After September 11," *World Focus*, vol. 23, No.6, June 2002, New Delhi, p.17.

December 2001.²⁵⁹ During her visit to Tashkent in December 2001 the then US Secretary of State Collin Powell, while addressing the press conference declared that “the US interests in the Central Asian region stretched beyond the current crises in Afghanistan.”²⁶⁰

Later on 7 January 2002, speaking at Bagram airbase near Kabul, visiting US Senator Joseph Lieberman also indicated a significant shift in Washington’s policy, *we learned at a very high and painful price the cost of a lack of involvement in Central Asia on 11 September and we are not going to let it happen again.*²⁶¹ US Deputy Secretary James Wolfowitz was reported to have stated that “by upgrading its military presence in Central Asia, the US wishes to send a clear message to regional countries – especially to Uzbekistan – that it will not forget about them and it has a capacity to come back and will come back in whenever needed.”²⁶²

Central Asian leaders have publicly acclaimed the positive effect of American presence in their region on improvement of their economy. The Kyrgyz Prime Minister Kurmanbek Bakiev is reported to have stated that the presence of thousands of American soldiers would be a goldmine for his poor country.²⁶³ Kyrgyzstan allowed the use of its territory for delivering humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. Kazakhstan which have no direct border with Afghanistan and did not face any serious threat to its security from the Taliban supported religious extremism, gave support to the US-led struggle against international terrorism in Afghanistan in the form of over flight clearances. It also offered Washington for the use of its bases.²⁶⁴

Tajikistan which along with Russia, Iran and India played a significant role in helping the fight of the Northern Alliance against the Taliban regime responded positively when the then US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visited Dushanbe by offering three of its airfields, namely, Kulyab, Khojand, and Kugan-Tyube. It also assisted in the shipment of

²⁵⁹ Jean Christopher Peauch, *Central Asia: US Military Buildup Shifts Sphere of Influence*, Prague, 11 January 2002, p.1-4.

²⁶⁰ *The Times of Central Asia*, 13 December 2001.

²⁶¹ *The New York Times*, New York, 8 January 2002.

²⁶² *The New York Times*, 8 January 2002.

²⁶³ Jean Christopher Peauch, *Central Asia: US Military Buildup Shifts Sphere of Influence*, Prague, 11 January 2002, pp. 4-7.

²⁶⁴ *The Times of Central Asia*, 13 December 2001.

humanitarian aid to the northern part of Afghanistan. It was through Tajikistan that the massive Russian military assistance to the Northern Alliance was transported to launch an attack on the Taliban capital Kabul.²⁶⁵

Five Republics of Central Asia and Georgia seem to have turned a deaf ear to Russian concerns about the US military intrusion into their strategic space. To meet this American threat in the Central Asian region, Moscow is for the time being trying to consolidate its relations with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. Apparently, it has reconciled itself to a long term US military presence in Georgia, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.²⁶⁶

China too had taken steps to counter the threat posed to its security by US military presence close to its border in the Central Asian region. The foreign ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) met in Beijing in January 2002 where they endorsed a call for neutral Afghanistan and opposed arbitrary expansion of the global war on terrorism to Iraq, Iran and Northern Korea described by President Bush as “axis of evil states.”²⁶⁷ China is also apprehensive of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan on its border. It is also scared of a growing effort by the two South Asian states to move closer to US.

According to several reports the US has many other important state interests in Central Asia and so will use the current situation to stay on for very long in this region.²⁶⁸ While supporting the Afghan war is the reason for many of the base agreements, the American forces deployed in Central Asia will have a much broader strategic reach. Some of the reasons for Americans interests in the Central Asian Republics are explained below:

- Soon after the disintegration of USSR, the US tried to involve herself in Central Asia. It has been involved in the process of democratization and economic

²⁶⁵ Unlike Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan has not allowed stationing of US troops on its territory. Further, the Tajiks are believed to have consulted Russia on offering bases to United States. Devendra Kaushik, “Central Asia: Changing Geopolitical Alignment in the Aftermath of 11 September,” *Dialogue*, vol.3, No.4, 2004, New Delhi, p.51.

²⁶⁶ *News from Russia*, vol.5, no.12, 22 March 2002, p.1.

²⁶⁷ Devendra Kaushik, “Central Asia: Changing Geopolitical Alignment in the Aftermath of 11 September,” *Dialogue*, vol.3, No.4, 2004, New Delhi, p.52.

²⁶⁸ *Los Angeles Times* special correspondent William Arkin wrote January 6, 2002: Cited by Patrick Martin, ‘US Bases Pave the Way for Long Term Intervention in Central Asia’, *New York Times*, 10-01 2002, p.6.

reforms in the Central Asian countries since the collapse of the Soviet Union upto 2001 incidents. However, prior to September 11, 2001 events, the US policies towards the five newly independent states, had not been as assertive as in the aftermath of the tragic events. The US foreign policy towards Central Asia has steadily developed over time due to geopolitical and geo-economic factors. The US policy culminated in the new strategic cooperation between the US and the Central Asian states on the issue of terrorism. The US moved away from being almost a benign observer in the mid-1990s, to an assertive state interested in exercising its influence in the region after 2000.

- After 11 September 2001, according to Pentagon sources, military tent cities have spring up at 13 locations in nine countries neighbouring Afghanistan, substantially extending the network of bases in the region. All together, from Bulgaria and Uzbekistan to Turkey, Kuwait and beyond, more than 60,000 US military personnel live and work at these forward bases. Hundreds of aircraft fly in and out of so-called 'expeditionary airfields.'²⁶⁹ The war against terrorism has justified their presence in this region and one can aptly sum up the strategic significance of the new base structure, by highlighting the point that behind a veil of secret agreements, the US is creating a ring of new and expanded military bases that encircle Afghanistan and enhance the armed forces ability to strike targets throughout much of the Muslim world.²⁷⁰
- The US perceives the threat of the militant Shiite organizations from Iran who could take every opportunity to fund money to rebuild the mosques and religious schools neglected during the Soviet rule. Whether the region is vulnerable to threats from the probable ascendancy of radical influences from Iran is something not really very clear, but thus far radicals have not done well

²⁶⁹ Patrich Martin, *New York Times*, 10-01-2002, p.6.

²⁷⁰ Rama Sampath Kumar, "Central Asia, Impact of US-led War on Terrorism," *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol.37, no.33, August 17, 2002, Mumbai, p.3418.

in the region, not even in Tajikistan.²⁷¹ The US believes that the American presence will prevent the transformation of Central Asia into a base for radical forces. America also does not approve the Iranian efforts to become a nuclear power with ballistic missiles. So it is in American interest to deny Iranian markets, and maneuver in Central Asia.²⁷² Iranian president Hassan Rouhani has tried to improve the relations with US and US president Barrack Obama responded positively.

Taking into account the US proclaimed design of “existing democracy,” all this will in result in the sole surviving superpower’ attempts to influence the development of internal processes in the countries of the region with the objectives of enabling the American protégés to come to power there. But it is the growing awareness of public opinion in these countries to such designs and the enhanced political-economic-military power and the potential of the Russian Federation. Hence the mounting frustrations of the White House strategies are compelling them to go in search of fresh pastures.²⁷³ In short we can say that long-term peace in Afghanistan will depend equally on the country’s regional neighbours. Iran, Pakistan and the Central Asian States will play a major role in Afghanistan’s future, but the new US administration has to avoid a generalized regional “package deal” and instead seek bilateral negotiations with each country. Strengthening civilian rule in Pakistan is vital to stabilize the country’s troubled north-western provinces, from where cross-border incursions into Afghanistan are frequent. Militant groups have flourished under military patronage, and another military intervention in government would only serve to strengthen and embolden those groups.²⁷⁴ The US should also urge the Pakistan government to

²⁷¹ Lt. General William E Odom, US, Ret., ‘The Caspian Sea Littoral States: The Object of a New Great Game, *Caspian Crossroads Magazine*, vol.3, Issue no.3, Winter 1998, USA, pp.41-43.

²⁷² Iran has achieved a great position in Central Asia. Tehran’s close ties with Russia, which has emerged as Iran’s principal arms supplier, its constructive role in mediating a settlement between the ruling secularist and Islamist forces in Tajikistan, and its restraint from siding with Islamic opposition forces in other states in the region, have proved to be quite reassuring to the relationships, as well as to Moscow and, for that matter, to Washington. Christine Noellekarimi, Conard, Reinhard Schlegintweit, *Afghanistan; A Country Without a State*, Vanguard, Lahore/Karachi/Islamabad 2002.

²⁷³ Mansor Ali, “US, Afghanistan, Central Asia: The New Game,” *Mainstream*, May 12-18, 2006, New Delhi, p.8.

²⁷⁴ Amy Zalman, “War in Afghanistan-The History Behind the US War in Afghanistan”, *New York Times*, New York, USA, September 2014, p.10.

implement its pledge to incorporate the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), bordering on Afghanistan, into the state and constitutional framework, thus depriving local, Afghan and transnational jihadis of a safe-haven.²⁷⁵

Impact on Central Asia

When US launched War on Terrorism in Afghanistan by US and her allies, Uzbekistan was the frontline state among Central Asian Republics to support America. Its willingness to open its borders to US troops and its permission to launch attacks on the Taliban from its military bases helped it to boost its fragile economy but on the other hand the extremist groups got reactivated.²⁷⁶ Uzbekistan is likely counting on increased military assistance to eliminate the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and the Hizbut-Tahrir – both underground resistance movements that have professed their desire to overthrow the current regime and replace it with an Islamic State. It is also noted that Uzbekistan’s growing economic problems – resulting from a combination of declining cotton prices, drought and rising unemployment – make it all the more important for her to secure financial aid from the US.²⁷⁷

The war in Afghanistan on terror has certain implications for Central Asian Republics: a) a huge influx of refugees from Afghanistan, b) continued and perhaps greater domestic repression in Uzbekistan, c) retaliation from militant groups both inside and outside the region and, d) increased tensions among the Central Asian States. It is also observed that concerning the refugee crises, this would impose a significant economic burden on these states, adding to the already immense economic problems that these countries face. The political dangers of an influx of refugees from Afghanistan into Central Asia will be felt in

²⁷⁵ For more information, see Crisis Group’s latest reports on Afghanistan, *New U.S. Administration, New Directions*, 13 March 2009, *Policing in Afghanistan: Still Searching for a Strategy*, 18 December 2008, and *Taliban Propaganda: Winning the War of Words*, 24 July 2008. <http://www.crisisgroups/Documents and Settings/Guest/My Documents/afghanistan conflict.htm>

²⁷⁶ Charles William Maynes, “America Discovers Central Asia,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, No. 2, March/April 2003, New York, p.125.

²⁷⁷ Vijay Kapur, “Afghanistan and Central Asia: differentiated Challenges and Priorities in the 21st Century”, K Warikoo, *Afghanistan: The Challenge* (ed), New Delhi, pp.106-108.

government institutions.²⁷⁸ It can be argued that there is strong historical precedent for refugee camps themselves to serve as breeding grounds for radicalism and gave several historical and contemporary examples.²⁷⁹

The bordering states of Afghanistan especially Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan exacerbate the threats of military incursions, drug and weapons trading, refugee flows and water sharing; will be affected by the conflict. Central Asian leaders fear the spread of army incursions-most recently from Tajikistan into Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. This fear exists as much now as ever, as many members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan had fled to Afghanistan.²⁸⁰ The conflict in Afghanistan could also have a significant impact on the flow of drugs especially as Afghans sell reserves of opium, which the Taliban banned during their rule. The ever present threat of weapons trafficking also remains a concern, while peace in the region requires decommissioning weapons, this will prove difficult since the weapons trade is a lucrative one. The overlooked issues of the need for regional water sharing agreements that include Afghanistan are yet to be resolved because the adequate supply of water is key to economic development in the region, which is primarily agricultural.²⁸¹ The regional cooperation with Afghanistan is the need of the hour to address the potentially explosive issues.

➤ **Impact on the Economy of Central Asia**

In Turkmenistan, a market economy exists only marginally, and the political system is dictatorial. Authoritarian governments in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are dominated by family clans who have implemented limited economic reforms. Tajikistan's oligarchy took

²⁷⁸ For instance, many of these refugees may themselves be members of militant Islamic groups, seeking temporary refuge from the war in Afghanistan. others may become ardent supporters if treated poorly and corralled into refugee camps indefinitely with no hope of future opportunities. <http://www.robertcutter.org>.

²⁷⁹ Taliban is one such example which emerged from the refugee camps.

²⁸⁰ Charles William Maynes, "America Discovers Central Asia," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, No. 2, March/April 2003, New York, p.127.

²⁸¹ Although Afghanistan is a principle user of the regions limited water resources and an upstream riparian on the Amu Darya, it was not included in previous agreements on water usage between the Central Asian states. Thus, the end of the war could dissolve these very agreements, which have kept the peace for the past several years.

power after a bloody civil war whose consequences are preventing an economic recovery-making it one of the world's poorest countries. Kyrgyz Republic is the only country that has pursued drastic political and economic reforms. Kyrgyz democracy is stabilizing, offering hope for a robust political framework to revive the economy.²⁸²

These five republics have achieved impressive economic results with relatively high growth rates over the last ten years based on natural resources underpinned by rising global prices for those exports. The reason for the high growth rates, Central Asia became attractive to the European Union (EU) and the US, as well as other Western countries and the People's Republic of China (PRC) as providers of energy and natural resources.²⁸³ But her rapidly growing foreign economic and political engagement in the region has led to a geostrategic rivalry with Russia in Central Asia. During 1995-2012 GDP per capita in Central Asia rose by 4016 US dollars (in 6.4 times) to 4753 US dollars. The average annual growth of GDP per capita in Central Asia was 236.2 US dollars or 32.1%. The economy of all the Republics increased slightly during US presence as the US provides handsome aid for the bases under US occupation. (See Annexure I and II).

On the basis of above discussion it is clear that the security of Central Asian Republics is dependent on the stability in Afghanistan. So, both the regions, being landlocked, need to work together through Regional Cooperation mechanism. After 9/11 a new geopolitical configuration has emerged where Russia, China and West led by America are playing a significant role in the regional development. There is a need for developing regional cooperation and cooperation with external powers, which is a prerequisite for stability and security.²⁸⁴

➤ Impact on Polity and Society

²⁸² <http://www.asiapathways-adbi.org/2014/04/is-regional-economic-integration-in-central-asia-a-doomed-vision-or-a-promising-future/>

²⁸³ Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal, "New Friends, New Fears in Central Asia," *Foreign Affairs* 81(2) March/April 2002, p.62.

²⁸⁴ Rashid, Ahmad, "Why are We Abandoning the Afghan's", *New York Times Review of Books*, University of Akron Press 30 Amberwood Parkway Ashland, May 22, 2012, p. 53.

Stability in the absence of peace is likely to strengthen non-state actors and their ability to shape events in the Central and South Asian regions. Unless efforts for negotiation and conflict resolution are strengthened, Afghanistan may remain vulnerable to the eroding economic and political impact of conflict beyond 2015. On the other hand, US has failed to achieve its goals in Afghanistan. Ultimately they have to leave Afghanistan without giving any long term solution.

By the US presence in the region, the presidents of Central Asian Republics have used the language of the War on Terror to quash minority separatist movements as well as some religious groups. This also allowed the Central Asian governments and security forces especially in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to destroy many militant cells from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and other groups, such as Hizb al-Tahrir. The ethnically diverse Uzbekistan has sometimes reclassified ethnic separatist attacks as terrorist attacks and prosecuted them as such. The growing concern among the Central Asian States is over the “colored revolutions” that had occurred in other parts of the former Soviet space. These had been brought about by the liberal reforms that had been supported by the West in general, and specifically the US. The US has entered in the region with one of the goals to change the authoritarian regimes. But now US does not stress more on these issues because they get their interests fulfilled under the authoritarian regimes.

The five Republics - Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan - do not trust the Americans or NATO to secure the region after 2015, because of their collective failure to secure peace inside Afghanistan or a regional settlement among countries bordering Afghanistan. They feel they are being given little importance politically by the US and the Kabul government. It is hard to predict what will happen after the ISAF drawdown which is expected in next year. Possible scenarios range from best case (Afghanistan

emerging as unified, strengthened state) to worst case (civil war or a north-south divide of the country along ethnic fault lines).²⁸⁵

Despite Great Game in Central Asia on its oil and gas wealth, politically Central Asia remains one of the most neglected regions of the world. The states remain deeply suspicious of outsider intentions. The Americans are disliked, the Russians are not trusted and overwhelming Chinese influence is feared.

CHAPTER V

After 9/11 Afghanistan once again fell in geopolitical game in which the US is the main actor.

²⁸⁵ Charles William Maynes, "America Discovers Central Asia," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, No. 2, March/April 2003, New York, p.100.

The attacks on US and the launching of the US-led anti-terrorist coalition, provided opportunities to the Central Asian Republics and South Asian states to thwart the Taliban threats and rising Islamic Radicalism. While welcoming stronger strategic ties with the US, the leaders of Central Asian Republics were hoping in part that such cooperation would lead to greater US economic assistance, boosting of economic development and sustaining of the democratic reforms in the region. However, with the acquisition of military air bases in the Central Asian region, the US has become a big player in the “New Great Game”. The Anglo-American intervention in Afghanistan and the newly discovered interest of the US for Central Asia by establishing military bases there did provoke China as well as Russia to take steps to counter the threats posed to their security. Thus Russia declared the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a defence bloc, as a commendable anti-terror group in a purely regional context. Now the US needs to develop a sound strategy towards South, Central and West Asia, a serious move to bring about a resolution of the Afghan conflict, with support from Russia, Iran, India and Central Asia, is most likely to benefit not only the cause of long term stability, but also Americas wider interests in the region.

Some states are of the opinion that the attacks were not carried out by the al-Qaeda; it was the conspiracy of US administration in order to fulfill some international interests. There are different conspiracy theories regarding these incidents. Let’s see that whether 9/11 was the work of Osama’s al-Qaeda extremist group or were they merely the cover story of a deeper conspiracy? The September 11, 2001 attacks in the US were a “false flag” operation carried out jointly by the US, Israel and Saudi Arabia with “Zionists playing the lead role. This theory is very close to reality which blames the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad or the Israeli government for the September 11 attacks and has become widespread around the world, and is contributing to a new form of global Anti-Semitism. As per this theory 9/11 was a myth, Afghanistan a staying place and Pakistan and other regional powers target. Almost majority of the conspiracy theorists and scholars consider this theory more close to truth.

The people were apprehensive that US troops may never leave their soil and it has been intensified in January 2006, when US president G W Bush addressed at Pentagon and confirmed that US will reduce its troops in Afghanistan from 19,000 to 16,000 during 2006. President also announced that it would reduce financial assistance to Afghanistan from \$1 billion to \$600 million, which created uncertainty among Afghans. But at the same time US seems to stepping back when the situation deteriorated after the announcement. The insurgency increased during the years 2008 and 2009, and is still going on in 2014 but not to that extent.

Impact on Central Asia

The 9/11 attacks on US left a profound impact not only within the United States of America but also on the International Security environment. On the one hand, the tragic incident revealed the remarkable degree of American vulnerability to an attack on its mainland. On the other, it exposed the deep anti-American resentment worldwide. The natural consequence of this surprise was greater global activism by the US. In order to dominate the entire world and to maintain its super power status, US led to form a global coalition against the menace of interventional terrorism.

The US military presence in Afghanistan had a profound impact on the security dynamics of Central Asia. It has certain regional implications: a) a huge influx of refugees from Afghanistan, b) continued and perhaps greater domestic repression in Uzbekistan, c) retaliation from militant groups both inside and outside the region and, d) increased tensions among the Central Asian states. The neighbours of Afghanistan especially Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan exacerbate the threats of military incursions, drug and weapons trading, refugee flows and water sharing; will be affected by the conflict. Central Asian leaders fear the spread of army incursions-most recently from Tajikistan into Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. This fear exists as much now as ever, as many members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan had fled to Afghanistan. The conflict in Afghanistan could also have a significant impact on the flow of drugs especially as Afghans sell reserves of

opium, which the Taliban banned during their rule. The ever present threat of weapons trafficking also remains a concern, while peace in the region requires decommissioning weapons, this will prove difficult since the weapons trade is a lucrative one. The overlooked issues of the need for regional water sharing agreements that include Afghanistan are yet to be resolved. Because the adequate supply of water is key to economic development in the region, which is primarily agricultural. The regional cooperation with Afghanistan is the need of the hour to address the potentially explosive issue.

Research Findings

- 9/11 became an opportunity for the US to enter in the region to fulfill its interests. For example regime changes, containment of China and Russia. Occupying and having US military bases in Afghanistan have tightened US control over the region flanking China to the west. The attacks on the US became a new and effective pretext for the US to seize and control strategic resources, prevent the rise of a peer rival Russia, expand and consolidate its global hegemony, and ensure its preeminent position as sole superpower.
- Stability in the absence of peace is likely to strengthen non-state actors and their ability to shape events in the Central and South Asian regions. Unless efforts for negotiation and conflict resolution are strengthened, Afghanistan will remain vulnerable to the corrosive economic and political impact of conflict beyond 2015. US has failed to achieve its goals in Afghanistan, for example to eliminate Taliban, to establish democracy etc. Ultimately they have to leave Afghanistan without giving any long term solution.
- The economy has progressed gradually. The US and international community is providing economic aid to Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics. As a result of US and western departure, Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics may suffer economic shrinkage and may likely face economic decline after 2015, including a big loss of jobs that had been generated by the US presence.

- China is also showing a great interest in Central Asia in order to have access to its resources especially oil. Kazakhstan is wholly and solely dependent on foreign countries on energy exports. She wants to sell her oil to eastern countries rather than western. For this purpose China being its close and immediate neighbour wants to take full advantage of its natural resources.
- By the US presence in the region, the leaders in the Central Asian Republics have used the language of the War on Terror to quash minority separatist movements as well as some religious groups. This also allowed the Central Asian governments and security forces especially in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to destroy many militant cells from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb al-Tahrir. The ethnically diverse Uzbekistan has sometimes reclassified ethnic separatist attacks as terrorist attacks and prosecuted them as such.
- By the US presence in the region the growing concern among the Central Asian States is over the “colored revolutions” that had occurred in other parts of the former Soviet space. These had been brought about by the liberal reforms that had been supported by the West in general and the US in particular. The US has entered in the region with one of the goals to change the authoritarian regimes during the times. But now US does not stress more on these issues because they get their interests fulfilled under the authoritarian regimes as discussed earlier.
- The arrival of US forces in the region represented an opportunity, firstly to lessen their dependence on Russia (and China) and, secondly to strike a decisive blow against the Taliban and similar extremist groups posing a threat to regional stability. But at the same time it halted the progress initiated by these countries after getting independence.

- The five Republics - Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan - do not trust the Americans or NATO to secure the region after 2015, because of their collective failure to secure peace inside Afghanistan or a regional settlement among countries bordering Afghanistan. They feel politically slighted by the US and the Kabul government. It is hard to predict what will happen after the ISAF drawdown which is expected in next year. Possible scenarios range from best case (Afghanistan emerging as unified, strengthened state) to worst case (civil war or a north-south divide of the country along ethnic fault lines).
- Despite Great Game in Central Asia on its oil and gas wealth, politically Central Asia remains one of the most neglected regions of the world. The states remain deeply suspicious of outsider intentions. The Americans are disliked, the Russians are not trusted and overwhelming Chinese influence is feared.
- The US drawdown can increase the threat of spillover of terrorist and extremist activity, tension and confrontation in the vast region of Central Asia and lead to the emergence of a permanent source of instability. The borders between Afghanistan and Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and especially Tajikistan will remain a source of concern for Central Asia.
- After US withdrawal, Afghanistan will remain dependent on the US; it would prevent Afghanistan from playing a more independent role in regional politics and make it difficult for them to develop closer relations with her neighbours. The US withdrawal will directly impact the wider region. It may accelerate the ongoing shift in the balance of power in Central Asia towards China. But Afghanistan and the region may make economic progress after US withdrawal, because all the states have to initiate developmental activities on their own.
- The scaling down of the military effort in Afghanistan also creates an opportunity for the US to review and likely rebalance its Central Asia policy. It

also has sparked regional fears of a near total US disengagement that Central Asian elites believe will result in increased threats to their security. It can also diminish their sovereignty vis-a-vis major powers, notably Russia and China.

After victory over the Taliban, the US had in fact, more enduring goals to achieve: (i) military hegemony (ii) maintenance of Super Power status (iii) widening its sphere of influence at the expense of Russia and China (iv) elimination of terrorism, and (v) access to the rich oil resources of Central Asia. The people of Afghanistan had two-fold fears: First, the Afghans believe that NATO is not strongly committed to fight insurgency and terrorism as is US-led coalition forces, because in their view that is not a NATO mission. They believe NATO is a peacekeeping force and thus could perform as a fighting force in one part of the country and as a peacekeeping force in another. Second, they fear that if the US will reduce its forces to an ineffective fighting level, the Taliban, with the help of some neighbouring countries, will step up their activities and Afghanistan will be once again engulfed in turmoil.

More than a decade after the US-led intervention in Afghanistan the country is still at war against extremists and has developed few democratic institutions. Of the several solutions that have been tried over the past two decades ranging from declaring victory and pulling out, to negotiating with the insurgents, to organizing regional conferences, to prioritizing relationships with favoured individuals and allies over the development of strong democratic institutions – no one worked properly. What is needed is the creation of a resilient (flexible, elastic) state, which will only emerge if moderate forces and democratic norms are strengthened. Countering the insurgency requires a broad effort to tackle the regional conditions that nurture and sustain militant groups, not just a narrow focus on defeating al-Qaeda through counter-terrorism measures that have so far failed to reduce religious extremism and bred local discontent and violence. The US aims to keep a permanent military base in Afghanistan as it has lost the war there amid the ongoing violence, civilian casualties, foreign troops' fatalities and further production of narcotics.

The Taliban holds sway over much of the countryside in the south, east and centre of Afghanistan, and carry out terror attacks in major population centres. Rather than using indiscriminate violence, the Taliban aims to demoralize the Afghan population and the international community through targeted attacks and preventing access to already limited government services.

Long-term peace in Afghanistan will depend equally on the country's regional neighbours. Iran, Pakistan and the Central Asian States will all play a major role in Afghanistan's future, but the new US administration has to avoid a generalized regional "package deal" and instead seek bilateral negotiations with each country. Strengthening civilian rule in Pakistan is vital to stabilize the country's troubled north-western provinces, from where cross-border incursions into Afghanistan are frequent. Militant groups have flourished under military patronage, and in 2013 a full-fledged democratic government has been formed in Pakistan under the Prime Ministership of Nawaz Sharief. The US should also urge the Pakistan government to implement its pledge to incorporate the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), bordering on Afghanistan, into the state and constitutional framework, thus depriving local, Afghan and transnational jihadis of a safe-haven.

Suggestions/Recommendations

- The first and foremost is to agree to a ceasefire between the coalition forces and the warrior factions in Afghanistan. To reach this, an all inclusive *Loya Jirga* that includes all ethnic groups beside the Taliban should be arranged to engage the people of Afghanistan in a process to realize durable peace and stability.
- The international community should made a plan and allocate funds for education, economic development and health. Since the Soviet invasion in 1979 to till date, the country has been virtually destroyed and one whole generation has been deprived of education and other basic needs.
- Afghanistan needs a leader whom Afghans have great respect and from whom they are willing to accept orders. The leader should engage the tribal elders with important

decisions. Not only this but also the decisions-making posts at all levels should be proportionally divided among the different ethnic tribes according to the ethnic composition of the country.

- Effective measures need to be taken to eliminate the narcotics trade, which has been rising continuously, and of which many officials are a part. Illegal opium farming has also been providing funds to both drug lords and Taliban fighters. Alternative and profitable crops should replace the present opium fields. Saffron is a very profitable crop that grows in extreme dry climates. However, this can only take place if alternative livelihoods are provided accordingly and other economic development has to be started in Afghanistan. Long-term planning is essential to boost trade and economy.
- The US and its allies have to comprehend and accept the reality that unless regional actors are drawn into the internal dynamics of Afghanistan, they can not accomplish anything inside Afghanistan. Regional players such as Pakistan, India, Iran and Russia need to be convinced to extend their support for any peace moves to succeed. In this regard, relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan have not been too good since the inception of later in 1947. This is an issue of serious concern for both sides and needs to be resolved urgently, for it could derail the entire rebuilding process.
- There is also the need for the establishment of a representative government in Afghanistan. Many analysts in Afghanistan feel that the present government of Ashraf Ghani does not represent a majority of the Afghan people and is merely a puppet regime of the US to carry out the US agenda.
- The US and NATO forces must change its image from an “occupation force” to a peacekeeping or liberating force, as it has been responsible for transforming the Taliban militancy into a popular resistance movement. For this purpose, USA and NATO forces needs to go back to its original purpose of winning the hearts and minds of the masses in Afghanistan rather than carrying out careless search and destroy missions which target innocent civilians.

- USA and allies must realize that the war in Afghanistan cannot be won by force alone. It can be won by winning over the hearts of the Afghan people, by providing them with an environment in which they can exercise their liberties freely. NATO and its allies also need to accept the fact that this region, unquestionably, does not belong to NATO, it should, therefore, fulfil its agenda of stabilizing Afghanistan and then leave it to the Afghans and the regional actors to deal with any remaining problems.
- Inevitably, an organization will be judged by what it can do. From the start, alliance commanders in Afghanistan have never been given the forces that they requested for the operation. NATO faces its toughest challenge ever. And it has laid bare its vulnerability and inability in quelling warlordism and militant insurgency in Afghanistan. In view of the collateral damage, it has caused especially the killing of non-combatant civilians, it may be determined to wriggle out of the quagmire it finds itself in, but looking at developments as they are unfolding, even the most optimistic people would find it difficult to view its future positively.
- It was accepted by all that the governments in Afghanistan are weak, and that the economy continues to be dependent on opium production. The Taliban and al-Qaeda continue to reemerge as political and military threats. Afghanistan will continue to haunt NATO with the stigma of incompetence until the above issues are addressed. Hence, NATO's performance remains highly debatable.
- The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) can also play an instrumental role in the stability and reconstruction of Afghanistan. Muslim states of the OIC can under UN auspices as the "blue berets" help in peacekeeping. The UN must continue to be actively and deeply involved in securing peace in Afghanistan.
- The Afghanistan government needs to assume more responsibility as an effective authority and gain confidence of the masses who have seen nothing more than turmoil, and bloodshed.
- All the Central Asian Republics and Afghanistan should become united to keep outside powers like US out from entering in this oil rich region.

And here, one cannot but think that the operation in Afghanistan was overly ambitious, and hinged on expecting too much too soon. The war in Afghanistan can not be win militarily the past more than one decade clearly reflect that there can be no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. Now US forces should withdraw from Afghanistan. Operation Enduring Freedom - purely combat in nature has achieved neither peace, nor stability but instability, violence and poverty, in short occupation and turmoil. NATO should stay and fulfil its assigned original role as a peacekeeping, stabilizing force, by concentrating reconstruction and development. More emphasis needs to be laid on developing and strengthening the war torn infrastructure. The Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) need to be more active and instrumental in this regard. Regional countries/neighbours need to be more actively involved in the reconstruction and development process and can work together with one another as well as with NATO in this regard.

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UN Security Council resolutions on Afghanistan

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- Resolution 2120 (2013) Adopted by the Security Council at its 7041st meeting, on 10 October 2013.
- S/RES/2120, 10 October 2013. This resolution extended the authorisation of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan until 31 December 2014.
- S/RES/2082, 17 December 2012. This resolution modified the Taliban (1988) sanctions regime, allowing for a number of exemptions to make it easier for listed individuals to travel in order to participate in meetings in support of peace and reconciliation. It also renewed the Committee's Monitoring Team.
- S/RES/2011, 12 OCTOBER 2011. This resolution renewed ISAF's mandate for one year.
- S/RES/1943, 13 October 2010. This resolution extended ISAF's mandate until 13 October 2011.
- S/RES/1868, 23 March 2009. This resolution extended the UNAMA mandate for 12 months and requested quarterly reports from the Secretary-General.
- UN Security Council resolution on the situation in Afghanistan, S/RES/1817 (11 June 2008)
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UN Office on Drugs and Crime Opium Surveys

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ANNEXTURE I

Table 1. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT's)

PRT Location	Province	Lead Force/Country
Gardez	Paktia	US
Ghazni	Ghazni	US
Bagram A.B	Parwan	US/South Korea
Jalalabad	Nangarhar	US
Khost	Khost	US
Qalat	Zabul	US(with Romania)
Asadabad	Kunar	US
Sharana	Paktika	US
Mehtarlam	Laghman	US
Jabal-o-Saraj	Panjshir Province	US(State Department lead)
Nuristan	Nuristan	US
Farah	Farah	US
NATO/ISAF and Partner-Run PRT's		
Kandahar	Kandahar	NATO/Canada(as of September 2005)
Lashkar Gah	Helmand	NATO/Britain(with Denmark and Estonia)
Tarin Kowt	Uruzgan	NATO/Netherlands(with Australia)
Heart	Heart	NATO/Italy

Qalah-ye Now	Badghis	NATO/Spain
Mazar-e-Sharif	Balkh	NATO/Sweden
Konduz	Konduz	NATO/Germany
Faizabad	Badakhshan	NATO/Germany
Meymanch	Faryab	NATO/Norway
Chaghcharan	Ghower	NATO/Lithuania
Pol-e-Khomri	Baghlan	NATO/Hungary(as of October 1,2006)
Bamiyan	Bamiyan	New Zealand(not NATO/ISAF)

Table 2 and 3 under some conditions, war is necessary to obtain justice.

	Great Britain	France	Germany	The Netherlands	Italy	Poland	Portugal	Europe	US
Agree strongly	35	12	12	22	15	18	16	18	55
Agree somewhat	39	27	27	38	28	28	29	30	29
Disagree somewhat	10	28	25	18	20	24	14	21	6
Disagree strongly	13	32	35	21	35	20	36	28	7
Don't know/Refused	3	1	1	1	2	10	5	3	3
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

When vital interests of our country are involved, it is justified to bypass the UN (if needed: "vital interest means when stakes are high.")

	Great Britain	France	Germany	The Netherlands	Italy	Poland	Portugal	Europe	US
Agree strongly	25	15	14	14	13	12	14	16	36
Agree	27	22	24	25	25	25	16	24	21

somewhat									
Disagree somewhat	22	30	32	34	26	27	23	28	18
Disagree strongly	20	30	27	22	28	17	37	25	20
Don't know/Refused	6	3	3	5	8	19	10	7	5
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: *Transatlantic Trends 2003*.

Table 4. Percentage of public responding "I favour the US-led war on terrorism"

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
US	89		81	76	73	70
Britain	69	63	63	51	49	38
France	75	60	50	51	47	43
Germany	70	60	55	50	47	42
Spain		63		26	19	21
Russia	73	51	73	55	52	50
Italy	67	70				41
Sweden						36
Bulgaria	72					51
Czech Republic	82					57
Poland	81			61		52
Slovakia	66					42
Netherlands				71		

Source: *Annual Pew Reports on Global Attitudes, 2002-2007*.

Table 5. The percentage of the public that views strong US leadership in world affairs as very or somewhat desirable.

	2002 (%)	2003 (%)	2004 (%)	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	2007 (%)
USA	83			85	84	82
France	48	27	24	28	30	28
Germany	68	45	39	40	43	38
UK	72	55	54	53	48	50
Italy	63	46	41	37	34	37
Netherlands	75	57	59	58	51	52
Poland	64	53	39	42	39	40
Portugal		43	32	44	37	33
Spain			18	22	19	18
Slovakia			21	34	19	16
Turkey			16	17	14	7
Bulgaria					21	22
Romania					46	46

Source: *Transatlantic Trends 2007*.

Table 6. Is NATO still essential for our country's security, 2002-2007?

	2002 (%)	2007 (%)
USA	56	60

France	61	55
Germany	74	55
UK	76	64
Italy	68	55
Netherlands	74	66
Poland	64	46
Portugal		59
Spain		49
Slovakia		44
Turkey		35
Bulgaria		58
Romania		62

Source: *Transatlantic Trends 2007*.

Table 7. As you know [COUNTRY] troops are currently stationed in Afghanistan. Do you approve or disapprove of the presence of [COUNTRY] troops in Afghanistan?

Countries	Approve (%)	Disapprove (%)	Don't Know/Refused (%)
USA	69	26	5
France	55	35	10
Germany	59	38	3
UK	50	41	9

Italy	56	39	5
Netherlands	66	29	4
Poland	24	67	8
Portugal	41	49	11
Spain	48	44	8
Turkey	41	52	7

Source: *Transatlantic Trends 2004*, www.transatlantictrends.org.

Table 8 So far, do you think the war against militant groups in Afghanistan has been mostly a success or mostly a failure?

	BRI (%)	FRA (%)	ITA (%)	GER (%)	CAN (%)
A success	16	12	18	15	22
A failure	63	63	66	69	49
Not sure	21	25	16	16	29

Source: *Angus Reid Monitor*.

Table 9. Should the US and NATO remove their troops from Afghanistan?

	Keep troops in Afghanistan (%)	Remove their troops (%)	Do Not Know/Refused (%)
US	50	42	7
Canada	43	49	8
Britain	45	42	13
France	48	51	1
Germany	44	49	8
Italy	32	55	13

Spain	22	67	11
Sweden	34	45	21
Bulgaria	21	60	19

Central Asian Country	FY1992 thru FY2010 Budgeted	FY1992 thru FY2010 Budgeted FY2011 Actual	FY2012 Actual	FY2013 Actual	FY2014 Estimate	FY2015 Request
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Czech Republic	45	45	10
Poland	24	63	13
Russia	12	73	16
Slovakia	29	58	13

Source: *Pew Global Attitudes Project: Spring 2007 Survey.*

Table 11 Table shows US Foreign Assistance to Central Asia, FY1992 to
FY2015 (millions of current dollars)

Kazakhstan	2,050.4	17.57	19.29	12.526	9.761	8.347
Kyrgyzstan	1,221.71	41.36	47.4	47.11	45.287	40.05
Tajikistan	988.57	44.48	45.09	37.47	34.479	26.89
Turkmenistan	351.55	11.01	9.2	5.468	5.473	4.85
Uzbekistan	971.36	11.34	16.73	11.378	11.278	9.79
Regional	130.44	23.15	8.22	17.105	25.928	23.8
Total	5,714.03	148.91	145.92	131.057	132.206	113.727
As a percentage of aid to Eurasia	14%	26%	34%	37%	40%	54%

Table 12 shows the GDP of Central Asia from 1990- 2012.

GDP of Central Asia

Year	GDP, bln. dollars	GDP per capita, dollars	GDP, bln. dollars	growth rate of GDP, %	share, %	
	current prices		constant prices 1990		in the World	in Asia
1990	53.1	1061	53.1		0.24	0.96
1991	51	1003	48.8	-8.1	0.21	0.84
1992	47.3	919	44.2	-9.4	0.19	0.71
1993	44.9	862	41.2	-6.8	0.17	0.6
1994	40.7	773	35.9	-12.9	0.15	0.51
1995	39.1	737	33.4	-7	0.13	0.43
1996	40.4	755	33.9	1.5	0.13	0.46
1997	43.2	802	34	0.29	0.14	0.51
1998	43.1	795	34.3	0.88	0.14	0.56
1999	40.3	737	36.2	5.5	0.13	0.47
2000	39.4	715	39	7.7	0.12	0.43
2001	41	740	42.8	9.7	0.13	0.48
2002	46.3	826	45.7	6.8	0.14	0.52
2003	55.9	990	49.2	7.7	0.15	0.57
2004	72	1261	53.4	8.5	0.17	0.65
2005	90.9	1575	58.4	9.4	0.2	0.76
2006	120.9	2070	64.1	9.8	0.24	0.92
2007	154.1	2604	70	9.2	0.27	1
2008	196.2	3271	74.3	6.1	0.32	1.1
2009	180	2960	76.7	3.2	0.31	1

2010	221.4	3589	82.4	7.4	0.34	1.1
2011	274.4	4385	89.6	8.7	0.39	1.2
2012	301.6	4753	94.9	5.9	0.41	1.2

Source: http://kushnirs.org/macroeconomics/gdp/gdp_central_asia.html

ANNEXTURE II

Figures:

Figure 1.

Attacks by Afghan Security Forces against Allied Troops.

Year	# killed	# of attacks causing death
2003-2009	12	N/A
2010	20	11
2011	35	21
2012*	57	41
2013	14	9
2014**	0	0

NOTE: Attacks from 2007-March 2012 killed 52 American soldiers and wounded 48 more. *An article from the U.S. Army notes that 62 “personnel” were killed, we have left off civilian contractors in the past which may account for the difference. **Through January 9, 2014.

Figure 2.

Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) Personnel Fatalities, January 2007-2013.

ANNUAL TOTALS

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011**	2012**	2013***
ANA	209	226	282	519	550	1,200	560
ANP	803	880	646	961	1,400	2,200	--

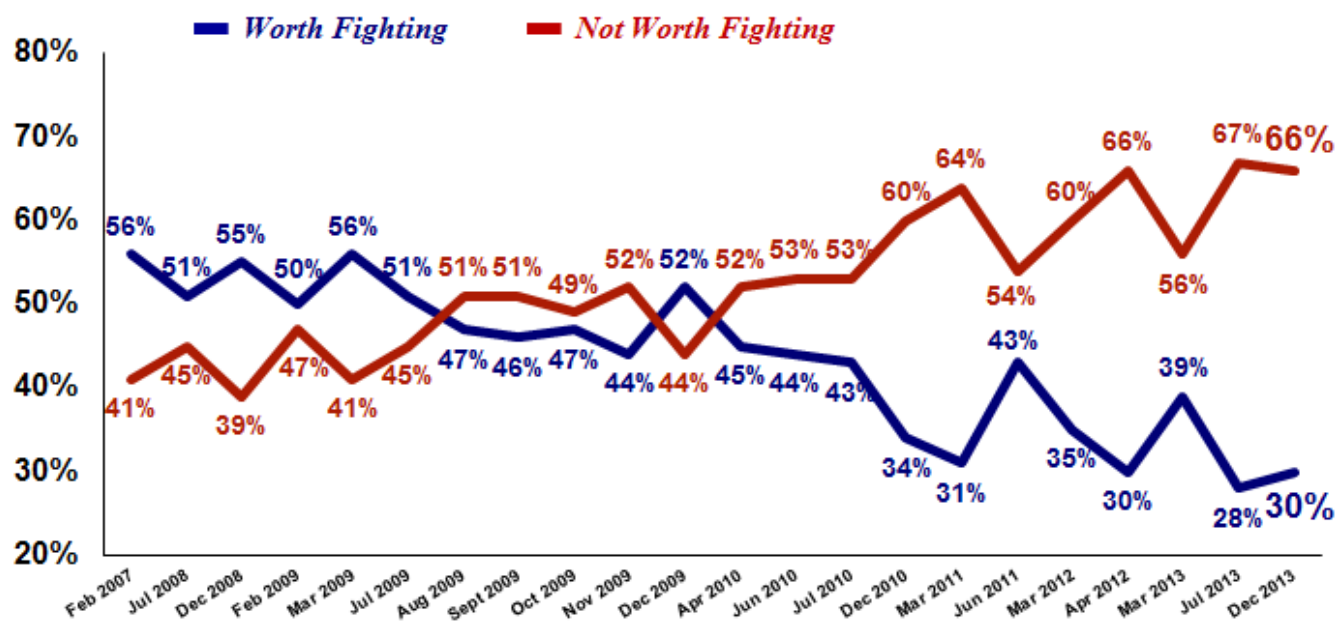
NOTE: Figures from 2007 through mid-2009 provided by NATO-ISAF and differ from those published in a January 2009 report released by the US Department of Defense. This report estimated 332 ANA fatalities and 692 ANP fatalities for 2007, with 2008 figures shown only through October 2008. Numbers for the second half of 2009 are

estimated based on information from several sources. **2011 and 2012 (through end November) numbers are estimates based off of shorter reporting periods in each year. 2012 numbers are based off reports of monthly averages through November. An article by Rod Nordland in the New York Times on April 20, 2013 quoted an Afghan Ministry of Defense official noted that 1,183 ANA soldiers were killed in the year ending March 20, 2013 compared to 841 in the year ending the same date prior. ***According to the Afghan Defense Ministry, 276 soldiers were killed March 21 to June 11. We have used the average per day during that period to come up with a yearly estimate through June 20, 2013.

Source: Strategic Advisory Group Headquarters ISAF, “Metrics Brief February 2009”, unclassified briefing slides (and subsequent updates). Rod Nordland, “With Raw Recruits, Afghan Police Buildup Falter”, New York Times, February 2, 2010. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, “Quarterly Report to the United States Congress”, January 30, 2010, p. 61. Accessed at: http://www.sigar.mil/reports/quarterlyreports/jan2010/pdf/SIGAR_Jan2010.pdf. ISAF.

The Graph shows whether the US war in Afghanistan is worth fighting or

All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting, or not?



**All trend from ABC News/Washington Post Poll

Source: www.pos.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/chart-1.png

Figure 10 shows people's support for US withdrawal and Taliban takeover as a threat (2014).

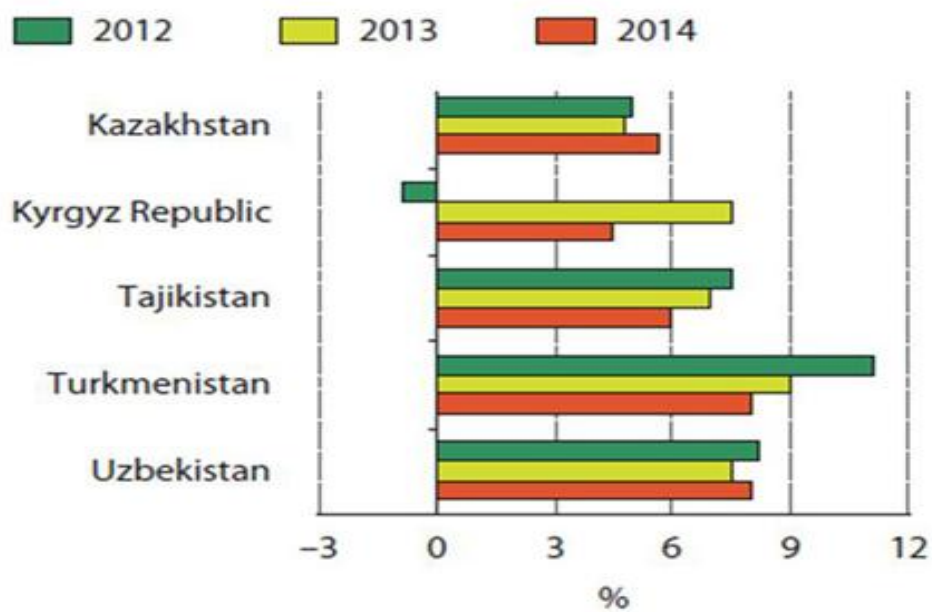
More Support U.S. Troop Withdrawal; Taliban Takeover Seen as Major Threat

<i>U.S./NATO troops in Afghanistan...</i>	<u>June</u> %	<u>Sept</u> %
Keep until country is stable	57	50
Remove as soon as possible	38	43
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>
	100	100
		<u>Major threat</u>
<i>Possible threats to the U.S.:</i>		%
If Iran developed nuclear weapons		82
If Taliban regained control in Afghanistan		76
If extremists took control in Pakistan		64

Q49,50a-c.

Source: PEW Global attitudes Project.

Central Asia GDP growth



Source: Asian Development Outlook Database