

The Development of Peace and Conflict During the 21st Century in Relevance with Afghanistan Warfare

K Jayasinghe#

Sri Lanka Army

#kavindagihan1949@gmail.com

Abstract: *The Present global order has been turned in to competitive manner due to the empowered regional superpowers, superpower rivalries upon fulfillment of political, Economic and Strategic agendas and concepts of Legitimacy, Sovereignty, Religious extremism and Democracy. Even though, The United Nations was established in order to keep global governance against the destructive, violent conflicts, up to day in many occasions it hasn't. Many proxy warfares has been taken place all around the world on achieving the regional hegemony towards many aspects. Afghanistan, being a battleground for many years, has experienced violations of its external and internal sovereignty by Russia and United States under the globalized justifications, upon protecting Afghan's internal sovereignty and legitimate ruling. In midst the struggles and proxies, made Afghanistan vulnerable to much interference such as internal conflicts by the armed fractions and external invasions by emerging superpowers. It caused in to grave damage on each and every aspect which required for futuristic development of a country such as destruction of infrastructure, brain drain, weakened rule of law and poor governance etc. Instead of that, this research focuses on the sudden power transition from United States who played a vital role in Afghanistan, with the concept "War on Terrorism" to Taliban; who was the major armed fraction in Afghanistan and the futuristic challenges ahead of Afghanistan.*

Keywords: *Legitimacy, Sovereignty, Religious Extremism, Democracy, proxy warfare, Regional hegemony, Armed fractions, Governance, Rule of Law*

1. Introduction

A. Background of the study

Present day global politics consist of various kinds of systems which have been focused upon a global agenda by concerning on democracy, sovereignty and legitimacy. Since the global order adopted on a multipolar system, power struggle has been emerged between the regional superpowers that have been intended to handle the economic, social and geo politics of the particular region. Afghanistan, being a landlocked country, bordered with Russia, Iran, and Pakistan. So, Afghanistan also became a battleground for many superpowers since decades due to the importance of geo politics of the region.

Afghanistan being a sovereign country for decades, faced many interferences both internal and external interferences. External physical interventions from various superpowers such as Russia, USA & Pakistan and internally from the militant fractions such as Taliban etc. so the other non-physical interventions took part by china, Saudi Arabia and Iran apart of military interventions. These interventions have justified by different faces at different times by those who intervened, caused in to lot of deaths, casualties and loss of properties for both sides. For decades that

made Afghanistan's governments fragile and unable to use its legitimate force upon protecting the internal and external sovereignty.

In midst all interventions Taliban grew up with many hands from some actors who assisted them. Inability of the Afghan government made them much more powerful and it led them on a considerable extent to get the total control of the country while dragging in to a situation even USA had to negotiate upon withdrawing their troops from there. It made the U.S.A interventions towards the Afghanistan's security worthless within a few months of time. U.S.A left majority of their latest military equipment at their withdrawal back by remaining a question upon the future of Afghanistan. Russia and China, being huge stakeholders in the global economy, they agreed on assisting newly appointed Taliban government to build up the country. Even being a sovereign country among the United Nations, Taliban cannot stand alone within the existing geo political system, competitive economy with the exiting damaged infrastructure and brain drain, where they have to move towards a new way instead of violence & use of force. This research focuses upon the internal & external actors, their involvements towards Afghanistan; How Taliban will make an approach towards governing the country, how they will make a transformation within a legitimate framework and what will be the necessary foreign policy and strategy implications they could follow.

2. Research Aims and Objectives

Aim of the study is to focus upon the latest incidents which took place in Afghanistan and to concern towards the futuristic movements and opportunities, which available for Afghanistan within the global community. The sudden transition of power has made a vacuum which vulnerable to seek on. Global

superpowers could concern it as an opportunity to both parties and it would be the initial movement on their new journey. An objective of this study comes as, to evaluate the historical interventions which intervened in Afghan politics internally and externally. It consists of the external involvements of global campaigns, proxy warfares and superpower rivalries which took place. Also, it focuses on the internal fractions and power struggle that caused in to Afghanistan warfare. Next objective is to evaluate Taliban's new possible approaches towards future governance of Afghanistan. Since being a military fraction, they have many challenges ahead of them to build the country in each and every aspect. Their future strategies on economy, politics, and security will be decisive factors in the global forum. The next objective is to evaluate their transformation on a legitimate framework with a relevant foreign policy, other policies, and strategies including further recommendations.

A. Research problem and research questions

How Afghanistan will reach on upcoming future opportunities after their power transition, while safeguarding its national interests? In the present global order Afghanistan faced many challenges as a country due to various kinds of interferences such as internal and external threats upon sovereignty, interruptions on its legitimate use of power within its boundaries, and to stand as an independent country. They have missed much more opportunities due to above mentioned interruptions and conflict situations over years and years. Then it caused on degrading their economy, infrastructure, damages on the workforce and other aspects as brain drain etc. but the recent transition of power made them a situation where to keep a pause on conflicts and to concern on a wider view than previous.

Since Taliban took power by use of force, they cannot continue it to the global community. There they have to concern on a legitimate framework to get the public in to a unified way in order to overcome the emerging challenges. There they have to face those challenges as a country, on obtaining global recognition and acceptance, implementation of human rights according to the global charter, developing an inclusive economy, and to create a peaceful environment with gender equality. Especially the considerable point is that, they have to safeguard their national interests as an independent country because they were failed on that over the previous decades. Afghanistan has to prevent being a battleground again for the global and neighboring superpower rivalries and the overspill of conflicts in to its territory. So, have to concern on, who are the actors and stakeholders of this warfare and what are their involvements? How Taliban will handle the power transition into a transformation? And what are the implications they could adopt on safeguarding the national interests?

B. Significance of the research

In the Modern world, conflicts have been taken place due to deprivation of needs in various ways. The significance of this study is to focus on historical aspects, actors, their motives, proxy warfares and other matters which caused in to long driven conflicts in Afghanistan, over decades many third world countries faced the problem of being sovereign states by having political and socio-economic independence. Multipolar world pattern has made many regional superpowers due to the development of technology and competition over the resources. Various effects have been emerged due to geopolitical and strategies over superpower rivalries. Effects of those factors in degrading a country, and to study on the factors affected on a sudden power transition and its impact on Afghanistan.

Recently Taliban took over the whole territory being a military fraction within the country. It took much assistance with the citizens and some of the Afghan military personnel. So, should focus how the motives of the stakeholders are effecting during the conflicts. They supposed to face many challenges being the ruling party of Afghanistan.

So, have to focus on how the newly ruling Taliban will grabbing ups the upcoming global opportunities as a country. Also have to concentrate towards the peace making and peacebuilding processes which have to take place according to the situation. When synchronizing to existing global pattern Afghanistan has to keep on alert.

Since Taliban have received much military equipment that left by the US forces who withdrew recently, there will be a vast opportunity for overspill or spreading of Taliban. So, have to study instead of use of force and violence how they will adopt on the global standards of human rights, gender equality and the usage of legitimate power & governing. There the concentration should be towards the upcoming motives of global powers and organizations on assisting Afghanistan to become a country instead of a battleground. Almost actions were taken by Russia and China to provide them the acceptance and recognition in the global forum by aiding Afghan economy, social strata and infrastructure. So, the future of Afghanistan will be decided on this transitive moment.

C. Potential limitation of the study

This study consists of limitations such as Dependence on the documentaries due to the method of obtaining the information subject to the qualitative method of the study. Also, it is narrowing the scope on view accordance with the view of the originator. There it drags the study in to a limited scope. Also, it causes to difficulties on interpreting the dynamic

movements of the foreign actors. Within a small period, there will be a change in the actions of global actors who involving these scenarios. So, by the study it is difficult to interpret the exact movements or decisions they are making. So, have to face upon difficulties towards forecasting the futuristic global movements by the scope of view.

Since there are many actors have involved in the Afghan warfare, their activities, strategies, aims and motives are differ from another to another. That is making their future actions unpredictable. Furthermore, actor to actor they have aimed to fulfill their various motives in economic, political and social aspects in Afghanistan by selling of weapons, laundering of money, smuggling of drugs and human, territorial disputes etc.

On the other hand, being a military fraction Taliban didn't had any kind of experiences regarding ruling a country before. But without much resistance within weeks Whole Afghanistan fell in to the hands of Taliban, since they got the sympathy of citizens. It reminds that even any party cannot submerge the human emotions by even legitimate or illegitimate use of force. That political movement keep remain a question upon the future of the Afghanistan's ruling system. They have to adopt on a suitable way of governing instead of using weapons and terrorism.

Meanwhile Afghanistan has to step in to the global order with the assistance of some powerful actors. By empowering the legal institutions and implementations of global standards in a democratic manner, will make some approaches towards the global setup. But the violations of those standards will result in to a worst situation rather than warfare. So, the ruling party has to reach on acceptance and recognition in lined with global charters.

3. Literature Review

Afghanistan being a landlocked country which neighbored by Russia, Iran and Pakistan had a peaceful ruling era till 1973 until the political coups take place. After those political instabilities, Afghanistan faced much interference upon its political freedom and sovereignty since 1979. It began with the interventions of Soviet Russia's invasion on the motive of assisting the ruling party which called as "People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan" also named as "PDPA". There it made much patriotic interventions of some internal military fractions to stand against the intruders. A considerable resistance was given by the "Afghan Mujahedeen" mean time they received the assistance by countries such as Germany, China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, United States and United Kingdom etc. (Republic et al., 2001). Due to the withdrawal of soviet forces above countries became the external actors of this warfare.

The assistance for internal military fractions was provided by Saudi Arabia, Iran etc. That made because of their aspirations upon regional hegemony and forecasting of Afghan instability as a gateway on implement their strategies. That instability was created due to another crucial factor of the weakened border security. Because of the surrounding borders Afghans were unable to prevent the movements which infiltrate their borders (Oliker, n.d.) Taliban and the northern alliance being the military fractions within the country, they received many opportunities to join with the democratic alliance. But it was refused by them in 1994. 1996, as the Taliban prepared for another major onslaught with military help from Pakistan and financial support from Saudi Arabia. On September 27, 1996, the Taliban captured Kabul and declared the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. The Taliban began planning offensives against Ahmad Shah Massoud and Abdul Rashid Dostum's remaining areas of authority. Former

adversaries Massoud and Dostum banded together to establish the United Front (Northern Alliance) against the Taliban. In addition to Massoud's predominantly Tajik forces and Dostum's predominantly Uzbek forces, the United Front comprised Hazara factions and Pashtun forces led by commanders. That made Taliban, Al-Qaeda, Pakistani ISI, Russian KGB, and US CIA main actors of the conflict.

The key incident made by the attack on September 11, 2001 attack on US. With the support of NATO and nearly 40 countries, the United States invaded Afghanistan in pursuit of the War on Terror in 2001. The United States has legitimized its military activities as 'Operation Enduring Freedom' from 2001 to 2014 and 'Operation Freedom's Sentinel' from 2015 to the present for over two decades. Over 100,000 civilians and 60,000 security personnel have been killed as a result of these military operations. This article focuses on US military activities in Afghanistan since 2001, whether they were carried out by the US or on its behalf. It analyses the detrimental repercussions on Afghanistan's stability and draws attention to the new paradigm, in addition to asking whether such military actions are in accordance with international law. (Asia & Connah, 2021). The United States' participation in Afghanistan is linked to past US initiatives, such as the Iraq conflict. Both are examples of large-scale warfare in the aftermath of September 11th. External action in Afghanistan is justified for the sake of the state's and region's future security.

But the impact on Afghanistan's sovereignty and legitimacy was not questioned anymore with those justifications as "war on terror". There some considerable points have remained as "(a) there must be a just cause to go to war; (b) the decision ought to be made by a legitimate authority; (c) force is to be used only with the right intention and as a last

resort; (d) there must be a reasonable hope for success, with peace as the expected outcome and (e) the use of force must be proportionate and discriminate." (Asia & Connah, 2021). But At the time, the United States was correct in holding the Taliban responsible for allowing al Qaeda to establish a foothold in Afghanistan. As a result, the Taliban may be regarded indirectly responsible for 9/11 to some extent. As a result, the foreign involvement was justified, because removing the Taliban would jeopardize the organization's ability to function.

Following al-September Qaeda's 11, 2001, attacks, the United States invaded Afghanistan after the Taliban administration refused to hand up terrorist leader Osama bin Laden. The Taliban swiftly lost control of the country and fled to southern Afghanistan and Pakistan. They launched an insurgency against Kabul's Western-backed government, Afghan national security forces, and international coalition soldiers from there. Due to the intensity of the attacks, incidents took place and the difficulties on operating within the territory, US and Taliban made an agreement upon withdrawing troops within an agreed time frame. Within 135 days, reduce US forces to around 8,500 and achieve a full pullout within 14 months (Tracker, 2021) so it highlights the impact of proxy wars on an unfamiliar ground. Despite the withdrawal of Western troops, the Taliban increased their military onslaught. In addition to the Taliban's push, Afghanistan is under threat from the Islamic State in Khorasan, which has increased its position in numerous eastern districts, attacked Kabul, and carried out suicide attacks against civilians. So, Taliban became more aggressive on that.

There the declaration by US towards the war on terrorism made kind of an influence to the jihad extremists upon unifying fighters against the westernized attacks on their soil. Also, it made a patriotic appearance towards their

campaign. It meant on their ideologies as a modernized crusade against the western. But the western countries promoted it under a campaign of spreading the freedom (Verma, 2021). Finally, the usage of adopted strategies caused in to overspill of terrorists over other countries. Many official violations of UN charters were occurred during the drone attacks etc. Mean time it proved the effects of promoting good governance, poor war reconstruction, prolonged military interventions, violations of human rights and smuggling of opium.

There the aspirations of other external global actors became much viral on this conflict, Increased Indian presence in the Persian Gulf would certainly be viewed negatively by Pakistan, as Pakistan is already reacting to expanding Indian involvement in Afghanistan, perhaps exacerbating tensions between the two nations (Attribution-noncommercial et al., n.d.). This desire on China's and India's parts does not necessitate their inclusion in a regional security system, at least not at this stage. The United States and those concerned about the Persian Gulf and the future of China and India, on the other hand, must consider the interests of those two countries. (License et al., n.d.) They're also concerned about the narcotics trade that originates in Afghanistan. Russian concerns that ISAF and NATO will fail in Afghanistan have been maybe the most astonishing of all.

When concern towards the futuristic movements of the Afghan conflict, Private military corporations' presence in Afghanistan exacerbates the situation by posing a threat to possible effective government. To avoid a recurrence of state failure, it would be in the international community's best interests to shift from military to humanitarian policies. (Asia & Connah, 2021) Any peace approach that avoids the use of violence would be beneficial to Afghanistan and its people. Some

argue that, given the instability of state institutions in Afghanistan, US forces should be totally removed, while others argue that doing so would create a vacuum for terrorist organizations to fill.

4. Conceptual Framework

The study stands between the discipline of international relations, while remarking an unsolved questions and suggestions. So, the major areas which has focused would be the,

1) The role internal and external actors

As major players in the world economy, Russia and China committed to aid the newly established Taliban leadership in developing the country. Even as a member of the United Nations, the Taliban are unable to operate independently within the existing geopolitical system, competitive economy, and brain drain, and must instead seek a new path away from violence and the use of force. The internal and external actors, as well as their involvements in Afghanistan, are the focus of this study.

2) The present ruling system and further approaches on upcoming opportunities

Taliban's new e approaches to Afghanistan's future governance. As a military component, they face numerous hurdles in their efforts to improve the country in all aspects. Their future economic, political, and security initiatives will be critical in the global arena. The next goal is to assess their transformation within a legal framework that includes a relevant foreign policy, other policies, and strategies, as well as further recommendations.

5. Research Design & Methodology

This study's qualitative method must be taken into consideration. Journals, publications, magazines, and websites are used to acquire data. The data is gathered from a variety of sources, including: 1) various publications of

foreign governments or international bodies and their subsidiary organizations, ii) various research reports prepared by research scholars, universities, economists, and others in various fields, iii) books by various authors, handbooks, theses, magazines, and newspapers, iv) various sources from university libraries, vi) technical and trade journals, vii) websites, and viii) public records and statistics. Secondary sources will be used to collect the necessary data in order to ensure the study's quality. The vast majority of the information will be obtained in a theoretical and conceptual fashion.

Data interpretation will be based on notions and theories such as legitimacy, sovereignty, and so on. As a result, in regards to the Afghan war, Validation of data obtained from secondary sources will be difficult to do to some extent. The internal and external stakeholders in this conflict will act in an unjustified manner. There will be a shift in the actions of global parties involved in these circumstances in a short period of time. As a result, the study finds it impossible to interpret their precise movements or conclusions. As a result, there will be challenges in anticipating future global movements from the perspective of the scope of vision.

6. Conclusion

As a result of problematic techniques utilized during military involvement, the War on Terror has undoubtedly harmed the moral reputation of the West. The US has paid a high price for attempting to eliminate Bin Laden and other al Qaeda commanders, as well as their Taliban supporters. Unsurprisingly, the West's enthusiasm for military intervention has dwindled as a result of prolonged military operations in Afghanistan and their failure to meet targeted goals. The public in the United States has grown sensitive of some of the atrocities committed during the military

involvement in Afghanistan and has become increasingly opposed to future military action.

As a military operation, the War on Terror has turned into a dangerous dilemma that has extended Western participation in Afghanistan. While hopeful measures promoting the development of democracy are not without risk, the United States and its allies should no longer presume that military force will or can successfully impose a democratic model on states. Afghanistan is still on the verge of being a failed state, and it is undeniably weak. It appears to be unable to enforce state law, to provide basic infrastructure to its population, and to be plagued by political corruption and violence. It also has a dysfunctional court and bureaucracy, as well as other symptoms of governmental failure. The best choice appears to be for Western forces to remain in Afghanistan solely for humanitarian reasons. However, any foreign forces may not be trusted, given the agony endured by the Afghan people.

References

Asia, S., & Connah, L. (2021). *US INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN: JUSTIFYING THE UNJUSTIFIABLE?* 41(1), 70–86.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0262728020964609>

Attribution-noncommercial, C. C., License, I., By-nc, C. C., & Rights, H. (n.d.). *Chapter Title: AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTROVERSIES OF HUMAN RIGHTS* Book Title: *Human Rights and the Environment* Book Subtitle: *Philosophical, Theoretical and Legal Perspectives* Book Author (s): *Linda Hajjar Leib* Published by: *Brill*.

License, R. C., Corporation, R., Security, B., & Gulf, P. (n.d.). *Building Security in the Persian Gulf; The Roles of Other External Actors* Book, Oliker, O. (n.d.). *The Afghan Military*.

Republic, G. D., Arabia, S., & States, U. (2001). *Afghanistan conflict (1978–present)*. 1994.

Verma, R. (2021). US–Taliban peace deal and regional powers as potential spoilers: Iran as a case study. *International Politics*, 668. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41311-021-00302-7>

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude towards Mr. HMN Herath, for the cooperation, active guidance and for encouraging me to complete the research project during the period of my work. Also, I would like to thank my Family members & colleagues for their valuable guidance and support on completion of this project. Finally, I would like to offer my heartiest gratitude to all the people whose names are not appeared, but their untiring effort was very much crucial to make this study success throughout this work.

Authors Biography



Captain J.K.K.G Jayasinghe enlisted to the Sri Lanka Army Regular Force as an Officer Cadet of Intake KDU 33 on 2015. He obtained his BSc in Social Sciences with a Second-Class upper

Division and has completed Certificate in Hospitality Management (SLITHM), Diploma in HRM (LPEC), Certified Trainer (LPEC) and presently reading for his Postgraduate Diploma in Conflict and Peace Studies at University of Colombo.