

# THE MAJOR INTERNAL CHALLENGES OF THE FAILED PEACE-BUILDING PROCESS OF AFGHANISTAN

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**Abstract-**In this paper, I want to explore the internal challenges of peace building in Afghanistan. The faction groups who are the major shareholders of the current government are considered one side and Taliban are the other side of the problem for peace in Afghanistan. In addition, land-mafia, corruption, weak economy divided society are the other core factors. Here in this paper we discuss the role of faction groups and other factors excluding Taliban.

**Keywords:** internal, challenges, failed, peace-building, Afghanistan.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The faction-groups were created by United States through the help of Pakistan to fight against Soviet Union invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. In total seven faction group parties were formed by the help of USA in Pakistan and five to six local commander parties were formed in Iran. After the defeat of Soviet Union in 1990, they started fighting with each other to take control over government, which resulted in a catastrophic Civil-War. According to Wardak Pakistan and USA had huge influence on Faction groups to fight on behalf of the West to stop Russian occupation and political influence in the region (Wardak, 2004, p.4). Because of these clashes among these groups, thousands of people killed, hundred thousand fled to neighboring countries. The Civil-War ended by the 20th century emerging the Taliban regime, which was overthrown in 2001 by United States. The international community started to bring peace to Afghanistan since 2001, through different approaches, but failed the country is still in fragile situation.

The conflict in Afghanistan has four stages, first is the period of Soviet occupation, associated with mass killings of innocents, disappearance of political opponents, tribal leaders and target killings in huge numbers. The second stage is the collapse of Soviet occupation and Soviet installed government and the Beginning of Mujahedeen's government, Mujahedeen leaders were the people fighting against Soviet, receiving funds from West through direct channels and Pakistan. They formed not unified government but each of them had government, militia and local power, which turned the country into civil war. The third period of conflict started in 1995, called the Taliban period. The fourth period started in 2001 after the event of 9/11. In which United States and Afghan government started war on Taliban. The fifth period is beginning as the United States have started withdrawing military from Afghanistan.

## 2. THE MAJOR CHALLENGES OF PEACE-BUILDING IN AFGHANISTAN

There are so many donor organizations working for peace-building, United States of America, United Nations and other developed nations play a huge role. As United Nations has been involved in multi-development projects to bring sustainable peace based on Bonn Agreement in 2001, since that United Nations has been working to build institutions, infrastructure, education, human development and in the meantime working for the reconciliation and reintegration process; There are too many achievements in all sectors, the only thing United Nations was unable to achieve the reconciliation and re-integration of the Taliban. Recent findings point out the main problems of not reaching peace are, the non-participation of people in peace-process, no intention for peace in some faction-groups, no effective strategy, different mandates by different donors so on so far resulted in the prolongation of internal conflict.

But according to my mind, the main problem of the conflict are Faction groups. If the Bonn Agreement had limited the influence of Faction groups, today the scenario may have been changed, but Bonn Agreement had given further power to them, as there is no provision regarding transitional justice in the Agreement, some of UN member states were insisting to include such provision, but Faction groups said we have fought against Soviet and we are holy warriors. Indeed UN was really concerned about the security situation of Afghanistan. Some of UN high profile advisors said that it will be quite difficult to bring peace and transition justice at the same time. As Nadery notes as below; The Special Representative of United Nations Secretary General Lakhdar Barhimi, planned a long-term strategy for peace-building by political sustainability, he proposed to neglect bringing Faction group to trial (Nadery, 2007, P. 2). To some extent, it is really impossible in bad security situation to restore transitional justice. But it was possible for the Faction group to offer their apology and pledge to refrain from the acts which destabilize the country in future.

In 2002, the government of Afghanistan established the Independent Commission of Human Rights (hereinafter, the Commission) in accordance with the Constitution. The President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan issued a decree authorizing the Commission to adapt a national strategy for bringing the war criminals for transitional justice. The Commission surveyed around 5000 people all around the country; the people welcomed the transitional justice for Faction group, the report findings brought an action plan for peace, justice and reconciliation with the collaboration of United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA), which was presented in International Conference in Hague 2005. The plan was to bring Faction groups to trial, but the plan was rejected by Faction groups and their huge influence in the government (Nadery, 2007, pp. 173-179). Civil-society and other human rights activist have lunched huge struggles to restore peace by transitional justice. But they receive threats; no one can easily publish or report any regarding their horrific actions. Because people working in such sectors are really worried about their security, as state is unable to provide security.

The circumstances went wrong enough, at the time when President Hamid Karzai ratified the law passed by parliament granting amenity to faction groups in 2007, some of the Parliament members who were not engaged in civil-war protested against the illegitimate enactment, unfortunately Faction groups have huge influence on the three branches of government. Faction-groups had parallel-institutions in Provinces, every day reports show their involvement in illegitimate activities, if the government official do not accept their order, they threaten them and fire them from offices. If the central government does not accept their offer, they start positioning militia. Currently they have terrorist groups, who they use as a political pressure.

The Disintegration Disarmament and Reintegration process in Afghanistan was not effective as it to be, because the groups submitted very small amount of weapons, they still have large amount of ammunition depots. still many Faction groups have huge influence on regional level to get the profits of opium, which is an easy source to reconstitute them. And how then they share the profits of opium-earning with other groups (Ishizuka, 2007, pp. 4, 5). Furthermore, 73% of illegal weapons are surrendered by Commanders in rural areas; those rural areas are imagined to get development projects (Higashi, 2008, p. 7). These local Commanders are linked with the provincial Commanders of Faction groups, they ask for illegal sharing the profits of developmental projects implemented by NGOs and other private contractors, majority of the NGOs working in local area reconstruction's projects pay illegal ransom for these Commanders, otherwise the workers might be killed or kidnaped. Therefore, these commanders are not only posing threat to peace, but they are against sustainable development. According to Suhrke, United States assisted in the empowerment of local commanders is opt-cited example, the reason for this support and empowerment is their being allies with USA to fight against (Suhrke, 2008, p.1). Furthermore, Mukhopadhyay in his article says; these Faction groups have no respect in Afghan society, their legacy is questioned. Their representation is fake, but the reason how they reached to high positions, it was because of fighting against Taliban (Mukhopadhyay, 2009, p.7).

According to Uesugi, People are willing to bring the Faction group to trails, if we want a sustainable peace, a bottom-up peace we need to take the consideration of people into account. It will facilitate people trust on state; reconciliation should be promoted from transitional justice window, rather than from post-conflict prospective (Uesugi, 2009, p.15). In addition, Afghanistan is going through the sustainable state building and democracy, but grave violation of the last three decades has been haltering the peaceful co-existence of its people. Bringing sustainable peace, access to crimes, bringing criminals and victims together to a shared future is not an easy job.

Moreover, Faction groups have private Prisons, where they jail people who raise their voices against the violence. This is the process of Criminalization by involving state factor which is called Faction groups. When these detainees release they turn to revenge. Furthermore, they are not only engaged in such destructions. They considered themselves above all laws, as recently a private news agency (mehrnnews) survey showed the entire Article of the Constitution of Afghanistan has been breached, due to the presence of Faction groups in government. They are considered a real threat to rule of law, peace, development and stability.

Furthermore, the effective land management system can contribute in post-conflict building of states. Studies conducted in countries, land management top-down approach has negative consequences. Land management and reform process has been started in Afghanistan for years, the system is top-down without taking local needs into consideration. The problems in registration, outdated mapping system, the dispute resolution system. These problems are linked to the breach of Property rights. Land's disputes in Afghanistan add in the development of conflict and halt sustainable peace.

Less of the population has official documents to prove their rights to the lands they live on, land registration was not successful in pre-war era though, but there was a system developed for land registration in early twenties. Most of the documents destroyed during the wars. According to Coburn, Taliban as emerging local power competes with both state and custom to resolve land disputes, as their contribution with Land Titling Department of Helmand province to resolve land cases was surfaced recently, which proves the inability of state administration (Coburn, 2013, p.31). Traditional mechanisms mediated land disputes, but decades of conflicts, insurgency and displacement have destabilized traditional mechanism too (Gaston & Dang, 2015).

Developing land strategy, improvement of land administrated system and regulations as Afghanistan lacks land

rules, commission to work with local land management system, reform in the court system as we see the formal courts, which deal with land issues, are lacking capital such material, personnel and modern technology. So these reforms can stabilize the rule of law and improve land security. As a result these all reforms can contribute to the peace building processes of Afghanistan.

Moreover, foreign-aid for peace-building in Afghanistan is considered assigning a child the job of adult (Jonathan, 2002, p. 4). As foreign aid weakened the structure of democratic system, which was considered to be accountable and responsible for the people of Afghanistan (Suhrike, 2008, p.1). As I mentioned the government is mainly formed by Faction groups, the aid went to their pockets; they have transformed all their capital to other countries. The money was believed to use for rebuilding of the state-economy. Afghanistan is cited as the country where foreign aid has not materialized into effective state institutions. NGOs have created parallel institutions to replace the government. As a result, the recipient government is unable to make its own decisions about what services should be provided (Ezrow & Frantz, 2013). According to Nojumi, some two-third of foreign aid spent outside of the government by NGOs, it was highly criticized by experts that argued it has undermined the efforts for building state institutions. The donors were concerned about the weak capacity of government staffs (Nojumi, 2016, p. 63). Donors owed a lot of aid budget, the multi-level subcontracting projects emerged and it was a daunting task to organize these aid (Bizhan, 2015). This donor driven policy caused state's weakness. According to Waldman, accountability in projected implemented by NGOs is limited or does not exist. Donors' performance is usually confidential or little publicized, which make them to the non-commitment of their duties to enhance effectiveness and efficiency of projects (Waldman, 2008, p. 20). Multiple organizations working for the same aim in the same institution created many organizational disorders. If we bring directorate of education on provincial level as an example, at local level with the directorate there were several NGOs working without proper plan and coordination in the education sector and the directorate was lacking resources to manage NGOs activities.

Finally, UN comprehensive peace-building approach has failed to bring peace, pessimism is increasing day by day, and the Afghan state is unable to provide basic protection to its people. The Middle-East war on terror declined the financial support for peace in Afghanistan, as Taliban are expending their influence from rural areas to the center of provinces, which resulted in the withdrawal of international organizations which were engaged in infra-structures and developmental projects. Unemployment rate is increasing day by day, foreign investors are leaving due to worsen security. Jobless youths are highly vulnerable for the recruitment of insurgent groups. The current situation is of big concern, because Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)-Khorasan branch lunched offensives in some provinces. They brutally killed women and children, burnt homes, kidnapped women and children. Therefore, the aforementioned factors are the internal spoiler of peace-building and exacerbate the situation in Afghanistan.

## CONCLUSION

The comprehensive peace-building approach failed to bring consolidating peace, pessimism was increasing day by day, and the Afghan state was unable to provide basic protection to its people. The Middle-East war on so-called terror declined the financial support for peace in Afghanistan, as Taliban was expending their influence from rural areas to the center of provinces, which resulted in the withdrawal of international organizations which were engaged in infra-structures and developmental projects. Unemployment rate was increasing day by day, foreign investors have left due to worst security before the collapse of the Republic. The foreign-aid driven economy put Afghanistan on the total economical collapse. Jobless youths are highly vulnerable for illegal migration. The current situation is of concern, because Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)-Khorasan branch lunched offensives in some provinces. They brutally kill women and children, burn homes, kidnap women and children. Therefore, the aforementioned factors were the internal spoiler of peace-building and exacerbate the situation in Afghanistan.

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