



Thirtieth Note

Elections Transparency:

The ballot counting process has begun by the Special Court in some provinces. Meanwhile, United Nations' representative has emphasized that the independence of electoral institutions should be reserved. In reaction to the remarks of the UN's representative the Attorney General has described the position adopted by UN's representative as irresponsible. With regard to this issue, Mr. Manavi has insisted that he would not surrender to force.

Reconciliation with Anti-Government Members:

Over the last few weeks, the subject of reconciliation and negotiation with the

Taliban has been the most important focal subject of the media. The delegation of the High Peace Council has paid separate visits to Turkey and Guantanamo Jail in order to get one of its inmates, who is said to have been close to the President Karzai, released from the jail. It is said the aim of the trip of the delegation of High Peace Council to Turkey has been to establish a political office for Taliban in that country. Meanwhile safe houses have been established in the northern province of Sar-e Pul and Balkh for militias that have joined the peace process.

Administrative Corruption:

The Attorney General of Afghanistan has said that he is facing some challenges in order to arrest those accused of corruption and that he is

unable to bring them to justice. Recently, Dr. Ludin, has been designated as the Head of High Office of Oversight.

Transitional Justice:

Transitional Justice Group has stated that issue of securing justice shall be taken into account in order to establish peace. This concern was voiced following initiation of widespread attempts of the government to negotiate and reconcile with Taliban and anti-government forces.

Interviews and Articles:

Afghanistan, Economy of War and Futile Cycle of Conflicts, is the title of the article written by Sayfullah Sayhun, a lecturer of Faculty of Economics of Kabul University on reconciliation and peace with anti-government groups.

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Afghanistan: The war economy and the endless circle of conflicts

By Saifuddin Saihon



► This is more than clear that peace is the precondition for every development and national reconciliation can also be institutionalized in close relation to justice. Building confidence, understanding and peace is linked to fair trial of major suspects of crimes against humanity, compensation to victims and restitution of their prestige.

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Transitional Justice

**Transitional Justice Group:
“For brining peace,
justice should be established”**

Afghanistan Daily, No 1331, Page Two, 28 February 2011

While the High Council for Peace of Afghanistan is continuing its efforts for bringing peace in the country, Transitional Justice Coordination Group sees these efforts as ineffective and fruitless suggesting that for reaching peace, justice should be established. At a press conference held on 27th of February, Transitional Justice Coordination Group brought forth its proposals and suggestions in the framework of a resolution.

Ajmal Baluch Zadeh, a member of Transitional Justice Coordination Group stated some suggestions of his group. He said: “as the first step towards peace, warlords and violators of human rights should be excluded from the state entities. Brining peace will be impossible with the existence of administrative corruption, lack of impartial courts, lack of powerful army and insecure borders”. These suggestions are made while from 4 months ago onwards serious efforts have been going on for brining peace in the country and negotiating with the Taliban by attracting internal and international supports. However, according to some members of the Transitional Justice Coordination Group, the peace efforts are a scenario of political games.

Negotiation with Armed Anti-Government Groups

Mullah Salam Zaif in London; Personal trip or a political effort?

Mandegar Daily, No 511, Page Eight, 19 February 2011

Mula Omar Zaif, the former ambassador of Taliban to Islamabad, is currently in Britain. Via an Email, Mr. Zaif told the reporters that he was staying in London on a personal trip. Based on the report of Daily Telegraph, Mr. Zaif has met Britain's Foreign Ministry and discussed about the peace process of Afghanistan with the Taliban. However, Zaif has rejected the report of Daily Telegraph.

Four months ago, as per the request of Afghanistan the name of Mr. Zaif was erased from the international black list. Four years ago he had been imprisoned in Guantanamo Jail. Since his release, he has been living in Kabul trying to keep himself away from politics.

In his Email he has underlined that if he is requested to render assistance for the purpose of securing peace in the country, he as an Afghan would be ready to participate in the efforts for stopping bloodshed in his country.

Meanwhile, an Afghan Official has told that in the recent days a number of Afghan national security officials have also been in London and met with security officials of Saudi Arabia and Britain. This official refused to verify or reject the presence of Mr. Zaif in those discussions.

Establishment of a Safe House for those participating in the peace process in Sar-e Pul

Afghanistan Daily, NO 1324, Page Eight, 19 February 2008

A Secure house and a vocational training center have been established for the armed anti- government forces who have entered the peace process in Sar-e Pul province. Sayed Aala Rahmati, the governor of the province, said the beneficiaries would be able to reside in the secure house. He added, they would also be trained some skills including carpentering, tailoring and farming. He pointed out that secure house and the vocational center had been established by a 40,000\$ fund donated by ISAF forces and it aimed to create jobs for those joining the peace process.

Mohammad Hassan, one of the Taliban's commanders who has recently joined the peace process along with his soldiers in Sayad district of Sar-e Pul province said due to some security concerns they could not go to their region. He added to say, once the security was established, they would return to their respective regions. Over the past few weeks, however, the armed anti-government forces who have joined the peace process have been complaining as no food had been provided



to them and no approach has been adopted to make their home return possible.

Four armed anti-Government forces joined the peace process

Afghanistan Daily, NO 1324, Page Eight, 19 February 2011

A group consisting of four armed anti-government forces have laid down their weapons and joined the peace process. This group of four led by a person named Shah Khan in Dare Soof district of Samangan province joined the government. Elkhani noted that these people had been involved in some anti-government activities in Dareh Soof district whose joining to the peace process in the said district would be remarkable for reaching peace.

General. Abdul Razaq Elkhani, the police commander of Jovzjan province said that these four persons had also handed their weapon over to the state forces. The police commander of Samangan added that there were discussions going on with other insurgents groups in Samangan province.

Forty militias joined the peace process in Sar-e Pul province

Cheragh Daily, No 19, Page 1, 19 February 2011

Local authorities of Sar-e Pul say a group consisting of forty armed anti-government militias joined the peace process. According to the state officials, these people led by Mavlavi Nader Abubakr who ignited anti-government activities in Alghani Villiage of Sayyad district of this province have joined the peace process.

Asadullah Shirzad the chief security commander of Sar-e Pul

province said: " Mavlavi Mohammad Nader along with his 20 people, and Mavlavi Abubakr along with his 20 people have stopped their insurgencies by handing 40 weapons of different types over to the government and joined the state forces".

According to local officials of Sar-e Pul province, during the last month around 150 of the Taliban members have stopped the war and joined the peace process.

Armed anti-government Forces lose popularity in public eye

Afghanistan Daily, No 1325, Page Four, 20 February 2011

Reports indicate that in some parts of the country, people tend to prevent the presence of the Taliban in their districts and villages. For example the residents of Obah district of Herat province drove Taliban forces out of two villages yesterday by taking actions on their own.

Judging by evidence, it seems that despite terrorist attacks of the Taliban in some parts of the country, they are in a weaker military position. Continued regional cooperation and widespread military missions in different parts of the country by National Army and NATO Forces, may generate hopes for Afghan people.

Decrease in Taliban's popularity among people may remarkably help strengthen the peace and stability trend in the country. However, this would be feasible only if the government continues rehabilitation process of the deprived areas of the country. Another sign of popularity of the government by Afghan people is their outstanding turnouts in the elections held in the country despite widespread intimidations and threats of the Taliban. Undoubtedly the Taliban are not accepted by people because despite their constant warnings and serious intimidations, Afghan people widely participated in the elections thus saying no to them and their demands. Finally, the government, security organs and armed forces of the country should well seek the opinions of Afghan people and from now on, should whatsoever use the language of diplomacy with the insurgent groups.

High Peace Council in pursuit of a "safe" country for negotiation with Taliban

Mandegar Daily, No 514, Page 1, 20 February 2011

The High Peace Council says that, at the present time, no foundation has been laid for negotiation with high officials of the Taliban- and there is an absence of trust. Yet some commanders of Taliban are in contact with the members of the council. According to the officials of the High Peace Council there are ongoing efforts being made to determine a third country, except for Pakistan and Afghanistan, in which Taliban leaders would feel safe to continue peace negotiations. Ataulah Ludin, the Deputy of the High Peace Council says: "the High Council Peace is seeking to find a third country, expect for Afghanistan and Pakistan with which the leaders of Taliban are in accord and feel safe for the purpose of peace negotiations".

Mr.Ludin says there is a tendency among some of the Taliban's leader towards negotiations but he refused to name any of them. However, the said council months after its establishment, has not yet reached any remarkable achievement. In line with the efforts for negotiations with Taliban, some media reports indicate that a number of Taliban leaders have been transferred to Kabul by NATO choppers. The High Peace Council warns that the NATO would face numerous difficulties should they continue creating obstacles against the demands of Taliban. Some political analysts believe that the demands of Taliban have made it difficult for the peace process to secure peace in Afghanistan.

US's covert and direct negotiations with Taliban

8 AM Daily, No 1090, Page 1, 20 February 2011

Based on a report, the administration of Barak Obama has entered covert and direct negotiations with the Taliban. Through these negotiations the US tries to determine which elements of Taliban leaders and under what conditions, are keen to participate in peace negotiations with Afghanistan.

False hopes of the government and explicit responses of the respected Taliban!

8 AM Daily, No 1090, Editorial, 20 February 2011

Although some high ranking officials of the government as well as some spokespersons of the High Peace Council baselessly and, sometimes without any preparatory scenarios, talk about the tendency of some of the Taliban elements to join the government claiming that the peace is close to reach, the Taliban respond to such claims by initiating a series of suicide and bomb- planting missions in Kabul and other provinces. They keep responding with the language of fire, bullet and bloodshed to show their reluctance to the peace and reconciliation process. Meanwhile, both the government and its foreign allies speak about the weakness and inability of Taliban. Recently, Taliban have changed their war tactics and instead of targeting military targets, they have started to attack every place and premises that could possibly serve them as a broadcasting point to make their imperceptible presence noticeable. Amid this precarious situation, the question arises as to who shall be held responsible for their barbaric and rebellious acts. Following the terrorist and anti-human crimes of the Taliban, the president of Afghanistan has described their acts as inhuman, barbaric and above all, non-Islamic.

Here this question occurs to mind as to whether it is possible to sit by barbaric and anti-Islamic elements behind a reconciliation desk and reach the elevated human values.

Planting delusion and cultivating catastrophe!

Mandegar Daily, No 515, Editorial, 21 February 2011

The daily was started by examining the efforts of High Peace

Council and the delusions prevailing around it. In return, however, the Taliban underlined the false nature and vainness of these delusions and dreams. Once again, forty dead bodies and eighty wounded people were gifted to the authorities who are seeking to bring them back to power. Meanwhile, the government and High Peace Council have decided to save the Taliban from isolation and give them a share of power. Having this description in mind, it becomes the pain of every discerning Afghan as they see and wonder why some officials who are, more than anybody else, cognizant of the true colors of Taliban and their crimes and those intended to be committed by them in the future, utter some words that do not fit their reputations. Anyhow, those who are seeking to make the High Peace Council succeed, need to know that they should not plant delusions and cultivate catastrophe for the Afghan people. By every day of the council's work, this doubt turns to reality that the government and some other foreign movements are trying to determine a share for Pakistan in Afghanistan. Therefore, the results of the peace efforts would be anything but benefit to the people of Afghanistan.

New responses of the Taliban to the High Peace Council

8 AM Daily, No 1092, Page Four, 22 February 2011

Brutal massacre of the people by Taliban in a Kabul Bank branches in Jalal Abad and Kunduz provinces are counted as the most disappointing events for the government of Afghanistan, in particular for Mr. Farooq Wardak, the Minister of Education. The secretary of the High Peace Council called on the U.S. government not to open discussion channel with the Taliban and respect the independence of Afghans. This was the reaction of the secretary of the High Peace Council to the recent article of New Yorker Magazine, in which there was an indication of initiation of communication with Taliban. In the past it was general's belief that the U.S government believed in the Afghan nature of the peace process. The government of Afghanistan actually took the first steps towards peace by convening the Peace Loya Jerga and establishing the High Peace Council.

Judging from the reactions of the armed anti-government forces, it is realized that the government has not had any remarkable achievement in infiltrating the Taliban groups and inviting them to peace process. Shaida Mohammad Abdali, a close official to the president said in London that the Taliban had leaning towards reconciliation. However, the New Yorker Magazine in a report said that even if the Taliban were inclined to negotiation, they would only negotiate with the U.S not the President Karzai. The ongoing war is the war between Americans with Taliban not the war of the government whose stability is not even guaranteed for a week or two. It should be admitted that fruitlessness of the negotiations and reconciliation efforts are due to a series of ineffective policies of the government. Our president well knows that he is not able to fight with his powerful foreign enemies by a weak and corrupt administration and his unequipped national army and police. The government can reach a sensible reconciliation when it has

started profound structural reforms within its system. Without a competent and law-based administration the threats of Taliban and instability crisis will not be tackled even in the long run.

The game of Taliban to take a share in power

Cheragh Daily, No 22, Page Two, 22 February 2011

The head of the High Peace Council has promised the Taliban if they laid their weapons, they would be given the right to partake in decision-taking process of the government. Burhanudin Rabani, who had talked earlier about the leaning of the government towards reconciliation with the Taliban and allowing them to gradually take a share in the government, has recently tried to bridge the trust gap between the Taliban and government. To that end, he has stated: "Taliban believe the High Peace Council is trying to create divisions and fractures among Taliban however, during the last months we have ensured them that our goal is giving them a share in decision-making process of the government".

Recently, the officials of High Peace Council have informed of the contacts with some of the Taliban's commanders. The Taliban have always set the unconditional withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan as their main condition for negotiation with the government, while, the U.S has announced that if Taliban do not enter the peace process, it will increase their military pressure and violence against them. It should not be forgotten that the plan for establishment of permanent U.S base in Afghanistan goes totally against the goals and conditions of Taliban, so we should not be very optimistic about the approaches taken by the High Peace Council which is referred to as "international" by Rabani. It seems that there is a complete cooperation among foreign policy makers involved in the affairs of Afghanistan with Afghanistan and the High Peace Council. Afghan political analysts believe that the new and brutal movements of the Taliban are an indication of their fundamental belief for armed approaches and taking control of the situation in provinces of Afghanistan.

Peace with sadistic criminals is surrender to them!

8 AM Daily, No 1093, Editorial, 23 February 2011

A delegation consisting of the members of High Peace Council went to Turkey to negotiate with Turkish officials.

According to the declaration issued by the council, the aim of the delegation's trip to Turkey is to strengthen ties between the two countries in different arenas. It is evident that what is stated as the aim of the delegation's trip by the council is not actually true and it has nothing to do with the High Peace Council. Because the government of Afghanistan has other authoritative organs and entities to strengthen its ties with other countries and this council has no authority in that regard.

A terrorist who was captured by security forces has said that he

enjoyed killing people! Maybe this is the case with all the Taliban. Wasn't it fair or necessary for our sympathetic and sentimental president and his democratic government to announce a day or even some hours as the "Public Mourning" following that tragic incident? Maybe this would have offended the respected Taliban brothers and was not seen expedient for the country, so it was decided not to be done!

Now the question is whether is it legitimate to reconcile with such sadistic criminals who enjoy smelling blood and watching the death of innocent people? The High Peace Council, being idle and out of programs, wouldn't mind having such fruitless trips once in a while. In a similar occasion, a number of the council's members had a fruitless trip to Pakistan as well. It is the general perception that such trip will not have any achievements to stop the massacres and brutalities but the fact that the members of the High Peace Council need some fresh air is out of the question!

Delegation of High Peace Council goes to Guantanamo

Mandegar Daily, No 517, Page1, 23 February 2011

The officials of the High Peace Council go to Guantanamo to carry out preliminary works for releasing some members of the Taliban as a step towards establishing peace in the country and showing their good faith to that end.

Asla Rahmani the head of the Inmates Committee of the High Council of Peace said on Tuesday that Hamid Karzai has supported the decision of the council's trip to Cuba and its initiative for releasing a number of Taliban members from Guantanamo Jail. It is said that Khairullah Khair Khah, is one of the leading persons this council is seeking to release. He is one of the former officials of Taliban who has been in Guantanamo Jail for 8 years. Vahid Mozhdah, in a contact with Mandegar Daily said, Khairullah Khair Khah who is being held in Guantanamo is a relative to Hamid Karzai that is why the President has decided to have him released. According to Mr. Mozhdah, the attempt of the council for releasing him has a tribal aspect. He says, formerly some other members of Taliban had been released from Guantanamo who were of high importance to Taliban; however their release has had no effect on the peace process in the country.

High ranking delegation of High Peace Council went to Turkey

Rahe Nejat Daily, No 1631, Page one, 23 February 2011

The high ranking delegation of the High Peace Council led by Rabani as the head of the council went to Turkey on Tuesday.

The aim of this trip is strengthening the ties between the two countries in different arenas. In its declaration, the High Peace Council has welcomed the efforts of Turkey for brining peace in Afghanistan and called on its further cooperation with Afghanistan to reach stability and peace in the region.

The High Peace Council has once again, urged all armed anti-government forces in the country to join the peace process and play a role in building their country.

Before the council's trip to Turkey, Ataulah Ludin, the Deputy of the High Peace Council had told the media that the council is ready to find a third country, except for Pakistan and Afghanistan, for negotiation with the Taliban.

21 Anti-government Forces Joined the Peace Process in Badghis

Nokhost Daily, No 50, Page Three, February 23 2011

Local authorities in Badghis province have informed of the joining of 21 Taliban insurgents to the peace process.

Sharafudin Majidi, the spokesperson of the governor of Badghis has said that these people, who were involved in insurgencies of Gahdis district of this province, have joined the peace process with the cooperation of local people and National Security Department of Badghis province. According to him, since the beginning of the new year around 30 groups of armed anti-government forces have joined the peace process in this province. He said so far, 500 people have joined the peace process in the current year.

A Safe House established for anti-government groups in Balkh

Afghanistan Daily, No 1328, Page Two, 23 February 2011

For the first time a Safe House was established and inaugurated for the armed anti-government groups who have joined the peace process in Balkh province on 22 February. This house which has the maximum capacity of 700 people was established in the center of Mazar.E.Sharif by international fund through the High Peace Council. Shir Zaman Saber Zadeh, the secretary of the High Peace Council told reporters in Balkh that a number of armed anti-government militants are residing in the secure house. According to him since the beginning of the current year up to the present, twenty one anti-government militants along with their weapons have joined the peace process in Balkh province.

These people have been linked to three groups in balk and Char-bolak districts of the Balkh province.

Essential factors to be avoided for the sake of peace

Afghanistan Daily, No 1329, Page Four, 24 February 2011

By: Rahin Farahmand

Recently the High Peace Council has expanded its efforts to expedite the peace process trend in the country, trying to prepare grounds more negotiations with the armed anti-government forces. Recently, it has paid some visits to neighboring countries through which it has been requested to

send a delegation to Guantanamo Jail for releasing a number of the Taliban members being held there. Meanwhile, a number of armed anti-government groups are trying to disrupt any negotiation effort through a new series of suicide attacks in different parts of the country. Taliban's attacks are a clear indication of their reluctance to join the peace process in the present moment. According to some scholars at least some of the activities of armed anti-government forces are directly controlled by groups beyond the borders of Afghanistan. Therefore, the government should not have burdened the government with heavy costs for holding several councils and gatherings within the country which brought in no achievement. This was one of the essential factors that needed to be avoided for the favor of the peace process. Another essential issue which needs to be taken into account is the role of international forces present in Afghanistan. The government should seek to have them prepare agreement and negotiations grounds with anti-government forces, though the question is how these forces could play a constructive role in the process? Although NATO backs up the peace process of Afghanistan with anti-government forces, their military missions and war tactics in Afghanistan have raised some concerns. It is believed that their actions may decrease the chance of negotiations with anti-government forces. From another perspective, while the government believes that the only key to peace crisis in Afghanistan is inter-afghan negotiations, the High Peace Council has practically resorted to other countries. As the final point it should be noted that for the purpose of the peace process, certain national interests and goals need to be redefined. The west did not want Afghanistan to turn into a safe haven for terrorists and it was the main reason behind the deployment of western forces to Afghanistan. Although this goal has been reached to some extent, there is no guarantee that Afghanistan is immune from becoming a safe haven for terrorists. Therefore, improper dealing with terrorists groups may endanger the government and have it threatened by some extremist forces. The return of these extremist forces to power means violation of human rights.

One- sided game of the peace process

Afghanistan Daily, No1329, Page Four, 24 February 2011

Normally in every game there are two teams or sides competing with each other while observing a certain framework of rules under the supervision of one or several referees and/or their assistances. Experts predict that the sole team in the one- sided game of the High Peace Council will be the loser. Because, through its poor non-political performances, it will lose all opportunities and privileges, thus it just adds up to its negative scores. At the present time this question exists as to whether the High Peace Council has reached any achievement so far? Is there any hope for the future performance of the council? Many believe that in this one sided game of the High Peace Council the negotiable party is not yet defined, secondly, the hypothetical parties of the negotiations have explicitly defined their positions against any negotiations, and thirdly, as yet, neither the government nor the High Peace Council have determined any rules for carrying out the negotiations; fourthly,

no agenda is set for negotiation, and fifthly red lines and flexible borders for discussion have not been determined. Thus, it would be so naive to be optimistic about the prospect of the peace in Afghanistan.

Due to all the confusions, ambiguities and flaws seen in the structure of the High Peace Council the prospect of peace is tarnished and doomed to failure. From its establishment onward, the High Peace Council has been privileges to Taliban. This approach of the council has been faced by bloody suicide attacks.

The trip of High Peace Council's Delegation to Ankara, evaluations and viewpoints

Eradeh Dially, No 988, Page one, 26 February 2011

Some experts believe that the delegation of High Peace Council will urge Turkey to establish a political office for negotiations with the Taliban in its country where the representatives of the Taliban would be able to meet freely with Afghan delegation of Hamid Karzia's government. A source of High Peace Council has told the media that the establishment of such office does not signify the recognition of the Taliban rather; it is an indication of Kabul and the west seriousness regarding negotiations with them. This initiative has coincided with the significant change in the policy of the United States which is negotiation with the Taliban in place of military approach. The members of High Peace Council hope to encourage the commandship of Taliban to join the negotiations. Mula Arsala Rahmani, a member of the High Peace Council who was a former minister in Taliban's regime says that the negotiations require a third country either a neighboring one or another.

Talibanization plan and a glance at Afghanistan's future

8 AM Daily, No 1095, Page Four, 26 February 2011

By: Shaker Mahriyar

Many believe that the issue of reconciliation with Taliban has turned into a political puzzle; however it is not a puzzle as it seems but a solution for another mysterious puzzle! The main perplexing issue is how some undeniable political rules should be modeled for the Taliban. The following reasons could be mentioned in support of the above argument:

Trend for normalization of relations and acquittal of Taliban: In the recent years we have witnessed that the government has not called the Taliban terrorists rather they have been called dissatisfied brothers.

The political rhetoric of the government with Taliban has been a conservative and distrustful; no criticizing rhetoric has been used to condemn or accuse the Taliban.

Political blackmailing of the Taliban has given rise to their political maneuvering and power.

Orienting affairs towards Pakistan has rendered the situation to the benefit of the Taliban.

Pro-Taliban trend has been strengthened by the political approach of Afghanistan under the title of "reconciliation" initiated with the establishment of High Peace Council, and by anti-western remarks and political opinions of Hamid Karzai and the political circles around him.

The role of Turkey in the peace process

Afghanistan Daily, NO 1330, Page Four, 26 February 2011

Recently, a delegation consisting of 10 members of the High Peace Council of Afghanistan went to Turkey to ask Ankara to act as an intermediary for political contacts with Taliban. The delegation will request Turkey to establish an office for negotiation in their country so as make it possible for the representative of Taliban to freely meet and discuss with the Afghan delegation.

Some believe that these efforts are taking place concurrently with the serious change in military trend of the United States towards the Taliban. Last week, Hilary Clinton, the US Secretary of State, emphasized the seriousness of diplomatic efforts for paving the way for peace and agreement in Afghanistan.

The plan for establishment of an office for the Taliban in Turkey was proposed by the President in September as he had a trip to that country. Mr. Karzai believes that by establishment of an office in Turkey, the government of Afghanistan will be able to take advantage of it. Turkish officials are emphasizing that this issue is still a plan and proposal. However, the US Secretary of State says it is the diplomatic goal of her country to help Afghanistan enter negotiations with those Taliban members who have evidently detachment themselves from Al-Qaida network.

It seems by leaning towards the establishment of the said office, the Taliban are trying to prove that some of their components are no longer linked with destructive and terrorist groups and they should not be viewed as terrorists any more. The positive role of Turkey in the last decades in the developments of Afghanistan is of utmost importance to Afghanistan.

However this fact should not be ignored that Turkey is not able to implement major and constructive works on its own, because the current crisis of Afghanistan is so complicated that it could not be solved merely by bringing some dissatisfied leaders of the Taliban out of the valleys and remote villages behind negotiation desk. Therefore, both the government and Turkey should not be ignorant of the profundity of Afghanistan's issues and they should not keep them at a distance.

Continuation and spread of civilian's death, peace process and violation of justice

Keramat Weekly, No 36, Page one, 26 February 2011

Over the last nine years, some elements within and outside of the country have been trying to promote this mindset that reconciliation with Taliban is the last solution for Afghanistan, thereby seeking to guarantee the perpetuity of their Mafia and economic interests.

Brutal massacre of the tens of civilians over the last two weeks, continuation of peace trend and its non-suspension due to ongoing massacre of innocent people, insinuate that this dilemma is bound to continue till the end of the adopted peace programs. Some people are making huge capital out of this situation. It has been proven that issuance of declarations condemning these massacres is merely a political trick. In practice, those committing such crimes are released or at least are living with immunity, while any attempt towards peace in the country should be based on stopping the massacre of civilians.

Peace around what pivot?

8 AM Daily, No 1096, Page Four, 27 February 2011

Author: Ehsanullah Duvlat Mardani

The trip of the delegation of the High Peace Council to Turkey and its effort for finding regional diplomatic solution indicates that it is the main political decision at leadership level of the government to put an end to the war with the Taliban. Yet the question remains as to for what fundamental goal the government of Afghanistan intends to reconcile with the Taliban.

Finding the answer to this question is important as it would reveal the final goal of the government and the degree of its commitment with regard to protection of the political, social and legal achievements gained over the last 10 years. If the final goal of the government is to reconcile with Taliban, then apparently it will be an easy task for the leadership of the government to sacrifice other achievements for that. However, if the main goal of the political leadership of the government is reaching democracy and sovereignty of the people of Afghanistan, the reconciliation with Taliban would lose its importance.

There is no doubt that at the present time the society emphasis the fact that the reconciliation with the Taliban should be limited to acceptance of democracy and democratic-based rights by the Taliban. However the quick pace of the government for reconciliation with the Taliban generates this worrying perception among the people that the government does not give any importance to this issue. The state officials believe that it is only the negotiation with the Taliban that would set them free from the dilemma of the Taliban. The fact that the Turkish officials have declared their readiness to cooperate with Afghanistan's peace process should not be considered more important than the perception and analysis existing within Afghanistan concerning the peace process. Because the assistance of the Turkish government or Pakistan or any other country can only be effective in reintegration of the Taliban and diminishing the war, however such assistance could never be viewed as the Afghan people's approval of their government's approach.

Taliban do not join the government rather the government joins them!

8am Daily, No 1096, Page Five, 27 February 2011

Author: Azhir Human

Constant efforts of the government to encourage the Taliban to

join the peace programs have proven the unwillingness of the government to fight off the remaining groups of the Taliban, contrary to what had been promised by the president saying: "we will push them (the Taliban) back to their terrorism nests beyond the borderlines".

Perhaps the government of Mr. Karzai by not cracking down of Taliban and by later calling them "brothers" was trying to use them in internal political equations and thereby strengthen its political balances. It seems this goal is still in place. The joining of a number of Taliban in Kunduz, Baghlan and northern province to police forces and other security organs is not whatsoever the result of brotherly and constant demands of the government and High Peace Council from the Taliban. Tens of Taliban forces have joined the government in Kunduz. However, evidence indicates that these elements of Taliban due to constant pressures and compulsions under the commandship of police from one side, and lack of job and their desperate conditions from other side, have joined the government.

These facts imply that the government should stop calling the Taliban "brothers" and give up the dream of Taliban's joining to the government. But it is not the case; by reviewing the recent developments it could be concluded that the Taliban do not join the government rather it is the government that joints them!

Enjil district of Herat province announced as peace zone

Afghanistan Daily, No1332, Page two, 28 February 2011

Local officials of Herat province say that all armed irresponsible groups in Enjil district have been disarmed and dissolved and no irresponsible person is in possession of a weapon.

Yet a number of residents in Enjil district have described this process as symbolic testifying that there are still some irresponsible armed people in the district.

The president joins the representative of Taliban in London!

Mondegar Daily, No 520, Page 1, 28 February 2001

Concurrent with the reports of covert meetings In London, the spokesperson of the president, reports of the trip of Hamid Karzai to Britain. He noted that the aim of this trip was to have some dialogs with British officials.

According to Siyamak Heravi, the aims of Afghanistan's President trip to London is to have dialogues with British officials on the reconciliation and negotiation with Taliban, transfer of security responsibilities to Afghan forces and strengthening the ties between the two countries. Meanwhile the media report of some Taliban leaders' negotiations with a number of officials of Afghan government in Britain.

Based on these reports, Farooq Wardak, the Minister of Education is representing Afghanistan, and those Taliban having tendency towards negotiations are represented by Abudulsalam

Zaif the former Taliban's ambassador to Islamabad. Mula Torjan and two other persons are representing the armed anti-government forces from Taliban side.

Turkey's cooperation for reconciliation with Taliban

Mandegar Daily, No 520, Page Eight, 28 February 2011

Turkey says it will assist Afghanistan in the peace process and integration of Taliban to normal life.

Turkish officials have promised Mr. Rabani, the Head of the High Peace Council that, they will provide support and help to Afghanistan in its peace process. After discussions, the Foreign Ministry of Turkey and Burhanuddin Rabani, in a joint resolution stated: "The government of Turkey shall assist the High Peace Council, as a leading Afghan entity which will regulate peace attempts in Afghanistan. Turkey is ready to support the initiatives taken by this council", while the last Christian calendar year, was one of the bloodiest year with maximum casualty rate of foreign forces based in Afghanistan. From another angle, in parallel with the initiation the serious attempts of High Peace Council of Afghanistan, the Taliban have started new round of attacks in the past few weeks which have led to the death of many security forces and civilians.

Provincial Council for Peace Established in Laghman province

Eslah Daily, No2154, Page Eight, 28 February 2011

In a gathering held to mark the inauguration of Provincial Council for Peace in Laghman province, Judge Mohammad Amin Vaghad as the head of the Public Awareness of the High Peace Council, emphasized the importance of the establishment of the High Peace Council in the country. He called on all the Jihadi commanders and representative of different ethnicities of the Khost province to cooperate with the government to reach peace in the country.

Elections Transparency

UNAMA:

“The independency of electoral institutions should be preserved”

8 AM Daily, No 1089, Page Three, 19 February 2011

While efforts for arresting Fazl Ahmad Manavi, the Head of Independent Election Commission and counting of vote boxes continue, the Independent Foundation of Fair and Free Elections of Afghanistan has voiced its concerns about possible violence- mixed interferences against electoral entities.

A credible source under the condition of anonymity told 8 AM Daily that following the tensions raised as a result of shutting down some polling stations at Central Office of Independent Election Commission and unhappiness of this commission about the decision of the Special Electoral Court, the Attorney General has decided to arrest Mr. Fazl Ahmad Manavi. While the officials of the Attorney General's Office talk about the agreement of the Independent Election Commission for recounting the ballots of disputed ballot boxes, the officials of the said commission declare their unawareness of such agreement. They have stated that they will only be ready to provide their assistance for investigation of criminal cases in accordance with Elections Law.

Meanwhile, Tabesh Forgh, the Deputy of the Spokesperson of the Independent Election Commission says he not aware of any agreement of this commission with the Special Electoral Court concerning the recounting of ballot boxes. Yet, he emphasized the readiness of the Independent Election Commission for dealing with criminal cases of the election process based on the Constitution and Elections Law. This official of the Independent Election Commission describes the unannounced and armed entrance of the Special Electoral Court's board to the commission as unlawful. He said that the election process had officially been finished.

Meanwhile, Sediqullah Haqiqi, the Head of the Special Election Tribunal has said that based on a judicial order of this tribunal the sealed off ballot boxes in 24 provinces about which dissatisfied candidates have disputed, will be investigated. The UNAMA office in Kabul has voiced its concerns regarding the sealing off of the ballot boxes by the Special Election Tribunal. UNAMA has stated it opposes any action that puts the electoral organs under question and challenges the transparency of the elections. It has also emphasized the independency of the electoral organs.

Interference of AG and weakening of legal organs

8 AM Daily, No 1089, Page Six, 19 February 2011

Recently, based on the order of the Attorney General the ballots



of the parliamentary elections have been sealed off. The AG has also ordered that the ballots of 12 other provinces be sealed off. This decision was taken by him as he claimed huge frauds have taken place in the last parliamentary elections. In addition, the AG has banned twenty one personnel of the Independent Election Commission who allegedly have been involved in the frauds, from leaving the country. Winning candidates of the last parliamentary elections call these elections fair and just, however a number of state officials are not satisfied with the results of the elections. Therefore, they are trying to bring some modifications to the results of the elections through the Special Electoral Tribunal dedicated to investigation of elections frauds. Yet, by sealing off the ballots in some provinces and the imposed ban on leaving the country of some personnel of the Independent Election Commission by the Attorney General, the Special Election Tribunal will function as it is expected from it.

The fate of the House of the Representatives in this week

Mandegar Daily, No 513, Editorial, 19 February 2011

As the Special Election Tribunal was constituted by the request of the Supreme Court and a decree of the President to deal with the election's complaints, many lawyers declared a clear viewpoint about it. They believe such tribunal contravenes the Constitution and other statutes of the country. Since it was not form the beginning, the aim of this tribunal to deal with legal issues of the election and it assumed a rather political characteristic and some power seeking people took up the position of backing it up to the extent possible.

They tried to create more tensions in the society by taking some

systematic actions. Therefore the Special Tribunal contrary to all applicable laws of the country, and with the aim of manipulating the results of parliamentary elections, has sealed off ballot boxes of some polling stations. Before this, those who were in pursuit of power had some unsuccessful efforts to enter the parliament and tried to take the control of election and ballots 'counting process. However they were stopped by different means the example of which is the quick move of the electoral entities against them, leaving them disappointed and provoked them to take revenge against election process. The current developments taking place around parliamentary elections find their roots at revengeful decisions of the power seeking people. Their decisions are an evident indication of their turning blind eye to tolerance and observance of law. The cause of such moves is clear; the power seeking elements have been placed in fragile positions, and the people and international community are realizing the fact that they do not have enough power to dominate the country. Indeed, this party lacked enough power from the very beginning however their inability was not apparent due to specific conditions prevailing in country at that time. After the passage of several years and expansion of democratic structures in the country, it has been proven that political outcomes have been formed around a circle whose sole concern is monopoly of the government and turning it to Mafia-based and tyrannical government.

The position adopted by UNAMA is irresponsible

Afghanistan Daily, No 1325, Page Two, 20 February 2011

Through a communiqué, the Attorney General has shown his reaction to the position adopted by the UNAMA office in Kabul regarding the sealing off the ballot boxes and shutting down of polling stations. This communiqué states: "the Judicial Branch is an independent organ of the government and it has the jurisdiction to investigate any cases brought before it by legal and natural persons based on the law, and as stipulated in Article 122 of the Constitution, no law can, under any circumstances, exclude any case or area from the jurisdiction of the judicial organ as defined in this chapter and submit it to another authority". This communiqué describes the positions taken up by the UNAMA office in Kabul as irresponsible and attributed it to UNAMA's lack of access to the facts. According to the communiqué the position of the UNAMA will disturb the public opinion. The communiqué of AG is important because there were many issues regarding the difference of opinion among Afghanistan and its international partners in the past, yet this is the first time that, UNAMA as an impartial and public spirited organ, experiences serious criticizing attacks.

Recounting of Elections' Ballots started

Afghanistan Daily, No 1325, Page Two, 20 February 2011

The Attorney General has said that the recounting of elections' ballots has been started in twelve provinces to address frauds

accusations. According to AGO, the recounting process of ballots in other provinces is due to be started within the next couple of days.

According to AGO the ballots recounting process will be carried out by a commission comprising of fourteen entities linked with elections, including Independent Election Commission, MOI, Judicial Branch, Civil Society and some other entities. In this process the AGO will have a monitoring role. Last week the Special Electoral Tribunal sealed off ballot boxes in polling stations.

The Special Election Tribunal becomes problematic

Subut Weekly, No 11, Editorial, 20 February 2011

These days the issue of election has been overshadowed by the actions of the Special Electoral Tribunal. In the recent days, 83 members of the House of the Representatives have been summoned by the said Tribunal. This move was faced by serious reactions of the members and the House of Representative ratified a Three-Article Draft on Abolition of the Special Tribunal and submitted it to the President. The Special Election Tribunal and the entities supporting it, accuse the independent Election Commission of frauds and breach of laws. Since no entity or person could definitely be accused of a crime, the Independent Election Commission may not be totally accused of frauds. Anyhow, an entity which has the support of the government can execute its intended actions in any manner regardless of the consequences they may have. The coincidence of the actions of the Special Election Tribunal with the House of Representatives being without a chairman is, indeed, a political and systematic event and it should not be considered as an unexpected and sudden one. However it could be foreseen that once the decisions of the tribunal have been finalized, the country will face a worse crisis at a heavy cost.

Manavi:

"I will not surrender to force!"

Mandegar Daily, No 516, Page One, 22 February 2011

The Head of the Independent Election Commission says: the "armed attack" of the AGO and the Police on the commission is an unlawful act and this commission will not surrender to any force. He also said the he was ready to go to prison through legal channel.

Election tensions raised when two senior members of the Independent Election Commission were debarred from their duties and ballot boxes were sealed off by the AGO. Fazl Ahmad Manavi, the Head of the Independent Election Commission at a press conference in Kabul held on February 21th, seriously criticized the armed attack on the commission. On February 20th, the AGO through a letter suspended the duties of the Abdullah Ahmad Zai, the Head of the Secretariat of the Independent Election Commission who is also a commissioner of the said commission. Additionally, over 20

senior members of the commission have been banned from leaving the country by the AGO.

Mr. Manavi said he would not let the AGO and the Special Election Tribunal to manipulate and bring modifications to the ballot boxes unless they use force to do so. The Head of the Independent Election Commission also said, the AGO along with other state organs while being backed up with national army and national security forces, illegally attacked a polling station in Badakhshan province and took the control of the said polling station.

Ludin and Manavi: Privilege and Revenge

Kabul Weekly, No 444, Page Six, 23 February 2011

Azizullah Ludin, the former Head of the Independent Election Commission has recently been assigned as the Head of the Office for the Monitoring the Anti-Administrative Corruption Strategy. Meanwhile, Fazl Ahmad Manavi, the Head of the Independent Election Commission, has been banned from leaving the country by judicial organs. In fact, the accusation attributed to Manavi and his colleagues are similar to the accusations attributed to Azizullah Ludin during the presidential elections. So far judicial organs have not been able to find Manavi guilty. Confirmation of about 1 millions and 3 hundred thousands of forged ballots in the last presidential elections which brought about the second round of the elections, led to the dismissal of Ludin from his position.

The accusations made against Ludin are by far more severe than those being made against Manavi these days. We recall that the foundation stone of frauds was laid in the last presidential elections; and the imperviousness of the government and judicial system to all the then widespread frauds, inspired a number of parliamentary candidates to make frauds in the elections. So, if you are making frauds in favor of the President you will not be threaten by any threat. In addition to that, you will not be sued by the AGO and Judicial System and you can gain some privileges as well!

International Crisis Group: “Special Electoral Tribunal should be abolished immediately”

8 AM Daily, No 1094, Page Eight, 24 February 2011

The Lower House, through a resolution ratified on February 12th, urged the President and the Supreme Court to abolish the Special Electoral Tribunal. This decision has given rise to emergence of a likely tension among three Branches of the government.

The International Community and Afghan Leaders should well comprehend the current dead-end emerged in the country. The President Hamid Karzai should give a positive respond to the request of the Lower House for the abolition of the Special Election Tribunal. In general, the government must immediately start brining reforms to fragile state entities. Further, the government should bring some fundamental reforms to the

election process and amend the Constitution in order to strengthen the division of power among the three government Branches of Executive, Legislative and Judicial. And finally, state entities in provinces and districts should be strengthened in order to serve the people more properly.

How far will the Special Election Tribunal go?

Mandegar Daily, No 519, Page Eight, 27 February 2011

Finally, the Special Election Tribunal targeted the Independent Election Commission and it seems this tribunal is determined to continue investigating election issues till the last order of the President.

All candidates had declared that the Special Election Tribunal would fail in resolving the election issues, as they believed the said tribunal was rather a ceremonial tribunal formed by the order of the President having no legal basis. However, as expected the Special Tribunal continued its work and followed the preset guidelines. In its latest act, the members of the tribunal invaded the Independent Election Commission and took control of all the affairs of the election process. This led to the subsiding of the complaints of dissatisfied candidates, so now they are waiting for the final results of the ballots recounting process carried out by the Special Election Tribunal. In fact Mr. Karzai wanted to reach his goals and schemes using guns and coercion. To that end, he is even giving rise to the parliament's crisis so that the parliament won't be able to determine its chairman until the end of the pronouncement of the final result by the Special Election Tribunal. It seems the Special Election Tribunal will bring remarkable changes by its thorough investigation thereby creating anarchy in the country.

Recounting of ballots and investigation of election violations started in Nurestan

Cheragh Daily, No 25, Page One, 27 February 2011

Recounting process of ballots and investigation of election frauds have been started in Nurestan province. The delegation dispatched from Kabul led by Mohammad Musa Madani monitors the recounting process. In the first working day of the ballots recounting process, Jamaludin Badr, the governor of Nurestan promised to cooperate with the delegation in accordance with law in order to prevent law violations.

Speaking in the presence of the dispatched delegation, Mr Badr ensured that the alleged frauds would be seriously investigated and people's elected candidates would finally go to the parliament. It is not yet definite for how long this process will take, though the dispatched delegation promised to investigate even the most minor violations.

Recount of ballots started in 4 provinces

Afghanistan Daily, No 1332, Page two, 28 February 2011

Officials of Special Electoral Tribunal for investigation of frauds

and irregularities of the elections say the recounting process of the ballots of both the winning and dissatisfied candidates started on 27 February in four the provinces of Kapisa, Herat, Nurestan and Kabul.

Sediquallah Haqiq, the head of the tribunal at press conferences on 27 February said: "the recounting of ballots has been started in four provinces as it had been started in eight provinces of Badakhshan, Paktiya, Helmand, Khost, Samangan, Kunar, Takhar, and Baghlan". He added, so far this Special Election Tribunal has investigated about 217 case files in 24 provinces and around 38 case files were investigated in the six provinces of Farah, Ghor, Bamiyan, Nimroz, Badghes and Maydan Wardak with the presence of a delegation of the tribunal; in addition Daykundi, Ghazni and Urozgan provinces which had about 25 case files together with Pajshir provinces with no case file, were investigated with the presence of a delegation from the said tribunal.

Corruption

Ludin's efforts paid off!

Mandegar Daily, No 514, Page One, 20 February 2011

The selection of Dr Ludin as the Head of the Office of Monitoring the Implementation of Anti Administrative Corruption, will not resolve the current challenges arising from widespread corruption in the country, rather it will create more of them and as a result, the government of Mr. Karzai will collapse.

Having this mindset, political scholars believe since the inception of Mr. Karzai's administration up to the present, neither competency and eligibility nor national devotion to the country has been a matter of consideration for assigning people in high ranking positions.

Ludin, who was assigned as the Head of the Office of Monitoring the Implementation of Anti Administrative Corruption Strategy a few days ago, was the head of Independent Election Commission, during the last year's presidential election time. Mohammad Fazel Sancharak, the spokesperson of Afghan National Front says: "as long as the corrupt hands of high ranking are not cut off, and as long as there is no change in the will of the ruling power, such symbolic institutions will not be able to do a positive deed even if they are candid and committed to do so, because fighting with corruption in Afghanistan is a very difficult and complicated task. Shah Abdulla Afzali, a member of the Parliament says: "if the State is to tackle with administrative corruption, then judicial organs will be the best source to resolve this dilemma. Because there is evidentiary evidence to prove for example a so and so minister or a governor was not affluent prior to assuming his position.

Coordination between the government and international agencies may uproot corruption in the country

Anis Daily, No 255, Editorial, 20 February 2011

Dr.Azizullah Ludin has started his work as the head of the Office of Monitoring the Implementation of Anti Administrative Corruption Strategy. Designation of Mr. Ludin in this position happens when there are many arguments regarding the existence of administrative corruption, as a chronic dilemma in the country. Judging from the history, the government of Afghanistan has always taken some approaches to cope with this phenomenon trying to uproot this vice issue by all its capabilities. If we take a deep look at the issue it will be cleared that the administrative corruption in the country has some external roots. Afghan officials have repeatedly noted the fact that some international organizations function in parallel with the government and some contracts signed by them lack

transparency and they are not answerable to any (Judicial) organ. In addition, a great deal of foreign donation funds is spent by such organizations. This plays a significant role in expanding administrative corruption in the country.

Administrative corruption, an everlasting puzzle

8 Am Daily, No 1092, Page 4, February 22 2011

Dr.Azizullah Ludin, the new Head of the Office of Monitoring the Implementation the Anti-Administrative Corruption Strategy, stated that he was going to increase the salaries of the state employees as a starting step towards tackling administrative corruption. Mr.Ludin has stated that he will attempt to initiate a joint effort with the Finance Ministry in this regard. Fighting with administrative corruption has assumed a very complicated aspect, here in Afghanistan. Despite numerous efforts claimed to have been made for dealing with it by different government organs, no remarkable achievement has been reached so far.

The replacement taken place in the head of the aforesaid office is an issue about which we should be neither optimistic nor pessimistic and it would still be difficult and rather impossible, to comment about it and predict its outcome. If the causing factors of the increasing administrative corruption in Afghanistan were known, it would be possible to embark on an effective and fruitful fight against it.

Administrative corruption has inseparable roots of avarice attitude, being the overwhelming attitude among people in the country at the present time. What is noticeable with regard to this issue is its infectious nature infecting the high ranking officials down to the ordinary citizens. This issue has been a major barrier in uprooting the corruption in the society. If failure in fighting against narcotics is a focal point for discussion, it will be realized that there had been some serious unknown obstacles associated with some criminal intention hindering the fighting efforts.

Attorney General:

"we cannot deal with powerful people!"

8 AM Daily, No 1097,Page One, 28 February 2011

The Attorney General of Afghanistan says he is facing with some challenges in order to arrest and bring into justice the former government officials who are accused of administrative corruption.

Mr.Rahmatullah Nazari, the Deputy Attorney General of Afghanistan said on February 27th, at the Countrywide Conference of Afghanistan's Prosecutors that the lack of security is one of the challenges faced by the Attorney General's Office.

Mr. Nazari Said: "there are some people who have been found guilty inside the country; however, they are living in foreign countries. The officials of those countries refuse to hand them over to the government of Afghanistan."

He continued to say: "expropriation of lands by powerful people is another problem of the Attorney General's Office".

Articles & Interviews



Afghanistan; The war economy and the endless circle of conflicts

By Saifuddin Saihon; Professor at Economics Faculty/ Kabul University

The on-going, long-lasting and resurgent conflicts in Afghanistan and endless insurgency of belligerent factions aimed at fortifying their position and hegemony for looting public properties, and transcendence over economic resources, taking money by force, killing innocent people by the name of totalitarian and justifying ideologies have resulted into extensive devastations. Continued insurgencies in the wake of interferences of foreign elements and expansion of resistance against those elements caused into some negative consequences such as collective massacre and the "burning farm policy". This fact has revitalized the sense of revenge in Afghanistan barbarian and traditional society and to heal the wounds originating from atrocities, there has been no attitude based on mutual understanding or any cultural and civil mechanism in place to strengthen the spirit of forgiveness. Under domination of war elements criminal liability of serious offenders has also been ignored from legal perspective.

Continuance of current constant war has its roots in the era of Cold War in which the west and U.S supported- at any cont- this endless war against increasing invasion of the Soviet Union. Establishment of religious schools beyond the eastern borders of the country, expansion of military bases, distribution of financial and weaponry resources coupled with ideological and political pursuance, the sense of liberalism among Afghans and fight against exported theories in the light of religious and ideological understandings are considered to the core motives behind Afghan mass uprisings. Undoubtedly, weaponry and financial aids of external circles and unbreakable ties of belligerent parties with traditional economy and collecting obligatory taxes, banditry, looting public properties, persuading and generating poppy cultivation, smuggling illegal drugs and collecting custom duties were also the sources of financing war in the past and present. In this long-lasting conflict both of the belligerent factions depend on financial and weaponry aids of supportive countries. Simultaneous with ideological propagandas, the financial power of contributing countries also started to flow. Victory in this battle is also subject to financial and weaponry supports in this regard. The more the parties had access to further facilities or foreign financial aids, selling precious stones, smuggling ancient monuments and illegal drugs, the better and easier they could attain power.

Ruling of parties affiliated to totalitarian and exclusivist strangers and Taliban networks was basically dependent on financial aids of the foreigners. They had the local and

international resources under their control. They show off in city centers through establishment of high buildings and luxurious apartments, consumption economy, seizing and looting private and state properties.

Dependency of Holy War fighters on foreign money and weaponry was coupled with their desire to collect wealth and pelf. This dependency which was formed through financial resources and collusion of foreign interfering circles, transformed the social fabric of traditional society too. With appearance of new fighters, the landlords, capitalists and craftsmen were excluded from the ring of competition and they had to abandon the county in the wake of threats and escalation of insecurity.

This is more than clear that peace is the precondition for every development and national reconciliation can also be institutionalized in close relation to justice. Building confidence, understanding and peace is linked to fair trial of major suspects of crimes against humanity, compensation to victims and restitution of their prestige.

Since there was no transparent and accountable mechanism, funds given by contributing countries were transferred to bank accounts of some limited number of militia fighters and Taliban.

After involvement of the international community in Afghanistan, this country while struggling between tradition and modernism this time again bogged down in an endless confusing circle of

backwardness, traditionalism and desperateness. The superficial counterinsurgency strategy of Afghanistan international partners resulted into failure of the most important development agendas such as state- building, rule of law, reconstruction and economic growth and finally security, peace and social development to materialize during the last ten years.

Political mechanism inspired by Bonn Agreement that mainly entailed belligerent factions and monarchial parties, resulted to establishment of a corporation government financed with easy-come wealth, and all political-economic pyramids were confined in some particular hands. Centralization of power and wealth, secular approach to politics, weakness in reviewing security crisis, economic and social abnormalities of transitional era,

domination of local bullies over the power, severe social polar and interferences of the foreign elements pushed the government in such a tight corner that during this period it has not been able to accumulate and centralize necessary capital for financing ordinary and operational projects. Foreign budgets are also provided by contributing countries. The government is weak to pay salary of its employees. It is not able to provide outfits, weaponry and financial aid for ANA, ANP and security entities.

In such a chaotic circumstance and non- functionality of political branch, poverty, unemployment, lack of employment opportunities, difficulties in earnings and inattention to economy-generating sectors are the consequences of current ineffective government.

In a circumstance where the peoples' hope for responsible and responsive government has dashed away and futile struggles of Afghanistan international partners in the campaign against insurgency and terrorism is also being viewed as ineffective, and with consideration of the U.S warnings and deadlines set for President Karzai to clean his administration and to undertake further accountability in campaign against administrative corruption, aid accountability and demonstration of competency for effective government for realization of which hopes have also crashed away, as well as with taking into account resentment of Mr. Karzai resulting from accusations and pressures of the western media, there seems that all the above factors have added further pulse in Karzai's resistance and will to restore peace at any cost. The peace-talk policy was accepted in Kabul and Landon conferences also and the international community in Lisbon summit also underlined gradual withdrawal of its security forces. The agenda of peace-talks with Taliban and armed insurgents with convening Loya Jirga (grand counsel) and establishment of Peace High Counsel has also got hot and serious.

It seems that the United States and NATO members are supporting the initiative of Afghan government to talk and reconcile with insurgents but, this is clear that they don't want Taliban or terrorist groups to turn Afghanistan into a safe haven for their terrorist activities. I think part of Afghanistan and her international partners' failure to assure security, peace and social and economic development is linked to not investing enough in areas of state- building, nation- building, sustainable development and social justice. The current conservative economic approach of Afghan government has also contributed to its failure to provide basic services for citizens, support livelihood, create employment opportunities and improve the agriculture and livestock in order to reduce poverty.

Rule of law isn't exercised and local administrations are filled with corrupt and unprofessional staff. Meanwhile, increasing networks of narcotics, distribution of funds and facilities by regional elements to insecure the country, has continued during years in the region and elements of such networks have been active at both regional and international levels.

The policy of reintegrating armed insurgents into government which has gained support from the international community as

well includes reintegration of Taliban fighters into society as political partners, providing employment opportunity for illegal armed men who lay down their guns as well as distribution of land and recruiting them in Afghanistan armed and police forces. Currently thousands of villages and hundreds of Afghan cities with poor security situations have been covered by the reintegration program and the potential negotiators – even the fake ones- are being granted packages of cash by government and relevant international institutions!

In a situation where increasing conflict and insecurity is overwhelming the country transition from conflict to peace and national reconciliation would be considered as a dominant dialogue. This is more than clear that peace is the precondition for every development and national reconciliation can also be institutionalized in close relation to justice. Building confidence, understanding and peace is linked to fair trial of major suspects of crimes against humanity, compensation to victims and restitution of their prestige.

Peace- talks can only reach a constructive result when parties to a conflict understand that their objectives can't be achieved through military means. This situation would be created only when the insurgents are denied internal and external supports. As the result, one has to say that peace isn't only a national agenda; it rather is an international and regional agenda. Thus, starting imperfect initiatives, curtailed and short- term struggles aimed at short- term gains would be misguiding the public and would also endanger the country's future.

New publications

Afghanistan's Elections Stalemate

International Crisis Group / February 23, 2011

The prolonged crisis over Afghanistan's parliamentary elections has further undermined President Hamid Karzai's credibility. He is now even more isolated politically than he was after his dubious re-election in 2009. The Wolesi Jirga was inaugurated on 26 January 2011, following a lengthy standoff that exposed sharp political fault lines, which could plunge the country deeper into not just political but armed conflict. Clashes between the executive, legislature and judiciary over the results of the polls are paralysing government and weakening already fragile institutions. Constitutional review is long overdue, and failure to implement changes that reinforce the separation of powers will only further weaken the state's ability to provide security or good governance. If public confidence is to be restored, the president and Supreme Court must disband a special tribunal that was created to adjudicate elections complaints but lacks a clear legal mandate. The new parliament must also immediately place electoral and constitutional reform at the top of its agenda. If left unaddressed, the current political crisis will stoke ethnic tensions and could drive disenfranchised Afghans into the arms of the Taliban.

[http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/B117%20Afghanistans%20Elections%20Stalemate.ashx](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/B117%20Afghanistans%20Elections%20Stalemate.ashx)

Shelters in the Storm: The Controversy over Women's Safehouses

Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN) / by Sari Koutu / February 18, 2011

The Afghan government accuses women's shelters of corruption, while women's rights advocates criticize the government for believing rumors rather than facts and succumbing to the pressure of conservatives. Whatever the outcome of this controversy, the victims are likely to be the women who have sought refuge in the shelters - most of them fleeing situations of extreme violence. AAN Senior Analyst Sari Koutu analyzes the shelter controversy. With support from Political Researcher Obaid Ali.

<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=1503>

Afghan prosecutors seize vote data: officials

AFP / February 14, 2011

Government prosecutors and police stormed into election commission offices in Kabul on Monday to seize control of vote data, accusing the body of not cooperating with a probe into fraud, officials said.

The raid was ordered by a special tribunal, which Afghan President Hamid Karzai assigned to investigate alleged fraud in Afghanistan's controversial parliamentary elections in September, they said.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iZwhzy3hQvvawV6JB4Inf8GWwOfA?docId=CNG.9d00ea2df5d6129be7cac650dbbd7208.1f1>

U.S.-Taliban Talks

The New Yorker / by Steve Coll / February 28, 2011

On August 22, 1998, Mullah Omar, the emir of Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, made a cold call to the State Department. The United States had just lobbed cruise missiles at Al Qaeda camps in his nation. Omar got a mid-level diplomat on the line and spoke calmly. He suggested that Congress force President Bill Clinton to resign. He said that American military strikes "would be counter-productive," and would "spark more, not less, terrorist attacks," according to a declassified record of the call. "Omar emphasized that this was his best advice," the record adds.

http://www.newyorker.com/talk/comment/2011/02/28/110228taco_talk_coll

Building Afghan Peace from the Ground Up

The Century Foundation / February 2011

This paper strives to capture Afghan perspectives on the state and governance, the nature of civil society, and the role of the international community. It also explores the prospects for peace with the insurgency and draws out the implications for Western strategy. The data is based on a series of consultations with community, religious, and tribal leaders; NGO and community activists; teachers and educators; and students and youth leaders. In total, the research brings together the stories, experiences, and perspectives of more than two hundred Afghan residents from Baghlan, Balkh, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Khost, and Nangarhar. The paper has three main findings. First, Afghans are considerably more sophisticated than is usually assumed. The experience of thirty

years of war and displacement has disrupted old identities, changed assumptions about the traditional and the modern, and reinforced the idea of the Afghanistan nation. Second, Afghans regard civil society not as NGOs or urban intellectuals, but rather as all those citizens concerned about the public good as opposed to private or sectarian interests. Third, there is a growing belief that the pervasive insecurity is less a result of conflict between the government and its international allies, on the one side, and insurgents and al Qaeda on the other, and more a mutually reinforcing enterprise in which various armed actors collude in predatory and criminal behavior.

<http://tcf.org/publications/2011/2/building-afghan-peace-from-the-ground-up/pdf>

Fear of Warlords' Return as Anti-Taliban Militias Clash

The Guardian / February 16, 2011

The dramatic build up of a controversial anti-Taliban militia that many Afghans fear could revive the country's detested warlords has had to be suspended in a key district of Helmand amid outbreaks of fighting between different groups. The local defence programme, which is similar to others that have been heavily promoted by US supreme commander David Petraeus as essential to beating the Taliban, has also been put on hold amid concern that the informal police force, with 800 men, is already bigger than the official police and could threaten government authority. US marines in the former Taliban stronghold of Marjah say they are using the same approach they successfully employed with 'awakening' councils during the Iraq war. But problems are starting to show: the district governor, Abdul Mutalib, last week called in leaders of the 30 groups of up to 50 gunmen to make them sign up to stricter rules of behaviour.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/feb/16/afghans-fear-return-of-warlords>

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The Afghanistan Watch is an independent, non-governmental and non-political organization registered with the Ministry of National Economy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. It envisions a democratic, peaceful, tolerant and just society in which all citizens have equal opportunities to realize their human potentials.

Its mission is to undertake activities that will promote peace, justice, and a culture of mutual tolerance and respect for human rights in Afghanistan. As its core values the organization is strongly committed to democracy, justice, human rights, sustainable and balanced social and economic development of the country and impartiality, independence and professionalism as guiding principles of its activities.

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