

DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY COMMITTEE



THE ISSUE OF **AFGHANISTAN**

UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL Mohammad Ruzain Bin İsmail

> **ACADEMIC ASSISTANT** Vedat Babatan





LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Highly esteemed participants,

I am Hüseyin Hikmet Fındık, a junior student at TED University, under the Department of Computer Engineering. I proudly would like to welcome you all to the TEDUMUN Training and Development Conference 2021, which we all believe will lead to a lot of new beginnings. While thinking about a training and development conference, it is impossible not to refer to what annoys us in real life. There is no doubt that day by day, the 21st century shows us the value of equality, democracy, justice, and every democratic norm that we deeply needed for peaceful communities. In the Turkey of the 21st century, it is obvious that we are stumbling at every single one of those values. These values create an environment that makes us happy, peaceful. It has been hard, sad, and desperate for us to see every single democratic norm being violated one by one, every day, right in front of our eyes.

When he first stepped into Havza, Samsun, while everything around was worse than ever, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk said "They do not want to kill us, they want to put us into the grave alive. We are now at the edge of the pit. One last tenacity can save us.". When the hope ends, tenacity begins. Today is the day to show that tenacity to build a better society, to build a better Turkey, and to build a better world. On this road, we believe that we need every single piece of an idea to ensure the rights of every single one of us.

It has been hard for the whole world to solve and maintain peace in Afghanistan. After all those years of external intervention, now we have the worst. This long-lasting problem can be only solved by understanding the motivation and challenges that Afghani people had live in those last years. I hope this committee can make you feel the empathy for a place far far away. I would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General Mr. Mohammad Ruzain Bin İsmail for quick help and efforts that he gave. He created a comprehensive guide on such a hard topic in a really short period of time. See you all at the conference.

Sincerely.

Hüseyin Hikmet Fındık

Secretary-General of TEDUTRAIN'21

LETTER FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL

Dear Esteemed Delegates,

I welcome you to the TED University MUN Training and Development Conference 2021. My name is Mohammad Ruzain Bin Ismail from Brunei Darussalam. I am a 3rd Year Petroleum Engineering student at Politeknik Brunei, and will be interning under the Geology Department of Universiti Brunei Darussalam next year. For TEDUTRAIN 2021, I will be serving as the Under-Secretary-General of the Disarmament and Security Committee (DISEC).

For DISEC, the topic of discussion outlines the issue taking place in Afghanistan, to which the context primarily converges towards the de facto authorities of the Taliban ruling. With the recent events taking place, it has shown the world the defective capacity of the Taliban to govern the nation.

Pertaining to the technicalities of DISEC, I would recommend the delegates to first understand the pre and post events, mainly identifying the context of governance, military groups and/or insurgencies, involving UN bodies jointly with relevant state and non-state actors. This is to grasp the basic idea of the core problems which significantly contributes to the current status quo of Afghanistan. Relative to that, determining past ineffective actions, especially in the process of deploying UN Peacekeeping troops in the area, is crucial, hence delegates must have a sense of urgency to cooperate with one another to ensure the solutions presented will have the highest probability of success upon the matter.

That is all from me as of now, and although I am unable to be physically present in the conference, I hope upon your utmost effort to participate in ensuring substantive and informative debate sessions. And lastly, I would like to thank the Academic Assistant of DISEC, Vedat Babatan, for his notable contribution to this committee document.

Yours Sincerely,

Mohammad Ruzain Bin Ismail
Under-Secretary-General of DISEC

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I. Introduction to the GA-1: DISEC

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) is the first committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). This committee focuses on demilitarization, global security, identification of threats to the international community, and ideating a mutual approach to systematically solve the existing crises.

It takes into account all disarmament and international security issues within the Charter's applicability or pertaining to the powers and functions of any other UN organ; guiding principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as principles governing disarmament and armament regulation; and advancement of cooperative arrangements and measures designed to strengthen stability through lower levels of military equipment usage.

Bear in mind that DISEC is under the General Assembly, hence its overall mandate concerning any security matters and/or final decision making is limited to discussions. DISEC consists of two reporting bodies, as follows:

A. Disarmament Commission

The Disarmament Commission gathers every three years in New York for three weeks of legislative and committee discussions. The Commission's activity is commonly subdivided into two working groups, each of which concentrates on one topic from a wide variety of disarmament concerns for that session, one of which must involve nuclear disarmament. At least once a year, the Commission submits a report to the General Assembly through the First Committee.

B. Conference on Disarmament

Although the Conference on Disarmament is not an official subsidiary body under the United Nations, such body still provides an annual report to the UN, and discuss on several issues; (i) Nuclear war prevention, (ii) Transparency and robustness in disarmament strategies, and (iii) Identification of new model of mass weapons and machineries.

II. Agenda Item: The Issue of Afghanistan

Overseeing the historical context and systematic downfall of the previous Afghanistan government, the fundamental aspect of the topic at hand is not just inclusive of security matters, but additionally focusing on internal and external implications of the Afghan conflict. To grasp the general overview of the issue of Afghanistan, it primarily is caused by past insurgencies (mentioned in Section IV: Historical background), and how both the previous government and external interventions have somewhat contributed to the paradigm shift of the nation.

Referencing a statement by the UN Special Representative and Head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, Deborah Lyons, despite acknowledging a constructive meeting with the de facto authorities of the Taliban, such progress could not dismiss the ongoing trust deficit defined by their actions. Without any urgent external military assistance to secure the rights of the people to safety and resist any form of torture, the continuity of human rights contravention will be a permanent integration to the current ideology of the Taliban. Therefore, resolving any form of hostility within and around the region requires cooperation from relevant member states.

The major problem, as stated earlier, is the trust deficit, which determines the extent of assistance provided by other member states. Hence, the relevant state and non-state actors

must establish a common ground with the Taliban representatives to re-establish Afghanistan as a functioning state. Although the core principles of DISEC is coherent on the subject of disarmament, determining other overlooked aftermaths of the conflict should be considered. On the basis that it is not within reach of the body's mandate, it is then urgent to allocate other high-power UN bodies to act as collaborators to tackle the following problems below:

A. Multiple secessionist ambition

Post-Taliban ruling, the region will have a power sharing system between the existing militant groups besides the Taliban themselves throughout the nation.

In such instances, there is lack of mutual trust and possibility of shifting alliances, thus this itself will create a probable issue amidst the current ones. For example, several military factions have implemented an independent control of certain regimes in Afghanistan; the Uzbek militia led by Rashid Dostum and the Hazara-based Hezb-e Wahdat (Unity Party), have been looking towards federation-like structures.

Thus, if the Taliban fails to secure a centralized power over the region, other militant groups might carry out insurgencies.

B. War economy

As the state's security is undermined by the deteriorating loss of public goods and supply chain capacity, the Taliban aims to be less reliant on external dependence on economy and military finance. This act of gain is based on looting of weapons, resources, and military technologies on every act of successful offence.

The significance of the offences carried out is due to the previous government's lack of control to sustain economic rationalism, especially amongst those from the poor and underprivileged. To this, the Talibans have applied psychological warfare as a mindset to recruit those from the underprivileged groups, and subsequently allowing them to loot as a form of incentive.

To relate the mandate of DISEC to this issue, it is the matter of governance and capacity to mitigate the offences properly, considering the difference in military power of the previous government.

C. Over surge of refugees

Humanitarian crises are looming, especially on the subject of displacement rife. As per the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) statement in September 2021, 600 000 Afghans were displaced this year.¹

Hence, the matter of deploying UN Peacekeeping troops should be alloted along the borders. This is to upkeep security to those fleeing from the Taliban ruling, thus adopting the UN Charter, Chapter VII: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression. But bear in mind that only the Security Council can carry out the contents upon the charter, especially in the aspect of United Nations peacekeeping operations and conflict prevention. Therefore, the importance of collaborating with other UN bodies with a more functioning mandate is viable and more effective.

¹ UN News. (2021). 'Major' humanitarian crisis looms in Afghanistan, as UN convenes fundraising conference. United Nations. Retrieved from: https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/09/1099112

Conclusively, the primary and secondary issues have been outlined and will be explained further in Section V: The Current State of Afghanistan.

III. Historical Background

To understand the historical structure and constructivism which highlights the main and subevents of the Afghanistan-Taliban Conflict, this section will be divided in accordance with the time and details:

[1992]

• With the help of rebellious government forces, the Mujahideen and other rebel organizations invade Kabul, removing Najibullah from power. The acclaimed guerilla leader Ahmad Shah Masood leads the army into the capital. Najibullah is offered protection by the United Nations. The Mujahadeen, a group that is already fracturing as warlords struggle over Afghanistan's future, construct a predominantly Islamic state led by scholar Burhannudin Rabbani.

[1995]

The establishment of a newly Islamic military group, Taliban.

[1997]

 Public execution of Najibullah by the Taliban. Ethnic groups in the north, led by Masood's Northern Alliance, and ethnic groups in the South, assisted by Hamid Karzai, continue to fight the Taliban from further controlling regions of Afghanistan.

[2001]

- The Taliban placed eight Western relief workers on trial prior to their release for propagating Christianity a month after detaining them. Proselytizing is punishable by death under Taliban control.
- The Northern Alliance reaches Kabul after weeks of warfare with Taliban forces.
 Taliban fighters escape southwest toward Kandahar. Taliban militants flee Kandahar, their last bastion in Afghanistan, as the paramilitary group's grip on the country deteriorates. Taliban leaders surrendered their final Afghan region, the province of Zabul two days after militant withdrawal from Kandahar.

[2003]

 In August, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) took over enforcement in Kabul amidst worsening conflict. The operation is the security organization's first outside of Europe commitment.

[2006]

NATO advances its peacekeeping mission to the southern part of Afghanistan, despite
prolonged conflict between Taliban and al-Qaeda members and Afghan government
forces. Taliban insurgents conduct a devastating wave of suicide strikes and incursions
against international troops after the forces take over from American-led forces.

[2013]

 NATO personnel pass over all military and security responsibilities to the Afghan government.

[2019]

- The United States and the Taliban reach an agreement on a peace treaty that will serve as the basis for the United States' departure from Afghanistan by May 2021.
- As of September, former U.S President Donald Trump nullified the Peace Treaty as per the killing incident of a U.S Soldier.

[2021]

- Unannounced withdrawal of the U.S troops from the Bagram airfield, no prior notification to the new Afghan commander of the base.
- Collapse of the Afghanistan government post Taliban takeover of Kabul.
- Thousands of Afghans attempt to exit the nation following the Taliban's takeover, and two suicide attacks occur outside the Kabul airport. The airstrikes resulted in at least 169 Afghans and 13 US personnel. The explosions were claimed by the extremist organization ISIS-K, a division group under ISIS, which uses the "K" to correspond to an ancient name for Afghanistan, Khorasan.

IV. The Current State of Afghanistan

Pertaining to the Taliban's takeover overriding the governance of Afghanistan, such instability has resulted in several ramifications relative to the sovereign status of the country, and subsequently averse to the political norms ruling the nation. To further understand the current status quo of Afghanistan, the section will be divided into four (4), as mentioned below:

A. Political Capacity

Post withdrawal of the Afghan President, Ashraf Ghani, the Taliban is focusing more towards the integration of military and non-military strategies in order to achieve political dominance within the 20 years timeframe of war. Considering the significant disparity in the evolution of Taliban from 2001 to the current times, there is a concern of growing military actions imprinted as a political identity.

One primary contributor of such growth is the negotiated peace deal between the former United States President Trump and Taliban representatives. The arrangement weakened the Ghani administration strategically by excluding the Afghan government, making it difficult to sustain coordination and cooperation among military allies. To this, such ideology concentrated with the fundamentalists movement, the capacity to govern Afghanistan as a new regime should be questioned.

B. National Security

Accounting to the successful takeover, the security in Afghanistan remains volatile whereby throughout the region, there has been continuous terrorist attacks in Kabul International Airport and across national borders. Since mid-April, more than 5,500 operations have been conducted by terrorist organizations in 31 of the 34 provinces. 20 factions, including Al-Qaida and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh), are cooperating with Taliban to counter Afghan civilian and security forces.

Although the Taliban has deflected claims regarding cooperation with foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), a UN Security Council report as of June 2021 calls upon concern over affiliation with entities that threatens the security and stability of Afghanistan. Referencing to the

Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to Resolution 2557, amid claims of internal difficulties or fractures, the organization has maintained an outward appearance of solidarity. The Quetta Shura is in charge of Taliban affairs in 11 provinces in Pakistan's south, south-west, and west. The Peshawar Shura, another branch, is in charge of 19 provinces. Both Shuras maintain offices in Kabul Province and collaborate. They've also been known to interchange troops occasionally to strengthen their respective operations.

In summary, the national security is diminishing exponentially, thus requires a tactical reapproachment by relevant UN organs and cooperation between neighbouring countries.

C. Contravention of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

Despite claims of ensuring to uphold the rights of the people, the Taliban were reported seeking high-profile women, limiting women freedom of movement outside their homes, enforcing mandatory social norms, heavily restricting access to work and education, and curtailing the right to peaceful assembly. With no existing security forces positioned in Afghanistan, countless contraventions of the IHL, primarily related to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), are frequent.

The main issue regarding the non-compliance to these international laws is that it requires a launch of investigation which must require a consent from the current interim government. In this instance, the Taliban. Considering the challenges of securing a new peace agreement between the interim government and the relevant UN bodies is with uncertain probability, hence within the mandate of DISEC and authorization of the UN Security Council, to deploy UN Peacekeeping troops to Afghanistan must be of urgency.

D. Constructive Relations between Afghanistan Interim Government & Member States

Although there is progress upon the de-facto Taliban administration, they seek for international recognition in order to evade the trust deficit from other member states concerning the heavy military control of the regime. Certain countries are taking leverage over the failure of the US administration over the military withdrawal, and a few are formally recognizing the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan. But to this, it is crucial for member states to mutually understand the importance of providing humanitarian aid and security assistance to the Afghans.

The question of effectiveness lies upon a unified policy that enables the acceptance of external security maintenance in the region.

Conclusively, focusing on the current state affairs detailed above, it is imperative to identify the most viable solution with consideration of understanding the systematic flaws of past policies or actions.

V. Role-Playing Countries

A. United States of America

The relationship between the two countries has always been on edge after the September 11 bombings and the declaration of the Operation Enduring Freedom on 7 October 2001, by President Bush. Thus declaring war against the Taliban government since they did not entertain the demands of the United States regarding the Al-Qaeda leaders.

The US formed an alliance from NATO member countries, starting with the UK, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Poland at first. Although the number of troops were brief at the

beginning with the passing years they have only gone up until the peace treaty in 2019, which meant that the USA had until May 2021 to leave Afghanistan free from US troops.

B. Russian Federation

Going back in history, control over Central-Asia was crucial for the Tsar, Russia. Although the invasion of Afghanistan was never economically reasonable, the desire of expanding south to a warm port was crucial. Near the end of the Soviet Union, Afghanistan was invaded but there was no success because of the support that the Afghans had from the USA.

With the failure of invasion the Soviet Union collapsed, and has lost its importance in the eyes of the Russian Federation but with the retraction of the US troops from Afghanistan, Russia may have more interest in the zone. Increasing its influence, as they have done before with Syria.

C. People's Republic of China

China has the least involvement of P5 countries in Afghanistan. During the years 2014-2016 China and Afghan trade market has gotten bigger since the establishment of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). For CPEC to be a success, China needs to have security in the region so that a post-war or more peaceful Afghanistan is more suitable for China's wishes.

D. Republic of India

The main point in common with India and Afghanistan is that they consider Pakistan as a rival.

Many high-ranked officers of the Indian government consider Afghanistan as a close ally and some closest.

The two countries have strengthened their relationship with India's economic aid to the Afghans of \$3 Billion. This makes India the largest donor. India even built structures in Afghanistan and helped the construction of the new parliament.

E. Pakistan

Pakistan claimed the Pashtun territory in 1947 after the departure of the British Empire, this made the Ghani Government offended, and from that point on they have become hostile against each other. When the US government supplied support to Afghanistan when the Soviet Union invaded, the US used Pakistan as a supply base. Although this has made their relations better at that moment, it did not affect the overall relations between the two countries. After the fall of the Soviet Union and the retraction of the US in the area, the relations have gone back to hostile.

Pakistan hosts a large number of Afghan refugees, and still grants visas to anyone who wants to flee from the torn apart country. Although these refugees have a big impact on the country's limited resources, Pakistan is still trying to negotiate peace with the Taliban but the Afghans interpret these actions as nothing but Pakistan's self-interests.

The Afghani government is known to raise the chaotic environment when the elections are near. In 2019 they accused the Pakistani government of supporting the former prime minister and 2019 presidential candidate, Gulbedin Hekmatyar against Ashraf Ghani. With the Afghan government turning toward India and an increase in uncontrolled insurgent strikes on Pakistan's side of the border, ties appear to be deteriorating. Despite Pakistan's efforts to negotiate between the Taliban and the Afghan government, this remains the case.

VI. Relevant UN Charter and Resolutions

Addressing the prolonged crisis, several resolutions have been passed concerning the issue in Afghanistan. Resolutions act as a form of report which entails a detailed account of the happenings issued in Afghanistan. The updated resolution is also pursuant of the previous reports published. Whereas the UN Charter provides the functionality and official responsibility of specific UN bodies and organs. Highly relevant to the agenda item, below are the set of clauses and resolutions:

A. UN Charter Chapter VII: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression

[Article 39] The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security.²

B. Resolution 2021/486

[Chapter IV (72)] Although the Taliban maintains its long-standing practice of denying the presence of foreign terrorist fighters in Afghanistan, fighters from a variety of countries and militant groups continue to operate in the country, and most are reported by Member States to be at minimum tolerated or protected by the Taliban.

The Monitoring Team continues to estimate the number of foreign terrorist fighters to be approximately between 8,000 and 10,000, mainly comprised of individuals from Central Asia, the north Caucasus region of the Russian Federation, Pakistan and the Xinjiang Uighur

² United Nations. (n.d). United Nations Charter (full text). United Nations. Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text

Autonomous Region of China, among others. Although the majority are affiliated foremost with the Taliban, many also support Al-Qaeda. Others are allied with ISIL or have ISIL sympathies.

VII. Definition of the Key Concepts

- A. Constructive Relations/Political Constructivism: a method for producing and defending principles of justice and legitimacy. The complex entities are moral and political principles or obligations, such as the principle to each according to his merits or the obligations created through contracts. [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy]
- B. <u>Economic Rationalism</u>: an economic policy based on the supposed efficiency of market forces, characterized by minimal government intervention, tax cuts, privatization, and deregulation of labour markets. [Atlas of Public Management]
- C. <u>Fundamentalist</u>: someone who believes in traditional forms of a religion, or believes that what is written in a holy book, such as the Christian Bible, is completely true. [Cambridge Dictionary]
- D. <u>Interim Government</u>: an emergency government, or a transitional government, is an emergency governmental authority set up to manage a political transition generally in the cases of new nations or following the collapse of the previous governing administration. [Dictionary of Politics and Government]
- E. <u>Sovereignty</u>: political concept that refers to dominant power or supreme authority, and is essentially the power to make laws. [Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School]

F. <u>Trust Deficit</u>: in politics, is when a state does not include their citizens in decision making, but claims to provide for their welfare. [Hannah Arendt, Columbia University]

VIII. Questions A Resolution Must Answer

- 1. Acknowledging that the ideology of the Taliban centers upon religion, what approach should the committee take to ensure the Taliban representatives will comply with the engagement in international assistance. If any, please clarify if an external organization should be involved. If so, what are their capacities?
- 2. Accounting for the cases of killings of civilians, what should the committee consider to do, as the de facto authorities of Afghanistan are under impunity?
- Will it be viable to establish a new peace accord with the Taliban, specifically in the matters of including military intervention? If yes, please provide a detailed context of your reason.
- 4. Understanding the difference in constructive relations between the Taliban and member states, what is their role to ensure that any dealings made between both relevant parties will not result in further ramifications to the region, especially in terms of security?
- 5. Provide a comprehensive plan upon consultation of a UN Peacekeeping Operation in Afghanistan. If any, explain the relevant UN actors, agencies, and member states, and include force requirements, alongside operational strategies.

6. What is the role of the Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to establish a common ground with the Taliban representatives? If any, please identify past actions and provide the result of the implemented actions.



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