

**Political Instability in Afghanistan:**

**Implications for Central Asia**

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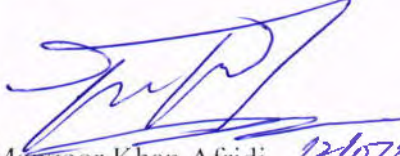
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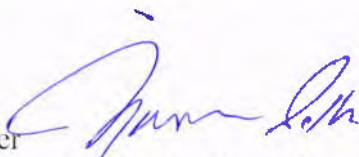
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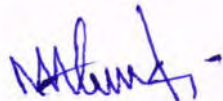
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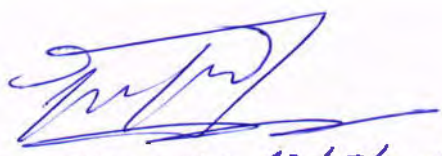
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To

My Loving Father;

Who sacrificed his entire life for his Family.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

<b>AIAS</b>	<b>American Institute of Afghanistan Studies</b>
<b>BB</b>	<b>Billion barrels</b>
<b>CA</b>	<b>Central Asia</b>
<b>CAR</b>	<b>Central Asian Republics</b>
<b>CASA</b>	<b>Central Asia South Asia</b>
<b>CEO</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>DOD</b>	<b>US Department of Defense</b>
<b>ECC</b>	<b>Elections Complaints Commission</b>
<b>EIA</b>	<b>US Energy Information Administration</b>
<b>IEC</b>	<b>Independent Elections Commission</b>
<b>IMU</b>	<b>Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan</b>
<b>IRPT</b>	<b>Islamic Renaissance Party Tajikistan</b>
<b>IS-KP</b>	<b>Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant - Khorasan Province</b>
<b>NA</b>	<b>Northern Alliance</b>
<b>NDN</b>	<b>Northern Distribution Network</b>
<b>NSF</b>	<b>National Security Forces</b>
<b>NUG</b>	<b>National Unity Government</b>
<b>ODA</b>	<b>Operational Detachment-Alpha</b>
<b>PDPA</b>	<b>Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan</b>
<b>PRIO</b>	<b>Peace Research institute Oslo</b>



UNDOC United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime  
USGS The U.S. Geological survey  
UTO United Tajikistan Opposition

## **Abstract**

### **Political Instability in Afghanistan:**

#### **Implications for Central Asia**

The main goal of the research is to investigate Political instability in Afghanistan, starting from collapse of USSR and its withdrawal from Afghanistan and secondly to investigate implications of Afghan Situation on newly independent countries of Central Asia, which includes Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In order to conduct its research, the researcher adopted descriptive and analytical approaches, to achieve this aim; only qualitative research method was adopted. Primary and secondary sources were used for data collection. In primary sources interviews were conducted with diplomats, Politicians, academics. Books, Journals, magazines, news paper articles, book reviews and net archives are used as secondary resources. The thesis is divided into five chapters; first chapter includes introduction of the thesis along proposal materials. Second chapter includes Mujahedeen era in Afghanistan and its implications on Central Asia. Third chapter starts from Mujahedeen collapse and end with the US invasion of Afghanistan and fourth chapter begins with US invasion and continues till now. Last, fifth, chapter consists of conclusion and recommendations. The study finds that situation of Afghanistan deteriorated continuously because of some reasons and in fact some of those reasons are still present. First reason was the dropping of Afghan issue from world political priorities, especially from world powers priority; where USSR lost its war in Afghanistan and withdrew, US achieved its goal and Afghanistan was no more important for them. USSR, after defeat was also no longer in condition to focus on Afghanistan, there for instability continued for decades, another factor was regional powers and neighbors interference in Afghan war, where every Country had its proxy group. Instability in Afghanistan had its vast impact on Central Asian Countries in four aspects on politics of Central Asia, where still after independent, these Countries were under control of old communist leaders and from other side newly emerged Muslim leaders, who were inspired from Afghan Jihad were rising. Also it is found that sometimes these leaders used the threat of Islamism for their political benefit. Afghan situation also has huge impact on Central Asia Security, where these Islamists had contacts with factions of Afghanistan and were doing military activities in Central Asian States. They also sometimes pose direct threat from Afghanistan Islamist Parties. But still this research indicates that CA leaders sometimes use this threat as a tool to receive International Sympathy. The research also shows that Central Asian Countries leaders believe that the biggest barrier for their economic prosperity is instability of Afghanistan. As they are not able to export their goods and natural resources through unstable Afghanistan as much they could from stable Afghanistan. It is also found that instability caused to convert Afghanistan to drug factory and newly emerged Central Asia was the best route for its traders to export it to outside world.

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

## **Introduction**

Because of the willingness of Kabul regime and weakness of oppositions, the Soviet Union easily occupied Afghanistan in September 1979. But in short time with the help of foreign aids and military equipment's, Mujahedeen was able to strengthening their resistance day by day until they forced Russia to leave Afghanistan. After the crisis of 1986, Gorbachev started campaign to find the way out of this problem, thus the Geneva Accord happened and it paved the way for Russia to withdraw from Afghanistan. After the withdrawal in 1989, Russia continued to help Najeebullah regime; he survived another three years after Soviet withdrawal. When Russia stopped its aid to Najeebullah regime, in late 1991 Najeebullah was under pressure, Mujahedeen were surrounding Kabul; at this time UN special envoy was given a task to solve the issue of power transition through diplomacy. Najeebullah at first proposed a way that he will remain in power with Mujahedeen, but it was not possible, he then agreed to step down but he wanted to give him a safe passage to leave Afghanistan. Benon Sevan agreed on the second one, although Mujahedeen agreed to leave his family to go to India but didn't agree to give him a way to leave Afghanistan (Dixit, 2000). Najeebullah knew he has little time in power, thus he attempted to leave Afghanistan but he couldn't. Finally his government collapsed in late 1992 and he went to asylum in UN headquarter till the collapse of Kabul by Taliban. In meantime with the collapse of USSR; Central Asia also shaped by newly independent countries (Saikal, 2012).

With the collapse of Najeebullah regime, it was a time for Afghan Mujahideen to form government, but at the mean time Jamiat-e-Islami Stronghold with Ahmed Shah Massoud and Uzbek Abdul Rasheed Dostam took control of Kabul; the Uzbek militia under the commandment of Abdul Rasheed Dostam was a powerful supporter of Najeebullah government and was controlling Kabul in the end of Najeebullah's regime, Massoud took benefit of the situation and made alliance with Dostam and captured Kabul without any fight, since then Kabul was under control of Uzbek Militia, during all these years Massoud, Mujadidi and his successor Rabbani was supporting Dostam and give him position of full army general. Hekmatyar argued to disarm Dostam militia but Mujadidi and after that Rabbani refused (Jalalzai, 2002), this act angered Hezb-e Islami Hekmatyar, and once again rivalries began for power transition between Mujahideen, most famous were Hezb-e Islami and Jamiat-e Islami (Barfield, 2010). About the fighting between Mujahideen factions Amin Saikal says that "Mujahideen was fragmented along ratio, linguistic, tribal and sectarian lines from the very beginning of their formation and for

Massoud and Hekmatyar it was not the first time that they were locked in a bloody power struggle in-fact their troops already fought in 1990's in Logar province" (Saikal, 2012).

In late 1992 the Peshawar Accord took place to assume the power in Kabul, all six parties agreed without Hekmatyar. The Accord had two stages, first was a transition authority which was cited for two months leaded by Sibghatullah Mujadidi and the second stage was of in-term government headed by Burhanuldeen Rabani for next six months, the Accord also gives the Interior Ministry to Jamiat-e Islami and Prime Ministry to Hekmatyar (Matinuddin, 1999). By April 25 Hekmatyar's troops were in filtering Kabul but Massoud's troops were positioned in a better strategic place, thus Massoud was able to take Hezb-e Islami out of the city and once again a new struggle for power has begun (Neamatollah. 2002).

After the Peshawar Accord Mujadidi headed towards Kabul along with his over fifty member council but he wasn't able to form government in his term, he attempted to further extent his two months period but he couldn't, his successor was Rabani, he and Massoud attempted to form national army but Hezb-e Islami's attacks on Kabul in August 1992 interrupted this goal of Rabani and Massoud. At the end of Rabani's term his government formed Shura, mostly dominated by Rabbani, to draft constitution and form government. The Shura formed government for two years, instead of forming new government rather Burhanuddin Rabbani extended his own rule, this act deepened conflict between various parties and they made alliances and positioned for rivalries. Ibid. On 7 March 1993 another peace accord took place in Islamabad which is known as Islamabad Peace Accord, the accord was much consisted of the previous Peshawar Accord but still they limited the 2 years of Rabbani to 18 months and then they gave Prime Ministry to Hekmatyaar but this accord never implemented (Institute of Regional Studies, 1997), in January 1994 the hardliner Islamist Hekmatyaar and previous communist commander Dostum attempt a cop against Rabbani government but they were not able to bring down Rabbani government. Two important reasons made Mujahedeen in a deadlock and they were not able to build strong unity government after Russian withdrawal, the very first was that at the beginning, Mujahideen leaders thought if they don't get power immediately after the withdrawal of Russia they will never be able to get it and this lead them to form their groups around ethnic and linguistic issues, although none of the Mujahideen group was emerged and fought against Soviet as a specific ethnic or linguistic group (Ahmad, 2002), as

Thomas Barfield writes: "By 1993, the country was divided into regions... Ismail Khan secured Herat and the west (including Badghis, Farah and Ghor). Dostam ruled the north from Mazar to Baghlan. Massoud controlled Kabul and the northeast. The Nangarhar Shura in Jalalabad led by Haji Qadir oversaw the east, while the southeast was divided between Jalaluldeen Haqqani and Mullah Naqibullah.", another important issue was the support of different countries from different groups, like Iran, Russia and Central Asian countries were supporting Northern Alliance, Pakistan was supporting Hekmatyar and so on.

In November 1994 a new phenomenon of Taliban came to exist, when they first captured Qandahar province. People welcomed them because they argued that they will bring peace and justice to war torn country and people were starving for peace but after capturing some provinces they then changed their ideology and staid to bring pure Islamic government and will expand it to the whole region thus any other group and ideology were opposing Taliban (Saikal, 2012). With the wake of Taliban, Rabbani was in a tense position; from one side a powerful alliance of Hekmatyar, Hezb-e Wahdat and Dostam was fighting against his government and from other side provinces were falling one after another in the hand of Taliban. He then created a new alliance with Hekmatyar and Hezb-e Wahdat. Hekmatyar was also worry about his future, because he was losing his Pakistani support. Pakistan was now supporting Taliban rather than Hezb-e Islami, thus he joined Rabbani government in 1996 after fighting it several years (Goodson, 2001).

After capturing Qandahar they advanced towards Kabul in to lines, one was on north that thy captured Ghazni in late January 1995 and on eastern line they captured Paktia and Paktika and reached to gates of Kabul, Taliban knew how to deal with warlords that's why till now they didn't fight a serious war, as Shia Mazari was against Massoud; Taliban took the situation and made alliance with Mazari against Massoud. They fought with Massoud but were defeated, this was the first war that Taliban fought an actual war and lost and they retreated from Kabul towards Qandahar and on the way back to they killed their partner Mazari and bought for them another opposition. At meantime Ismail Khan was controlling Herat; he attacked Taliban from the west and pushed Taliban back to Qandahar in March, although at the same time Ismail Khan was in a fight with Dostam. Taliban enlisted new people in their army for counter attack, this time they attacked from east, they secured Herat in September and advanced, they then captured

Nangarhar in 1996 and went towards Kabul (Barfield, 2010), On 10th September 1996 Taliban captured Jalalabad and quickly advanced towards Kabul and in few days they took control over Kabul and force Massoud back to Punjsher (Saikal, 2012). When Taliban pushed back Massoud, it result a new political alliance against Taliban. By October, Massoud meet Dostam in Khaletin; a small city near Salang and agreed to join the alliance. Hezbe Wahdat's Karim Khalili also joined the alliance. When Taliban were defeating Massoud, Dostam was happy, because Massoud was his enemy. Soon he realized that Taliban neither accept Massoud nor him, thus he joined Massoud and fought Taliban (Magnus & Naby, 1998). After capturing Kabul Taliban advanced towards north attacking Mazari Sharif, on that time due to its internal problems Dostam was in exile, Taliban captured Mazar in May 1997 but Uzbek Militia attacked Taliban and defeated them, this was a catastrophe for Taliban; hundreds of Taliban were killed and about three thousand were taken prisoners. They captured almost all Afghanistan by med 1997 except Punjsher where Massoud resists; he fought against Taliban for next three years. Taliban fought till the end of their government, situation was somewhat better when they took control of Mazari Sharef and Bamyan provinces in 1998 (Goodson, 2001).

Although several peace negotiations took place between Northern Alliance and Taliban, like the one which was place for power sharing in Ashkhabad Turkemnestan in March 1999, they agreed on power sharing but later on Mullah Omar refused the deal, also the issue then raised in "Six plus two" meeting of Tashkent in July to implement the previous agreement, but they were failed to do so. Ibid.

Mullah Omar was governing Afghanistan as Amir-Ul-Momineen. Structure of government was poorly designed there were two kind of Shuras, the first was Inner Shura with six members, headed by Mullah Omar, another was Central Shura consisted of nine members, they had to report to Mullah Omar. In foreign relations only three countries (Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and UAE) recognized Taliban regime, the latter two soon withdraw their recognitions, and thus there wasn't any trade and foreign aid. This situation forced Taliban to export opium to outside world through Central Asian countries (Barfield, 2010). Till the end of 1998 Taliban regime was not in focus of world but after 1998 international actors focused due to some reasons as Goodson (2001) mentioned it "By the end of 1998 the international actors focused on Afghanistan due to some reasons, first due to their social policies, implementing Sharia and women rule in society,

also trade of opium and not giving rights to minorities to represent in government, this actually marginalized and isolated their regime.”pp79 The rest of the world, other than Pakistan, Saudi and UAE, marginalized Taliban, almost everyone had its own reason; Iran due to its Shia factor, Central Asian countries due to support of Taliban to CA militant groups and due to their extremist ideology and Russia due to the support of Taliban to Chechnya freedom fighters.(Goodson, 2010). After attacking US Embassies in 1998 in Kenya and Tanzania, US demanded UN to activate sanctions on Taliban. The UN Security Council sanctions further isolated Taliban, the UNSCR 1267(1999) passed in med October 1999 condemned Taliban’s violations of International Humanitarian Laws and Human Rights, the rise in the productions of opium and capturing of Iranian diplomat and killing some of them in Mazari Sharif. The resolution also demanded Osama Bin Ladin to surrender him to US and imposed sanctions on Taliban. In December 2000 UN further strengthen its sanctions on Taliban through its UNSCR 1333(2000).

In the wake of 9/11 US demanded Osama-bin-Ladin, Taliban refused it due to Pashtun culture and this paved the way to US and its allies to enter Afghanistan. Soon USA started the “Operation Enduring Freedom”, their main goal was to smash down the Taliban government and install the one which will be acceptable to International Community. Thus CIA for the first time entered Afghanistan from north with the help of Northern Alliance or Jabhaye Mutahid, by med November Northern Alliance was able to enter Kabul, the fall of Kabul wheeled the process and Taliban soon lost major cities. (Saikal, 2012)

In the meantime, Popalzai; a tribe in southern Afghanistan, requested Karzai to inter Afghanistan and lead them, by this he interred Afghanistan alone by Motorcycle. He with another Pashton warlord was able to capture Kandahar; he then was selected as a Chairman of in term authority in Bonn conference and took oath on 22 December 2001. As per Bonn conference the emergency Loya Jirga was convened in 2002 and Karzai was selected as a head of State with some 1295 votes and Karzai form a provisional government for two years, until constitution produced and elections held. In 2003 Karzai created another Loya Jirga to vote for constitution, the major debate of Jirga was the form of the governmental structure that wither it would be federal or centralized presidential system, at the end they selected the second one. (Barfield, 2010).



Karzai won 2004 presidential elections and had a chance to rule a country for next four years, finally he ruled Afghanistan for 13 years but still there are lots of problems in political environment of Afghanistan, Taliban insurgencies are increasing day by day and the government is much weaker than the starting of Karzai era. In institutional level there are distances between executive and legislative branches as Saikal noted "The growing lack of trust between the executive and legislative branches are seriously undermined the process of building on inter institutional cooperation and bureaucratic regularization against the entrenched personalization of politics in Afghanistan"p253. The first parliamentary elections held in 2005, this election entered most of warlords to government's legislations branch, most of them had bad human rights records and then they continue their illegal activities, Drug smuggling, kidnaping, under governments protections. The second parliamentary elections took place in 2010, where most of them were Karzai's opponents but still they were not able to pressurize government affectively. During first parliament, Karzai mostly ignored Wolosi Jirga as Saikal writes, "Karzai ignored some no confidence votes of Wolosi Jiraga to some of Karzai's ministers like no confidence vote for Rangin Dadfar Spanta. He also ignored Wolosi Jirga sometime in his Decisions like hi never sought legislative approval for signing Afghan-US strategic partnership of 2005 or augmentation in US troop deployment in September 2008 and early 2011".

Drug cultivation and smuggling is still one of primary income of Afghan society, according to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) 2013 drug report poppy cultivation reached to new peak in this year, it increased 36 percent to reach to 209,000 ha in 2013, higher than the previous record of 193,000 ha in 2007 (UNDOC, 2013). Neither also after 15 years of war afghan is neither secure nor stable. According the US department of defense 2010 report, 48 percent of Afghans are sympathetic to Taliban (US Department of Defense [DOD], 2010). Another survey shows that about 52 percent Afghans think Taliban have gained strength during 2015 and according US department of defense 2015 report warns about the increasing of insurgences and also indicates operationally presence of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant - Khorasan Province (IS-KP).Ibid. Without cities, Taliban still control majority of the country and they resist against regime. On 28<sup>th</sup> September they were able to take control of Kundus Province and challenge government for almost two days. Much of the government is still controlled by warlords, most of which are corrupt and drug smuggling is by these high profile officials.

## Implications for Central Asia

Security of Afghanistan is utmost importance for landlocked Central Asian Countries as Rashid noted “the crisis in Afghanistan is the single most important external factor in the growing instability of Central Asia”<sup>p209</sup>, they also consider political Islam as a threat to their security, as Islam Karimov call it “Strong Politicization of Islam” which he think has deep negative impact on social and political situation of Central Asia in general and Uzbekistan in specific (Karimov, 1997). A common fear of all Central Asian countries is military insurgency which they fear from Afghanistan. Afghanistan is also the only bridge for these countries to connect with outside world and export their natural resources to South and Southeast Asia. Drug trafficking is another problem for these countries which came from Afghanistan. Water energy issue also can be discussed, although still Afghanistan is not involved in this issue but Central Asia has fear that stable Afghanistan will participate in this very issue.

For Central Asian countries, Security is their first core issue. They fear about military insurgency and Political Islam which they think will come from unstable Afghanistan. After the drawdown of USSR from Afghanistan, Central Asian countries got their independence. In the beginning they welcomed Islamic Imams and Scholars but after sometime these Scholars and Imams in Mosques, struggled for Islamizing of Central Asian regimes in this case these regimes acted against them and suppressed Islamic movements elsewhere in Central Asia, Rashid argues that “Taliban fundamentalism was at direct odds with moderate Islam of Central Asia”.

Tajikistan is the first country which fears about Political Islam, they experienced the civil war between 1992 and 1997. Civil war fought by United Tajikistan Opposition (UTO) based in Afghanistan, during Mujahidin era the involvement of Afghan groups in Tajik civil war was not because of Afghanistan’s regional expansions; rather it was just due to Afghanistan’s internal extensions of civil war where every leader wanted to take power in Kabul. Most of refugees were sheared by Massoud and Hekmatyar, Hekmatyar was providing arms and training to Tajik refugees to put pressure on Tajik government to end its support for Massoud and Dostam, while Massoud was supporting Tajik rebels to pressurize Tajikistan for more support to take power in Kabul (Djalili, Grare and Akiner, 1998), That’s why they supported US lead invasion of Afghanistan and by the wake of 9/11 they crackdown on Political Islam to suppress insurgency

and find way for their myriad problems (Karagiannis, 2010). Uzbekistan also fear about militant insurgency, in his book, *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty First Century*, president of Uzbekistan writes "The regional conflicts in Afghanistan and Tajikistan, posing real external threats to our national security, do not help to struggle stability in Central Asia or globally, they imply considerable negative potential and could lead to disastrous effects on a global scale"p18. the leader of Islamic group Adolat(Justice) Juma Namangani was warlord in Afghanistan, he fought in Uzbekistan's Farghana valley and Tajikistan that's why when Taliban was advancing towards north, Uzbek government supported Dostam to fight against Taliban (Nojumi, ). After cease fire of Tajikistan in 1998 Namangani fled to Afghanistan and acted from there, where he killed by US lead attack after 9/11. Although Karzai was arguing that Afghanistan Soil will never be used against any neighboring country, but still Uzbek and other northern countries don't trust unstable Afghanistan and still they fear about extremism. Oil and gas pipelines through Afghanistan shaped Turkmenistan's foreign policy, mostly they were neutral; they supported Ismail Khan after Russia withdrawal, then they continued their consulate in Herat during Taliban rule on Herat and at the same time they had consulate in Mazar-e Sharif where Dostam was a ruler and at last they didn't joined Anti-Taliban Alliance.

All Central Asian countries are landlocked and far from economic centers. From one side Afghanistan is an economic market which has large population than any of the Central Asian countries and has a need to import goods and energy; it also offers a transit route to Central Asian resource to meet the growing demands of South Asian Countries (Heal, 2015). Central Asian countries can't reach the outside world because of political instability in Afghanistan.

Central Asian countries were dependent on Russia till the collapse of Soviet Union, but after that when these countries took independent, immediately they began to contact with outside world, to export their energy resources. Central Asian energy resources are the last resources in the world which are not explored, according to US Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimated oil reserves in Caspian Sea 48 billion barrels (Bb) of oil and about 292 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas in proved and probable reserves where they produced 2.6 Bb per day in 2012, in which Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan are the biggest contributor to the regional market, in addition the U.S. Geological survey (USGS) also estimates another 20 Bb of oil and 243 Tcf of Natural gas as undiscovered (US Energy information Administration [EIA], 2013). But in natural gas,

Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan are the most importance producers during last one decade (EIA). Although after the independent, these countries were still under control of previous communist minded rulers, thus they didn't want to communicate with outside world specially the western world as Ahmed Rashid indicates " in 1996 Central Asian Countries produced 1 million Barrels oil per day but only 300,000 (b/d) were exported where only 140,000 (b/d) were exported to outside world other than Russia, its gas production was 3,3 (Tcf) per day but just 0.8 Tcf was exporting to other countries", but soon when form one side they confront economic problems and form other side Russia paid the lowest price for Central Asian oil and gas, thus they felt the argent need of exporting their natural resources other than Russia, to the rest of the world as Rashid says " They don't want to depend over Russia, they are looking south for oil and gas pipeline and communication routs."p155. meanwhile big powers and regional powers also contacted to Central Asia every one for their own needs like US for its proposed pipelines, form Tajikistan to Turkey and Europe and from Tajikistan to Pakistan, Pakistan for its energy needs and so own but the problem raised when the civil war started in Afghanistan (Rashid, 2000).

Drug Trafficking is the most important threat to Central Asian security and economies, as Dhaka noted "The opium trade is good enough to make serious dent to Central Asian Economies". The geographical proximity of Central Asia to Afghanistan makes it the key transit way to Russia and Europe, about 30 percent of Afghan opiates travels throw Central Asia, The number of drug addicts is also rising day by day. Central Asia is also effecting from instability of Afghanistan in form of migration, as Dhaka noted in his article that "most Afghans are migrating to Pakistan and Iran but still some of them prefer to migrate to Central Asia most of them are Non-Pashtuns".

### **Statement of the Problem**

After the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991, changes in Afghanistan had vast impact on regional politics, specifically on newly independent Central Asian Countries. Since then Central Asian countries see Afghanistan as the only hope to bring-out them from these problems but they also consider Afghanistan as a threat to them, the question is; how does the situation in Afghanistan influences Central Asian Countries?

## **Literature Review**

There is lots of literature on post-soviet Afghanistan-Central Asia relations, the security and economic situation is also of vast of importance in literature. It is still an important issue for the development of the region, still the stability of Afghanistan impacts on the entire region, specifically on landlocked central Asia, we are going to discuss the present literature on the topic below.

Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weinker's book (1994) entitled *The new geo politics of Central Asia and its borderlands* discusses the Afghan factor in a topic Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Central Asian states, but this discussion is most form Pakistan's perspective that Pakistan's major communications routs to Central Asia lie through Afghanistan, therefore until and unless normalcy returns to Afghanistan, Pakistan's vision of building an effective relationship with Central Asian states will remain unrealized.

The most relevant book with this topic is from Ahmed Shayeq Qassem (2009) entitled *Afghanistan's Political Stability: a Dream Unrealized*. Qassem discusses most about instability in Afghanistan during Mujahedeen and Taliban, he don't discuss Karzi era and after math. He also discusses historic relations of Afghanistan and Central Asia but don't discuss Central Asian and Afghan relations after soviets withdraw and the book doesn't discuss the impacts of instability of Afghanistan on Central Asia.

The working paper (*The Afghanistan Central Asia relationship: What role for the EU?*) 2013 by Marlene Laruelle, Sebastien Peyrouse and Vera Axyonova discusses the Afghan- Central Asian relation in post NATO withdrawal, it tell us about the security spill over from Afghanistan and the preparation of Central Asian countries for this problem, it also suggest policies for European Union, the article neither discuss other implications of Afghan situation on Central Asia nor the situation of Afghanistan before 2014 and its impact on Central Asian countries.

In a book " *Jihad: The rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*" (2002) Ahmed Rashid discusses mostly the military insurgency and Islamic Movements, it talks a little about Afghanistan's Political instability and its impact on Central Asia, it barely discusses the presence of AMU in Afghanistan.

In his essay "The Taliban: Exporting Extremism" (1999) Ahmed Rashid discusses the Taliban government and its impact on the region, specially their ambition of exporting their own style Islam, it also discussed the fear of Central Asian countries about political Islam but he mostly discusses Pakistan and also the essay just covers the Taliban era. The article is also limited with the exporting of Islamization; it doesn't discuss the drug trafficking, or refuge, weapon export and so on.

In his book "Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics and the Rise of the Taliban" (2001) Larry P. Goodson mostly discusses Afghan Wars, he also discusses Central Asian dilemma under chapter five (Afghanistan and the Changing Regional Environment) ,which contains the economic situation of Central Asia and its Pipeline politics which also contain Afghanistan's insecure situation but even in this section he mostly discusses the outside actors like Pakistan, USA, Iran and Russia, he still didn't focused impact of Afghanistan situation on Central Asian Politics.

Neamatollah Nojumi in his book "The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan: mass mobilization, civil war and the future of the region" (2002) discusses the mobilization of the Taliban and its impact on the region over all and specifically on Central Asian countries. It also talks about the role of Afghan government in civil war of Tajikistan and the civil war of Afghanistan and how it affects the region.

Emmanuel Karagiannis in his book "Political Islam in Central Asia: The challenge of Hezb-Ut-Tahrir" (2009) explained the political situation of Central Asian countries and the role of Islamic Movements. It little discusses the role of Afghanistan in Islamic insurgency in Central Asia.

In his other book "Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and fundamentalism in Central Asia" (2000), Ahmed Rashid discusses how Taliban complete their economic needs from opium. It also talks about the regional and world players are involved in this game and how they play Taliban. It little talks about the threat of militant insurgency from Taliban. It also doesn't discuss the problem that Central Asian countries face from Afghanistan's security situation; even it doesn't touch the effects of drug trade of Taliban on Central Asian countries.

The book "Pakistan, Central Asia, and the region: prospects of regional cooperation" (1994), edited by Dr.S.M.Haider mostly discusses the economic cooperation in the region, it only

discussed the construction of Afghanistan, that regional countries must cooperate to construct Afghanistan. It also discussed the challenges to Central Asian countries but still it doesn't discuss the political situation of Afghanistan and its impact on Central Asian Countries.

Edited book "Post-soviet Central Asia" (1998) by Touraj Atabaki is also relevant to our research which discusses internal problems of Central Asian countries he also glanced over the relation of these problems with Afghanistan. It also writes about the condition of Uzbek minorities in Afghanistan.

Dilip Hiro's book entitled *Inside Central Asia: A political and cultural history of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Iran* can be considered important regarding Central Asia and Afghanistan relations. Although it discussed the Central Asian rebels presence in Afghanistan, especially during Tajik civil war and other Muslim uprising's in Central Asian countries but still it mostly talks about the internal politics, culture and people of Central Asia. It mainly discusses Central Asia's external politics or Afghanistan's impact on Central Asian politics.

Central Asia and Afghanistan: Insulation on the Silk Road, Between Eurasia and the Heart of Asia; a paper of Peace Research institute Oslo (PRIO) written by Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh is also an importance research about Central Asian security and its relations with Afghanistan's instability. The paper discussed the CA regional security complex and argues that although there are external factors which threaten CA security, but the author demonstrated that the most important one is internal factors, he mentions water disputes between CA countries, border issues in the region and the internal Islamic groups which threaten secular governments of CA. the paper also discussed the impact of CA and CRC's impact on relations of Central Asia and Afghanistan, but he slightly discussed the impact of Afghan instability on Central Asian security.

In article "Central Asia and Afghanistan: A Tumultuous History" which is published in "Stratfor Global Intelligence" discusses internal security situation of Central Asia, it also tell us about the migration of militate oppositions of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan governments to Afghanistan but it don't discuss the impact of Afghan situation and the presence of these militant groups in Afghanistan on Central Asian security.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Neorealism is most famous theory of International Relations. It starts from simple sets of assumptions. It seeks to explain how states behave and how they interact in international arena. Neorealism has six fundamental concepts anarchy, structure, capability, distribution of power, polarity and national interest (Dibek, 2012). Which leads us to say why states shift their behavior in such ways or acts in such behavior?

Classical realism was central theory of international politics during interwar period and World War 1 and 2 till the end of cold war. But after cold war when those tow powers proceeded to an agreement in 1970's, realism slowly lost its explanatory power, thus a new theory of International Relations came to exist was Neorealism. The theory was founded by Kenneth Waltz in 1979 in his book *Theory of International Politics*. Neorealism has close bounds with realism but it also differs a lot with it. Realism's central idea is that war happens because of human nature, but on contrary neorealism strongly opposed this explanation of international politics of realism (Schornig, 2014). As Waltz says "While human nature no doubt plays a role in bringing about war, it cannot be itself explain both war and peace, except by the simple statement that man's nature is such that sometimes he fights and sometimes he does not."p32. Waltz thought that security is the main reason to push states to action in such ways. It also contradicts with realism, where focus is on international system. As Niklos Schornig writes "Against the central aim of traditional realists, to produce a theory of international politics in the form of theory of foreign policy, Waltz aspires to develop a systematic theory of international politics. Neorealism thus shifts the analytical focus to the level of International systems."p38.

As Neorealism focuses on structure of international politics, thus it is also called Structural Realism, it means structure of international system affects the international politics, and it even affects behavior of the states. We can easily notice that change in international politics affects the politics and behavior of states. (Jakobsen, 2013).

In waltz conception of structure two things are very important about international system. Ibid. Firstly international system's ordering principle is anarchy, It doesn't mean there will be always a chose and disorder, rather it simply means that there is no world government to apply legitimate force on states to maintain order and form other side all main units "states" are equal and also in national level power is distributed hierarchically, while in international level power is



distributed horizontally. This lack of international government causes an international anarchic structure and forces states to be security seeking (Bordner, 1997). Thus Waltz says it's a self-help system where state wants to secure itself and achieve its primary goal to survive (Waltz, 1979).

Second important concept of structure of international politics is distribution of capabilities. As in this kind of anarchic world where each state constantly feel insecure, each state needs to be capable of defending itself, it starts race between states to capable their selves. Since states are always insecure and they always try to get more capabilities, this competition leads us to security dilemma; it means each state struggle to gain more capabilities, so the gaining of one state, insecure others, thus no one can ever feel entirely secure in such a world of competing units. Capabilities vary significantly from state to state, because there are different variations for states which constraints their capabilities and this affects their behavior (Jakobsen, 2013).

The very good example for this is the end of World War 2. After World War 2, structure of international system has changed in terms of distribution of power. The multipolar world had gone and the new bipolar world emerged, where USA and Russia were the two super powers. Change in power distribution had vast impact on all over the world, specifically on Europe. Before World War 2, Europe was secure but after that they feel insecure in international arena.

Old Great powers Germany, Great Britain and France lost their powers and now they were in a serious threat from Russia. Even they were not able to follow the strategy of internal balancing, thus they had to rely on external balancing, for this they had to work under America and they were security provider of the continent.

Similarly in 1991 when Russia lost its battle ground in Afghanistan, once again the structure of international system changed from bipolar to unipolar, where Russia lost its power, in mean time Central Asian Republics got their independents. As neorealist believe; change in international system or change in distribution of power actually has its deep impact on countries politics and foreign policies, thus it can be said; dissolving of Soviet Union and changing of the world from bipolar to unipolar had its deep impact on the politics of Central Asian Countries, and since then changes in Afghanistan has its political, economic, and social implications on Central Asian Countries.

As Najeebullah government in Afghanistan was a puppet of Russia, Central Asian Countries didn't consider it as a threat for their security, but when world and regional level distribution of power changed, Central Asian Countries considered Afghanistan as a threat to their survivor. These countries were also in a tense situation from economical side and the only hope was Afghanistan to export their national resources to the rest of the world, but it was not possible with insecure Afghanistan.

Central Asian Countries were economically, socially and Militarily weak, so they were not able to secure themselves and had to rely on Russia to survive, for example whenever insecurity rises in north of Afghanistan they invite Russia to intervene and secure Afghanistan-Central Asia border.

Professor Andreas Bieler in his article, *The Anarchy Problematique and Sovereignty: Neo-Realism and State Power*, writes "when analyzing international relations, one has to look at the distribution of capabilities in order to explain new developments. For example, if state A re-arms itself with a new type of weapon and, thus, increases its capabilities, state B can be expected either to re-arm itself too, or to forge a military alliance with another state to balance state A." so change in capabilities in Afghanistan had a deep impact on Central Asian countries, that's why whenever major developments happen in Afghanistan, Central Asian countries changes their foreign policies, for example soon after their independence they consider Mujahidin as a threat to their survival. Because after USSR dissolving from Afghanistan, Afghan factions were fully armed and powerful, Mujahidin also had the agenda to implement Islam in every spare of life include politics and governance. But newly independent countries of central Asia were still ruled by communist background politicians, that's why they consider armed Afghanistan as a threat to their rule and politics and for this they sometime supported some liberal and previous communist Afghan groups against other extremist Islamic groups, like they supported Dostam and Massoud against Hekmatyar during Mujahidin war and later on against Taliban and sometime they aligns with each other or relayed on Russia, like they did in 1997 during Tajik civil war and for the same reason of security and survival they supported US lead coalition attack on Taliban in 2001.

Political instability in Afghanistan also has its impact on economic policies of Central Asian countries. Most of Central Asian countries think that Afghanistan is the only bridge to them to connect with South and Southeast Asia and export its natural resources as President of

Uzbekistan Islam Karimov says in his book; *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century* "The war in Afghanistan is today the major constant for new transport links which would allow Central Asian states to have access to 'warm sea' ports and would help to integrate them into existing of world trade."p17. So for the reason of their trade they always wished to see stable Afghanistan and connect them with outside world. For their economic reasons, even some Central Asian countries had good relations with Taliban, also one of the strongest reasons that Central Asian states supported US invasion of Afghanistan was economic reason that they thought their Oil and Gas pipeline will reach Pakistan and India.

### **Justification for the Study**

Landlocked Central Asia faces economical and security problems, they are also struggling to control drug smuggling, all these problems can't be solve until there isn't a stable Afghanistan, thus we explore this topic so that Central Asian Countries may place bitter foreign policy towards Afghanistan that can help in bringing political stability in this country and by this they solve their own internal problems. This research is also significant for Afghanistan and other stakeholders in the region to perform bitter role in bringing peace and stability to Afghanistan.

The study of political stability in Afghanistan is very important; not only for Central Asian Countries but also for South and southeast Asia, because from one side it is vital for Central Asian Countries to export their resources, from other side south and southeast Asia faces the lack of energy, so they need Central Asian Countries' energy, and the only way to connect them is Afghanistan.

### **Scope of Thesis**

The study is of vital importance from various sides, like Central Asia itself is in a difficult position: economically, politically and security wise, where this research can help them to solve their problems. It is important for Afghan government to make stable its country and take benefit of its geopolitical position. It is even related to South Asian countries, where they need Central Asian energy. Also there is lack of information and researches in Afghanistan on the said topic, so can be published in Pashto language that Afghan students of politics will read it.

## **Objectives of the Study**

1. To explore the type of relations between Afghanistan and Central Asian Countries.
2. To assess the economic development of Central Asia with stable Afghanistan.
3. To examine the conflicted situation in Afghanistan and its implications for Central Asia.
4. To Judge the response of Central Asian Countries to deferent political changes in Afghanistan since 1991.

## **Research Questions**

1. How the political instability of Afghanistan does influence the politics of Central Asian Countries?
2. What is the impact of instability in Afghanistan on security of Central Asian Countries?
3. How do Central Asian Countries look to political changes in Afghanistan?

## **Research Methodology**

The methodology will be based on descriptive and analytical approaches. In order to conduct the proposed study, only qualitative research method will be adopted. For data collection both primary and secondary resources will be used. Secondary resources will include books, journals, magazines, newspaper articles, book reviews and net archives.

## **Outline of the Study**

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Political Instability in Afghanistan 1992-1996: Implications for Central Asia.

Chapter 3: Political Instability in Afghanistan 1996-2001: Implications for Central Asia.

Chapter 4: Political Instability in Afghanistan 2001-2013: Implications for Central Asia.

Chapter 5: Political Instability in Afghanistan since 2013: Implications for Central Asia.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

**Chapter Two**  
**Political Instability in Afghanistan 1992-1996**  
**Implications for Central Asia**

## Introduction

Since the creation of modern Afghanistan, most of the time it was the battle ground of super powers. During nineteenth century Afghanistan found itself between two superpowers, the Great Britain and Russia. Great Britain fought three wars in Afghanistan but they were defeated. In twentieth century once again Afghanistan was between two superpowers, Russian and the United States in the shape of Cold War. This time the battle was between Ideologies; Communism, Capitalism and Islam. The Afghan Communist party, Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), was founded on January 1965 in Kabul; its first leader was Nur Mohammad Taraki. Internal hostilities of the party caused the splitting of party in two factions, the Khaq led by Taraki and Parcham faction.

Zahir Shah, king since 1933, was set aside by Sardar Mohammad Daoud in July 1973 in lightning coup. Actually communists brought Sardar Daoud to power as Martin McCauley in his book *Afghanistan and Central Asia: A Modern History* writes "The most important element in his success was that he ensured that some members of the instruments of coercion, the military and the police, sided with him. It turned out later that most of them had pro-soviet sympathies... over half of the ministers in the new government were linked to the PDPA."(McCauley, 2002)

During Daoud government, Islamic groups created to influence events, as Communist's were strong enough in government and Daoud also was against Islamic groups, he took actions against it, the Islamic Leaders Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Massoud left the country and later on led Afghan Mujahideen groups.(Misdaq, 2006)

The communists attempted a coup against Daoud and took control of the government and killed almost all members of Daoud family in April 1978. The new government with the Ideology of Communism launched new economic and social reforms which were totally against Islamic and traditional Afghan Values. Ibid.

After Taraki, Hafizullah Amin took control of government, Moscow and some PDPA strongholds like Babrak Karmal thought Amin as a CIA agent, that's why Moscow feared that the country is falling in US hands and to secure Afghanistan Moscow saw one way to invade Afghanistan and so they invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. (Feifer, 2009)

Although resistance against the government was started during Daoud government and was continuing during PDPA government but the resistance was not much supported in Afghan society as soviet invasion give it national identity. The resistance groups had other advantages too; they were outside the country in Pakistan so they had access to forgiven aids. From other side Russia crossed the cold war policy and by this the US was willing to support their opposition and Saudi also was willing to help Mujahidin because of Muslim identity.

At first the soviet strategy was to attack Afghanistan and pacify it in some months and strengthen the PDPA government, but when they entered Afghanistan, they were not able to defeat Mujahidin and by this the war continued for a decade. The human casualties, the financial and diplomatic costs were increasing day by day which changed the war perception in Moscow especially after the death of Brezhnev. When Mikhail Gorbachev took power in 1985, he changed the soviet strategy from war to negotiations. He accepted UN to begin their negotiation and pave the way for soviets to withdraw their troops. He specifically focused on PDPA to strengthen and stabilize it internally. Najeebullah replaced Karmal, he attempted to set aside PDPA from Marxist ideology to broaden his government's base, he changed his parties name to Hezb-i-Watan, he also changed Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to Republic of Afghanistan, and he even offered a shared government by offering defense ministry to Ahmad Shah Massoud. The Geneva Accord signed on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1988 between Pakistan, Afghanistan, US and Russia to facilitate soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. The soviet withdrawal completed on 15 may 1989. (Rasanayagam, 2005)

After soviet troops withdraw from Afghanistan they continued aiding Najeebullah government till 1992. When Russia stopped aiding Najeeb, he agreed a UN proposed transition government. This new events caused to create new alliances which were largely based on region and ethnicity as Barfield argues "These new alliances were based largely on region and ethnicity, so that the radically socialist Khalqis joined Hekmatyar's Islamist party to unite the Pushtons. Dostam's Uzbeks and Kayani's Ismaili militias revolted against Najeebullah's regular troops and then allied with Massoud's Tajiks." This new alliances caused that Massoud occupaid the capital, at mean time Najeebullah was unable to escape Kabul so he took asylum in UN headquarter in Kabul. (Barfield, 2010)

## **Fall of Najeebullah and Creation of Mujahidin Government**

Dr. Najeebullah, the last president of PDPA government was born in 1947 to Mr. Muhammad Akhtar in Kabul, he was Ahmadzai Pushton of Paktia province he started his study in Habibia High School and finished his degree in Faculty of Medicine in Kabul university.(Taqi, 2014) When Najeebullah was student he joined the Parcham faction of PDPA. PDPA took government in 1978, as the Khalq faction of PDPA took supremacy over Parcham, Najeebullah was selected as ambassador to Iran in 1978, and he then went to exile to Europe due to his involvement in plotting a coup on Hafizullah Amin. When USSR invaded Afghanistan, they supported Parcham faction and bring them in power, thus Najeebullah was selected as a head of secret police. He proved the efficiency of KhAD by his brutality and this made him famous in the eye of PDPA and USSR also. He became the general Secretary of Peoples Democratic Party in. ("Najibullah," 2016)

Unless other PDPA leaders, Najeebullah had very flexible policy, he knew the nerve of Afghan society. He also knew the situation that Soviet Union will soon withdrew from Afghanistan so he changed his policies like he changed his party name to Hizbe Wattan, he also changed the name of the country from people Republic of Afghanistan to Republic of Afghanistan. He was as a good Muslim and Afghan nationalist. (Barfield, 2010) In 1986 Najeeb started a national reconciliation program which was to begin from the start of 1987 for a possible coalition government. (Feifer, 2009)

During PDPA governance, control of central government over regions were weekend day by day, that's why during Najeeb presidency the government was thinking about northern transit route, Najeeb didn't want to lose his connectivity with Soviet Union, for this he supported Ismailia of Baghlan province to protect Salang Pass, Najeeullah was also paying some Mujahideen to protect the way, because his governance was based on distributing the Soviet aid and foods. (Barfield, 2010)

After the Soviet withdraw Najeebullah survived for some years and this putted Mujahideen in difficult position in reality very few countries were willing to aid Mujahideen after the soviet



withdraw, like US was not willing because they achieved their goal of defeating USSR. Najeebullah by his talent was able to survive his failed regime, he was able to defeat Mujahideen in Jalalabad combat , but when Soviet left its support, thus Najeeb was not able to continue his governance, as Thomas Barfield noted in his book, Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History, “Deliveries of such assistance had already begun declining substantially in the aftermath of the failed coup against Gorbachev in August by hard- liners, leaving Afghanistan without enough fuel and food for the winter. The Soviets had promised 230,000 tons of food that year, but by October had delivered only half that amount and only 10 percent of the promised amount of fuel.”Ibid.

Najeebullah’s last hope was to accept a UN proposed transition process through UN-Brokered conference, so he may somewhat remain in power. But the Mujahideen never agreed with that. Mujahideen took Kabul in April 1992 and Najeeb went to asylum in UN office in Kabul.

The Afghan Mujahideen movement was not a new phenomenon, this movement started long before the Soviet invasion, as Neamatullah Najumi writes in his book ,The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan, that “... The Mujahideen organizational formation is rooted in political movements from 1968 through 1971.” Most of today’s movements began their propaganda from urban areas, like universities, schools and from government. Various movements emerged in this era but two of them were very famous and influential, Ikhwan Ul Muslimen and the Marxist/Leninist movements, each of them wanted to bring reforms in the government according their own agenda. In 1973 coup, where Mohammad Dauod become a President, the Parcham Faction of PDPA were involved in coup, thus their participation in Dauod government upsets the Ikhwanies, so they began their secret activities, by this Dauod government started to put pressure on them. Some of their leaders were executed and jailed and some, like Gulbadin Hekmatyar and Ahmad Shah Massoud took refuge to Pakistan, others like Maulawi Unis Khalis, Jalaluddin Haqani, Maulawi Mansoor and Burhanudin Rabbani were with them. They formed Hezbi Islami and started their movement from abroad. (Najumi, 2009)

When PDPA attempted a coup and topple down Dauod government and established Peoples Republics of Afghanistan, soon after Mujahideen strengthen their relations with other countries, which were against the Soviet and the Marxist/Leninist ideology, but till now Mujahideen were

not successful in achieving full support of Afghan peoples and forging countries like Saudi Arabia, US and others. But when Soviet invaded Afghanistan, by this, countries like Saudi Arabia and United States started their aids and weapons to Mujahideen through Pakistan and Mujahideen stated their fight against Soviet. (Brafied, 2010)

Before Soviet invasion they had limited goals, but when soviet invaded, the ruler elders were united against Soviet under Mujahideen leaders in the name of Jihad against infidel, and now their goal was to withdraw the foreign troops and bring Islamic government. Thus Mujahideen with the help of Afghan people were able to defeat world supper power by 1989 and then they draw downed their puppet government by 1992. Ibid.

### **Creation of Central Asian Republics**

Soviet Union was the largest country of the world, which was extended from northern Europe to Asia. When Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 after its withdrawal from Afghanistan it falls apart into 15 independent countries. Some of these new independent states were European like Ukraine, Moldova, Lithuania and Belarus, some were Asian like Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, which is now called Central Asian Countries. Central Asian Countries remained under Soviet Union as colonies. Before Soviet Union these poorest countries were part of Russian empire and were neglected in every aspect of life. (Kort, 2003)

Brezhnev died in 1982, after that Mikhail Gorbachev came to Power in 1985, this was a time where Communist Regime of Soviet Union was politically and economically weakening day by day as Michael Kort is writing in his book, Central Asian Republics: Nations in Transition, that "Even its ordinary citizen were increasingly aware of how far their standard of living lagged behind that of the democratic countries of the west." Ibid.

Politically it had a tough time in Afghanistan where she was about to lose the battle against United States, economically they used outdated machinery in their industries, their weapons were also not matching the new demands of the modern time, corruption was also at its high peak and much more challenges were there that Gorbachev regime was facing it was a time for reforms caused the collapse of USSR and independence of Central Asian Republics. Ibid.

Because of the obstacles in his regime, Gorbachev was not able to bring full changes in his country, but when reforms came to Central Asian Countries, chaos take the place of reforms and resulted in unwanted independence of these five Central Asian Republics.

Gorbachev stated his reforms from Kazakhstan in Central Asia and replace Dinmukhamed Kunayev, an ethnic Kazak, with Gennadi Koblin. After this, people demonstrated against government and turned into riot, the army struggled to stop it, which caused 200 deaths and thousands injured. Moscow step-down from its decision and then replaced Koblin with Nursultan Nazrbayev. Meanwhile the Kazak nationalist feeling was emerging, that's why the Kazak parliament passed a bill to bring Kazak language as national language. Ibid.

The cotton scam exposed in Uzbekistan, because of which several officials dismissed and arrested, Uzbeks demonstrated against it. Islam Karimov came to Communist Party leadership in 1989 and soon became a President in 1990, at the same time reformist political opposition under the name of Birlik (Unity) founded. Birlik's leader Abduhrahim Pulatov called himself and other opposition parties'; democrats. In October 1989 the Uzbek parliament announced Uzbek language their official language. Ibid.

In Kyrgyzstan new local communist party leader, Absamat Masaliyev, was not supporting the perestroika, even he was opposing that policy. This situation raised the idea of Kyrgyz nationalism, thus in September 1989 the Kyrgyz parliament declared Kyrgyz the countries official language. Ibid.

In May 1990 the Democratic Kyrgyzstan organization formed, they wanted democratic reform in the country. When dispute between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks emerged in Osh city and 300 people killed in its aftermath. Democratic Kyrgyzstan was able to calm the riot and this gives them enormous popularity in the country. Thus they influenced the Kyrgyz parliament, not to select the local Communist party leader, Absamat Masalyaev, as President. So they selected Scientist and former head of Kyrgyz academy of sciences, Askar Akayev. Ibid.

In the wake of Gorbachev's 1985 reforms, the corrupt leader, Rahman Nabiyev, of Tajikistan was forced to leave the office and Kakhar Mahkamov replaced him. Mahkamov gave people more freedom and by this in 1989 Tajik parliament announced Tajik as their national language.

Emerging of Islamic Renaissance Party was the most important development in Tajikistan; they were encouraging Tajiks to educate their children with Islamic law. Ibid.

As Central Asian Republics did not experienced the independence since long time, for about seven decades they were under soviet control, before that they were living under Russian empire, so at the end of Soviet Union they worried that they will lose their territory, that's why they supported Soviet hard liners coup against Gorbachev, only Akayev of Kyrgyzstan immediately acted against the coup. Other four presidents of Central Asia countries did not react until the coup failed. Ibid.

In the wake of failed coup, the European countries of Soviet Union announced their independence; at the end the Central Asian Countries announced their independence one after another. Central Asian Countries along with six other countries in December signed the declaration of establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States in Almaty and this declaration caused the collapse of Soviet Union and the creation of Central Asian Republic. Ibid.

## **Mujahedeen Governance**

Finale the Geneva Accord, between Pakistan and Afghanistan with the guaranty of USSR and US was to select the future of Afghanistan, the accord happened on 14 April 1988. The most important part of this agreement was the withdrawal of Soviet from Afghanistan which was beginning from 15 may. Mujahedeen was not happy with the agreement because they didn't have representative in the agreement. With the signing of the accord the fall of Najeebullah regime was guaranteed, the CIA estimated that Najeeb's government will fall in three to six months. (Barfield, 2010)

With the withdrawal of USSR, different ideas came about the future government of Afghanistan, one of that was the bringing of former King Zahir Shah, but all Mujahedeen parties were strongly opposed to him, in mean time all parties were struggling to gain power. Ibid.

When Diego Cordovez, UN's special representative succeeded Geneva Accord, than UN give him second task to solve afghan problem by bringing new government. For this Cordovez traveled to Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. He met Afghan resistance parties in Tehran and Pakistan and also with Najeebullah and Soviet ambassador in Kabul and shared his proposal. At first he saw Najeeb and demanded his resignation, Najeebullah agreed that he will step-down but demanded the guaranty of arranging Loya Jerga and the presence of his party in next government but the Afghan resistance parties did not agreed with his proposal. They do not wanted the presence of Communist party in next government and also they thought that y arranging of Loya Jerga their role will be week in next government. (Misdaq, 2006)

Second proposal that Cordovez presented was to bring the old King Zahir Shah back to power, Najeebullah and the soviet agreed the proposal, Pakistan was also willing, because they wanted any government other than Najeebullah, but Peshawar based Afghan resistance parties did not agree to bring back the old King, also King by himself did not act, although he was agreeing by words. Ibid.

Cordovez was replaced by Benon Sevan, Sevan asked Najeebullah to step-down and he did so. It was first time after fourteen years that the world hoped that there will be peace in Afghanistan, but soon the two major Mujahideen parties, Jamiat and Hezb-e Islami, positioned against each

other. Ibid. General Dostum, once ally of Najeebullah, turned against him in February 1992. Dostum allied with Massoud. in the meantime Hekmatyaar reached to south Kabul and began advancing towards capital, Dostum invited Massoud to enter Kabul and by this Massoud's forces were able to take the capital and pushed Hekmatyaar's troops out of Kabul. (Feifer, 2009) Jamiat at the north and Hezb at the south of Kabul positioned themselves and asked Peshawar based parties to draw a path for next government. (Misdaq, 2006)

The Peshawar based parties signed an accord to arrange temporary solution to Afghanistan. According to that, Sebghatullah Mujadidi head of Jabh-i-Nejat was assigned as Interim President for two months, Massoud as Defense Minister, Gailani Foreign Minister and Sayyaf as Interior Minister. After that Burhanuddin Rabbani was expected to take over the government for four months and Massoud will be his Defense Minister along with Hekmatyaar of Hezb-e Islami as Prime Minister. Soon Hekmatyaar and Masoud's troops started fighting each other in the street of Kabul and at end of Rabbani's four month term he excused that due to fighting he was not able to work and form representative Shura. The Peshawar based parties give him another three months to form the Shura. At the end of his second term, he formed a 1335 member Shura in December 1992. Most of its participants were from his party, and that Shura appointed him as President for next two years, this Shura was rejected by all other parties except his own Jamiat. Ibid.

Where Rabbani was not willing to step-down the civil war started between Masoud and Hekmatyaar, Although Saudi Arabia mediated a lot but still Hekmatyaar did not agreed to enter Kabul and positioned himself in South of Kabul, he bombarded Kabul and troops of President Rabbani from there. But he was not able to defeat the government so he allied Abdul Rashid Dostum and Hezb-e Wahdat. (Barfield, 2010)

After one year of fighting government and the opposing parties met in Islamabad and another Accord took place, where the time of his presidency was decreased to eighteen months and the prime ministry was than given to Hekmatyaar. Important issue in this accord was that they agreed on electoral process, where the government was directed to form an independent election commission and thin this commission will hold election for grand constitution Assembly. And then this Assembly will formulate a constitution through which general elections will be held for

the presidency and parliament. (United Nations Security Council, 1993) But again Rabbani was not able to fulfill the terms of the Accord. He then finished his two years and after that Rabbani asked his Chief Justice to renew his term for another four years. Ibid.

According to Nabi Misdaq the reason of the internal war after Najeeb's government was in fact the refusal of Rabbani and Massoud to transfer power due to the Peshawar accord. Rabbani prolonged his government four times consistently where major parties were not agreed with him to stay in power. He every time was arranging the passable putting his own people. (Misdaq, 2006)

All parties were positioned in and around Kabul where they were strong, it was not possible for one party to conquer all Kabul and defeat others as Amin Saikal writes, "Hekmatyar's Hizb-e Islam faction was ensconced in the city's Pashtun southern flank, Masud's Jamiat troops had control of Tajik Kohistan, and Mazari's Hizb-i-Wahdat troops were able to support Kabul's Hazara neighborhoods with aid from central and northern Afghanistan. It was thus hard for any faction to drive the others far enough away to secure the city from further attack." (Saikal, 2004) The country was divided regionally between various groups where every group had its foreign relations with the neighboring countries, like Dostem had direct relations with Uzbekistan and Russia. Ismail Khan in Herat was supported by Turkmenistan, Iran and to some extent with Pakistan. Haji Qadir was supported by Pakistan, Jalaluddin Haqqani had close relations with Pakistan and Arab Countries. Various factions were active in Kabul which had their own relations with foreign countries, Hezb-e Islami supported by Pakistan, Hezb-e Wahdat was supported by Iran, Sayyaf had close ties with Gulf Countries. (Qassem, 2009)

This war was very different from other Afghan Civil wars. In previous Civil wars one party was able to defeat others, because foreign support was with that one party and also previous wars were mostly between one tribe, Durrani Tribe, so the powerful side was able to defeat the others. But in this war, no party was able to defeat others totally and permanently due to some reasons; from one side the international supporters, which supported these factions during war with USSR, had gone; like Russia was not willing to support because they lost their battle in Afghanistan, USA after the dissolving of USSR was not keen to support Mujahideen, only Pakistan was supporting their loyal in that war. Although other countries also supported Mujahideen groups, like Iran and Russia was supporting Massoud and Rabbani, but not as much

to defeat others. So these parties was able to defend their homelands but wasn't able to defeat others, that's why the civil war prolonged for about three years. Unlike others this war was open for all, so every party was strong and autonomous in their home regions and the country was divided between there parties as Thomas Brafield in his book, Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History, writes "Ismail Khan secured Herat and the west (including Badghis, Farah, and Ghor). Dostam ruled the north from Mazar in alliance with the Hazara Hizb- i- Wahdat and the Ismailis in the Baghlan. Masud controlled Kabul and the northeast. The Nangarhar Shura in Jalalabad led by Haji Qadir oversaw the east, while the southeast was divided between Jalaludin Haqqani in Paktia and Mulla Naqibullah Akhund in Qandahar", but still these regional autonomous groups had connections with two parties in the central Kabul, the Hezb-e Islami of Hekmatyaar and Jamiat of Rabbani, because they provided financial support.(Barfield, 2010)



## **Implications for Central Asia**

### **Security Implications**

Collapse of Soviet Union in Afghanistan and the emergence of Islamic State of Afghanistan by Islamic Jihadist inspired other Jihadist groups all over the world, mostly Central Asian and South Asian states, like Kashmir Mujahidden and newly emerged Islamic groups in Central Asia. The ISA was not only an ideal state for these groups but also Afghanistan was good training base for them and Mujahideen government supported them morally and logistically. As Ahmed Shayeq Qassem believes, “for its part the ISA’s Islamic ideology and keenness to enhance its ethical legitimacy through support of forging Islamic groups was another factor which damaged its relations with Central Asia...” (Qassem, 2009)

In Afghan Jihad there were about 100,000 Jihadist from around the world to fought USSR troops; Central Asian young Muslims also joined them. They admitted to Pakistani Maddrassas in Northern Frontier to learn Islam and then vast majority of them fought Russian in Afghanistan and some of them returned back to Central Asia. (Johnson, 2007) Mujahideen government with Islamic background supported Islamic groups out of Afghanistan, they were supporting Islamic groups in Central Asia against their governments, and they also were supporting Kashmiri Mujahideen, Chechen and even supported Chinese Uighur. (Qassem, 2009)

Central Asia was passing from its most difficult time. After defeat of Communism, from one side an ideological vacuum was created which was filling with newly emerged Islamic ideology and from other side new leadership of Central Asian states was still remnant of Soviet era communists which was supported by Russia. This leadership considers the emergence of Islam, as a political force, a threat to their power. When they started operation against these groups, leadership and other members of these groups migrated to Afghanistan, like Tajikistan’s Islamic Opposition leaded by Said Abdullah Nuri and Haji Akber, Who fought against Tajik pro-communist government. Members of this group came to Afghanistan and fought from there, for this Russians deployed some troops in Tajik-Afghan border, where several times cross-border attacks took place. Ibid.

As Gorbachev was engaged in Afghan war, so he give vast freedom to CAR, by this on August 24, 1990 Tajikistan declared its sovereignty. After the failed coup against Gorbachev, leader of

the Tajik Communist party (TCP) resigned. The Tajik Opposition Parties pressurized Tajik government to announce its independence and by 9<sup>th</sup> of September 1991 Tajikistan declared its independence. Kadreddin Aslonov was selected as an acting president and the TCP was suspended. And thus the former communist was encouraged to overthrow the acting president and announce the state of emergency. (Buyers, 2003)

Opposition forces remained in capital and decided not to leave demonstrations until new elections held, thus elections took place in November 1991 between Rakhmon Nabiyev and Davlat Khudonazarov. Nabiyev, Communist Party Candidate, won elections, but the opposition groups did not accept the result and argued that elections were rigged. Soon demonstrations turned violent, the government replied with strong reaction, where many killed. (Johnson, 2007) After short battle, demonstrators were able to capture most of the capital and forced Nabiyev to step-down. Nabiyev formed coalition government but because of hardliner communists in his party, he was not able to meet the demands of oppositions which he agreed, thus the oppositions captured him and forcefully resigned him. Soon interim government was formed by parliament where nationalists and Islamists had strong positions in new government. (Buyers, 2003)

Communists, which were sidelined by nationalists and Islamists, regrouped, struggled against government and replaced the government officials with pro-Nabiyev supporters, in result Parliamentary System was installed and the post of president was dissolved. Ibid. by this the opposition started to find foreign support to fight with government, for this the opposition groups contacted Afghan Mujahideen groups, specially their ethnic Tajiks for weapons and other logistic support. (Johnson, 2007) Although there were other factions to shape Tajik Civil war but one of that was Afghanistan's Instability, as Lena Jonson in his book, Tajikistan in the new Central Asia, writes, "Second, there was the turbulence around neighboring Afghanistan, which provided inspiration and later weapons and safe haven for the opposition fighters." (Jonson, 2006)

Different factions of Tajik Civil War was supported by different foreign actors, like Nabieva invited Russian troops to secure his government and that's why Russia sent its troops to Tajikistan during 1992, their aim was to protect Nabiyev's government. Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan also announced to send troops to Tajikistan borders to prevent the expansion of Tajik

war. Tajik oppositions, Islamic and Democratic, were supported from Iran and Afghanistan. Both Hekmatyar and president Rabbani was supporting these groups, the Tajik old guard which had direct relations with Uzbekistan and were ethnic Uzbeks was supported by Uzbek Militia, Dostum. (Buyers, 2003)

With the withdrawal of USSR troops, political and ideological vacuum was created, Uzbek leaders thought Nationalism and Islam will fill the gap, but Islam Karimov wanted silence Islam with no political agenda, where course of events in neighboring Tajikistan and in Afghanistan did not agreed with this thinking. So Uzbek leadership suppressed the groups under the name of national security and stability. (Akbarzadeh, 2005)

The IRP founded in Moscow in 1990's, soon converted to more aggressive faction called Adalat (Justice) leaded by Tahir Yuldash and Juma Namangani in Farghana valley and Namangan, Adalat was only working in Namangan to execute Islamic Social values, at first Karimov give space to them but they started campaign against Adalat to suppress them.(Hiro, 2009)

When karimov visited Namangan in 1992, he was offered to swear on Holy Quran to bring Islamic Sharia and announce Uzbekistan as Islamic State. By his return to Capital, Karimov ordered to arrest some members of the Islamic oppositions groups. But when the Islamic groups of Tajikistan was able to overthrow President Rahman Nabeyev and become important force in Tajik politics and also Mujahideen Parties in Afghanistan was able to defeat Russia and bring Islamic Government, Karimov worried about his own presidency and government. He then suppressed Adalat, Juma Namangani, Tahir Yuldash and its other important members escaped to Afghanistan, where they formed Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). Karimov also sealed boarder with Tajikistan and imposed strict role for entering and exiting Farghana Valley, which had border with Tajikistan. Ibid.

Kyrgyzstan unlike other Central Asian states, the Supreme Soviet of Kyrgyzstan selected a 46 years old scientist, Askar Akayev, as a President. Akayev later was the only one in Central Asia who condemned the communist coup on Gorbachev. Kyrgyzstan unlike Tajikistan and Uzbekistan was not affected from Islamism not it experienced any civil war, although it shared Farghana Valley with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, also its 70 percent populations is Muslim, but very few of them was inspired by IMU and IRP of Tajikistan. At his first years Akayev announced his State as a secular state and registered no party with religious background or agenda, but still number one threat to Kyrgyzstan was movement of Islamic militant groups of Central Asia and Afghanistan. The reason why Islamic militant groups of Central Asia and Afghanistan were not able to expand their ideology in their initial years to Kyrgyzstan was that

Firstly Akayev sealed all borders with Tajikistan where civil war was at its peak; secondly he banned all religious parties and announced all political activity by religious groups. From other side the IMU and IRP of Tajikistan in their initial years had limited goal of establishing Islamic government at their own countries. (Bokoshov, 2013)

### **Drug Trafficking**

Militancy is not the only threat to newly independent Central Asian states; there are other threats to the security of Central Asia. After Islamic militancy, the threat of drug trafficking is the most dangerous one. Scholars argued that after the collapse of USSR, Central Asian States will become the most productive countries of drug in the world, but later on these countries were not the producers but rather the transit routes and consumers of the opiates. (Abdullayev, 2013)

After withdraw of Russia from Afghanistan, international supporters of Afghan Mujahideen stopped donating resisting groups, thus Afghan Mujahideen parties were not able to support their party members in different regions of Afghanistan, so these warlords started drug business to finance their selves in civil war. When members of Islamic groups of Central Asia like IMU, UTO or IRPT migrated to Afghanistan, during their stay in Afghanistan they made close connections with Afghan warlords and thus they were able to start drug trade between Afghanistan and Central Asia to Europe and Russia. Like warlords in Afghanistan, opposition factions in Central Asia also started drug trafficking to finance their fight against Tajikistan and later against Uzbekistan, that's why drug trafficking was increasing during Afghan and Tajikistan Civil Wars, according to the Council on Foreign and Defiance Policy of the Russian Federation's 1997 report, drug trafficking in Central Asia increased 13.5 times between 1992 and 1996. (Olcott and Udalova, 2000) Where drug trafficking was increasing along Central Asian Routes, it was obvious that consumption of Opium will be increase, that's why drug edicts increased more than tripling from 1992 to 2000. (Chouvy, 2009)

There are two transit ways to export opiates to Europe and other Western Countries, the first one was the Balkan route which previously was famous but after the emerging of new states in Central Asia the route which is crossing Central Asia is called Northern Route, is getting famous in transitions of drug. According to Abdullayev the reason that drug traffickers choose Northern Route is that these five Countries are newly independent which don't have strong political systems, also they don't have enough experience of drug trafficking, from other side countries in Balkan Route like Iran, Turkey, Balkan Countries and Europe have strong political systems and they are also experienced in combating drug. (Abdullayev, 2013) Mcgooven also indicates somewhat the same analysis about the factors that are participating in increasing of drug trafficking in Central Asia; he mention's, border guards with limited

resources as first factor which increased drug trafficking; the second factor he elaborates is that Afghan factions in civil war needed new means of support after soviet withdrawal. (Mcgoven, 2003)

Three of Central Asian countries have border with Afghanistan which were directly affected from opium cultivating in Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan were affecting the most, because of their long border with Afghanistan. (Abdullayev, 2013) Tajikistan border with Afghanistan was poorly guarded by border police, it also is mostly covered with mountains, when civil war started in Tajikistan in 1992, normal income of most people slowdown and there was no business other than militancy or drug trafficking and thus economic problems of ordinary people resulted in emergence of warlord system in Central Asia and these warlords were leading drug trafficking. (Mcgoven, 2003)

All Central Asian Countries are low developed, rate of unemployment is very high but in Tajikistan it is at its peak, the average income of five or six people family is about 10\$ per month, that's why more people in Tajikistan, than other Central Asian Countries, entered to drug business. It gets an alarming high level when women in Tajikistan contributed to drug trade. Women, whose husbands died in Tajik civil war, started this business to become a source of income for their family. (Hanks, 2010)

Uzbekistan was affected lesser then above mentioned two countries, from one side it has narrow border with Afghanistan and also its border is defined with Amu Darya River and thus it's not ideal for smugglers to travel from Uzbekistan. Kazakhstan as largest country of Central Asia is the only country to pass the opiate to Russia and Europe. Kyrgyzstan with mountainous structure is also vulnerable transit route for drug to pass it to Russia and Europe. (Abdullayev, 2013)

Increase in drug trade was directly affecting some of neighboring countries, Russia was the most affected country of them all, Russia operated many joined programs with Central Asia to combat narcotics, as they offered the belt of security between Central Asia and Afghanistan, consumers of drug was increasing year by year in Russia as Human Rights Watch's report of 2004 states about Narcotic Drug use in Russia that: "There is no doubt that drug use and heroin use particularly have risen meteorically in Russia since 1990. Mikhailov said the total number of drug users had risen 900 percent in the decade ending in early 2004."(Human Rights Watch (hrw), 2004) Also they used drug directly by injecting their selves and this had vast impact on spreading HIV/AIDS, as same report of Human Rights Watch indicates that new infection cases of HIV/AIDS was doubling by every six to twelve months. (Hanks, 2010)

## **Economic Implications**

Prior to Central Asia's independence, the region didn't had the experience of free thinking about their economy, politics, security or other future developments. Everything was decided by and in Moscow like what to produce, when to produce, what to export and so on, all these questions were decided by USSR. When Moscow, itself faced economic problems, it lefts Central Asia on ground to start their own journey. After their unexpected independence, none of Central Asian country was ready for it. They didn't know how to combat these economic problems. They had to export their goods and other natural resources to countries other than Russia, because from one side Russia was not willing to buy their raw material and natural resources according world standard prices and from other side a country, Afghanistan, which was a bridge for them to connect them with South and Southeast Asia, was facing a serious turmoil. Afghanistan was engaged in Civil War and security during Mujahideen government was in its worst position. Although they wanted to free themselves from economic dependency, still they had to rely on Russia.

In Soviet era decision makers were in Moscow, economy was also strictly directed centrally. When Soviet collapsed and every country in Central Asia was independent to run their country, they were not able to develop their economy and were not able to bring economic reforms and change Centralized Economy to Market Economy, because they did not had much experience so they remain as they were in Soviet era. (American Institute of Afghanistan Studies (AIAS) and the Hollings Center for International Dialogue (HCID), 2008)

Central Asian countries during USSR rule were all raw material exporter and producer to USSR, mostly on agricultural side. Uzbekistan was major producer of Cotton which gained fifth position in Cotton production in the world. It was providing 70 percent Cotton of all USSR. Kazakhstan was also famous in its wheat production; Kyrgyzstan was also depended on agriculture but mostly on livestock's. Turkmenistan was also producing raw materials like Cotton and agriculture to USSR, but still they managed to expand their gas production in last year's. And the same was Tajikistan which provided Cotton to USSR, but after their independence all these countries focused on industrial and other mines productions rapidly after USSR dissolved. (Khan, n.d)

After independence, disputes started over water usage, natural gas, oil and electricity, as report, Afghanistan's other neighbors: Iran, Central Asia and China, organized by The American Institute of Afghanistan Studies(AIAS) and the Hollings Center for International Dialogue(HCID) indicates this issue: "Disputes have arisen about payments and availability and about whether water in dams should be used primarily for irrigation of cotton (most profitable for Uzbekistan) or production of hydropower

**Chapter Three**  
**Political Instability in Afghanistan 1996-2000**  
**Implications for Central Asia**

## Introduction

When USSR withdraw from Afghanistan, it was time where people were hoping that finally after a decade of chaos and insecurity there will be peace, security and of course an Islamic government, but when Mujahedeen entered Kabul, they then started killing each other to control power. Despite the entire struggle that have done by regional and international organizations to make a deal between them, they were hopeless and give no positive result. Even when they themselves agreed on some pointes, like in Peshawar accord or Islamabad Accord, were not keen to implement those agreements. Although there were about 13 factions of Soviet oppositions, but two Peshawar based parties of them were too powerful, Jamiat of Burhanuddin Rabbani and Hezb-e Islami of Hekmatyaar. After Soviet withdrawal, Peshawar based parties signed Peshawar Accord of Power Shearing, in fact the battle for power struggle began from here. In this accord presidency and defense ministry was given to Jamiat and Prime Ministry was given to Hezb-e-Islami. Hekmatyaar demanded that defense minister should work under Prime Minister and Massoud, who was nominated for defense ministry, wanted that defense ministry will work under Presidency and this resulted in about five years of Civil War between Mujahideen.

In these five years, every faction struggled to support their commanders in the regions and later on Civil was made regional commanders autonomous and they became warlords. Every warlord has their own region of power, where his own leader of party was not able to challenge them. These warlords were abusing people brutally, they were killing, robbing public property and even rapping women and thus a new phenomenon under the name of Taliban emerge, in the beginning Taliban didn't emerged for Islamic cause or Islamic government, their aim was to bring peace to the people of Kandahar but later on they became an Islamic force to establish Islamic government. They conquered two third of Afghanistan in lease thin two years. Thus when Taliban were entering Kabul, a Shura of Ulema announced their leader, Mullah Omar, as Amir ul Mominen. This was in fact an alarm for regional states, especially to Central Asian states.

Thus when Taliban controlled 90 percent of the country, they supported militant groups of Central Asia, and this time Political Islam was a big threat for Central Asia, Politically and security wise. It was a political threat for Central Asian leaders because almost all Central Asian leaders were the remnants of previous communist parties and were already in war with Islamic Militant groups of Central Asia like Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and United Tajik Opposition, thus Central Asian countries opposed Taliban politically; they created various regional groups to oppose Taliban and also lobbying in various other regional and international organizations. Taliban's support for regional Islamic groups also poses serious treats for Central Asian States, because they were already fighting these groups and Taliban was



giving them safe haven. Taliban also poses economic threats to Central Asian states and Taliban was also supporting drug trafficking which was an immediate challenge for these newly independent countries.

## **Emergence of Taliban**

During Soviet invasion, Deobandi Madrasas were established for Afghan students in NWFP, these students were studying and after their graduation they were joining Afghan Jihad against Soviet, but where Soviet withdrew from Afghanistan and later on Civil war started, these students ignored to join Afghan Mujahideen factions any more. They started to find an alternative way, thus they formed a new group under the name of Taliban or Islamic Students. (Barfield, 2010) Taliban rose as security force to secure some parts of the Country but as they were Islamic Students of Madrassas, they soon changed their ambitions to bring Islamic state. Various factors contributed in emergence of Taliban and bringing them to power as quickly as no one can imagine. Afghans fought for eighteen years, at first they fought with communist regime of Afghanistan than with USSR for about then years. after USSR withdrawal and Najeeb drawdown, people hoped an Islamic and prosperous government will come and days of security will come, but unfortunately civil war between Mujahedeen disappointed them, now they don't have the stamina to resist any new group, thus Taliban were able to take two third of the country without any big battle. (Rais, 2008)

Civil war also created political vacuum, where warlordism was at its high peak that central government had no check and balance of regional warlords, thus here Taliban came these warlords saw their survival under Taliban. Ibid.

Factor of religion is also of a vast importance in bringing Taliban to power, they come with Sunni Deobandi type of Islam which was ideal for Pashtuns and was practiced by Pashtuns, so it was welcomed by Pashtun dominant areas. Besides all these factors according Rasul Bakhsh Rais, Pashtun Nationalism is also an important factor in bring Taliban so quickly to power and during their dominant regions, as Rais states:

*Among all these factors in our judgment, the undercurrents of Pashtun nationalism, though, subdued by the Islamic rhetoric of the Taliban, served as bedrock for the growth of the movement. Largely for this reason the movement captured more than two-thirds of the country without any major resistance and its social support base remained largely confined to the Pashtun-dominated regions where it emerged...What motivated the Pashtuns and set them behind the Taliban was a general concern that they had lost power over the state to the Tajiks and Uzbeks, and the Taliban was the right kind of force to secure their country and establish order. The Pashtuns had*

*difficulty in accepting the fact that ethnic and religious minorities had grown vastly powerful, and had created autonomous regional fiefdoms. Pashtuns, on the other hand, wanted to reestablish a reunified, centralized Afghan state under their domination. This still remains a fundamental point of consensus among them.*

There are two analysis about their first development, according to their own view, that in the mid 1994 they organized in Kandahar, local commanders were brutally abusing people, when brutality of these commanders rise and they raped some people, local people complained to Mullah Mohammad Omar, an Islamic clerk in one of Kandahar Madrassas, from these local commanders. Gradually other areas people came to him and complain about their area commanders and by this Taliban got famous b providing security to people, sometime later they started securing roads and then took control of Kandahar. (Barfield, 2010)

Another analysis about Taliban's early development is that Pakistan was disappointed about Hekmatyaar's performance in taking the power in Kabul; they now organized another group under the name of Taliban. They argue that from one side Pakistan needed secure Afghanistan to reach Central Asian Market to export their goods and import natural energy from Central Asia, from other side they wanted friendly government in Kabul. They argue that Taliban started their mission from Pakistan and then they crossed Spin Boldak boarder and seize Hekmatyaar's army depot and from there they quickly controlled Kandahar. Ibid.

According to these analysts, independence of Central Asian states brought new opportunities for Pakistan; they wanted to connect themselves with Central Asia through northern rout of Afghanistan, Torkham to Kabul and by Salang Pass. But soon, Civil war started between Hekmatyaar and Rabbani, which was intensifying day by day, and this created problems for Pakistan ambitions of reaching Central Asian markets. When international competition started about Central Asian national energy exploitation, especially Gas and Oil, Pakistan even more accelerated its efforts to complete its dream of reaching Central Asian Republics, and by this they searched an alternative rout of Quetta-Herat to Central Asia. When Taliban subjugated the pasha depot of Hekmatyaar's troops in October 1994, Pakistani 30 truck convoy was on the way to Kandahar, before reaching Kandahar, it was taken by local warlords and demanded, thus this convoy was freed by Taliban and reached Kandahar, and some days later Taliban conquered Kandahar. (Rasanayagam, 2003)

From Kandahar, they expanded their under control territory in two sides, to north they took Uruzgan and to east of Kandahar they took Zabul, but till now Taliban were not engaged in large battle where they

reached Helmand they placed themselves with some warlords against others and this was first time for them to participate in large scale combat, where hundreds killed from both sides. Now it was a time for them to expand their territory under control, after Uruzgan and Zabul still they continued their attack in two lines, in 1995 first they took Gazni in north and in eastern line they took Paktia and Paktika provinces. Ibid.

In Ghazni, Hekmatyaar's forces were pressurizing Ghazni's governor to step-down, he then asked Taliban for help. Taliban and Governor Qari Baba's forces combined were able to defeat Hekmatyaar's troops, Taliban then disarmed Qari Baba. According Angelo Rasanayagam till now neither Taliban nor Rabbani was against each other, as he mentions in his book, *Afghanistan: A Modern History*, "It is interesting to note that the Rabbani government was not at first hostile to the Taliban who had earlier sent a delegation to Kabul requesting assistance against the Kandahari warlords. In fact the leader of the most important of the Kandahari militias, who was their corps commander, had received instructions from Kabul not to oppose the Taliban and to surrender his weaponry. In Ghazni it appeared that the Taliban had intervened on behalf of a government appointee. P146" in fact it shows that at the beginning, Rabbani supported Taliban against Hekmatyaar. But Taliban denied any of these reports as Rasanayagam noted, "We are neutral in the power struggle between Rabbani and Hekmatyaar." Ibid.

First sufferer of these advances was Hekmatyaar, who was forced to leave northern areas and move to eastern areas of Kabul; it seems like he had little support in Pashtun areas as Barfield argues, "Hekmatyaar's party proved so weakly rooted within Afghanistan's Pashtun regions that their military units dissolved in the face of the Taliban advance. The Taliban simply swept them aside until they stood at the gates of Kabul.P259" (Barfield, 2010)

In 1995, Hekmatyaar was in difficult position. From one side he was in continues battle with Rabbani government, form other side Taliban were advancing by taking his areas in south of Kabul one by one. Where Taliban reached Charasiab district, Hekmatyaar was forced to leave it for Taliban and retreated to Sarobi district of Kabul. When Hekmatyaar left Charasiab base, government took it but then left it for Taliban. Now as Massoud was not in combat with Hekmatyaar, he took advantage from the situation and attacked Hezb-i-Wahdat of Abdul Ali Mazari, at the end Mazari was defeated and Mazari came to Taliban and agreed to surrender his weapons to them. (Rasanayagam, 2003)

Taliban, from their beginning, took very successful strategy, they every time was attacking weapon depots at first and after that they control the province, they also was benefiting from internal rivalries of different groups, joining one group with them and fought it with other groups in the ground. When they

reached Kabul, they knew Shia Hezb-e-Wahdat was one of rivals of Massoud, so they united Hezb-e-Wahdat with them and prepared themselves to attack on Kabul in March 1995. (Barfield, 2010) Taliban advanced to the western areas of Kabul which was home of Shi'ite Wahdat. Mazari's troops refused to join Taliban or disarm themselves to Taliban and joined with Ali Akbari's troops, a pro-government Shi'ite faction. In meanwhile Taliban took control of Herat in March 1995. When Taliban was advancing west of Kabul, Mazari's defeated troops and Massoud launched an attack against Taliban, by mid-March Taliban setback and leave Charasiab base for Massoud. (Rasanayagam, 2003) Taliban was defeated by Massoud, who was far experienced than Taliban. Taliban set backed towards South, on the way they killed Shia leader, Mazari. (Barfield, 2010)

At same time, after Herat Taliban was advancing towards Farah and Nimroz and by mid-March they were able to take most of Farah and Nimruz until they reached Shendand. When Islamil Khan, leader of Mujahideen faction in Herat, saw the situation, he attacked Taliban from there. Although Ismail Khan was engaged in fight with Dostum, he managed to force Taliban for setback towards Kandahar in March. (Barfield, 2010) Massoud helped Ismail Khan in this situation, he sent his air forces to assist him and by this they were able to force Taliban for setback, now government and Ismail Khan's troops advanced after Taliban. (Rasanayagam, 2003)

Taliban prepared them for counter attack, they got new weapons and pick-up cars from Saudi, and they also repaired their aircrafts and in meanwhile were combining more volunteers from Madrassa's, now their count raised to 25000 troops. (Rasanayagam, 2003) and thus they captured Herat in September, basically Ismail Khan's involvement in battle with Taliban give them clue of new rout of Herat and to attack Kabul from there. (Barfield, 2010)

When Ismail Khan and Rabbani's troops reached these will prepared Taliban, they did not had enough weapons and support from behind, so they were not able to fight Taliban, Ismail Khan ordered his forces to general retreat but Taliban cut down road's behind these troops with their new pack-u[s, thus more of their troops killed. From now on Taliban's undefeatable advance began, when Taliban were advancing towards south, Ismail Khan abandoned Shendand. So Taliban took Shendand. Ismail Khan knew he can't defend Herat, so he left Herat in beginning of September. Form Herat they then moved towards Kabul and for second time they took Charasiab. (Rasanayagam, 2003)

This time Taliban wanted to attack Kabul from east of the country. Taliban took Paktia from Hekmatyaar troops at the end of 1996, when they took Paktia, Nangarhar Shura divided in pro and anti-Taliban factions, thus Haji Qadir left the country, they attacked Nangarhar from paktia and captured it in

September 1996. Taliban easily were able to conquer Nangarhar, They captured large amount of arms in Hekmatyaar depot, Taliban than attacked Kabul from Nangarhar. From Nangarhar Taliban controlled Laghman and Kunar and advanced toward Sarobi, home town of Hekmatyaar. Massoud decided to defend Taliban in Sarobi but his troops were not able to reach Sarobi, as Taliban were too quickly advancing, form Sarobi Taliban without any delay went on Kabul, by 26th September Massoud ordered for general retreat from Kabul and went back to north of country. Ibid.

After the death of Mazari, Karim Khalili emerged as representative and leader of Shi'ite Wahdat faction, Khalili with Massoud and Dostum formed supreme Council for the Defense of the Motherland to defend the north of Afghanistan. On October 1996, at the end of the month Massoud was able to take three important provinces, Jabul Seraj, Bagram and Charikar in north of Kabul.

After their takeover of Kabul, Taliban set new goals to achieve; it was a time for northern Afghanistan to be conquest. In November and December 1996, Taliban made some important advances, they capture Salang highway pass once again from Massoud and forced him to retreat back to Punjsher valley, and they also took Badghis and preparing themselves to attack on Faryab. (Rasanayagam, 2003) They advanced northerly from Herat by May 1997 until they reached Mazar-i-Sharif without any big incidence.

General Malik, deputy of General Dostum, had his base in Faryab near Badghis. Taliban agreed with Malik to unite with them and in return Taliban will give him the autonomy of Uzbek region. Malik headed over Ismail Khan to Taliban and joined Taliban and Dostum was forced to leave the country and went to Turkey. By the end of May 1997, Taliban were able to capture Mazar-i-Sharif. When Taliban controlled Mazar, they then started disarming Uzbeks, Malik and other local Uzbeks angered and it resulted in Uzbek revolt. Uzbeks and Hazara's started firing on Taliban in the streets and about 600 were killed and some thousand were captured. Malik than was able to retook four provinces from Taliban, at the same time when Massoud saw the situation, his commander in Salang, Bashir Salangi, blocked Salang rout by bombing Salang Tunnel, so Talban were not able to escape and by this thousands Taliban warriors were captured and then shot dead. With Taliban defeat in Mazar, Khalili also pushed Taliban back from entering Bamyan; Massoud also advanced towards Kabul and once again captured Charikar and Bagram. Ibid.

Taliban experienced the worst defeat of their history by losing vast territory and thousands of their followers. Mullah Omar, himself took action and appealed Madrassas for help, thus new troops added. Dostum forces fought with Malik's and Malik was forced to leave the country. This time Taliban started their attack on Mazar from north side of Afghanistan, from Herat they took Faryab and from there they

took Jowzjan. (Rasanayagam, 2003) Taliban then united and prepared themselves to attack Mazar, this time they changed their alignment, instead of Hazara they took help of local Pashtuns and thus captured Mazar once again by August 1998, and soon took control of Bamyan, the heart of Hazara. (Barfield, 2010)

Security of its southern boarder for Russia during Soviet era was a matter of concern, but when Central Asian Republics (CAR) got independence, it was not only Russia's problem, now Central Asian States were equally involved. When Taliban took Kabul in September 1996, it alarmed Central Asia and Russia to secure their Southern border with Afghanistan. They assumed ongoing instability in Central Asia, especially in Tajikistan, from Afghanistan and they thought it will increase with raising Taliban to power and defeat of Tajik opposition in the north. (Rasanayagam, 2003)

Russia called for meeting on Central Asian Republics on October 4 1996. They meet in Almaty, the capital of Kazakhstan, where four of the Central Asian Republics participated. Only Turkmenistan did not participated, because Turkistan was wishing to export her Gas and Oil to Pakistan and South Asia through Afghanistan. They consider Taliban as an opportunity to bring security in Afghanistan and pave the way for their energy resources to export, therefor Turkmenistan supported Pakistan's policy regarding Taliban and Taliban themselves. Other Republics along Russia agreed to strengthen Russian forces along Southern border with Afghanistan. They then meet in Dushanbe in late April 1997 and discussed the latest advances of Taliban and the coming threats which could be spillover from Taliban government. (Matinuddin, 1999)

Although every state of Central Asia had its own national interests and in fact it differed one state to another, but still they were noted in term of Security of Central Asia. They agreed to maintain the existing security system, as we mentioned above that in the meeting of Almaty they agreed on the continuation of boarder security by Russian forces. They also felt that the presence of an anti-Taliban force in the north of Afghanistan was necessary to use this area as a buffer zone between Taliban and CASs. Therefor anti-Taliban coalition formed under Burhanuddin Rabbani in 1996, the alliance consisted Jamiat-e-Islami under Rabbani and Massoud, Shi'ite Hezb-e-Wahdat leded by Karim Khalili and General Dostum's Popular Islamic Movement of Afghanistan (Rumer, 2002)

## Taliban Government

Mullah Omar was Ghalzai Pashtun of Hotak clan, he was born in 1960, Omar's father, Mawlawi Ghulam Nabi, was a religious leader, his father died when Omar was three years old. He went Pakistan before Soviet invasion and joined Jamia Uloom ul Islamia of Karachi, when Soviet invaded Mullah Omar came back to Afghanistan and joined Hezb-e-Islami Khalis and fought with USSR. (Rasanayagam, 2003)

After Najeebullah regime, Mujahideen was not able to bring peace and establish government, thus commanders and warlords in every area started their brutality as there was no government to ask them for their brutality. People appealed to Mullah Omar from harassment of these warlords, thus Mullah Omar ordered his some thirty students to punish these warlords, according Angelo Rasanayagam; in early 1994 Omar helped two young girls, who were harassed and raped by a warlord, then he rescued a reengaged boy from two warlords, thus he was famous and thus people of other areas were coming to him to help them against their area's warlord. Ibid.

When Taliban was preparing themselves from attack on Kabul in 1996, more than thousand Ulema joined the Shura and at the end they selected Mullah Omar as Amir-ul-Mominin (Commander of the Faithful). (Rasanayagam, 2003) Taliban were implementing Deobandi Fiqh as their legal system although Pashtun tribal code was also important for them but if these codes opposed Sharia, then the second one got the upper hand. Taliban were also against Shi'ite, although they made several alliances with them. Ibid.

Shura Selected their Amir, but it left it unclear that how this government will work, how the economic situation will group up. When Taliban took Kabul from Rabbani, they created political system which was never practiced in Afghanistan. Their political system was consisted of two Shuras. Supreme Shura consisted of six members, who was led by Mullah Omar and was based in Kandahar; second Shura was made of two Inner Shuras; the Military Shura and Kabul Shura. Kabul Shura which was in Kabul, consisted of 14 members. It worked as cabinet, where every member of Shura was dealing with one specific ministerial area of specialty. Kabul Shura working as cabinet was mostly free in its decisions but still was under Mullah Omar and Kandahari Shura. Ibid.

As according Rasanayagam Kabul Shura members were more flexible and pragmatic, they had better relations with United Nations and other NGOs, but as Kandahari Shura and Mullah Omar mostly overruled Kabul Shura, it was difficult for them to deal with such situation. Kabul Shura did not had the right to take decisions about important issues, they had to refer it to Kandahari Shura and Mullah Omar. Ibid.

Basically all members of Kabul and Kandahari Shura were Kandahari Pashtuns, governors and senior police officers of provinces were also mostly Kandahari Pashtuns, although there were some non-Kandahari Pashtuns in some provinces but they don't had as much power as Kandahari governors had, even they were not funded as much as Kandaharis'. It means they controlled all power in Kandahar as Rasanayagam argues; "Thus political power was centralized at the level of the Kandaharis under Omar, to whom all revenues were also remitted.P193" Third one was Military Shura which was headed by Mullah Omar, it was composed of General Chef of Staff, Chef of ground army and Chef of Air Army. Ibid.

Later on Taliban opened the old institutions and employed people in Kabul, they also opened some ministries and appointed Taliban for those posts, but still these ministers had little power, they were still under Kandahar Shura, even most of their decisions were overruled by Kandahari Shura. As Taliban started their movement as military and social movement, still they were thinking like military commanders and were not able to convert themselves to government or think as government. (Barfield, 2010)

When Taliban took control of Mazar-i-Sharif in 1997, they claimed the legitimate government of the country as they took two-third of Afghanistan. Finally, Pakistan recognized them as government of Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirate recognized them after Pakistan and by this Taliban started campaign to receive the recognition from other countries as well. When they took 9 percent of the country by 1999, they also applied for UN seat of Afghanistan. But after some days UN announced economic sanctions on Taliban and also included ban on international flights to and from Afghanistan and was going to implement in thirty days if Taliban did not extradite Osama bin Laden to United States for trail.

Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda was accused of bombing US embassies in Dar Es Salaam and Nairobi in 1998, where over 5000 were wounded and about 224 were killed including 12 Americans, this was a time where US included Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda in their priority list to be dealt with and thus US launched an attack against Al-Qaeda from Indian Ocean on 28<sup>th</sup> August. They fired Cruise Missiles on Bin Laden base in Paktia province. When Al Qaeda attacked USS Cole on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2000 in Yemen, killed about 17 members of the ship, US raised a reward of 5 million to 10 million on bin Laden.

On 19 December 2000, UN security council reaffirmed its previous sanctions and also imposed new ones under Terrorism Resolution 1333, the resolution called on Taliban for closure of training camps of international Al-Qaeda's and returning of Osama bin Laden . It also prevented other countries from trade with territories under Taliban, Also ordered other countries to withdraw their nationals which assist



Taliban in any field. It freezes all assets of Osama bin Laden and Taliban abroad. Soon Taliban rejected sanctions and refused the extradition of Osama bin Laden. (UN Security Council, 2000)

Like Taliban's lack of experience in internal matters, they faced lack of experience in their external relations and this lack of experience led them to total isolation, where no one was ready to support them politically or militarily. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were their biggest supporters. Pakistan, after the UN sanctions and US campaign against Taliban did not support Taliban as much as previously, when Saudi demanded Taliban to extradite Osama to US or other country, Taliban denied it, thus Saudi returned her diplomats from Afghanistan.

Afghanistan, during Taliban, experienced its worst relations with Iran, they killed Shi'ite faction's leader which was supported from Iran, but when Taliban killed some Iranian diplomats in Mazar-i-Sharif, their relations with Iran stopped and Iran raised its support to Taliban's oppositions. Central Asia with rising Islamism had fear of spillover of political Islam from Taliban; Taliban was supporting Muslim rebels from all over Central Asia. Leaders of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Juma Namangani and Tahir Yuldashev, living here in Peshawar and then in Afghanistan, they were regularly meeting Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar, they formed training base in Mazar-i-Sharif and were training Uzbek, Chechen, Tajik and other Central Asian rebels. Thus Taliban had worst relations with Central Asian states either.

Russia, from the beginning of Mujahideen government, had fear from spillover of Islamism and this fear rose during Taliban, especially when they openly supported Chechnya rebels and then recognized them as legitimate government of Chechnya in January 2000. In return Russia raised its support for Taliban's opponents. China also had its concerns about the support of Taliban for Chinese Uighur Muslims and by this several times China accused Taliban but they denied this.

United States, at first issued positive statements about Taliban, they saw Taliban from Gas pipeline perspective, but when Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda bombed two embassies of US in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, US from one side warned Taliban to extradite Osama bin Laden to US, from other side they attacked training bases of Osama bin Laden and this led to the collapse of Taliban in 2001. This isolation forced Taliban to depend economically on Pakistan and United Nations. India and Japan also did not have good relations with Taliban, Japan was giving hundreds of millions of Dollars as humanitarian aid to Taliban, but when Taliban blew up Buddha's sculpture in 2001, they stopped their aid, as Taliban was supporting international Islamists including Kashmiri separatists, so India didn't have good relations with Taliban at all.

## Fall of Taliban

During Afghan Jihad, Muslims from other countries, mostly from Arab Countries, came to Afghanistan to participate in Afghan Jihad against USSR, as they were fighting Soviet the process was encouraged by US and other Arab Countries. When Soviet withdrew from Afghanistan these groups now searched for new enemy and thus they selected US as their new enemy, these foreign Jihadist formed several groups, of which Al Qaeda was its famous. When Taliban emerged and took power, Al Qaeda joined Taliban. (Rais, 2008)

After Soviet withdrawal, US diverted her attention somewhere else, now Afghanistan was not in their priority list, but where Al Qaeda started their mission against United States, especially when Bin Laden attacked two Embassies of US in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi in 1998, then US started focusing Al Qaeda and Bin Laden. Ibid.

Besides all these problems that Taliban had, no country was willing to directly intervene and overthrow Taliban, but continuous support and presence of Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan made it possible, where US entered and collapsed the Taliban regime in 2001. Demand of Osama's extradition from US and Saudi Arabia began in 1998 when Al-Qaeda attacked two US embassies in South of Africa. (Barfield, 2010) From that on US intelligence started various missions to capture or kill Bin Laden. Several times they attacked Bin Laden's training bases to kill him but every time he left the base before attack. They also trained Afghan's to kill him but they failed to do so, until 9/11 World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks. Ibid.

Since then US several times attacked Al-Qaeda and in several ways pressurized Taliban not to support foreign Jihadist and pressurized Taliban to hand over him to US or evict him from Afghanistan, they used Saudi and Pakistan to convince Taliban, they even putted pressure on Pakistan to convince Taliban, but Mullah Omar repeatedly asked the same question that US must provide an adequate prove about Bin Laden involvement. Ibid. When Al-Qaeda attacked New York World Trade Center and Pentagon in Washington, DC on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001, they crossed red line. (Barfield, 2010) According Niaz Naik, former Pakistani foreign minister, ousting of Taliban regime and capturing Osama bin Laden was decided before 9/11 incidence, he told BBC that an American official told him in July that meeting took place between America and its close allies, that Taliban must extradite Osama to them unless they will replace Taliban and install broad based government, but when World Trade Center destroyed, it confirmed the implementation of pre-ready plan. (BBC, 2001)

Learning from Russian invasion of Afghanistan, US took in confidence all shareholders, regional and international. USSR attacked Afghanistan with not taking any stakeholder in confidence, Pakistan, US, Arab States and other international players were opposing their invasion but when United States after 9/11 incidence intended to topple down Taliban government and install a broad-based government, they took all regional stakeholders in confidence, even they got the support of Taliban's opponents, specially Northern Alliance. At regional level they got full support of Pakistan in sense of transit route for their supplies, Central Asian states also supported US intervention in case of airbase for their attack and finally Iran was neutralized about US operations on Taliban. (Barfield, 2010)

Soon after World Trade Center collapsed, US decided to punish Al Qaeda and Taliban by ousting Taliban government and capturing Al Qaeda members. To oust Taliban regime, according to Rasul Bakhsh Rais, US had few options, first was to divide Taliban from within in different factions, but it was not possible, even it was possible it needed more time, second one was to cultivate Pashtun leaders of different Mujahideen factions, which also needed a lot of time. Third option and in fact the best one was to make an alignment with Northern Alliance, it was best option because northern alliance was already fighting with Taliban. Since several years, they knew how to fight with them, they also had vast network of intelligence against Taliban and more importantly they had the will to fight with them. In their last years of fighting with Taliban, they were in very difficult position, they were only limited to tiny Punsheer Valley, in fact this was a God-gifted opportunity for them that country like US, they had on their side. US also needed them to fight an internal group against Taliban and thus it calls it perfect match. (Rais, 2008)

Pakistan was another important country in the region to take it in confidence, after USSR withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pakistan and US relations did not remain as good as it was during Soviet presence in Afghanistan. US applied sanctions on Pakistan almost three times; last sanctions were after 1999 military coup in Pakistan that General Pervez Musharraf took government. They also had contradicted opinions about Kashmir issue, nuclear and Taliban, but now both Pakistan and United States need each other. Pakistan was facing a kind of isolation after coup and needed support of US, in opposite, US also needed Pakistan's support in ousting Taliban, because, Pakistan was the best option from where they can conduct their operation. As a transit route, Pakistan was cheapest and nearest way to transit their equipment. Pakistan also was connected to Arabian Sea, from where US could attack Taliban by using Pakistan's airspace and finally US also could use Pakistan's airbases. Another plus point of Pakistan in this regard was that Pakistan had vast intelligence links and information, which US could use it in their operations against Taliban. Ibid.

While US were thinking about Pakistan to launch their operations from there, they also had Central Asia in mind and in Central Asia they specifically focused on Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Uzbekistan after its independence was facing serious challenges, most important of which was the emergence of Islamic militants. When Taliban came to power, they supported IMU and was training them, so Islam Karimov consider them as a big threat to his government, thus when US decided to destroy Taliban this was best opportunity for him to destroy government oppositions as well. Islam Karimov and US did not had good relation due to some reasons, first reason was the suppression of democracy in all over Central Asia and specifically in Uzbekistan, second one was poor human rights record, where Karimov was suppressing all oppositions. When US requested about use of Khanabad airbase against Taliban, it was time for Karimov to achieve above sited goals, thus there was no room for rejecting the proposal, they welcomed US, therefor when US invaded Afghanistan, Karimov suppressed all his opponents by considering all of them Islamist terrorists. (Barfield, 2010)

When US was preparing for operation against Taliban, they don't consider Iran as a source of support, military, in terms of airbase or transit route, and they did not appeal Iran for help. But they also knew that Iran will remain silent and will not make an issue of US invasion, because Iran was supporting Northern Alliance against Taliban but they were not able to defeat Taliban so Iran was praying that someone oust Taliban and by ousting Taliban they knew their ethnic Tajiks will become powerful. Also Taliban were Deobandi Sunni forces and consider Shi'ite faction of Afghanistan as non-Muslims and Iran hoped that by creating broad based government, Shi'ite minority factions will become powerful, therefor with the invasion of US, Iran remained neutral. (Rais, 2008)

US demanded Taliban to extradite Osama bin Laden or be ready for destruction, Pakistan advised Taliban to return Osama to US or exile him to any other country, but Taliban refused it, Mullah Omar arranged assembly of Muslim Ulemas' to discuss the issue, although the assembly advised Mullah Omar to ask bin Laden to leave Afghanistan, because its right that Mullah Omar should protect his quest, but in return quest also must not cause problems for host, but Mullah Omar did not accept their advice and denied from extradition of Osama to US and thus air strikes started in October against Taliban, northern alliance also attacked Taliban from north of Afghanistan. (Barfield, 2010)

When Taliban refused to hand over Osama bin Laden to US, Bush administration started preparing themselves for attack on Afghanistan, America unlike USSR did not sent large forces, but they contacted northern alliance, which was in a very weak position and they only had 5 to 10 percent of territory under control, and offered them with money and weapons to fight against Taliban, they also confirmed them that US forces may come, in fact this was a golden chance for northern alliance. According Nabi Misdaq,

CIA team headed by Gary landed in northern areas of Afghanistan with some 3 million dollars in cash on 26 September, in his first meeting with Abdullah Abdullah and General Fahim on 27 September offered them one million dollars in cash to buy whatever they need, but to cooperate American troops and thus on 7 October the war on Taliban started. (Misdaq, 2006)

Taliban's collapse first started in the north and then lost control over west; they then lost Kabul in November. In Pashtun areas, where Taliban took control from tribal leaders, now in opposite tribal leaders found a chance to expel Taliban from their areas of power with the support of US, therefor soon Taliban returned to Kandahar and from their they left Kandahar, both Osama and Mullah Omar went to exile. (Barfield, 2010)

## Implications for Central Asia

### Political Implications

One of the biggest challenges for Uzbekistan in its relation with Afghanistan was the Islamism and political instability in Afghanistan. When Taliban controlled Kabul in late 1996, it alarmed Uzbek government, because Taliban was strictly implementing Sharia and Uzbek government was secular and communist, so Uzbek authority was concerning about their secular government while they were already fighting Uzbek Islamic oppositions. That's why they were supporting Uzbek militia General Dostum against Taliban, they thought that Dostum is able to stop Taliban in Central Afghanistan by controlling Salang Pass and by this they hoped that a kind of buffer will be created between Taliban and Uzbekistan. (Akbarzadeh, 2005)

Uzbekistan was feared by Taliban in a sense that Taliban may inspire opposition of Uzbek government, but not in a sense that Taliban will directly attack Uzbekistan and will invade some areas of the country. President Karimov was arguing that this is propaganda of Russia to justify here military presence in Central Asia as Shahram Akbarzadeh quoted Karimov; "I do not take seriously the claim that the Taliban want to conquer a part of Uzbek territory.... It is hard to believe that such assessment could have been made in the first place. Uzbekistan has its own armed forces and with the assistance of its friends can rebuff any aggression.P43" Ibid.

They were believed that Dostum will keep Taliban away from Uzbek border, when Taliban was advancing north, Uzbek military was alarmed when Taliban controlled Mazar-i-Sharif in May 1997. Uzbek leadership focused on its border with Afghanistan by reinforcing of its border. Parallel with its internal efforts, Uzbekistan turned to its regional and international friends for support: at international level, Uzbekistan was engaging international friend that from one side to decrease Taliban's impact on region and from other side to decrease their power internally in Afghanistan and for these two objectives they proposed a way of reconciliation and broad based unity government. They were also lobbying international community, especially US, UN and other western countries by warning them from growing international extremism in Afghanistan and cultivating opium and its trafficking from Afghanistan. Ibid.

Situation in Afghanistan was not only changing Uzbek policy towards Afghanistan but it also impacting its view towards other countries, like they make a policy reverse about Pakistan, they were introducing Pakistan in every international forum as a main pillar of support for Taliban, as Karimov criticized Pakistan and demanded Nawaz Sharif to not to support Taliban. Taliban issue also brought Uzbekistan near to US and other western countries. But Tashkent was more sensitive when they were informed that

IMU was provided safe haven from Taliban, the increased their propaganda in international level. They knew how much the western countries specially USA is concerned about terrorism and extremism, so they shaped their foreign policy towards Taliban in US context that was familiar to western countries and United States. Ibid.

Tashkent was supporting Uzbek minority group in Afghanistan, when Taliban took control of Kabul, soon Tashkent announced Taliban government as illegitimate and lobbying about broad based government in Afghanistan. In fact they aimed to include Uzbek minority to power. But they were achieving this goal indirectly by putting their policy in a context which was confirmed by international norms. Ibid.

Finally all these efforts of Uzbekistan resulted in six plus two group meeting in 1999 in Tashkent which passed a declaration and confirmed Uzbek position to bring broad based government which will be representative of all Afghanistan. But these countries were not able to implement their decisions and at the end it seemed that Tashkent was hopeless from these efforts, they accepted that Taliban will remain for long time, thus Tashkent changed its policy towards Taliban as Karimov showed his willingness to have diplomatic relations with Taliban as Shahram Akbarzadeh quoted President Karimov, "Tashkent is prepared to recognize any Afghan government, be it even a Taliban one. It does not matter whether we like that government or not... To judge which government suits the people of that long-supporting8 country is the Afghan people's internal affair, in which Uzbekistan does not intend to intervene.P45" but still it didn't change Uzbekistan-Afghanistan relations as long as Taliban was supporting IMU and its leader Namangani. Ibid.

Tajikistan like Uzbekistan was also fearing from Taliban advance towards north of Afghanistan, they consider the north of Afghanistan as buffer between them and Taliban and to maintain this buffer zone they unlike Uzbekistan did not supported Uzbek militia, but instead they supported Tajik Massoud and later on the Northern Alliance, they believe that only Massoud is able to stop Taliban from advancing to north. various factors were contributing in Tajik-Taliban relation that they had hostile relations; like Taliban was supporting IMU of Uzbekistan which fought shoulder by shoulder with United Tajik Opposition against Tajik government during Tajik civil war, another hurdle between their relations were the ethnic issue, where Taliban were Pashtun and fought against ethnic Tajiks, Taliban ousted a Tajik dominated government from Kabul which off course had the sympathy of Tajikistan and later on full support. Third hurdle for their good relations was the Islamic agenda of Taliban, Tajik leaders were still the remnant of communism and were against Political Islam, in fact they fought several years with Islamic groups and finally Taliban's support for drug trafficking was the last hurdle in their relations. Thus when US started attack on Taliban after 9/11, Tajikistan supported US attack and facilitated US in

three of its bases which were provided for US forces from Moscow. (Global Investment and Business Center, 2000)

Kyrgyzstan is the first Central Asian country with no direct border with Afghanistan, so they don't fear a direct attack from Taliban, but IMU was crossing its territory from Tajikistan to Uzbekistan's Farghana Valley, so they concerned about that, because IMU several time's threatened Kyrgyz officials, therefor when US attacked Taliban, Kyrgyz offered it's Manas airport in December 2001. Kazakhstan although at the end of Taliban regime prior to US lead operation hoped to start relation with Taliban, but when US attacked Afghanistan, they also supported US position and allowed coalition air crafts to use Kazakhstan's airports. Ibid.

### Security Implications

Although Central Asian states feared from Mujahideen government but not as much as from Taliban, because Afghan Society was not divided ethnically as much as during Taliban – Northern Alliance war. Central Asian States feared that as Northern Alliance was joined by ethnic minorities (Tajik, Uzbek and Turkmen) and from other side Central Asian States also have ethnic relations with these groups, like there are more Tajiks in Afghanistan than Tajikistan. Also Uzbeks ranked fourth as population in Afghanistan, so Central Asian states feared that after Northern Alliance's defeat by Taliban, Taliban may advance towards Central Asia. There are various reasons that Central Asian States considered about the reaching of Taliban to power, but Rasul Bakhsh Rais mentions two of them in his book: Recovering the frontier State, as he states, "First, they fear that an Islamic state in Afghanistan under the control of conservative and militant elements would destabilize their societies, and perhaps incite similar elements across the border. Second, they echo the concerns of their ethnic cousins in Afghanistan who believe that the Taliban would reestablish Pashtun dominance and deny the ethnic minorities autonomy in their affairs.P199" (Rais, 2008)

Before Taliban conquer Mazar-i-Sharif, Uzbekistan was not willing to help Massoud, because they considered Massoud's Islamist agenda as a threat for Uzbekistan, although Massoud was moderate than Taliban and even other Mujahideen factions, especially Hekmatyaar's. Instead, Uzbekistan supported communist General Dostum to form a buffer zone. But Russia and Tajikistan from the beginning were supporters of Massoud against Taliban, but when Taliban controlled Mazar, Uzbekistan changed her mind and joined Tajikistan and Russia to support Massoud against Taliban, they knew Massoud is the only force which can fight with Taliban. (Menon, 2000)



Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) established in 1990 and opened its branches all over Central Asia. IRP got famous in some Central Asian States, especially in Tajikistan but in Uzbekistan, it was not able to strengthen as much as in other countries, it also was not able to register itself in Uzbek government, Rasanayagam argues that in fact IRP's Uzbek branch did not had the capability to implement Uzbek Muslims demands, thus young Muslims in Uzbekistan formed new Party with the name of Adolat(Justice) Party under the leadership of Tahir Yuldashev and Jumaboi Ahmadjonovich Khodhjiyev famous as Juma Namangani. In 1992, Karimov visited Namangani where Adolat Party demanded him to bring Islamic government, although Adolat Party was already practicing Islamic law strictly in Farghana valley. When Karimov returned to Tashkent, he crack down on Adolat and arrested some important members of Adolat Party. With the suppression of Adolat, both Yuldashev and Namangani left the country. (Rasanayagam, 2003)

Yuldashev traveled to Tajikistan and joined Tajikistan's IRP, but soon civil war erupted in Tajikistan in 1992 and Yuldashev was forced to leave Tajikistan. He then came to Peshawar, Pakistan and started collecting funds for Adolat and his next insurgencies, for this he traveled several countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE, Turkey and other countries. He also started to find young Muslims in Central Asia and enrolled them to Peshawar based Madrassas; he stayed in Peshawar till 1998. Ibid.

Juma Namangani fled to Tajikistan's Kurgan Tube (Qurghonteppa). Namangani was previous Soviet Soldier and he fought against Mujahideen during Soviet invasion, he knew military tactics, there for Tajik IRP needed him in their civil war against Tajik government. Namangani was very successful in his attacks on government, that's why more Tajik IRP members joined his group, also in Uzbekistan Adolat was under Karimov's suppression and Adolat's members were coming to Juma Namangani. When civil war in Tajikistan ended in 1997, Namangani stopped his insurgencies and settled in a village between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Ibid.

In 1998 Yuldashev went back to Afghanistan, Taliban give him places in Kabul and Kandahar, he than visit Namangani in Tajikistan, thus Namangani and Yuldashev formed Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in 1998. Juma Namangani agreed with Tajik government that he will not engage in Tajik internal issues, but instead he demanded transit rights to cross Tajikistan to Kyrgyzstan and from there to Farghana Valley. They were crossing these borders but they faced problems in Kyrgyz boarder and for that they were kidnapping Kyrgyz local officials to give them save passage; even they kidnapped Japanese geologists in 1999. (Rasanayagam, 2003)

Uzbekistan was always complaining about the presence of Namangani in Tajikistan, thus Tajik government pressurized Tajik IRP leaders in government to convince Juma Namangani to leave Tajikistan, thus IRP officials met Juma Namangani and in result, in late October 1999, Namangani with his militants and their families migrated to Afghanistan, where they welcomed by Taliban and Tahir Yuldashev. Juma Namangani stayed in Mazar-i-Sharif migrant camp; he carried out his operations in Uzbekistan from Afghanistan. He was also recruiting fresh militants from Uzbekistan and training them in Mazar-i-Sharif refugee camp. Ibid.

Now Namangani and Yuldashev were searching for equipment's to carry out their missions. For this they traveled many times to Kandahar to meet Taliban leader, according to some sources they were able to collect enough funds. According Russian intelligence, Osama bin Laden offered them two MI-8 helicopters and give them 20 million dollars, they also had meetings with other Saudi donor and they obtained some 15 million dollars. Thus Namangani went back to Tavildare, his old base in Tajikistan and then from there he with his guerrilla forces moved to Surkhandarya in Uzbekistan bordered with Tajikistan and Afghanistan's Mazar-i-Sharif. They were announced terrorist group from United States, where they Kidnapped 10 mountain climbers, four of which were US nationals. Namangani came back to Mazar-i-Sharif in late October 2000. IMU once again started training militants from all over Central Asia in Mazar and Kunduz at the end of 2000. In the month of December, Namangani was able to reach Farghana Valley with his 3000 militants to form Islamic Emirate there, but this time his militants were not only from Uzbekistan, rather they were multi nationals from across the Central Asian Republics. They passed Tajikistan, although the boarder was sealed with Russian forces and the area was also covered by IRP of Tajikistan which had representatives in Tajik government, therefor Uzbek government accused Tajikistan of harboring IMU, they also accused Russia that by this they justify their presence in Central Asia. Ibid.

Tajikistan has 1300 kilometer long border with Afghanistan, Tajikistan is the most vulnerable country to spread the threat of instability from Afghanistan. Islamists first appeared in 1989 in Tajikistan and from their spread to other Central Asian countries and this instability changed to civil war which continued from 1992 to 1997 in Tajikistan, in 1997 government's oppositions and government with the mediation of UN and Russia signed a peace agreement, but even after peace settlements Tajikistan feared from Afghanistan. Because Taliban had extreme nationalist Pashtun agenda and were anti-Tajik, so Tajikistan feared that after Massoud, Taliban may advance towards Tajikistan, there for when Taliban captured Kabul, Tajikistan increased their support for northern alliance. They provided base for Massoud in Kuliab region. Tajikistan also poses a threat that Taliban with the help of their good relations with IMU and IRP

may be able to allure Tajik opposition to break their agreements or after defeat of Massoud they may attack Tajikistan and add some areas of Tajikistan to Afghanistan. (Menon, 2000)

The immediate challenge for Central Asia after their independent was the territorial integrity. But even all these assumptions proved wrong, Tajikistan was not willing to place herself between two instable countries, from one side Afghanistan's Taliban and from other side IMU of Uzbekistan. Ibid.

Central Asian countries formed coalition under collective security treaty to support anti-Taliban forces in Afghanistan effectively. Kyrgyzstan was also feared of militant Islam, but they consider Uzbek IMU as a serious threat, which was traveling from Tajikistan to Uzbekistan by passing Kyrgyz territory. They also concerned about Uzbek populated areas of Kyrgyzstan, like Jalalabad and Osh. But when Uzbek militants of Juma Namangani were passing Kyrgyz territory to Uzbekistan's Farghana valley, they demanded safe passage from Kyrgyz authority, which was refused. After that militants took 13 people hostages in August 1999, four of which were Japanese. This was a turning point where Kyrgyzstan considered Taliban as a threat. Ibid.

Turkmenistan was the only country in Central Asia which had totally different opinion about Taliban; they had good relations with Taliban. Because of Iran's nuclear program, US posed sanctions on Iran to not to involve Iran in Eurasian pipeline, there for Turkmenistan knew it was not able to export its gas and oil through Iran, so they hoped that Afghanistan is the only way to export. For this they maintain good relations with Taliban, even they mediated between Taliban and their opposition forces. Turkmen foreign minister Shikhuradov traveled to Afghanistan in March 1999 and meet Mullah Omar in Kandahar, they agreed to strengthen their relations and increase their trade. Ibid.

In fact with the passing of time Central Asian Republics slowly but gradually was making relations with Taliban. As we know Turkmenistan from the beginning maintained good relations with Taliban in hope that with stable Afghanistan, they will export their gas and oil energy through Afghanistan. In 1999 Kazakhstan also contacted with Taliban to export 60,000 tons wheat to Afghanistan through Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan at the end of 2000 was willing to make a deal with Taliban to export their electricity to northern Afghanistan. What's why Angelo Rasanayagam states that, "These CARS appeared to have accepted that the Taliban had come to stay and that it would be in their interests to have a strong and stable government in Afghanistan with which they could deal?" (Rasanayagam, 2003)

## **Economic Implications**

With the collapse of Soviet Union, Central Asian countries and also Russia faced economic problems, to ride these problems they had their top priority list, building new communication links was one important option of those priorities. About 70 years, Central Asian States were under Soviet rule, during these 70 years Central Asia's all communication links, roads, pipelines and air links were to and from Russia, mean all communication links were towards east.

Now Central Asian countries wanted to find other ways to export their resources, they wanted to connect with South and Southeast Asia, Arabian Sea and India Sea. But Central Asia faces serious problems to connect with outside world other than Russia, they had two way's to reach South and Southeast Asia and from there to Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea; first one was from Iran to Arabian Sea, Pakistan and India, but because of Iran's nuclear program, it faces economic sanctions from US and no company was willing to build pipeline which crosses Iran, although the Turkmenistan-Iran railway build as early as 1995. Another way was passing from Afghanistan to Pakistan and from there to Arabian Sea, Indian ocean and India, but problem with this route was that there was never ending civil war, which make it difficult for these countries to build communication links through Afghanistan. (Rashid, 2010)

According USA, Central Asian oil reserves are between 100 and 150 billion barrels (bb) and its proven oil reserves are between 16 and 50 bb. This region was almost closed to outside world, only Russia had the right to reach it, so this region was the only region in the world which was almost unexplored and unexploited. These countries after USSR dissolving, wanted to break that isolation and dependency on Russia. When these countries got independent, western oil companies focused on these oil rich countries. According Rashid during 1994-1998, about 24 companies of 13 countries signed contracts in Central Asia to explore energy. Ibid.

Kazakhstan with about 85 bb has the leading position in Central Asian oil reserves, where only 10 to 16 bb of which is proven. Turkmenistan has estimated 32 bb oil reserves, but just 1.5 bb of which is proven. Central Asia is richer in gas than oil, its proven gas reserves are estimated 236-337 trillion cubic feet (tcf). Turkmenistan has largest gas reserves in Central Asia, she is 11<sup>th</sup> in the world, possibly it has 159 tcf of gas reserves, and Uzbekistan has estimated 110 tcf of gas reserves and Kazakhstan 88 tcf of gas reserves. (Rashid, 2010)

Central Asian leaders saw pipeline as the only way to run out from their economic dependency on Russia. Because, Central Asia had vast oil and gas reserves, but very little of that is exploring and half of that explored oil and gas is exploring to other countries than Russia. As Rashid estimates that, "In 2006 the

Caspian region produced one million barrels per day (b/d) of oil of which only 300,000 b/d was exported – Mainly from Kazakhstan. However only half that (140,000 b/d) was exported outside the former Soviet Union. The region's natural gas production in 1996 totaled 3.3 tcf, but only 0.8 tcf was exported outside the former Soviet union." And in fact Russia was buying Central Asian oil and gas far cheaper than world rates. As they face serious economic problems, these countries needed immediate pipelines. (Rashid, 2010)

When Taliban came to power, every stakeholder (Russia, US, international companies and Central Asian states) in pipeline politics were confuse how to react to Taliban's advance, whether to support Taliban or not, or whether Taliban will agree to protect pipeline which crosses Afghanistan and so on. Ibid.

Turkmenistan unlike other Central Asian states saw Afghanistan not from ideological point of view, they saw Afghanistan as an economic hub through which they can solve their economic problems, that's why from one side they allowed ISA's embassy in Turkmenistan in 1990's and at the same time was dealing with Taliban. Turkmenistan maintained friendly relation with Taliban in hope that they would export their gas and oil through Afghanistan and link its gas pipeline (TAP) to Karachi port. It was also important for Turkmenistan to have good relations with Pakistan, thus they signed various agreements with Pakistan in 1994, Pakistan and Turkmenistan signed an agreement that Pakistan will train Turkmen military personals, they then signed a memorandum of TAP in 1995, that they will build a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan and from there to Pakistan, they later added India and it changed to TAPI, thus when Taliban captured Kabul and Central Asian leaders and Russian representatives arranged an emergency meeting in October 1996, Niyazov did not attended the meeting and supported Pakistan view on Taliban. (Qassem, 2009)

In 1998 Taliban agreed with Unocal to pass pipeline through Afghanistan, in late April 1999 Taliban signed an agreement with Turkmenistan that they will provide protection to pipeline which passes from Afghanistan. After that, Taliban visited Turkmenistan multiple times where in May 1999 Taliban's deputy minster visited Turkmenistan and signed multi memorandums about economic cooperation. Ibid.

## Drug Trafficking

During Taliban era, drug production was continually increasing but Taliban themselves were not involve in trafficking or trading the drug, but they were benefiting from drug trade in sense of tax, they implemented tax on drug trade as they did on other items, it was first time that Taliban some kind legalized opium cultivation by implementing 10 percent tax on opium trade and production and by this Afghanistan achieved first position in the world. Taliban also made license for drug exporters and seal it on them on 70 dollars, they also legalized drug (Shanty, 2011) although Afghanistan's opium was exporting from various ways, like through Iran, Pakistan and Central Asian, but Central Asia was the best route for drug traffickers, because these countries were newly independent, from other side during Taliban almost all Central Asia was chaotic, IMU of Uzbekistan and UTO of Tajikistan make it hard for governments to combat with drug and make it more vulnerable for drug traffickers to trade drug easily.

During 1996 Afghanistan was still the second largest opium produce, as there wasn't any national government and lawlessness, UN was not able to blame any party but when Taliban controlled two third of the country they condemned opium cultivation because Afghanistan was party in 1988 UN convention and they had to condemn it, although they condemned , but they didn't banned opium cultivation because this was the only source for them to earn in come as the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, 1996(INCSR), issued by US Department of States in March 1997 states, "The Taliban leaders told United States Government (USG) officials that they are not prepared to enforce a ban on poppy cultivation until farmers have been given the opportunity to earn an alternative income." Although opium production decreased 1.6 percent from 1250 metric tons (mt) in 1995 to 1230 mt in 1996.( International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), 1996)

During 1997, Afghanistan also maintained its second position in opium production; with slight increase its opium production reached 1265 mt from 1230m. In November 1997, Taliban agreed with UNDCP proposal to ban opium cultivation in areas where an alternative ways of income to grown something else. But Taliban did not implement that agreement. (INCSR, 1997)

Despite bad weather, opium production increased in 1998, which reached to 1350 mt. poppy cultivation started in new areas in Jalalabad, Laghman and Kandahar. Despite the efforts that UNDCP had done poppy cultivation and production was continually increasing and in fact Taliban was not willing to implement their agreements with UNDCP, Taliban wanted to receive UN set, mean UN recognition of Taliban and to receive economic fund from United Nations, there for when United nations General Assembly's 1998's special session on drugs was attended by Rabbani's representative Taliban angered and almost stopped relations with UNDCP. (INCSR, 1998)

In 2000, Afghanistan was producing worlds 72 percent of opium, it's production increased by 25 percent although Taliban issued ban in July, but people were growing opium instead of wheat and Taliban did not banned them forcefully. According to INCSR 2000's report, both Taliban and Northern Alliance were given opportunity for people to grow opium, Taliban increased tax from 10 percent to 12 percent. But after Taliban ban most of opium was producing areas which was under Northern Alliance. (INCSR, 2000)

Kazakhstan is the most strategic country for drug traffickers, it covers almost all central Asian states, from one side it is the only Central Asian country which has direct boarder with Russia where the drug Markets are available, notably Russia and Europe. Kazakhstan's other side is bordered with Central Asian countries and is near to the most productive region of opium, especially Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In fact Kazakhstan is a bridge between productive countries of opium and Market countries of opium. Drug trafficking and drug addiction increased in 1996. Drug traffickers were using the route of Turkmenistan and from there on Caspian Sea to Kazakhstan, they also found new way from Afghanistan to Tajikistan and from there to Uzbekistan through Kyrgyzstan and finally to Kazakhstan and to Russia and Western Europe. Increase in drug smuggling also increased drug addict's rate in Kazakhstan, according INCSR 1996: drug addicts in 1996 tripled from 6000 to 18000 and in fact the unofficial addicts reached 50,000. (INCSR, 1996)

Drug trade and drug addiction also increased drug related crimes in Kazakhstan, drug Trafficking from Afghanistan and Pakistan was increasing during 1997 and 1998, in 1998 Kazakhstan approved new law for drug trafficking and production and drug related crimes. UNDCP presented a counter-narcotics proposal which was approved by President Nazarbayev in 1998 which was going to implement from 1998 to 2006. There for Nazarbayev putted counter-narcotics in their priority list. (INCSR, 1998)

When Taliban implemented tax on opium, drug smuggling increased dramatically during 1999 and now about 90 percent of Afghan opium was trafficking through Kazakhstan the number of drug addicts also increased 7 to 8 times. In 2000, more under-aged traffickers joined the smuggling and in drug addicts also the percentage of young children and women increased in this year. (INCSR, 1999)

Kyrgyzstan, which was between two unstable and hostile countries, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan was the most vulnerable country to transit opium through it. Also people were very poor, so corruption was at its peak, thus in 1996, Kyrgyzstan was the best transit route for drug traffickers. (INCSR, 1996) Most of drug trafficking was done in Osh region of Kyrgyzstan, which was the most unstable and hostile regime of the country. Thus government of Kyrgyzstan developed National Drug Intelligence Unit to counter the problem. When they route of Turkmenistan-Kazakhstan-Russia was controlled, another route which

passes Kyrgyzstan got famous and drug trafficking through it was increasing continually, there were stately 50,000 drug addicts in 1998 of which 5 percent were women. (INCSR, 1998) According INCSR 1999, although Kyrgyzstan is actively supporting UNDCP, Kyrgyz authority is notable to counter narcotics trafficking, because of their undertrained staff and poor funding. (INCSR, 1999)

Tajikistan, because of its geography and internal civil was during Taliban era was the most vulnerable country for drug trafficking. It had direct border with Afghanistan which was the world's number one opium producer, it was also engaged in civil war, so they were not able to counter-Narcotics, in fact in these years drug Trafficking was not included in Tajik governments' priority, their first and last priority was to win Ceil War.

Drug trafficking took very dangerous phase, when drug traders make connections with Soviet border guards, with government's oppositions and government officials. (INCSR, 1996) Involvement of governmental officials, even high level officials are mainly because of two reasons, from one side drug trade involves very high corruption and from other side salaries of government officials are very low. (INCSR, 1998)

Drug addictions were also increasing continually during 1990's, because Tajikistan was a poor country with very poor medical infrastructure; they were not able to treat drug addicts properly. When Civil War ended in 1997, government got serious about drug trafficking, thus when UNDCP proposed a master plane in 1998, Tajik government created drug control agency under President in 1999. (INCSR, 1999)



**Chapter Four**  
**Political Instability in Afghanistan: 2001-Present**  
**Implications for Central Asia**

## **Introduction**

Taliban from one side were strictly following Islamic laws from other side were pursuing Pashtun values under the name of Pashtunwali, thus they provided Osama a safe haven under their Pashtunwali traditional and Islamic values, but in fact Osama bin Laden abuses Afghanistan's hospitality and his presence in Afghanistan causes serious problems for Taliban, Politically, socially, militarily and at the end the collapse of the Taliban regime. (Maley, 2009)

Since the creation of Taliban and their takeover of Kabul, US was concerning about Osama bin Laden, but the issue was being more importing when Osama linked Al Qaeda members attempted suicide attacks on two US embassies, one in Tanzania and other in Kenya on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1998. Following the attacks, US hated Osama bases in Nangarhar with cruise missile on August 20, number of his followers were killed but he was lucky to escape. Ibid.

The Clinton administration than imposed sanctions on Taliban in July 1999, where they froze Taliban's assets and banned any economic ties between Taliban and US and later on these sanction was followed by UN Security Council sanctions on October 15, Resolution number 1267. UN demanded Osama bin Laden from Taliban to turn him over to US or Saudi or extradite him from Afghanistan, otherwise sanctions will be implemented, and it contained the freezing of Taliban assets in member countries, also banned countries not to takeoff from or land in Taliban territory. Ibid.

After 9/11, US immediately focused on Afghanistan, they demanded Air bases and territory of Pakistan, to stand against a country that they have recognized it; President Pervez Musharraf knew he was not in a position to say no to US demands. US also demanded Taliban to extradite Osama bin Laden to US, but Taliban from their Islamabad office answered that they asked Osama bin Laden to leave Afghanistan, but won't force him for leaving. (Mills, 2007)

Osama experienced US airstrikes after 1998 US embassies bombing in Africa, thus after 9/11, with his friends left the cities and went to mountains, at first US planned to attack Osama with missiles, but they knew they can't defeat them with missiles as they did this previously, second option was to support anti-Taliban forces in the north, now led by General Fahim Khan, and in the east and west with Pashtun leadership, specially Karzai and commander Abdul Haq. (Mills, 2007)

When Pakistan agreed to fully support US lead war on terror, US Shared her evidences of Al-Qaeda involvement in 9/11 incidents with NATO member countries, they agreed that will help US. In 6th October US gave last warning to Taliban to arrest Osama bin Laden to US, but Taliban didn't agree and the next day US and Great Brittan attacked Afghanistan under the name of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Coalition troops and Northern Alliance entered Kabul on November 14, on 19 November Haji Qadir claimed that Nangarhar is under his Control and on December 7 Hamid Karzai captured Kandahar. (Fiscus, 2004)

US suggested three ways to conduct military operations against Taliban and Osama bin Laden, first option was to attack Taliban and Al Qaeda with Cruise missiles and destroy Taliban and Osama, but it was not going to work, cause after 9/11, Osama immediately ordered his followers to hid in caves, so it was not effective as British Prime Minister said that “there was no point in ‘Bombing sand’ in order to retaliate against al Qaeda. P252”, they also ruled out the option to deploy heavy coalition troops, it was difficult for them, because a small group Taliban could attack them from hills and leave them high casualties and Taliban will start guerrilla attacks and it will be very difficult for coalition troops to fought with a guerilla force which know the area and have experience of guerrilla fighting. (Rasanayagam, 2005)

Second option was to bomb Talban positions and allow Northern Alliance to advance, but Coalitions knew it was not possible, because Northern Alliance was so week and were outnumbered in their last years, the last option which was then implemented was to bomb Taliban’s front lines and destroy their offensive capabilities and then assist and support northern Alliance militarily and intelligence wise by sending small groups of US Special Forces and CIA agents and give them a way to advance, for this coalition started their air campaign on October 7 by launching some 50 missiles from US ships and British Submarines. In this phase they destroyed Taliban’s air power. Ibid.

Northern Alliance was included Dostum, Karim Khalili, Ismail Khan of Herat and Jamiat of Rabbani and Massoud, Northern Alliance was headed by Rabbani. In 2001 they were only limited to Punjsher valley. Massoud with his abilities was able to keep Northern factions united under the floor of Alliance, but then he was assassinated on 9 September, 2001 in an interview by some Arabs, the Alliance although didn’t dissolved, but leaders of the factions struggled to get the leadership of Northern Alliance (NA) and for this every leader controlled NA’s forces in different areas. The most powerful of those was General Mohammad Fahim khan, who controlled the highest position of military commander of NA. General Ismail Khan took control of forces in Herat and Ghowr, Dostum was another party in NA, he controlled NA forces in six Northern provinces along Mazar-I Sharif and the last faction was Hazara Karim Khalili. (Wright & Dempsey, 2010)

### **The Insertion of US troops**

US Plan was to insert US Special Forces to join Northern Alliances for support against Taliban. This Special Forces (SF) they called ODA’s or A Teams. US secretary of Defense thought Airstrikes alone

won't be much effective to defeat Taliban, for this they had to send troop's on the ground, from one side to help US Air Strikers in specifying targets and from other side advice Northern Alliances in their combat. The first SF elements entered Afghanistan on 19 October; they went to Punjsher and soon linked with General Bismillah near Bagram. And then other forces infiltrated in north Afghanistan and joined Northern Alliance's different factions, like some of them joined General Dostum in Darya Suf valley, others with Karim Khalili, they also joined General Atta and other Factions. (Wright & Dempsey, 2010)

Northern Alliance thought for their next war against Taliban, Mazar-I Sharif is very important, for this US Central Command's commander General Franks and NA's commander Fahim Khan met in Tajikistan and both agreed to capture Mazar at first, thus Mazar was first province in north Afghanistan where Taliban was defeated by NA with the help of US troops and airstrikes. On November 4, General Dostum was in Darya Suf advancing towards Mazar and Atta Mohammad was with Balkh river pushing towards north of Mazar-I Sharif, they met together and were ready to attack on Mazar. On 5th November they began their attack, from air US was striking Taliban's front lines and from ground NA's forces were attacking them and finally on 10 November NA's forces entered city and Taliban were forced to retreated towards Kunduz. Ibid.

Northern Alliance continued its advance towards Kunduz. In Kunduz, General Bariullah Khan was NA's commander. Coalition team met him to operate joint attack on Kunduz, after several days of ground and air attacks, Bariullah reached near Kunduz city from north, northern Alliance's other commander General Daoud Khan was approaching the city southeast, General Daoud captured Taloqan province very easily on 11th November and advanced towards Kunduz from southeast side. On 13 November Dostum, General Daoud and General Bariullah surrounded Kunduz and after four days of surrounding, Taliban surrendered Kunduz to NA forces. (Wright & Dempsey, 2010)

In November key provinces fell to Northern Alliance, on 9 November, Mazar-i-Sharif fell to Dostum, Mohaqqueq and Atta's forces, on 10 November, Northern Alliance attacked Taliban and in result cities of Aibak, Baghlan, Pul-i Khumri, Bamyan, Hairatan and Shibarghan were conquered by them. Next days on 11 and 12 November, Taliban was defeated in Maimana and Herat and thus Northern Alliance were at the northern gates of Kabul. On the next day Taliban retreated from Kabul and thus Northern Front entered Kabul without any combat. (Maley, 2009)

US were not expected that Taliban will be defeated as quickly as they did, but Northern Alliance was able to defeat them with the assistance of coalition's air strikes. Northern Alliance knew how to fight with

Taliban, they had the will to fight and from another side US airstrikes destroyed Taliban's heavy artillery which accelerated NA's advance and Taliban's defeat. (Wright & Dempsey, 2010)

In South the situation totally differed from North. South of Afghanistan was ethnically Pashtuns and in fact the Taliban was emerged in south and this was their support area. From other side in North there was still an organized and operative anti-Taliban force, although where week but still fighting them, but in south, Taliban oppositions were inactive and most of them left the country after Taliban emergence. So it was difficult for Coalitions to engage Operational Detachment-Alpha (ODA) with any will organized anti-Taliban force to drawdown the Taliban. But still coalition forces knew they can't operate their attacks in south without the help of any anti-Taliban local force, they also needed a Pashtun leadership because they didn't want rely only on Northern Alliance which is dominated by Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara minority groups, thus without the presence of any Pashtun leader it was difficult for them to rule the country. Eventually US found two figures willing to launch attacks against Taliban with support of coalition forces, Hamid Karzai and Gul Agha Sherzai. US with the help of these two figures were able to capture Kandahar in early December. Ibid.

After Northern Alliances successions in north Afghanistan, two importance Pashtun figures entered Afghanistan to unite Pashtun tribes and revolt against Taliban, first one was Abdul Haq from Jabarkhel clan of Ahmadzai tribe from Nangarhar province and the second one was Hamid Karzai, he was from Popalzai clan of Durrani. (Barfield, 2010)

Abdul Haq was an important figure in Afghan Jihad against Soviet Union, but when Civil war between Mujahideen starts, Haq was silent and didn't participated that time, but when Taliban Killed his wife and daughter he went to Dubai, he returned to Peshawar in the aftermath of 9/11 and from there he entered Afghanistan to start a revolution against Taliban, unlike other Afghan leaders in this war, Haq didn't get any help from US or Pakistan, he entered Afghanistan in October in a hope that if he reached his village, he could unite tribes in Nangarhar against Taliban and stand them against them, but unfortunately he was captured by Taliban before he reached his town and executed by Taliban near Kabul. (Barfield, 2010)

According Barfield if Haq was able to raise an army against Taliban Pashtun's may perform more important and powerful role in postwar politics. Unlike Haq, Karzai had organized people and in fact they invited Karzai to lead them against Taliban, thus he entered Afghanistan almost alone with motorcycle and joined his supporters, after taking Kandahar they advanced towards Oruzgan and as war progressed Karzai find support of US. (Barfield, 2010)

## The Bonn Agreement

When US decided to attack Afghanistan, UN started their initiatives to pave the way for next government. For this the UN secretary General appointed Lakhdar Brahimi his special representative to lead UN humanitarian and Political mission in Afghanistan, Brahimi was aware of the situation and US policy about Afghanistan and Taliban. (Maley, 2009)

He started his struggles to bring the groups close that he knows will participate in next government. And for this he knew that prior to these internal groups agreements their stakeholder neighbors' consensus are of importance, for this he established 6+2, Six Afghanistan's neighbors with US and Russia, meetings. Although 6+2 groups were meeting before this, but that time they were not serious about the issue, not after 9/11 the situation was changed, especially US was keen to Change the government. Ibid.

In a meeting that held on 13 November between 6+2, the countries at least agreed to bring broad based government which will be representative of all ethnic groups, but for Brahimi, implementation of this decision was very hard, for this he holds regular meetings with leaders of different ethnic groups and finely was able to bring all Afghan factions to gather in Bonn, Germany. Participants of the meetings included different factions like the Rome group headed by Zahir Shah, United Front, Cyprus Group and Peshawar Group. Ibid.

The meeting, which is famous on Bonn conference held in Bonn from 27 November to 5 December. Taliban were not invited, King Zahir Shah and Burhanuddin Rabbani was not present, Dostum also didn't participated and Haji Qadir and Karim Khalili boycotted the meeting, in result Bonn Agreement signed by participants which was than registered in UN under United Nations Security Council's Resolution 1383 under the name of "Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan pending the Re-establishment of Permanent government Institutions". Ibid.

The agreement was consisted of five principle Articles and three annex's. The agreement also have some pointes before principles and annex's, where it appreciates afghan Mujahideen and announced them as hero of Jihad and champion of peace who defended their countries integrity , sovereignty and independence, it also expressed appreciations to Burhanuddin Rabbani for his readiness to transfer power to Interim Authority. (Bonn Agreement, 2001)

It recognized the bringing of broad based government, where all ethnic groups must have representatives, even parties which is not present or left the meeting must join the interim authority, the interim authority which was arranged by this meeting was only for a specific period of time which was not going to be

extended beyond specific time and introduced this period only as a step towards broad-based, fully representative and gender sensitive. (Bonn Agreement, 2001)

According to the agreement, power should be transferred by 22 of December 2001, interim Authority was not a kind of full government, neither a transitional government, rather it was only a preparation period for transitional government. The authority was consisted of three agencies, first one was Interim Administration led by a chairman, second was Special Independent Commission which had responsibility to arrange Emergency Loya Jirga and third one was supreme Court of Afghanistan and some other small courts. Ibid.

The agreement also recognized interim authority to perform full sovereignty and representative of the Country by filling UN General Assembly seat and other related world organization and to represent Afghanistan in external world. Special Independent Commission should arrange Emergency Loya Jirga within six months, Emergency Loya Jirga will decide Transitional Authority, Transitional Administration will continue till the free and fair elected government, transitional government will arrange elections within two years. Once Transitional Authority selected by Loya Jirga, Interim Authority will be expired. Ibid.

Transitional Authority with the help of United Nations should form a Constitutional Commission within two months from the start of the Transitional Authority and within eighteen months of the starting of transitional Authority, constitutional Loya Jirga should be convened to adopt new constitution. Interim Administration was consisted of 30 people, where it had a chairman alongside five Vice Chairmen and 24 other members, 24 members and five Chairmen was headed a specific department of Interim Administration. In fact it worked as a Cabinet, they had to deal with day to day matters and if necessary they can order decrees. Ibid.

The agreement also specified the functions and composition of the special independent commission for the convening of Emergency Loya Jirga, it ordered that Special Commission should be arranged within two months of the establishment of Interim Authority, it will have 21 members, this commission will decide rules and procedures for Loya Jirga and Finally the Emergency Loya Jirga will select the head of the Transitional Administration. Ibid.

Paper work of the agreement was easy, but implementing and selecting people for those posts were very difficult, but then with the pressure of international community they reached arrangements. At the beginning Abdul Sattar Serat was a likely candidate for Chairman of Interim Administration, but his

relations with United Front got difficult when he criticized them for their entering Kabul, thus Hamid Karzai, 57 years old Pashtun won the position. (Maley, 2009)

Five Voice Chairmen positions went to the candidates of different factions. General Fahim Khan was one voice chairman with the head of Department of Defense, Younas Qanuni was heading department of interior and Abdullah Abdullah was head of foreign department, Hedayat Amin Arsala was heading finance department. As scheduled in agreement, the power was formally transferred from Rabbani to Karzai in a ceremony in front of about 2000 people in Kabul on 22 December 2001. Ibid.

As United Front was an important ally of US in war against Taliban, thus they controlled important positions in Interim Administration, Defense Ministry was with General Fahim, Foreign Ministry was with Abdullah Abdullah and Interior Ministry was with Younas Qanuni and not only this but with the defeat of Taliban, United Front's troops entered Kabul and now Kabul was controlled by them, in fact it was a tough time for Pashtuns in Afghanistan Politics, in fact Pashtuns were paying ultimate price of Taliban's Politics. But with passing of time, the situation changed in favor of Pashtun's. Kabul was controlled by international forces and United Front lost Key posts in government, when Karzai won elections in 2004 and even lost more power when Karzai won elections in 2008. Ibid.

### **Karzai Government**

When Bush administration decided to destroy Taliban and replace their government with a moderate one, parallel with military campaign, they started political campaign as well, for this they supported UN talks in Bonn to create broad based government. During fight against Taliban, two US favorite leaders raised Pashtun anti-Taliban leaders raised, Abdul Haq and Karzai. US's first choice was Haq, when he died, US turned to Karzai. Although there were other leaders in war against Taliban, but US selected Karzai, because they were afraid that if a non-Pashtun led the government it will isolated Pashtun's and a majority will be unhappy from settlement and it may lead to another civil war in Afghanistan. Thus they supported Karzai in rising people against Taliban and later on in his selection as chairman of interim administration. Thus he was selected as interim leader of Afghanistan by Bonn participants and on December 22 formally received power from Burhanuddin Rabbani. (Lansford, 2011)

When Taliban withdrew from Kandahar and disappeared, Mullah Omer once again began to organize his team, for this he created a ten member governor Shura to start their insurgencies one gain. Thus immediately after their collapse, was able to start their insurgencies against government and US lead coalition, but they changed their tactics from big combat to a small guerilla war. After their defeat



Taliban were able to find safe bases in Pakistan and from one side it resulted increasing in insurgencies against Afghanistan government and coalition troops from other side and the insurgency spread to Pakistan also. (Lansford, 2011)

When US invaded Iraq in 2003, it boosted insurgency in Afghanistan, because Muslims angered on US and thus more people joined Taliban and Al-Qaeda, not only Afghans and Pakistani but also from other Muslim Countries were coming for training and then some of them were going to Iraq and some joined insurgents in Afghanistan. Ibid.

Not only Taliban was challenging government's authority, but there were other elements which challenged government, like after Taliban, warlords were the most influential of that, who wisely was challenging government. Karzai was not able to implement his decisions in most areas of Afghanistan, where second challenge to his government was trade of drugs and of course this trade was supported by warlords and Taliban and directly benefited them. As warlords supported US invasion of Afghanistan, but when the situation clam down and Karzai government begun his carrier, warlord's returned to their tribes, from where they were supported. And established their superiority there, like Dostum went back to north, Mohammad Atta went to Mazar-I Sharif and soon from there, they begun threatening government. Ibid.

For various reasons from one side they wanted to have a kind of recognition from Central government from other side they demanded political positions and in fact they were successful in this, as we see that although Uzbek General Dostum was a presidential candidate in 2004 elections and he got ten percent of votes, but still when Karzai won election, he selected him as chief of staff of army. Karzai was in fact limited to Kabul as these warlords were very powerful in their areas, so Karzai was always giving them rewards to receive their support. Ibid.

Another main threat to government and coalition was Hezb-e Islami, Hezb-e Islami was headed by Gulbaddin Hekmatyaar, they fought Taliban and were alliance of northern Alliance during Taliban government, but when US invaded Afghanistan, Hezb-I Islami announced Jihad against US lead coalition and Karzai government. Hezb was weak in insurgencies then Taliban in m=May 2002, US attacked Hekmatyaar's positions with drone but he was safe and take Hezb attempted assassination against Karzai on September of that year. Another warlord was Gul Agha Sherzai in Kandahar, he was also important ally of US in capturing Kandahar from Taliban, and in 2002 he forced Kandahar governor to leave governorship and thus became Kandahar's governor. He was extremely corrupt and engaged in drug trade. He was then dismissed from Kandahar governorship, but soon appointed Nangarhar governor. Ibid.

### **Emergency Loya Jirga and Interim Government**

As Bonn Agreement scheduled the emergency Loya Jirga in sixth months of intern authority, the Jirga held between 13 and 16 June, where about 1000 representations of different locations and ethnic groups were selected by Special Independent Commission, which was joined by United Nations representative also, when the list of participants of the Loya Jirga completed at the end about 45 unselected military commanders also joined Jirga. The Jirga was composed of Different groups even some religious clerks and women participated. After a lot of debates and walkouts, finely they selected Karzai as head of transitional government for 2 years. Second task of Emergency Loya Jirga was to create legislature body by selecting its members.(Barfield, 2010)

They were successful in achieving their first task by selecting head of Transitional government. But in their second Task, the Jirga was not able to select members of interim parliament. Karzai was selected as new president for two years with 80 percent of votes from Loya Jirga, although there were other candidates who withdrew for Karzai. Now his task was to convene Constitutional Jirga for creating new constitution and declares elections at the end of his two years presidency. (Lansford, 2011)

With the support of coalition forces and their countries, Karzai remained limited to Kabul. He was not able to leave Kabul and even his government in every province was limited to the city of that province, transitional government faced many other challenges, like vast numbers of people were internally displaced due to insurgencies as Human Rights Groups reported that till January 2003, more than 4 million people were displaced internally. The problem of drug was in its place, according to United Nations Office on Drug and Crime in 2003 with the producing one third of world opium, Afghanistan is still leading opium productive country in the world. Ibid.

Taliban after their defeat disappeared, they slowly organized themselves and recruited new followers, in spring 2003, and they once again strongly started their insurgencies. Now they were not fighting in large numbers, instead they were fighting guerrilla war of 40-50 peoples. The number of killings in coalition's strikes rose. Constitutional Loya Jirga was expected to be convene in 18th month of Karzai transitional government, thus a 33 member group, which was selected by Karzai, completed constitutions draft in November and Constitutional Loya Jirga was convened on December 14 to discuss the proposed constitution. After long debates, Jirga approved a new constitution for Afghanistan, which was consisted of 160 articles; it specifies responsibilities, obligations and authorities of political elements of the states. It approved a presidential system of governance, a supreme court and a two chamber legislature system with Wolessi Jirga (House of People) with 250 members all of which will be selected and Meshrano Jirga

(House of Elders) with 102 members, all of which will be selected, one third from President, one third from district Councils and one third from provincial councils. (Lansford, 2011)

Constitutional Loya Jirga was also scheduled in Bonn agreement to be held in 2003, thus they held Loya Jirga in December 2003 to convene constitution. Some five hundred representatives of various factions and groups from different ethnicities participated in the Jirga, where one third of which were women. According to Barfield the most important debate of Jirga was about the form of the government, that whether it will be extremely centralized Presidential system or will be federal system with autonomous regions and a Prime Minister in the Center Kabul. Both sides had their own arguments, the supporters of federal system arguing that Central government can't reach the problems of the Regions, therefore it will be better to have an autonomous regions to be free in their internal matters, also for centuries there is centralized government, whose decisions are very detrimental to the regions, another argument was that after two decades of war the situation has changed now regions are autonomous and it is very difficult for central government to implement its decisions or exercise its superiority on the regions. (Barfield, 2010)

From other side supporters of Centralized presidential system had their own justifications, for their idea. They claimed that as regions are powerful now, if power has gone away from Kabul and regions got more power it will pave way for dissolution of the country. More moderate nationalists were in favor of this idea and Pashtuns also, in fact Pashtuns thought that by this they could maintain their superiority over Tajiks as they lost it in the aftermath of the fall of Taliban. International community was also supporting presidential idea including USA. Thus Jirga proposed Presidential System in drafted constitution. Other issues were also discussed in constitutions like the approval or dismissing of a cabinet member by Parliament, recognizing minority languages, Shi'ites were free in their family law and other equity rights were discussed including women rights. Ibid.

### **First Presidential Elections**

Although parliamentary elections were held previously, but selecting national leader by votes, this was first time that Afghanistan was experiencing presidential elections, Karzai knew he is the prominent figure and elections will be in his favor, thus he was very entrusted in holding elections, despite international community doubted that immediately after war, and still Taliban are active Afghans may not be able to hold elections, thus they feared that elections may be disrupted by Taliban and other opponents, but Taliban were failed to disrupt it, although there were some small incidents but no major incident occurred.

For the first time Afghan's had their presidential election in the fall of 2004. One year prior to elections, United Nations organized teams to register eligible voters and give the voting cards, they also educating rural people about elections, that what is election and how it works, final about 12 million eligible voter were registered of which 750,000 were refugees in Pakistan, but in election day less than half of that number casted there votes. Although there were more candidates for election but some disqualified by elections and thus eighteen candidates remained in final round. (Ansari, 2012)

Along Karzai, there were three other dominant personalities were candidate' Younas Qanuni a candidate of Tajiks, Uzbek Dostum and Hazara Mohaqiq. At the end of the day Karzai was able to secure 56 percent of votes of total of approximately 8 million votes. (Barfield, 2010)

Pashtuns felt isolated after Taliban defeat, thus all Pashtuns united against Tajiks and voted Karzai in a hope that through this they may involve in future politics. But Karzai was not only successful in Pashtun areas, he also received notable votes from Tajiks also, the rest candidates remained prominent to their ethnic regions. Ibid.

Karzai from the beginning was acting very weak, like when in his starting days appointed Mullah Naqeeb as Kandahar's governor, Gul Agha Sherzai changing governments from one province to another but was not able to dismiss them, in fact in some cases he was unable to even change them like Atta Mohammad in Mazar-I Sharif. Ibid.

Karzai's popularity declined after 2004 elections continually, because of some reasons like he failed to create effective administration, also was not able to bring security to ordinary afghans the security situation was worsening rapidly and he was unable to bring economic progress with all international support. Karzai also acted very weak against US airstrikes, Karzai further isolated when Bush left the office in 2008, now he was under pressure, internally and internationally. Ibid.

After 2005 elections, International pressure increased on Karzai. International donors demanded Karzai to act effectively against corruption and bring references when international donors met in London in 2006, they announced \$10.5 Billion in five years for Afghanistan but in return Karzai must bring Political and economic reforms and for this Karzai promised some points, he promised to suppress drug trade and also control warlords and dismiss regional militias, he also agreed to increase National Security Forces (NSF) to 70,000 by 2009, but due to some reasons Karzai was not able to complete his commitments, first of all legislative opposition which dominated by these commanders and because of these warlords Karzai was not able to curb drug trend and decrease insurgency and in return due to insurgency and drug trade.

Karzai was not able to suppress these warlords. Although he brought some economic reforms but it had little impact due to increased insurgency, drug trade and powerful regional commanders. (Lansford, 2011)

### **Parliamentary Elections 2005**

Constitution which was created in 2004 approved two housed legislature body, Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders) and Wolessi Jirga (house of People). Meshrano Jirga was supposed to have 102 members of which one third, 34 members, should be selected by president, one third should be selected by provincial councils and the remaining third should be selected by district councils. The lower chamber was said to have 240 members, which will be elected directly from people where each province's representative's numbers will vary according to their populations. Ibid.

After new constitution, first parliamentary elections took place in 2005. As Karzai was eager and excited about presidential elections, he was not much keen to hold parliamentary elections, in fact he didn't want another institution which is equally powerful in Afghan political system, and thus he postponed it for about a year. When parliamentary elections came closer, he didn't agree to hold party based elections, rather he preferred that candidates to run election independently and individually, because he didn't want to organize opposition against his government, that's why in various decisions, parliament was dividing ethnically, linguistically or region wise, but still an opposition emerged in parliament, but that was not as powerful an opposition as it could be in a party based parliament. (Barfield, 2010)

Candidates nominated themselves individually not party wise. Provincial council elections and elections for one third of Meshrano Jirga from Provincial Council were also held on the same day. Taliban was much more active in these elections than the presidential elections, they aimed to disrupt elections and in fact they killed at least four candidates during their campaign. When results were announced, most warlords and commanders won elections and the rest were candidates who at least allied with these warlords or commanders and thus they formed a powerful block against Karzai and by this Karzai was forced to give them positions and by this he received their support for his policies, but Karzai's relations with these commanders undermined his character within and abroad, because these warlords were corrupt, fraudulent and were involved in drug trade. (Lansford, 2011)

After selection of legislature body, disagreements between parliament and Karzai emerged, when he appointed a new cabinet, the lower chamber delayed it until May 2006 and later on five candidates for ministries were rejected, when Iran forced Afghanistan to leave their country, Parliament questioned two Cabinet members. (Lansford, 2011)

As ethnic Tajiks lost presidential elections to Pashtun's, now they consider parliament the only institution through which they can pressurize government and can participated actively in past Taliban politics, thus they achieved reasonable seats in Parliament and Younas Qanuni was selected as head of parliament, they formed opposition to government and in various places pressurized government like parliament rejected government's nominee for Judiciary and forced Karzai to recognize the nominee for supreme court Chief.

### **Taliban Insurgencies**

Taliban With their collapse, soon they began recruiting fresh followers, they established small training camps on afghan-Pakistan borders and were recruiting people from Madrassas. At first they started guerrilla war, they were attacking isolated troops of ISAF or government in some 50 member groups and after attack they divided in 5 to 10 member groups. And another strategy was to recruit and train new fighters in winter and fought them in summer. Mullah Omar established a 10 member council to organize and regulate the operations and he divided Afghanistan in five operational zones. ("Afghanistan", 2011)

At beginning of 2003, Taliban started large scale attacks on government and international troop, in summer of that year, they killed more government officials and ISAF troops in larger combats then previous attacks, they also began to create their own troops during this time. The number was growing staidly and according to report this number increased to 10,000 in 2007 and n this year more fogien combaters saw in Taliban lines then before according to repot about 200 to 300 foreign insurgents were there in Taliban lines, 2007 was also a deadly year for coalition troops were more than 100 troops killed this year. Ibid.

Taliban also faces big loss when Afghan troops killed their important person. Mowlawi Abdul Manan with the increase in Taliban insurgencies, US and other coalition troops also increased their troops, in first half of 2008, US troops increased 80 percent from 26607 to 48250, in September 2008, US withdrew its 8000 troops from Iraq and sent 4500 troops to Afghanistan, and British also increased its troops to 8030. While US were increasing its troops, in Jun 13 Taliban was able to break Kandahar Jail and freed all 1200 prisoners of which 400 were Taliban. This was a big disappointment moment for government and coalition countries and with the breaking of Jail this month was the most suffering not for US and British forces and Afghan civilians, where 90 civilians killed in airstrike by coalition troops in Herat province. Ibid.

With the deadly 2008 year passed, US send 3000 more troops in January 2009 and following 17000 in mid-February, although US military leadership in Afghanistan was in favor of more troops to combat Taliban, they proposed that 500,000 troops with five years of fighting can defeat Taliban fully, but

Political leadership in Afghanistan was urging that sending more troops without pressurizing Karzai government to curb corruption and mismanagement won't be helpful because they thought corruption, drug trade and mismanagement fueled Taliban's increase. Karzai in late November 2009 claimed in his interview with CNN that it's urgent need to start peace negotiations with Taliban directly and announced that Obama administration is opposing such talks, in last month of 2009, Obama announced that they will send more 30,000 troops to Afghanistan. ("Afghanistan", 2011)

US military leadership estimated that insurgencies will increase in 2010 as it was already increased 300 percent from 2007 to 2009; they also estimated that no Taliban has some 25000 troops; in fact Taliban count was the same during their government. Ibid.

In 2009, Taliban's focus was on presidential elections to bring under question the credibility of elections by disrupting elections, thus according Taliban, they conducted 135 incidents of violence on the day of elections, the overall turnout was lower than previous elections but in southern and eastern Afghanistan, which is heartland of Taliban, turnout was much low. The election was full of fraud, both Karzai and Abdullah Abdullah was involved in fraud and regional warlords also vastly participated in fraud. At least 9 civilians and 14 troops have been killed on elections day. Ibid.

US once again increased its troops in 2010 with 9000 in March and some 18000 in Jun, instead Taliban also increased their insurgencies from guerrilla was to large scale combats, like they attacked two US bases, one in Kandahar and one in Bagram. Ibid.

Barack Obama on May 1, 2011 announced officially the death of Osama bin Laden, they stated that he was killed during US special operation, following the death of Osama bin Laden Taliban launched their attacks on governmental buildings, for two days on 7 and 8 May. Taliban announced that their aim is to take control of Kandahar, they attacked at least 8 locations in these two days, killing of Osama presented opportunity for Obama to announce that they have achieved their goal and they destroyed Al Qaeda, thus on June 6, Obama announced withdrawal of US troops which will finish till 2014. Ibid.

### **Presidential Elections 2009**

Second Afghan presidential elections held on 20 August 2009, although Karzai took majority but his rival Abdullah Abdullah, got second highest votes, challenged elections very successfully and thus Karzai was forced to pass elections to second term, second term elections were announced to be held on 7 November, but before elections Abdullah Abdullah withdrew from contest and therefore Karzai remained victorious, he sworn in on November 19. (Burki, 2009)

During last year of his first presidency, Karzai lost his popularity and thus US was facing that if we interfere in Afghan matters, it will boost the already present Afghan anger, they also can't interfere because "bringing democracy in Afghanistan" was their one and only achievement, which they were propagating to the world, but Afghans believed that a leader who is preferable for US will win elections and this benefited Karzai because all Afghans thought Karzai is the person that US wants to bring him, Karzai saw path of 2<sup>nd</sup> presidency open for him.Ibid.

Karzai as we mentioned before prevented party politics and candidates were forced to run election individually and this benefited him throughout his governance, because there wasn't any powerful opposition to him. Again it also benefited him in 2009 presidential elections, as about forty one qualified candidates were standing for presidency and by this opposition was divided.Ibid.

He also enrolled most of warlords with him in presidential elections as he selected Marshal Fahim as his vice president, he also promised ministries and governorships of provinces and for some he offered cash to vote him, he also received Pashtun vote by fearing them that if he didn't win, they will lose Pashtun dominance to Tajiks.Ibid.

By these efforts Karzai himself, Afghan people and even US, in last month's prior to elections were believing that Karzai will win elections, but as time of elections were getting closer, his opponent Abdullah Abdullah was getting famous and people doubted that he will give tough competition to Karzai, although observers thought that Karzai will win majority but will not be able to achieve fifty plus and elections will pass to second round. Karzai determined that he must win elections in first round, otherwise it will be difficult for him to win in second round, because Karzai was fearing that if elections went to second round, his supporters, who joined him in first round may leave him and create new alliance with Abdullah Abdullah, so for this he used his whole power to win the first round.Ibid.

He swore in, in a big ceremony where 800 people were present including some international figures like Hillary Clinton and President Asif Ali Zardari. In Ceremony Karzai presented his speech and promised various tasks to be done in next presidency, he first stressed the need of peace and security with force and for this he promised to reach Afghan Taliban and will convene Loya Jirga and include those Taliban who want to work with government. (Burki, 2009)

Karzai, Because of his previous policies, now was in a difficult position, Taliban in his previous governance were able to strengthen their selves and now Karzai was very much limited to Kabul, because of his own policies that he strengthened regional commanders by presenting them important posts in



government, now he is not able to implement his policies on them, therefore corruption raised in alarming level, he started his second term with much difficulties ahead of him. (Burki, 2009)

Obama Administration after the death of Osama bin Laden propagated that they finished AL Qaeda and changed their policy towards Afghanistan; Obama promised during his second term campaign that he will end the war in Afghanistan, thus Karzai in his speech proposed his own agenda. He said that in next two years all private security companies will be shut down and will transfer their role to Afghan security forces, he also said that in next three years Afghan Army will lead operations and till the end of his presidency they will be able to take responsibility of the country. He also promised to curb corruption, he knew that international community is disappointed with corruption in Afghan administration, that's why he promised to end corruption in Afghan government and will bring corrupt ministers to justice, he also promised that they will create a law which will require ministers and high level officials to register their assets, but still he blamed international community that aid system is not transparent and accountability is not present in aid spending, he also promised that he will change un-educational ministers and will bring expert ministers. Ibid.

After inauguration he started to create his government and soon presented his government. His western allies seemed quite happy with his selection of cabinet; he reselected the previous reformists and brought new talents to Cabinet either. But he also take some ministers who was a kind of disappointment for west like he selected Ismail Khan a previous commander in Herat as water and energy minister, he also didn't took some powerful figure with powerful western support like Zia the Minister for Rural development and Fatimi Minister of Health. Karzai presented his cabinet to Parliament and parliament set to vote them on 2 January. When voting ended, 17 of his ministers were not able to receive parliament's confidants and thus Karzai faced a major political blow from parliament. Karzai didn't expect, that's why he travelled to Helmand on the same day, but this time the opposition was united and disapproved two third of his cabinet. Karzai once again begun to prepare new list of nominees for cabinet, he then presented his second list two weeks later and for second time his ten nominees were rejected and remaining seven were accepted. (Eide, 2012)

### **2010 Parliamentary Elections**

Disputes of 2009 presidential elections widened in 2010 parliamentary elections, after 2009 elections although Karzai and independent elections Commission (IEC) promised to create a mechanism to prevent fraud in elections, they did but what they didn't was the implementation of that very mechanism and at the end elections were full of fraud and resulted in disputes, which caused delay of the new parliament till July 2011. (Katzman, 2015)

In February 2010 Karzai signed a decree about election; he ordered that 2010 elections will be held under this decree. Mentioned decree had various controversy points, one of which was nationalization of Elections Complaints Commission (ECC), where Karzai dismissed two seats of non-Afghans, international community alarmed by this and fully criticized Karzai and thus Karzai was forced to compromise on this point and in March 2010 then returned two seats in ECC for non-Afghans. Voter registration was finished between June 12 and August 12 where total 11.3 million eligible voters were registered, total candidates for 2010 elections were 2,577 to run up in next elections. Ibid.

5.6 million Votes of 11.3 million votes coasted and thus the turnout was very low as about 33 percent. The major issue of low turnout was insecurity, where IEC was forced to lock some 938 polling stations because of security reasons. Although results announced on 20 October but it was delayed till 24 November, because of investigating fraud and in the end some 1.3 million votes were discredited and final result announced on 24 November, results were opposite to most people's expectations, because about 60 percent of previous parliament members lost elections also lots of Karzai's supporters lost elections as he had 90 supporter parliamentarians, but this time it decreased to 70 members, in fact without people's expectations most Pashtun candidates lost their seats, even they lost in areas which was Pashtun dominant areas, thus they demonstrated that we lost because of fraud and once again country faces political crisis. Ibid.

Supreme Court instructed Karzai on 28 December and he created a five member committee to discuss fraud, but he faced criticism from ECC. ECC argued that ECC and IEC are the only bodies which have legitimacy to investigate fraud in elections but still Karzai ordered the five member tribunal to go ahead, but when the elected candidates of parliament announced that they will inaugurate themselves, thus Karzai was forced to inaugurate parliament which took place on 26 January 2011. Soon Lower House elected Abdul Raouf Ibrahimi as speaker and Upper House was finalized on 19 February 2011. Ibid.

## **2014 Presidential and Provincial Elections**

After vast fraud in 2009 presidential elections and 2010 parliamentary elections, international community and observers were doubting about another fraud election, but later on when first round of elections passed it proved far better than 2009 elections, which didn't experience any widespread fraud, but in second round specially Abdullah Abdullah committed vast systematic fraud in elections. Ibid.

According constitution, presidential elections must held 30 to 60 days prior to the expiration of current government, thus IEC announced April 5 2014 for next presidential elections, IEC also decided to hold provincial elections with presidential elections, because separately it was too costly and because of

logistical difficulties. IEC announced time between September 16 and October 6 for candidates to register themselves. The elections were going to hold under two laws, IEC Law and Electoral Law. 6800 out of 7170 polling stations were announced secure and will be open in elections day. Ibid.

October was the last day for candidates to request themselves, thus 26 candidates were registered of which 16 was later disqualified, the final list was announced on 20 November, Taliban once again announced to disrupt the elections but this time Hezb-e Islami changed his policy and announced to his followers to vote Hezb Candidate in election. Preparations for Provincial elections were also completed, 2713 candidates participated for 420 provincial seats. Ibid.

Voting have held in April 5, turnout was much higher than expected, it was 60 percent, in some places even ballots shortened and people remained without voting, although extra time was given to them because of ballots shortage, after election total of 80 complaints registered and in result 375,000 votes were canceled. IEC announced official elections on May 15, 2014. Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani had the leading position with Abdullah with 44.9 percent and Ashraf Ghani with 31.5 percent of total votes and by this elections passed to second round, June 14 was announced for second round elections and 22 July was official date for announcement of results, second round elections held on due date, although turn out remained the same but it was more violent then firs round elections, in first round about 14 people were killed but in second round about 50 persons were reported killed. Ibid.

After elections, informal result's showed Ghani as a winner, thus this angered Abdullah particularly he claimed that how is possible that turnout raised so much in eastern provinces where Ghani's supporters are strong. He also blamed IEC of involving in fraud with Ghani and thus he left relations with IEC and announced not to recognize IEC's decisions and requested UNAMA to involve in vote count, both sides were negotiating to discuss the process to count fraud votes, but were not able to do so, on 21 June Abdullah's supporters protested in several provinces. On July 7, IEC announced parliamentary official results, according which Ghani was ahead with 56.44 percent of votes and Abdullah was second with 43.66 percent. Ibid.

Abdullah Abdullah several times warned to declare presidency and will announce government, thus US intervened and Obama called Abdullah to send his Secretary of State, Johan Kerry, to Kabul to mediate between them. On July 12, Ghani and Abdullah with the mediation of John Kerry announced agreement in conference. They both agreed to count all ballot boxes by IEC in front of various diplomats of different embassies, who ever won elections will be the president and the second candidate will be head of Chief

Executive Officer (CEO), which will act as Prime Minister and later on after changing the constitution will improve to Prime Minister Ship. (Katzman, 2015)

Recount Started on July 17 and at the end once again Ghani was ahead and thus Abdullah once again threatened that he will not accept the result if Ghani announced victorious, thus they both agreed on power sharing and finally Ghani sworn in on September 29 and soon Ghani appointed Abdullah as CEO. In this power sharing agreement, President's some power passed to CEO and the Cabinet will work under CEO, which will lead by President. Abdullah was also had shares with Ghani in appointing high level governmental officials and ministers. They also agreed to convert CEO's post to proper Prime Minister.

With the brokered of John Kerry, National Unity Government (NUG) formed between Ashraf Ghani as a President and Abdullah Abdullah as CEO, the NUG was facing difficulties from it's very begging, but it reached to alarming level when Abdullah Abdullah accused Ghani of not giving him importance as Kenneth Katzman stated Director of National Intelligence James Clapper's words in his 2017 report that "Afghanistan is at serious risk of a political breakdown during 2016, occasionally by mounting political, economic and security challenges." (Katzman, 2017)

After forming NUG, according institutions they had thirty day's to nominate cabinet, but they were not agreed on that till October 2014, they were also not able to nominate governors for 34 provinces and Ambassadors for major countries till April 2016. Selecting of Defense minister was also delayed several months, Tajiks thought Pashtun's are dominating security institutions, though they opposed Pashtun defense minister several time in National Assembly. Ibid.

As Ghani first appointed Sher Mohammad Karimi as Defense Minister but National Assembly didn't pass him, he then nominated Masoom Stanakzai as Defense minister, he was also rejected by National Assembly and finally in July 2016 National Assembly confirmed General Abdullah Habibi as Defense Minister. Ibid.

These advancements also increased ethnic fragmentation, as Hazara's protested in July 2016 and bomb exploded on protesters and about hundred people were killed, in August Dostum attacked Tajiks in Kabul and killed one person, he then threatened NUG multi times to respect and give importance to his loyal. Ibid.

Another problem for Ghani is the convening of Constitutional Loya Jirga to change constitution and convert CEO post to formal Prime Minister Ship and to do so; they were conditioned to hold parliamentary and District Elections because both, parliament members and District Council members

were part of Constitutional Loya Jirga. October 15, 2016 was dated for parliamentary elections, but were not able to hold elections, a new commission for electoral reforms were established under the name of "Special Electoral Reforms" but it's members were rejected by National Assembly, then they appointed new IEC and ECC and once again enacted election Law to bring somewhat reforms and hold parliament elections, but still elections date is not specified, eve, some observers say the new parliament may delay till next presidential Elections. (Katzman, 2017)

## **Obama Administration - Transition and Drawdown**

Bush Administration give Afghanistan second priority, their first priority was always Iraq, but when Obama came to Power, he comprehensively changed US policy towards Afghanistan, now his focus was on Afghanistan and thus after a lot of discussions Obama Administration announce a strategy on March 27, 2009 and according that policy he send 21,000 more fresh forces. (Katzman, 2014)

Robert Gates, US Secretary of Defense, changed General McKiernan with General Stanly McChrystal and he took the possession on Jun 15, 2009 and two months later he sent strategy proposal which demanded that it will be better for US forces to be engage which people of Afghanistan then following Taliban and killing them, we should participate in local Shura instead counting Killed Taliban. His another point was that there is possibility for losing mission in Afghanistan unless a powerful counter insurgency policy made and pursue and to reverse Taliban momentum it needs to send additional 44,000 troops and it will take about twelve to eighteen months. Ibid.

With this demand, debates started in Obama Administration and once again policy reviews started, most worried was Secretary of Defense Gates, he thought that sending more and more troops will establish sense of occupation in local Afghans, for this Obama Administration took high level meetings several times and at the end on December 1, 2009 Obama announced a revised policy for Afghanistan. (Katzman, 2014)

The policy was in fact two folded, the first was a surge to increase US troops count and "reverse the Taliban Momentum", for this they announced to send an additional 30,000 troops, second decision was transit security responsibility to Afghan authority gradually which will began in July 2011 and thus a corresponding drawdown will began and after that their main goal will be to train and assist Afghan National Troops. They announced this in 2010 NATO summit in London that the transition will begin in 2011 and will end in 2014. (Katzman, 2014)

In 2010 General McChrystal resigned and General Petraeus was appointed new successor in June 30, 2010. They scheduled transition in five tranches and specified numbers of districts from 364 districts for each period. First tranche begun from July 2011, second from November 2011, third from May 2012, fourth on December 2012 and final tranche was announced on June 2013. Thus gradually US forces transitioned their leading role to Afghan National Forces and with the end of fifth tranche Karzai announced that "Afghanistan and NATO/ISAF had moved to supporting role." And thus US announced to withdraw 10,000 troops by the end of 2011 and another 23,000 by the end of September 2011 which brought their count to 68,000 troops in February 2013, Obama announced that their number of troops will drop to 34,000 by the end of February 2014 and finally will reach to 9,800 troops by the end of 2014, US closed almost 300 of its bases in Afghanistan and now only 80 are operating. Ibid.

Barack Obama then announced in May 2014, that 9,800 troops will remain the same in 2015, but will gradually decrease if Afghan government didn't agree on Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) by first January 2016, they will decrease their troops to 4,900 limited to Kabul and Bagram air base and later on will remain only 1000 experts. Ibid.

As presence of US troops were conditioned to BSA, US and Afghan governments began to work on it. They both agreed on various points of BSA, but both sides had some important concerns about some issues, like as Karzai demanded US to protect or support Afghanistan from any foreign intervention, especially from Pakistan, but US thought we will only support Afghan government against Al Qaeda and Taliban, Karzai's another concern was about legal immunities for US forces in Afghanistan and this was a non-negotiable demand of US. Karzai wanted to present these points to Parliament and Loya Jirga, thus he convened Loya Jirga on November 27, 2013 and authorized Karzai to sign with some changes, Karzai then wanted to decrease the role of US forces riding Afghan homes and thus he refused to sign BSA and passed it to next government, where both candidates Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani were willing to sign it. Ibid.

## **Insurgent Groups after Transition**

Still the biggest insurgent group is Taliban but other groups are also participating in insurgencies like Islamic State of Khorasan (ISK), Hekmatyahr's Hezb-e Islami which participated in reconciliation later and last one is Haqqani Network.

Taliban first leader Mullah Omar was died in 2013 which was announced in July 2015, this act of Taliban angered lots of low ranked Taliban and their supporters, after long debate and disputes Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour was selected as new leader of Taliban. Mullah Muhammad Yaqoob and some other

opponents of “the selections of Mansour” left Taliban; they argued that Mansour was connected with Pakistan and engineered by Pakistan to succeed Mullah Omar’s selection.

Mansour Was killed by US air stick on May 23, 2016 when he crossed Iran to Pakistan, some days later Taliban confirmed Mansour’s death and appointed Mawlawi Haibatullah Akhonzadeh as new leader of Taliban, he was deputy of Mansour. Before his succession, Haibatullah was involved in religious part of the movement, but was not engage in command structure; still some observers say that he left operational command to two of his powerful deputies, Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob and Sirajuddin Haqqani. (Katzman, 2016)

Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob is the elder son of Mullah Omar, he is a powerful figure in Taliban and was leading the separated faction of Taliban from Mullah Mansour but later on Joined the group when offered a high post in command by Taliban and Sirajuddin Haqqani is the leader of Haqqani Network which is supporter of Taliban but is separate group. When Haibatullah came to power, he immediately announced that they will not resume talks with Afghanistan government and the idea got stronger when Taliban was able to capture Kunduz Province in September 2016 and took more districts in Helmand and Kandahar provinces. They though, they can defeat government so why negotiate. Ibid.

After 15 years, US and international forces left Afghanistan unsecure in the hand of Afghan Army and were not able to fully defeat Taliban, now afghan Army was struggling to limit Taliban’s succession to some area’s but Taliban were getting stronger and stronger. Count of Al Qaeda is increasing n Taliban lines once again. From other side Afghan leadership is busy in power struggle and are divided, US also decided to decrease their number from 8,900 to 5000, but Afghan government think that US should increase their troops and engage in ground operations that Taliban will know that defeating government through fighting is not possible and then will be forced to negotiate with government.

Another insurgent group which emerged lately in Afghanistan is Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) which is affiliated with Islamic state of Iraq and Syria. Some Taliban factions and other insurgent groups announced their affiliation with ISIL in 2013 and become more active in mid-2014 in eastern Afghanistan. ISIL started supporting their Afghanistan’s group financially in 2015, US estimated that they are between 1500 and 2500 and their goal is to gain strength in some eastern provinces and Kandahar.

Although US forces thought they now ISKP are not threat to US or its allies because ISKP is mostly fighting Taliban then US forces or Afghan forces. But still Afghan forces and US air strikes conducting operations against ISKP and forced them to setback, in July 2016 their leader Hafiz Saeed Khan was

killed in US air strike and limited them to two or three provinces but US think it will pose threat to US and its allies in the future. (Katzman, 2017)

Hezb-e Islami Hekmatyaaar is another insurgent group; it is headed by Hekmatyaaar a previous Mujahid against Soviet. This group proved more flexible for reconciliation than Taliban. With the drawdown of US, Hezb begins its efforts to start reconciliation, they first participated in peace Jirga of 2010, they then met Afghan government representatives several times to discuss peace process, like they met Afghan government representative in 2012 during June Paris Conference and then in December 2012 in France, they later announced in May 2016 that they are very close to make a deal with government, they signed agreement on 22 September 2016. Ibid.

Another potential insurgent group is Haqqani Network, it was founded by Jalaluddin Haqqani, and he served as commander during Mujahideen fight against Soviet he later on was Minister of Tribal Affairs in Taliban government and now is linked with Taliban. His son Sirajuddin serves in Taliban as deputy and is powerful role in Taliban affairs and also in operating Haqqani group's insurgency. His two brothers killed by US and Pakistan and third one caught by Afghan government and sentenced to death.

Haqqani group was very powerful in its initial years of US war on terror, it is said that the group had about 3000 fighters which had the ability to conduct operations anywhere in Afghanistan but now it is weak and observers say the group is declining gradually, but still can conduct operation in Kabul City as they kidnaped two professors of American University Kabul. The group also attacked two times on Indian Embassy in Kabul, in July 2008 and October 2009. Indian officials also suspected the group in attack on Indian Consulate in Jalalabad on August 4, 2013. The group is also suspected in various other attacks some reports also indicate that attack on Kandahar governor compound was also done by group in which five UAE officials including their Ambassador was killed.



## **Implications for Central Asia**

After 9/11 when Bush Administration decided to attack Afghanistan and dismiss Taliban, eventually all the region, especially Central Asian states welcomed the invaders, they consider US coalition as an alternate to Russia and China in bringing security and suppression of militant groups. Thus later on they benefited from US presence in Afghanistan not only from security side but politically and economically. Security wise most of Central Asia militant either left fighting in Central Asia or reconciled in peace process and engaged in political structure of government, also Taliban was overthrown by US troops and installed more democratic and broad based government. They also benefited politically from US presence and fight against terrorism, as US and most western countries were criticizing Central Asian states for their non-democratic government and their policies against human rights, but now as US has its troops in Afghanistan and needs Central Asian States cooperation, they are no more criticizing Central Asian regimes, from other side, Taliban was ethnically Pashtuns and Central Asian counties consider it as a threat to their countries, thus they were supporting ethnic minorities against Taliban and now with US invasion, Taliban government collapsed and somewhat broad based government created which is dominated by ethnic minorities, especially Tajiks. (Asey, 2015)

The situation changed once again, when ISAF forces decided to withdraw from Afghanistan, their security concerns raised once again, their economic benefits from US presence declined, cause after 2013 US was transiting its supply through Central Asia and it provided good money to these countries, they also enjoyed good trade with Afghanistan but not now, it was declining and the threat of spillover of militancy once again emerged. Ibid.

### **Security Implications**

After decade long war, Central Asia is still worried from Afghanistan, Afghanistan is still at the top of the list for Central Asian security concerns, even after US invasion, Central Asian States are concerning about spillover of ongoing insecurity in Afghanistan, they are also suspicious of ISAF and US policies in Afghanistan as they left Northern Afghanistan to Northern Alliance and their focus was on eastern and southern Afghanistan to dismiss Taliban power bases, but Central Asian States were thinking US left their southern border insecure and their concern raised when Barack Obama Administration announced to withdraw, they thought US will leave Afghanistan insecure and Taliban may reach once again to north

Afghanistan and thus they once again will pose threat to Central Asian states. (Rumer, Stokowski & Stronski, 2016)

With the invasion of US into Afghanistan, militant groups of Central Asia was disrupted their activities for a while, but as coalition troops focused on Southern Afghanistan, most of foreign militants left Afghanistan and were leaving on Afghanistan and Pakistan border even some with their families, the Central Asian militant groups were able to regroup and organize their troops as observers warned that regional militant groups are coming to Central Asia, especially from Afghanistan and Pakistan and now the IMU and its separated group Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) are uniting and now they exploding there operations beyond Central Asia States with the help of Al Qaeda and, these observers thought that after 2014, Taliban may get stronger and by this IMU and IJU will get more stronger. (Nichol, 2014)

Central Asian States were always concerning about withdrawal of forging faces, the every time was linking instability with withdrawal, they were arguing that with the withdrawal of collation troops, foreign militant groups will find safe heaven once again and this will lead to instability in the region and it will also encourage internal militant groups of Central Asia like IMU, and indeed they were quite right about that, the first suicide bomb exploded in Kazakhstan in 2011. (Mankoff, 2013)

When Pakistan started operation Zarb-e-Azb against Tahrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in northern and Southern Waziristan, these foreign militants forced to move to northern Afghanistan and some of them are moving to Central Asian States Especially to Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. Therefore we see in recent years that Taliban were more active in Northern provinces of Afghanistan like Baghlan, Kunduz, Badakhshan, Faryab and Takhar, these provinces are mostly bordered with Central Asia. (Asey, 2015)

### *Kazakhstan*

Since the beginning Kazakhstan was arguing that it has no direct border with Afghanistan so it experienced few militant attacks and they thought they don't consider militancy as big threat to their security, but observers were shocked when Kazakh National Security Committee established Anti-terrorist Center in 2003 and soon arrested tens of IJU members. Kazakhstan witnessed more suicide attacks and terrorist activity. Between 2011 and 2012, over 100 crimes committed and from 2005 to 2012 over 300 people were arrested by police and were convicted related t terrorism in 2012, a group of terrorists attacked police in Almaty and killed one police and later on in police operation they were killed. In September a bomb maker killed his self by exploding bomb by him and his other friends killed n police

operation. Thus President Nazarbayev ordered to strengthen legislature on terrorist to success on terrorism and for this they have made changes in law in January 2013. (Nichol, 2014)

The National Security Committee announced in 2013 that the prevented some 35 terrorist incidents and demolished about 42 extremist groups during 2011 and 2012 but still about seven explosions and eleven other incidents accord. About sex people were arrested in 2013 and were accused of bombing civic sites and security buildings but later on the prosecutor discovered that they were going to establish Islamic Caliphate in Kyrgyzstan. Ibid.

The government further tightened religious issues and places by security cameras in Mosques and restricting people from religious studios and in November 2013 Kazakhstan imprisoned a person for twenty years and was accused of leading terrorist Organization.

### *Kyrgyzstan*

Although Kyrgyzstan was bordered with two most violent states in the region, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan but still joining new people to Islamic groups was very low and thus Kyrgyz Islamic groups were not able to influence the events in the country but still it experienced some deadly attacks from its neighboring countries, Kyrgyzstan witnessed two attacks right before 9/11 first time IMU invaded Kyrgyzstan s south, they planned to create Islamic State there, although they were able to capture various villages but in October 1999 with the help of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, Kyrgyz forces were able to defeat IMU and once again IMU guerrilla were forced to leave Kyrgyzstan, they attacked Kyrgyzstan in August 2000 and then were defeated by October 2000. They then attacked Kyrgyzstan in 2006 but were defeated, thus Kyrgyz Defiance Minister announced that IMU and Hezb-u Tahrir are immense threat to Kyrgyz security.

Kyrgyz Islamic Party, "Jammal Kyrgyzstan Jaish al-Mihdi" famous when they bombed several places including a Synagogue and attempted to bomb a police station in 2010. They also killed three policemen in 2011 an even attempted to attack US Embassy and Manas airbase, thus Kyrgyz security forces started operations against them and killed many of them including their leader in 2011.

### *Tajikistan*

Tajikistan experienced deadly civilian between 1992 and 1997, but when President Rahmanov and IRP leader Abdullo Nuri singed peace agreement and later on after Taliban and Al Qaeda suppression Tajikistan was more secure than previous years, but in 2010 about two dozens of prisoners, who were prisoned on terrorist charges, they went to various places and launched attacks . (Nichol, 2014)

In late 2010 a suicide bomber hated Police station and killed dozens in Khujand, IMU's Tajik faction Jamaat Ansarullah took responsibility of attack. In November 2010 they then attacked military convoy in eastern Dushanbe and killed dozens of forces, in early 2011 Tajik forces claimed to kill several leaders of alleged insurgent group. (Nichol, 2014)

Insecurity once again erupted in Tajikistan when criminal group killed Tajik national security official in Badakhshan, thus Tajik forces launched operation against them, they claimed thus this group has links with IMU and UTO and also had support of drug smugglers, the battle begun on 24 July and in result about 30 members of criminal group were killed and about 17 security forces were killed and finally cease fire happened in August 22.

#### *Uzbekistan*

Since its independence, Uzbekistan was the most vulnerable country to insurgencies, in February 1999 various explosions heated Tashkent where about 16 to 28 people were killed and about 200 people were reportedly injured, Karimov accused Mohammad Solikh (previous presidential candidates), Yuldashev and Juma Namangani of IMU, thus announce death sentence to Yuldashev and Namangani and 15 years prison to Solikh.

In late March, IJU launched various suicide bombs and attacks which killed some 47 person, IJU's headed by Najmiddin Kamolitdinovich Jalolov which had links with Taliban head Mullah Omar and Osama bin Laden in May 2009, several people attacked Uzbek check post in Khanabad and four bombs exploded in Andijon, IJU claimed responsibility but government accused IMU.

When US begun operation enduring freedom in Afghanistan, IMU supported Taliban and thus faced major loses in war against US, it's leader Juma Namangan was killed in US attacks and it's other members moved to Pak-Afghan border and fro there was attacking Pakistan and Coalition forces, Yuldashev was killed in 2009.

## **Economic Implications**

The best hope for Central Asian States to overcome their economic problems was related to Afghanistan, when US invaded Afghanistan and was defeating Taliban with the help of Northern Alliance, Central Asian Countries supported US lead coalition in war against Taliban, not for moral purpose but their main purpose was to gain economic help from US by providing them their air and ground to use it as transit rout or as airbase for attack. (Tadjbaksh, 2012),

Every Central Asian Republic made their own contribution in war against Taliban, as Uzbekistan allowed US to use its Karshi-Khanabad base for military purpose, it also allowed to transit it's humanitarian supplies through Termez base, Kyrgyzstan also supported US invasion by providing them Manas airbase, President Akaev give it to US in very low price, which was later in 2009, questioned by President Bakiev and in result, US agreed to increase its rent and change it from base to only transit hub. Ibid.

Tajikistan made deal about its Dushanbe Airbase with France. Turkmenistan, to some extent managed its neutrality and was conscious not to engage with US military actions too much, but still it provided its air for humanitarian purpose and later on allowed US planes to refuel them in Turkmen airport, but still they were arguing that they are allowing its air for humanitarian assistance. Ibid.

Since their independence they favored to make Afghanistan as a transit route between Central Asia and South Asia and by coming of US, this dream become more realistic as US was also supporting the New Silk Road vision. Central Asian Courtiers hoped to send their natural energy and other materials to South Asia and by these they could decrease their dependency on Russia and of course it will boost their economy. In this regard one of their initiative was providing Afghanistan and Pakistan their summer surplus electricity, which was called (CASA-1000), according this project Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan was going to export its electricity to Afghanistan and Pakistan. The ground breaking for project stated in May 2016 and is expected to finish till 2018.

When US invaded Afghanistan and Taliban regime collapsed, Central Asia found new opportunity to revive their old silk road and connect their selves with South and Southeast Asia. US was also willing that Central Asia export it's goods and natural resources through Afghanistan, because they were against Central Asian trade through Iran, that's why US Secretary Clinton announced in July 2011 that " Stronger economic ties through South and Central Asia so that goods, Capital and people can flow more easily across border.", and later on in April 2012 assistance secretary of state for Central And south Asia, Robert Orris Blacke announced that NDN routs could be used as new Silk Road between Central Asia and Afghanistan after 2014 US withdrawal, he then claimed in his meetings in Kazakhstan and

Uzbekistan in 2012 that according to US administration's Silk Road vision, US plans to build TAPI gas pipeline between, Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan and India, and finance the CASA-1000 the Central Asia and South Asia electric line, he also stated that US plans to build railway line between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. (Nichol, 2014)

In 2011 State Department released report which stated that as per State Administration's Silk Road Vision, US is going to start nine projects which will help both Afghanistan and Central Asia, these nine projects included building roads which connected Central Asian States to Central Afghanistan like Mazar-i Sharif-Hairatan railway, building road from Mazar to Dar-e Suf, a railway from Sherkhan Bandar to Herat, it also included connecting major cities of Afghanistan with Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan with internet wire, TAPI and CASA-1000 was also part of these nine projects. Ibid.

Although CASA-1000 was sponsored by World Bank and Asian Development Bank, but Asian Development Bank pullout itself, thus in December 2014, US announced 15 million to finance CASA-1000 project, though which Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan would be able to export 1300 Megawatt (MW) of its electricity to Afghanistan.

Tajikistan with the experience of civil war between 1992-1997 is the poorest country of all Central Asian States, Tajikistan is more concerned about development in Afghanistan than other countries, because it has long border with Afghanistan, it's opposition in civil war also lived and operated from northern Afghanistan, another factor lays within Tajikistan: as unemployment rates is too high and faces economic crisis so it's population are the most vulnerable for joining violent groups, thus Tajik leadership give importance to developments in Kabul. (Bell, 2015)

With its poor economy, Tajikistan consider a stable Afghanistan as an economic luff for itself, thus she went more links with Afghanistan and already contribute to CASA-1000 with Kyrgyzstan, but the project faces some difficulties, it also supports Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Turkmenistan railway rout and hopes that it will help Tajikistan to raise its economy. Ibid.

Opposite to all other Central Asian Republics, Turkmenistan officially recognized the policy of neutrality towards Afghanistan, without of consideration of government in Afghanistan, they focused on their trade with Afghanistan. As they were struggling to export their energy during Taliban, now US invasion Tajikistan continue its same struggle as they are keeping themselves from insecurity in Afghanistan and maintaining its economic relations, it latest struggle is TAPI to export its gas to Afghanistan, Pakistan and India.

With all these support, still Central Asian Republics were avoiding to send troops to Afghanistan, they didn't want to engage in war directly with Taliban or Al Qaeda, but they provided air and ground for economic purpose and for this economic purpose all Central Asian countries supported ISAF/NATO new supply road, the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) to avoid their dependency on Pakistan. (Tadjbaksh, 2012)

## Drug Trafficking

Although it's difficult to imagine the accurate route of Afghanistan drug trafficking, but still according to UN about 93 percent of Afghanistan opiates production is exported through three major routes. Western route which passes through Iran, Southern route through Pakistan and the most important one is the Northern route, which passes through Central Asia and reaches to Russia and Europe and even to some extent to the US, where about 99 percent of drug which crosses Central Asia are of Afghan origin. Various reasons contributed to encourage drug traffickers to transit opiates to major markets like one important reason is the border itself, as in most parts border between Afghanistan and Central Asia is difficult to access, as border of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan is marked by Panj River with Afghanistan and border of Turkmenistan and Afghanistan is mostly a desert, another reason is the involvement of Central Asia border guards in opium trade, third reason is poor population and low economy where people are forced to join this business and the fourth reason is the weakness of Central Asian Republic's anti-drug agencies. (Hays, 2016)

Only in 2010 more than 90 tons of heroin trafficked through Central Asia, most of which transited through Tajikistan. Uzbekistan is the second one and Turkmenistan is in third position, as Turkmenistan contributed in two to four heroin transits, eight to ten tons were transited through Uzbekistan and about 75 to 80 tons transited through Tajikistan, but only 2.6 tons were seized in 2010, which was less than 3 percent of those 90 tons. (Hays, 2016) Now drug traffickers in Central Asia use developed roads instead of local roads as 70 to 75 percent of opiates are transiting through roads to western Russia and Siberia and only 15 to 25 percent is transiting through train and planes. (UNODC, 2012)

Drug production although decreased since Taliban defeated, also drug traffickers decreased the use of northern route, now only 25 percent of Afghanistan's opium production is exported through Central Asia, but still it has vast impact on Central Asia, in fact traffickers receiving 1.4 billion net profit, it had vast negative impact on these countries of which corruption was the most important, not only low profile officials were involved in this business but also high level border police, law enforcement institutes, customs were engaged in corruption to protect this trade. (Gavrilis, 2015)

While most of opium production fields are in the South but most of heroin manufacturing takes place in the North of Afghanistan, most famous of that is Badakhshan. Also Takhar, Baghlan and Faryab provinces are contributing in heroin manufacturing, according to UNODC, there were about 45 to 50 laboratories active in North Afghanistan during 2010, where estimably every laboratory produced 1 ton heroin per year, total of which will be about 45 tons. (UNODC, 2012) According to United Nations Office on Drug and



Crime (UNODC), in 2009 about 6,900 metric tons of opium was produced in Afghanistan which is equal to 90 percent of world opium. (UNODC, 2010)

### *Tajikistan*

Tajikistan with 1207 KM long border is the most vulnerable border for drug trade, its border is the most remote and difficult to control and monitor, latest developing progress in both side of building bridges and roads wheeled the licit business and illicit business as well, mostly drug trafficking done by local people with small boats and in fact it's not a one way traffic, opium, heroin, Chars smuggled from Afghanistan and weapon and wine smuggled from Tajikistan, in Tajikistan drug trafficking makes about 30 percent GDP of the country, Tajikistan receives the biggest aid and assistance then all Central Asian countries from different attain and Counties. (Gavrilis, 2015)

### *Turkmenistan*

Turkmenistan and Afghanistan border is covered by desert, due to its flat terrain nature is difficult for anti-drug officers to control it, also both side live same ethnic groups and tribes, so they move too easily from other side several Turkmen and Afghan Police officers are involved in drug trade which made it very difficult to control drug trafficking. (UNODC, 2012)

Imam Nazar and Sherhetabad are two important cross point of Turkmen borders with Afghanistan, from there, drug traffickers transit it through trucks, Turkmenistan is stated last in heroin seizure of about 104 kilogram but it is on top in opium seizure with 757 kg. Heroin seizure was very high in 2009 which declined almost 75 percent, they seized about 215 kg of heroin only in November according to observers, flow of drug increased due to strict checking in Tajik border. Ibid.

### *Uzbekistan*

Uzbekistan's border with Afghanistan is the most strict and intense border then all other borders of Afghanistan, the border is controlled by electric fence, mines and arm solder watch. Two crossing pints are open for NATO/ISAF supplies but are closed to afghan goods to cross from Afghanistan and it caused to decrease drug trafficking but it also limited the ability of Afghanistan to export their goods to Central Asian markets. Thus traffickers changed their way and now they use an alternative way of Tajikistan to Uzbekistan, Uzbek anti-drug authorities complained about the irresponsibility of Tajik border guards and anti-drug authorities, therefor Uzbekistan was seizing more than any other Central Asian country, as in 2011 seizure rose 25 percent but it later declined in 2012. (Gavrilis, 2015)

It is called that opium trade will increase in recent years, as UNODC argues that drug trade in Central Asia continually increased by past decade but there has been no actions from low enforcement institution not they increased checking in cross border points, as with the US help a bridge build on Punj River between Afghanistan and Tajikistan but now that bridge works as a wheel for drug trade. In deed Central Asian States do not give importance to drug trafficking. Thus they don't act precisely against it, as we see overall drug seizure decreased in recent years, as these countries combined seized 5291 kg heroin in 2008 but in 2011 it dropped to 1810 Kg. Ibid.

## Political Implications

September 11 attacks had vast impact on world politics, especially on Central Asian politics, on domestic and international level. Domestically it was an opportunity for them to suppress insurgent groups which fought with their regimes, even they benefited from it to suppress their political rival under the label of terrorism and extremism. Internationally it also had vast impact on Central Asian countries. Internationally they not only benefited economically but also received world powers attention and support, as they were now in US priority list and supported them in their battle against Central Asian militant groups. They also in the aftermath of 9/11 found friendly, broad based government in Afghanistan which was dominated by ethnic groups which had ethnic relations with most of Central Asian countries. (Lapidus, 2001)

With sudden decision of Bush administration to attack Afghanistan and to send their troops, it was though decision for them to support US lead Coalition campaign against Taliban, because it raised many concerns in Central Asian Republics like US war against Taliban may increase instability in Central Asian countries on Taliban and Central Asian militant groups based in Afghanistan may move back to Central Asia, they also concerned about the long stay of US troops in Afghanistan, which they consider as threat for them, some of them though that if US withdrawal at the end ultimately, so they may deal with the problem alone and that will be difficult for them. Ibid.

Prior to 9/11, relations between Central Asian countries and US was not very good, because of these states Authoritarian Political System and in this case US lost its interest in the region but when 9/11 happened and Bush decided to attack Afghanistan., all these countries moved very quickly to receive US support economically and politically and security wise. President Karimov of Uzbekistan offered tactical support for US invasion, he offered military base near Afghanistan which was very important for US operation against Taliban and instead of its support, Uzbekistan received various political, economic and security assurances as US added IMU in its terrorist list, and this was not the only commitment, but they also agreed on long term commitments that US will remain engaged long after US withdrawal from Afghanistan. Ibid.

As we mentioned before that, Central Asian Countries were worried in initial years thus they were not able to decide what to do, but still all five countries agreed to provide intelligence assistance to US troops, they also permitted Coalition troops to use their air space, some counties like Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan agreed on leading of Coalition aircrafts to land in emergency cases. Tajikistan although at first offered air and ground facilities for US troops, but due to Russian pressure, they back tracked their

decision of ground facility, because still Russian troops were present in Tajikistan, but later on when Russia withdrew, they provided the air base to Coalition troops, later on Tajikistan provided three more bases to Coalition troops. In December 2001, Kyrgyzstan signed an agreement with US, through which they provided Manas airbase to US troops. (Wishnick, 2002)

These authoritarian regimes were hoping that US will support them against any anti-government protest, form other sided people of these countries were in a believe that as long as coalition troops stay in these counties , US will support these governments in any situation. As [protests begun in 2002 in Kyrgyzstan , it was possible to oust President Akayev, but couldn't because of coalition troops presence in the country. Ibid.

**Chapter Five**  
**Conclusion and Recommendations**

## Conclusion

Though out its context, this thesis answers its research question that how does the situation in Afghanistan influences Central Asian Countries? The main focus of research was two folded, from one side it focused on Afghanistan's and in second stage it examines impact of Afghan situation on Central Asian Countries. The study found that instability in Afghanistan has its vast impact on Central Asian Countries in four important aspects; political, economic, Security wise and on drug trafficking in Central Asia. Different incidents in Afghanistan had different impacts on Central Asia; sometimes these countries benefited in some areas while in some areas had very negative impact on these countries. After their independence, the impact also differed in deferent governments in Afghanistan.

This thesis indicates that two important factors contributed to the continuation of Afghan problem, the first one is; neglecting Afghanistan's ongoing situation by world community, especially big powers, but that was situation before 9/11. Although UN was struggling to bring peace and reach a brokers but world power; especially US was not giving as much attention to issue as much it was needed. The second factor was the engagement of regional and world powers in a proxy war, where every country has its own interests and its own group in Afghanistan, this factor is still continue. Central Asia was also doing the same; after their independence, Central Asian States continually supported some groups in Afghanistan, to establish buffer zone against Islamists groups and by this they would avoid the ongoing threat, which is coming from Afghanistan's instability.

Different factions rose against Soviet occupation based on ethnicities and every group had its own area of power from where they were supported. When Soviet withdrew, these groups became representatives of different ethnicities and this made them powerful in their hometowns, thus warlord System rose in the country. They became very powerful that after US lead Coalition invasion, coalition and Afghan Government were not able to control them. That's why international community during its 17 years stay is not able to cure instability in Afghanistan.

Insecurity in Afghanistan has deep impact on the security of Central Asia than any other area like Politics, Economy or drug trafficking. When Central Asian States got independent, it was a time where Afghan Mujahedeen formed Islamic government, therefore from one side their government was ideal for all other Islamic militant groups around the world and from other side in fact this government was supporting various Islamic groups including Central Sian Islamist groups like IMU of Uzbekistan and UTO of Tajikistan, thus these militant groups pose threat to Central Asian Republics, even they were posing threat to the existing of these States in initial years of their independents.

Central Asia faces more difficult time when Taliban took government in Afghanistan, as Taliban were more aggressive and fundamentalists than Mujahideen and also they were ethnic Pashtuns while Mujahideen government was dominated by Tajiks. When Taliban took Kabul, immediately Central Asian States supported Northern Alliance to create a buffer, but soon Taliban conquered all Afghanistan except Paktia province. Taliban clearly supported Central Asian militant groups and in this era these groups were able to connect with Al Qaeda and other groups. Militant activities increased in Central Asia during Taliban and this worried Central Asian Republics, that's why Tajik government was forced to reconcile with United Tajik opposition during civil war.

The situation in Central Asia immediately changed when US led Coalition began its campaign against Taliban. Taliban and Central Asian militant groups were forced to move to South and east of Afghanistan and once again north of Afghanistan was under control of Northern Alliance. But soon Central Asian States criticized Coalitions of leaving northern Afghanistan and are only focusing on South and East Afghanistan, they concerned that Taliban and other groups may shift their attentions to northern Afghanistan and once again militancy and insecurity will rise in Central Asia as it happened after operation Zarb-e Azb.

The second area that Central Asia was affecting negatively from Afghanistan's instability is "Drug Trafficking". It was affecting continually after their independence. In initial years, Central Asia was only a transit route for drug, but soon it poses serious threat to the health of ordinary people of Central Asia, where rate of drug addicts were increasing consistently, also as drug trade is expansive with high benefits, therefore soon it included border guards, government's high officials and even anti-drug law enforcement agencies' employees, also corruption increased in government, where even high level governmental officials were involved in corruption.

Opium cultivation increased in Afghanistan when foreign countries decreased their support for different factions in Afghanistan; Commanders in different areas were connected with a faction of Mujahideen and was supported economically and weapon wise by leader of faction, when foreign countries decreased their aids, Commanders were forced to support Opium cultivation to buy weapons and give salary to its followers, and it resulted increase in Central Asian drug trade.

During Taliban drug trade reached to high level as they give legal status to opium cultivation and trade by implementing tax on opium trade and cultivation, even UN was not able to force Taliban to act against opium, because it was important source of income for Taliban. With the coming of new government under Coalition troops, opium cultivation slowly but gradually decreased in Afghanistan, its trade

through northern route also decreased due to Central Asian anti-drug law informant agencies effects, but what changed in this era was the establishment of drug manufacturing companies in the north of Afghanistan and now export of Heroin increased.

Political instability in Afghanistan also challenged Central Asia economically, where Central Asian States consider Afghanistan as vital economic hub to overcome their economic problems, but for the last two decades political instability in Afghanistan is the only obstacle in front of this dream, through out last two and half decades, their aim was to reach to outside world other than Russia and connect with South and Southeast Asia through Afghanistan to send their goods and natural resources. Their aim was to limit their dependency on Russia by having trade with Afghanistan and South Asia, but they could not because of the unstable situation in Afghanistan, although latterly they achieved some success by completing some energy projects with Afghanistan and signing some other with Pakistan and India.

After their independence, Central Asian Republics were still dependent on Russia. When Russia stopped supporting Central Asian Republics, these countries faced serious economic crisis, as all their connectivity, trade and infrastructure was towards Russia. Their goods and natural resources were exporting to Russia, where they bought it at very low price than world market, thus Central Asian leaders from very beginning were struggling to limit dependency on Russia and extend their trade with South and Southeast Asia,

When Mujahedeen established government they hoped to connect with outside world, but it was not possible because of civil war between different factions in Afghanistan, another obstacle was the dominant ideology in Afghan government, which was based on Islam and Jihad and off course Central Asian States were opposing this ideology. For their economic need, even some Central Asian States agreed with international companies to transit their resources through Taliban governed Afghanistan; even Turkmenistan permitted Taliban to open an office in its capital and for this economic benefit, Turkmenistan neutralized its policy towards Afghanistan.

When US decided to attack Afghanistan and oust Taliban government, Central Asia considers it golden opportunity to achieve all their strategic goals along economic benefits. Although in the beginning they were hesitating because of some policy concerns and because of their relations with Russia, but soon all Central Asian States supported attack in one or other way, throughout NATO/ISAF presence in Afghanistan they benefited in various ways.

Central Asian States at first signed contracts with US and other coalition States by providing them their air and ground for humanitarian, transit and military use and in return they receive money as rent of those



facilities, also US aid for Central Asia was very low, which increased consistently after US invasion of Afghanistan. International Organizations and NGO's also increased their aids for Central Asia, in this era Central Asian States were also able to extend their trade with Afghanistan and to some extent connected with outside world.

Politics of Central Asia was another area where political instability in Afghanistan had its vast impact, situation in Afghanistan had vastly changed Central Asian Countries domestic and international politics; in domestic level, they consider the spread of Islam as an extensive threat to their secular governments and as Afghanistan was an ideal government for these Islamic groups and also instability in Afghanistan provided these groups safe haven to carry out their operations against Central Asian countries, therefore Central Asian Republics soon after their independent crack downed on political Islam. To some extent they were right about militant groups, but indeed they were propagating the term of militant Islam and under the umbrella of terrorism Central Asian Republics leadership are suppressing all political oppositions, both Islamists and democrats, even they banned Islamic teachings and Mosques, they are also exaggerating terrorism and extremism in international level to slow down democratization of Central Asian Republics, Afghan problem also impacting Central Asia's politics. In Afghanistan, Central Asia always struggle to free northern Afghanistan from Taliban and other militant groups and for this they vastly supported Northern Alliance to defeat them from their Southern borders and later on they supported broad based government in Afghanistan. They were also propagating and lobbying in international arena to include Central Asian Militant groups in international terrorist groups. They are also using extremism and terrorism to balance their relations with US and Russia. Sometime, in international arena, they use threat of militancy as a justification for not bringing democratic reforms in their countries.

## **Recommendations**

- 1- Afghan government should end insecurity in Afghanistan by speeding up and strengthening reconciliation process with Taliban.
- 2- Afghan government should strengthen law enforcement agencies to end opiate cultivation; it also should provide alternative products for growing to Afghan farmers.
- 3- Both afghan and Central Asian States should further enhance cooperate in regional and international organization to end instability in the region.
- 4- Both Afghanistan and Central Asian States need to share information about drug trade and militant activities to cure drug trade and insecurity issues.

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- 5- Suppressing opposition and Islamic groups caused to increase level of militancy in Central Asia, because youngsters are joining military groups, thus Central Asian governments should bring democratic reforms and thus it will decrease militancy, they also should not suppress Islam and Islamic Scholars to decrease insecurity in the region.
- 6- Media of both Afghanistan and Central Asia can play important role in defeating drug trade and drug addiction by increasing general awareness in the society, media also can play impressive role in bringing democracy and security to the region through its general awareness about benefits of democracy and defeat insecurity.
- 7- For their economic prosperity, Central Asian States should solve their internal and regional issues through regional organizations or through mediation or through international organization.
- 8- Although some Central Asian countries combated with drug trafficking impressively, but still most of them don't focus on the issue so they need to strengthen their anti-drug and law enforcement agencies, end corruption in governmental offices and cooperate with world anti-drug organizations.
- 9- Civil societies of Afghanistan and Central Asian States should cooperate and work with each other to bring close the regions societies and it will help Afghanistan as well Central Asian Republics to promote their trade.

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