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٢٠١٤; toughest year for U.S. in Afghanistan

Abdullah Elham Jamalzai, political analyst



Referring to the challenges that Afghans will be facing, and the opportunities that Afghans might have in ٢٠١٤, this year seems very significant for Afghans, as well for the white house; they also face a number of serious challenges and enquiries this year; whether they will withdraw all their troops with a failure, or they choose to fight for next ١٠ years or more; if they are facing a serious demand from their nation of the their troops withdrawal from Afghanistan and the immediate stop of the killings of American soldiers in Afghanistan; in that case white house, specifically, President Obama will be under pressure, because he has to take these decisions in ٢٠١٤; that's why this year is the toughest not only for Afghanistan but also for U. S.

According to Washington Post; Obama's administration is pushing for a new security deal with the Afghan government that would allow at least ٨,٠٠٠ U.S. troops to stay in Afghanistan until "٢٠٢٤ and beyond." (By any definition, this is ١٠ more years of war, no matter what the White House says. If President Obama proposes sending ٨,٠٠٠ troops to Syria, with them located in a network of U.S. military bases and carrying out combat operations, any rational person would rightly see this as launching a war. The same definition is true of the next decade in Afghanistan, but the White House tries to show this one as a very normal case.)

Americans easily judge this as well, that during seven years under President George W. Bush, ٦٣٠ Americans were killed in Afghanistan. Under Obama, ١,٦٧١ soldiers have been killed, and still it is not clear to which direction is this war going, Meanwhile it will make the decision tougher for Obama to extend the war for ١٠ more years.

According to a report published in USA; Obama's opposition to the invasion of Iraq helped him claim the Democratic nomination over Hillary Clinton in ٢٠٠٨, and voters' weariness over the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan contributed to his victory in the general election over Republican John McCain. Currently the numbers of US troops in Afghanistan are decreasing, but the statistics clearly defines the increased oppositions in the US to the war in Afghanistan, meanwhile the American leaders are trying to justify and legitimize this war.

Now when the Bilateral Security Agreement between Kabul and Washington is not signed, it is not clear what will happen next and what do Hamid Karzai and his team wants by refusing to sign the agreement immediately, and it is also not clear what will be the upcoming reaction of U.S, and also we must see that what happens between Afghanistan, NATO and the so called international anti-terror coalition, all these questions need time to get answered. If the agreement gets signed, it will mean that the NATO and US mission will continue in Afghanistan and the American military trainers and advisors would stay in Afghanistan. If it does not get signed and the current debate between Kabul and Washington does not end to a result, it will mean that the military mission of U.S will terminate on ٣١th December ٢٠١٤ after thirteen years from the military attack on Afghanistan; therefore the year ٢٠١٤ is a very important year for Obama's administration.

USA Today newspaper quoted through Wali Nasr, a former adviser on Afghanistan and Pakistan affairs to Obama administration and currently the dean of the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies that the eagerness of most Americans has raised to see this chapter closed and failing to reach a deal in this case probably wouldn't cost Obama politically at home, But its substantive impact in the longer term could be catastrophic.

He adds: "It becomes a problem down the road if we don't have an agreement with Karzai, we end up going to a zero option with Afghanistan and the place

disintegrates into civil war," and "If Afghanistan unravels, the reasons that got us there in the first place may very well return, and we may very well be put in the same position 10 years from now and have to go back in."

With all reasons mentioned above, 2014 is an important year for Afghanistan as well; keeping in mind the importance of national, regional and global events, which can affect Afghanistan, it is also important for the relation of Afghanistan and its western allies especially for U.S that must get a result of their war that has lasted more than a decade and the heavy casualties caused to them.

High peace council to nowhere land!

Zakir Jalaly, political analyst



Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al Faisal visited Pakistan while former dictator president Pervez Musharraf faces trial.

Prior to the visit of the high-ranking Saudi official, there was speculation that the purpose of his visit was to rescue Musharraf. While the officials in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan has dispelled the impression of linking the Saudi FM's visit to Musharraf's case and insisting that the discussions retained focused on bilateral relations and regional events.

Meanwhile Afghanistan's high peace council claimed that Faisal's visit is aimed to convince Pakistani leadership to pressurize Afghan Taliban to negotiate with the government of Mr. Karzai. Afghan government's officials and members of high peace council often pretend that Pakistan can facilitate peace negotiations between the Afghan High Peace Council and the Taliban. Pakistani Prime Minister's adviser on security and foreign affairs stated last month that Pakistan has no control over Taliban and they are not ready to accept peace talk's requests from Afghan government.

The possible signature of bilateral Security Agreement between Kabul and Washington on the one hand and the expectation of peace negotiations with Taliban on the other hand seems paradox. Moreover, Hezb-e-Islimi which has

initiated peace talks with government with soft conditions than that of Taliban failed in reaching any result.

Afghan government and Afghan high peace council have repeatedly made this mistake by highlighting the role of Pakistan in Peace negotiation more than it reserves, while Pakistan itself sought political advantage of this role, which has been provided easily by Afghan government.

If there was a political commitment to peace in the government of Afghanistan, the Qattar office was the reliable address for Afghan Taliban which was regrettably closed. If Afghan government had managed with the sense of consultation in the peace issue, today the negotiation delegates would have been able to negotiate with Taliban over various issues of Afghanistan.

Bagram jail and its detainees; the victims of the hated politics from Kabul to Washington

Ahmad Zia Rahimzai, political analyst



Bagram jail and its Afghan and non-Afghan inmates are the victims of the so-called "war on terror" from inauspicious start of this war, which has recently caused the reaction of President Hamid Karzai and has also gained the national and international media attention as well.

To explain the story from its start needs much time, as the atrocities committed by the US forces requires more time to explain, but we focus just on the atrocities committed in the last few days after releasing of ٦٥٠ Afghan inmates from this jail.

As the media reported, after releasing of the detainees, who were released after having been cleared by the appointed reviewing committee, American and some Afghan parties, who prioritize the interests of US more than the interests of Afghanistan, claimed that ^^ prisoners who's documents are not considered yet are more dangerous and can pose a serious threat to security of Afghanistan.

But it looks interesting when Americans explicitly say that Taliban is not their enemy, then why are these prisoners still held captive in Bagram with horrible torturing? And why American troops and even republican senators are afraid of releasing these prisoners.

Meanwhile, releasing of prisoners from Bagram after consideration of appointed reviewing committee is a further strain on Afghan-U.S. relations already seriously soured upon the security agreement and American delegations taking Kabul under

pressure to sign the agreement. It looks both sides are misusing the Bagram Jail and its detainees as a political force in their relations.

Interestingly, while Abdul Shukoor Dadras the head of the appointed reviewing committee announced that the documents provided by American and NATO troops cannot provide the reason to convict these ^^ prisoners and they will be released soon, the directorate of national security administration of Afghanistan claims that they have provided the appointed reviewing committee with documents clarifying that at least °° of these prisoners are dangerous.

Anyway, since Bagram is part of Afghan territory (however is not practically under authority of Afghanistan), so the detainees must be tried in accordance with Afghanistan judicial terms and system, but the interference of American senators in this case and as a result of these interferences, the decision of president Hamid Karzai to review the cases again, proves an obvious fact that neither the Afghanistan national sovereignty nor president Hamid Karzai himself are respected by Americans however president Hamid Karzai claims that we are getting this respect.

Even more regrettable, Hamid Karzai's team in presidential palace is not structured from those that Karzai could count on them.

As seemed in the issue of the Bilateral Security Agreement between Kabul and Washington, from presidential candidates to members of the Afghan cabinet all are insisting on signing this agreement and are not agreed with the president.

Now, when disagreements between Kabul and Washington are soured again upon the Bagram jail and its detainees, more officials near to the president instead of supporting his position are supporting Americans in this regard.

There is no doubt that Hamid Karzai is using the Bagram jail and its recent case as a trump card and a political force against US particularly during the negotiations over bilateral security agreement, but obviously this fact cannot be denied that releasing of Bagram jail detainees who spent years under tortures without any guilt are as much important as the preconditions for bilateral security agreement for the people of Afghanistan and people will support the Afghan government in this regard to defend the rights of Afghans and their government against US and the western colonialism.