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## Obama's new approach to global foreign policy



### Introduction

United States President Barack Obama visited Bagram Military Base, located 40-kilometers off Kabul International Airport, without informing Afghan Embassy in US or Afghan foreign ministry officials. During the visit he announced the new Afghan strategy and invited his counterpart President Hamid Karzai to meet him in Bagram.

Just a day after his visit to Afghanistan, Barack Obama laid out his new global foreign policy on the world and the role of United States in an address to graduating cadets at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point among growing criticism from conservatives and other US political experts blaming him for isolated politics and feckless administration. The aim of the policy is to lay down future role for the US in the changing political world.

Ahmad Bilal Khalil has analyzed Barack Obama's general foreign policy, Afghanistan strategy and his new approach to global foreign:

### Obama's foreign policy:

While Barak Obama was senator during George W. Bush's administration, he was criticizing Iraq and Afghanistan wars. While he was running for presidency, when John McCain was his rival, he explained his foreign policy in Chicago Council on Global Affairs, where putting end to Iraq war was in his priority.

When he won 2008 presidential election and took oath on January 20, 2009, some significant geo-politic changes has taken place. For instance, the 2008 global financial crisis, Euro crisis, Putin and Russian's intervention in Georgia affairs, negotiations of 5+1 countries with Iran, drones attacks, revelations by WikiLeaks, Arab spring, civil wars in Libya and Syria, revelations of Edward Snowden about US surveillance programs, withdrawal of American troops from Iraq, emergence of Al-Qaida elements in North Africa, dilemma of US-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Agreement and so on.

Obama won the 2008 election under the slogans of change, end to Iraq war and withdrawal of US military from Afghanistan. The Obama's Afghan strategy (2008-2014) was affected by uncertainties, in 2009 he increased the number of soldiers in Afghanistan by 3000, and decided for withdrawal in 2013, decided to sing U.S.–Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2013, and announced in 2014 that 9800 soldiers will stay in Afghanistan and will withdraw in 2016.

### **Obama's global new foreign policy:**

Obama knows that starting Afghan war was easy but winning it is difficult. Obama in Bagram, having a historic series of civilizations and military bases, announced that 9800 soldiers will be staying in Afghanistan post-2014 and all the soldiers will withdraw in 2016.

Later, he announced US' new policy at U.S. Military Academy at West Point in New York, facing criticism from Americans from the military point of view.

The core of Obama's address begins with, "So let me spend the rest of my time describing my vision for how the United States of America and our military should lead in the years to come, for you will be part of that leadership. "

Obama stated that previously we were military intervening while the interests of America or our allies were in danger, but now we must ask critically that whether our act is justifiable, efficient or just or not?. Thus the global vision is significant.

He on the one hand want support of military action, but on the other hand says that whenever the interest of their people, country or the way of living is threatened then they do not need any approval.

He says about Afghanistan that we broke the backbone of the Al-Qaida and overthrew the regime who supported them. Now the control of the affairs is the job of Afghans, we therefore trained hundreds of thousands Afghan soldiers. The Afghans voted this spring, and paved the

way for transition of the power in a democratic atmosphere. At the end of this year, a new Afghan President will be in office and America's combat mission will be over.

The aim of withdrawing from Afghanistan and staying of a limited number of soldiers and bases is that we are to pay attention to Middle East and North Africa, where in Nigeria the Boko Haram and militants in Somalia paved the way for emerging Al-Qaida which is threatening America's security.

However Obama said in his statements that whenever the country, people or the way of living of US is threatened, they will not neglect the attacking military policy, but he adds that this policy will be not giving birth to America's new enemies.

By hearing or reading Obama's statements one can realize that he on the one hand do not want to neglect direct intervention but in case of threatening US' interests. He wants to save his country from heavy sacrifices and involvement in long term wars. He also do not want to involve America in each conflict of the world, therefore he did not mention some countries which are worth to be mentioned in his statement.

Richard Haass, President of Council on Foreign Relations believes that Obama insisted on issues which were not interesting to him and did not insist on issues which were interesting to him.

The new foreign policy in overall gives United States a new vision for foreign relations protecting it from unnecessary military interventions or aggressions and isolated politics.

Most of analysts view Obama's new policy as Nixon-Kissinger policy; Richard Nixon through the diplomacy of Henry Kissinger wanted to oust enemies using other allied states. He gave a new role to Reza Shah Pahlavi of Iran, he pursued his given plan in the region especially to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in Pakistan and Mohammed Daoud Khan in Afghanistan. But the consequences went wrong when Pahlavi was overthrown in Iran, Bhutto was taken to death row and Daoud Khan was killed along with his family.

Obama now wants to conduct military operations in Somalia and Mali using France and allot \$5 billion for North Africa for war on Al-Qaeda, through the help of international forces he wants to control situation in Libya, and is keen to have good ties with Syrian neighbors, Turkey and Iraq, because they have given safe haven to Syrian refugees and are standing on the front lines of terrorism.

## Responsively end of unresponsive war



Recent events, exchanging of an American soldier with Taliban prisoners, US plans and programs for ending of Afghanistan war and other issues, Muzhda waheed expert of political issues has analyzed:

We have heard this issue several times that in politics there is no permanent friendship and hostility, but what exists, is a permanent interests and benefits.

Long-term benefits of America in Afghanistan not necessarily mean military presence is not permanent in there, it might be better if such a goal met without admitting war and military presence. Recent developments make clear these issues to some extent.

A few months ago Hamid Karzai was under pressure by the United States govt, Pro US groups and Pro US-media to sign the security contract as soon as possible, and if it doesn't take place America must have to pull out all its forces from Afghanistan before ending of year 2014.

With tension in the relations between Karzai and White Palace, some people are fed to believe that this conflict or in other words called vulgar or "Goldsmith war" which is a part of US programs to pull out its troops from deadlock Afghanistan.

This has been said from long time, America which has options for the future of Afghanistan among those options, Zero option is discussible as well and this is possible that US won't leave its forces in Afghanistan. But supporters of America in Afghanistan always accepting this option zero and pressurize it which America bring to hamid Karzai' these pressures led to whatever curses and abuse of media of the supporters of America especially dependent on the country and those who bestow Hamid Karzai is opposed to signing the contract with the United States security.

But now gradually it has been cleared that US program for Afghanistan ,presence of US military forces were not to surround the country, Obama has repeatedly said this that he will end the war of Afghanistan responsively.

Ambiguity in interpretation “End of responsive war” led to anyone understands from it.

It was clear that US program was not in asked of hamid karzai, America for its military operations never took serious hamid karzai and his government, No need to stay military as well as the permission of Karzai. With latest and new report from Obama for entire exit of US from Afghanistan by the end of year 2016 it clarifies that US has a plan for the opponents end of this war.

### **The process of direct negotiation between the Taliban and America:**

On the other hand the Taliban as the only hostile forces in military during twelve years, presence of America in Afghanistan they challenge only if joining the peace process to complete exit foreign forces from Afghanistan announced. In the year 2010 for the first time links between the representatives of USA and Taliban with the help of Germany took place. Taliban named the presence of American forces the only reason of war in Afghanistan and asked them to leave as soon as possible. If USA didn't want to pay attention to the demand of Taliban, they wouldn't agree on opening an office in Qatar as without accepting the first demand of Taliban, the negotiations wouldn't give result.

If Taliban were very strict in their official declaration and demanded the overall withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan but in face to face negotiations they weren't so strict. They asked from Americans that Afghanistan is in the state where it needs the help of international community and they have to be committed in this case.

They promised American forces that with their withdrawal from Afghanistan, they wouldn't allow anyone to use the land of Afghanistan against any kind of activities against USA.

For this reason, they wanted to create an atmosphere of trust with each other and demanded the release of five Taliban Commanders from Guantanamo. Americans didn't want to take a rapid action in this regard and paved ground for changing the mentality of Afghans and other foreigners. They delayed the negotiation and put the blame on Afghan Government and Taliban.

Americans had a condition with Afghan government that the office of Taliban in Qatar wouldn't be by the name of Islamic State of Taliban but in actions it came with the same name as there

weren't any sort of conditions on Taliban by USA. For the same purpose, after the opening of office in Doha, the government of Doha came into trouble.

### **USA's Plans for Ending War in Afghanistan:**

The problems between Hamid Karzai and USA on signing strategic document increased day by day and prolonged for months. This was the hot issue in internal and more importantly in externally (American media) and the options of complete withdrawal (zero option) came into the discussion. In the same time, the public opinion showed less interest to Afghan war as compare to other years.

The year 2014 was considered the change year for Afghanistan, the year in which the military responsibilities were handed over to Afghan forces from American forces. Afghan forces with having no complete equipment and proper training took the overall responsibility and their practical examination or work was the current election of Afghanistan that they passed.

Even though Taliban in overall Afghanistan had many attacks but just because of the killing of one journalist in the attack of Kabul Serana Hotel, the journalists decided not release or publish the news relevant to Taliban. They showed to Afghans and international community that Taliban are no longer able to face Afghan forces and are going down day by day even Taliban had almost thousand attacks on Election Day but they didn't publish.

It is very interesting that those people who believed that with the withdrawal of American forces, Afghanistan will face an internal war and won't be able to continue the system, in reality worked that Afghans no long need the help of USA and they can continue the system without the help of US troops too.

Now there is an opportunity for the complete withdrawal of Americans from Afghanistan and Obama in his trip to Afghanistan requested President Karzai to meet him in Bagram air base which was rejected by Karzai. Americans before this announce that there is no need of signing this document with President Karzai and they will sign it with the coming president.

Now that President Obama announced that in the year 2016 all American troops will leave Afghanistan so the signing of strategic document becomes doubtful for the people. In this document there was a signal for the remaining of American troops until 2024 with nine bases but now Obama says that there will be only 9800 soldiers till the end of 2016 in Bagram and other bases will be handed over to Afghans.



Our condition is towards change and Obama is having problems from Central East, to Far East, from Eastern Europe to Africa and Obama says they can't solve all problems with military powers.

Now it is our turn (Afghans) to identify the real conditions of the world for peace and stability and we also have to think like Obama that military option is never, and will never be solution option.