



Center for Strategic & Regional Studies

Kabul

Weekly Analysis-Issue Number 175 (October 1-8, 2016)

Weekly Analysis is one of CSRS' publications, which significantly analyses weekly economic and political events in Afghanistan and the region. The prime motive behind this is to provide strategic insights and policy solutions to decision-making institutions and individuals in order to help them to design best policies. Weekly Analysis is published in local languages (Pashto and Dari) and international languages (English and Arabic).

In this issue:

Preface.....	2
Brussels Conference on Afghanistan: NUG's achievements and International Community's commitments	3
• International conferences on Afghanistan.....	4
• The Afghan government and Warsaw and Brussels Conferences.....	6
• The Afghan government's achievements in Brussels Conference.....	7
• The impacts of the Brussels Conference on the situation of the country.....	8
Afghanistan's security situation	10
• Change in the Taliban's fighting tactics	11
• The US military strategy in Afghanistan	11
• Security situation in 2016.....	12
Seminar: peace deal between Afghan government and Hezb-e-Islami (HI) ..	14

Preface

Dozens of representatives of countries and international organizations had gathered, to support Afghanistan, in an international conference in the capital of Belgium, Brussels, on Tuesday and Wednesday. The Afghan government needed to present its achievements in this Conference and, therefore, was busy with the preparations for a long time.

The Afghan government succeeded to attract the support of international community. The international conferences on Afghanistan in the past one and half decade, the achievements that the Afghan government presented in the Brussels Conference and various aspects of Brussels Conference are the issues that are analyzed in the first part of analysis.

On the other hand, coincide with the Brussels conference, the Taliban conducted operations in Kunduz city and for the second time in the year seized control of the city (except its airport).

Besides the situation in Kunduz, insurgency has also intensified in other parts of the country such as Helmand and Urozgan, which is also on the verge of falling to Taliban.. Due to Taliban's new war tactics, the possibility of falling strategic areas and cities into the Taliban hands has increased.

In this issue you would read the analysis of the Center for Strategic and Regional Studies about the above two issues.

Brussels Conference on Afghanistan: NUG's achievements and International Community's commitments



The Brussels Conference on Afghanistan was held in the capital of Belgium, Brussels, on 4-5 October 2016.

After London Conference in 2014, this conference is the second of the meetings agreed at the Tokyo Conference in 2012 to support progress in Afghanistan. In this conference, international community pledged \$15.2bn in aid to help Afghanistan until 2020. Although, before this there were reports that the European Union (EU) would provide help to Afghanistan only if the Afghan National Unity Government (NUG) undertake measures to take 80 thousand Afghan refugees back to Afghanistan; but the High Representative of EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Mrs. Federica Mogherini labeled these reports inaccurate and said that there is no conditionality link between aid and the migrants.

The background of international conferences on Afghanistan, the significance of Brussels Conference for Afghanistan, the impacts of this conference over political and economic situation of the country and the Afghan government's achievements in this conference are the issues that are analyzed here.

International conferences on Afghanistan

Numerous conferences on Afghanistan were convened in the past one and half decade and even after the collapse of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, the foundation of the new Afghan government was also put by an international conference (the Bonn Conference).

At the end of 2001, the first Bonn Conference on Afghanistan was held in the city of Bonn, Germany and the issues of government's structure and transition of power were discussed.

The Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan was organized in January 2002 where donor countries pledged \$5.4bn in aid for Afghanistan's reconstruction.

The Berlin Conference on Afghanistan was held in March 2004, where the international community promised \$8bn for Afghanistan's reconstruction and also, in this conference, international community announced its support from the Afghan Presidential Elections.

In the London Conference held in February 2006, \$10bn in aid was provided to Afghanistan for maintenance of security and good governance. More than 70 countries and international organizations had taken part in this conference and the "Afghanistan Agreement" was the most important document signed between the Afghan government and international community in this conference. Based on the agreement, Afghanistan committed to create accountable and transparent administrations, to respect human rights and to fight against corruption.

In July 2007, "International Conference on Afghanistan" was organized in Rome, the capital of Italy, and the main issue discussed in this conference was the evaluation of "rule of law" in Afghanistan and reforming Afghan Justice and Judicial institutions.

The Paris meeting was held in June 2008 and the Afghan government presented its five-year plan and the representatives of the countries that had participated in this conference promised \$10bn in aid for Afghanistan.

In March 2009, another international conference on Afghanistan under “the Afghan crisis; the possible scenarios of development” was held in Moscow and the participants discussed struggle against terrorism, drug smuggling and some other issues in order to find a solution for Afghanistan.

The Hague International Conference on Afghanistan was held on 31 March 2009 in the capital of Netherlands-Hague where 70 countries and international institutions participated and its main objectives were reconstruction and maintenance of security in Afghanistan.

In July 2010, the International Conference of Kabul was held in Kabul where the representatives of more than 70 donor countries, international and regional organizations and global financial institutions had participated and the participants emphasized on good governance, fight against corruption and human rights in Afghanistan.

Another International Conference under “Security and Cooperation in the Heart of Asia” was held in November 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey and the participants discussed an action plan for post-2014 Afghanistan’s economic and security developments.

The Second International Bonn Conference was held on 5 December 2011 in Bonn, Germany and representatives of more than 85 countries and 15 international organizations had participated and international community committed to provide support for Afghanistan at least for ten years after the foreign troops’ withdrawal from this country.

On 20-21 May 2012, the Chicago International Conference was held in Chicago-Illinois state of the US where the leaders of more than 50 countries had participated and the leaders of NATO came to an agreement on a \$4bn annual financial aid to Afghan security forces and complete security transition to Afghan forces in mid-2013.

The Tokyo Conference was held in July 2012 and the international community promised \$16bn financial support in four years for Afghanistan which includes the two years of transition period.

Generally, the above mentioned conferences and almost all other conferences on Afghanistan had economic and security aspects. The Pre-2010 conferences were more focused on cooperation in reconstruction of Afghanistan while the post-2010 conferences mostly concerned on security transition to Afghans and security situation of the country in the aftermath of a foreign troops' withdrawal. All these conferences were extraordinarily significant for Afghanistan.

The Afghan government and Warsaw and Brussels Conferences

After the formation of the NUG, the London Conference on Afghanistan (2014) was convened where the Afghan government presented its scheme for reforms which was warmly welcomed by donor countries. In London Conference, 59 countries reaffirmed their commitments of supporting Afghanistan and also supported the Afghan-led peace process.

After the London Conference, Warsaw and Brussels are the most important conferences on Afghanistan. In Warsaw Conference on Afghanistan, the Afghan government succeeded to get the commitment of international community for \$5bn financial aid a year until 2020. The difference between the two conferences is that the Warsaw Conference was mostly focused on security sector and Afghan security forces but in the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, issues like, Afghanistan's reconstruction, economic growth, struggle against corruption, human rights and Afghanistan's economic integration and cooperation was discussed.

The Afghan government looked forward to these conferences because it needed to gain the support of international community and aids of donor countries in order to fund its economic programs and security forces until 2020.

The Afghan government's achievements in Brussels Conference

Around 70 countries and 30 international institutions had participated in Brussels Conference-held to help Afghanistan in the upcoming four years.

In this conference the leaders of the NUG, announced the new “Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF)” instead of the former “Afghanistan National Development Strategy” which continued from 2004 to 2008 and 2009 to 2013. According to the ANPDF, having budget is the main principle in order to execute major government policies and also the international community has agreed to adjust their financial aids in accordance to ANPDF in four upcoming years and in the meanwhile in a way that would avoid budgetary vacuum in these four years.

Besides that, the NUG also presented the report regarding the accomplishment of promises made in the London Conference. In the London Conference, the Afghan government had made commitments regarding good governance, struggle against corruption and some other issues and in Brussels Conference the Afghan government presented its achievements regarding rise in the country's revenues, fight against corruption, economic integration and peace- the most important of which being the NUG-HI peace deal.

It changed 600 judges including every single provincial judge, released 20% prosecutors from posts, and fired 25% of custom officials., seizing over 100 Kabul city officials Passports on charges of corruption, , 95% of government officials have declared their assets, registration of 6000 properties, approval of 1250 contracts and saving \$220m by the National Procurement Commission were the achievements of the NUG regarding struggle against corruption that was presented in Brussels Conference.

Regarding economic integration, the beginning of construction on TAPI, signing the MoU of TAP-500 between Turkmenistan-Afghanistan and Pakistan, inauguration of CASA-1000, inking the Chabahar port deal and the commencement of trade by the transit railway between China and Afghanistan were the NUG's achievement regarding regional economic integration.

Compared to the past several years, the Afghan government's revenue in 2015 was increased for the first time and even more than the target of International Monetary Fund (IMF) had specified. IMF had specified \$2bn of revenue as target for Afghanistan and the Afghan government's revenue in this year was \$2.155bn; thus the government's revenue has increased 22.4% compared to that of 2014. The Afghan government's revenue in 2014 was \$1.79bn.

Regarding women, there are now three women ministers, 9 women deputy ministers, a governor, deputy attorney general, deputy and two members of High Peace Council and four women Ambassadors in the NUG.

Regarding the economic situation and infrastructures, inauguration of the *Salma* Dam in Herat province with a capacity of producing 42 megawatts of electricity and irrigating 200 thousand hectares of land, rise of foreign investment from \$51m in 2014 to \$170m in 2015 and efforts to promote private sector and including them in the country's economy were the achievements of the NUG.

Due to the preparation of the government and particularly Ministry of Finance for Brussels Conference, the NUG succeeded to attract \$15.2bn in aid from international community until 2020. The United Kingdom and India pledged \$1bn in aid for Afghanistan, Germany \$1.7bn, Japan \$0.9bn, Turkey \$0.6bn, Pakistan \$0.5bn, Saudi Arabia \$0.1bn and Norway \$0.078bn.

The impacts of the Brussels Conference on the situation of the country

The Afghan government is reliant on international donors for its expenditures; therefore, this conference is very significant for Afghanistan in the areas of economy and security.

The commitments, which donor countries had made in Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan in 2012, ended in 2016 and, therefore, the Afghan government needed international community's renewed support until 2020. Therefore, the Brussels Conference was vital for the Afghan National Unity Government and hence it was preparing for it since a long time.

In Warsaw and Brussels Conferences, the international community supported Afghanistan in the areas of politics, security and economy and this support would be a source of income for the Afghan government until 2020. After receiving these aids, the NUG would certainly have some significant economic developments.

Afghanistan's security situation



Since several months, Afghanistan's security situation is deteriorating and the recent Helmand, Urozgan and Kunduz incidents underlines it.

Precisely one year after, the first collapse of Kunduz, once again, this city (except its airport) fell at the hand of the Taliban while the leaders of the NUG had traveled to Brussels to participate in the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan in order to attract international aids for this country. Coincide with that, the war in Baghlan was also warm and the armed Taliban had reached at the gates of Pol-e-Khumri.

Although it seems that the efforts to recapture Kunduz city by the Taliban was to shadow the Afghan government's stance in the Brussels Conference; but in the meanwhile, many analysts believe that distance between the Afghan government and the people in many areas has resulted in the successes of the Taliban.

The country's current security situation, the change in the fighting tactics of the Taliban and the direction of the country's security situation are amid issues that are analyzed here.

Change in the Taliban's fighting tactics

On 28 September 2015, for the first time in the past one and half decade, the Taliban seized control of a major city of Afghanistan-the Kunduz city. News about this event was highly reflected in domestic and international media and it was raised as a serious threat.

The Afghan government, later-on, launched vast operations to recapture Kunduz; but the recapture of Kunduz from the Taliban occurred after two weeks and since 2001, it was the first time that the Taliban and the Afghan security forces fought in a strategic city of Afghanistan. The collapse of Kunduz was the start of Taliban's new tactic; because, by seizing Kunduz, the Taliban on the one hand, began to capture cities and on the other hand, strengthened their control over the captured areas.

Before the first collapse of Kunduz, the Taliban used to conduct guerilla operations on the Afghan and foreign forces. Particularly, the Taliban were involved in explosions or were sending their men to attack on some areas in major cities which did not aim to capture or control those areas; but after the Kunduz incident, the Taliban focused on capturing regions and strengthening their control in these regions. Thus, since the past one year, on the one hand, the Taliban's fighting tactics are changed and has turned from defensive to aggressive and on the other hand, war has spread its scope from villages and remote areas to major places and cities.

The US military strategy in Afghanistan

Right after the formation of the NUG in 2014, the Afghan government signed Security Agreements with the US and NATO and it was hence due to this only 9800 US and 2000 NATO forces were supposed to remain in Afghanistan and in 2016 this number would have decreased to half. But this policy was postponed when the Afghan President and Chief Executive officer visited the US in March 2015 and Obama agreed to keep 9800 US soldiers in Afghanistan until 2015.

Later-on in the backdrops of Kunduz fall, Obama changed its policy once again and stated that he would keep the 9800 US forces in Afghanistan to the end of 2016 and will decrease this number to 5500 in the first month of 2017. But later in July 2016, Obama announced that only 8400 soldiers would remain in Afghanistan by the end of 2016.

In 2015, the Afghan security situation deteriorated and consequently, on the one hand, it destabilized the US policy towards Afghanistan and on the other hand, it signified the fragility of Afghan security forces. Some while ago, in the Warsaw International Conference, the international community decided to support Afghan security forces until 2020. In the meanwhile, coincide with the intensification of war in Helmand and Kunduz and deterioration of security situation in the country, the United States on the one hand, unlike its previous policy, deployed new troops in Helmand and on the other hand increased its airstrikes which killed and injured many civilians in the eastern regions of the country. Increase in the role of foreign troops in the battlefield would, once again, strengthen the moral of the Taliban fighters.

Security situation in 2016

Currently the country is in worst security situation compared to the past one and half year. Based on the report of the United Nations (UN), armed conflict in May, June and July has increased 14.7% compared to the first three months of this year and the Taliban conducted bloody wars in Helmand, Jawzjan, Kunduz, Takhar, Urozgan, and some other provinces and districts of the country. Thus, the Afghan security forces confronted many challenges and a number of districts and Kunduz city collapsed at the hands of the Taliban.

Between 20 May and 15 August, the UN has documented 5996 security incidents which show a 4.7% increase compared to similar period of time in 2015. Besides that, 268 incident of assassination is also documented, 40 of which were failed attempts.

On the other hand, after a relative defeat, the ISIS, once again, began to re-emerge in the eastern provinces of the country and also claimed the responsibility of a bloody explosion in a demonstration of “Enlightenment Movement” in Kabul.

On the other hand, Hezb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar) signed the peace deal with the Afghan government; although, this deal would not have deep impacts on the security situation of the country but it would have some impacts on the security situation in the long run.

Given the recent security incidents in the country particularly the fact that Urozgan almost collapsed, the collapse of Kunduz for a second time and heavy civilian casualties in the airstrikes of foreign troops; one can easily estimate the country will face immense challenges in the future.

Seminar: peace deal between Afghan government and Hezb-e-Islami (HI)



After prolonged negotiations, Hezb-e-Islami (HI) under Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's leadership signed peace deal with the Afghan government. Both sides labeled this deal as an outcome of intra-afghan talks.

In its monthly academic debate, which discusses each month's hot issue and would carry on in the future, the Center for Strategic and Regional Studies (CSRS) discussed the Afghan government-HI peace deal on October 3, 2016, where besides the speakers many academic individuals had also participated.

Beginning the seminar with his speech, the General Director of CSRS Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin said that the peace deal between the Afghan government and HI is a positive step and stressed that currently some foreign circles are trying to take advantage of the current war in Afghanistan, and added that ending the war is in absolute interest of all Afghans.

Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin said that, "three decades of war has fiercely agonized Afghans and although this war was started by foreigners; but its main victims are Afghans, therefore, Afghans themselves must take the initiative to end this war"; he also added that he is contented that HI has preferred political struggle over armed struggle and also said that the objective of the seminar is to offer constructive advises to both sides.

The first speaker of the seminar Waheed Muzhda said that turning away from armed struggle is a good message and undoubtedly HI's joining in the peace process would have impacts inside the country.

He said that, although, HI did not have a significant role in the battlefield; but the head of the Hezb (Gulbuddin Hekmatyar) has played a significant role in the history of Afghan politics and it may influence the opinions of many Afghans, even the Taliban as well.

About the flaws in the agreement he said that, the ambiguous statement regarding foreign troops' withdrawal from the country in the fourth article of the agreement would confront both sides with a number of questions in the future.

He also highlighted that Hekmatyar may confront some issues after coming to Kabul; therefore, he has to play the role of a national leader rather than an ethnic leader.

Another speaker of the seminar Mohammad Zaman Mozamel also emphasized on the importance of NUG-HI deal and labeled it as an important achievement to the Afghan government, he add that "although there is nothing important in the deal but Hekmatyar's return is important"

He also said that after Hekmatyar' return to Kabul, he would have to deal with a number of issues and pointed out the opposition of Sebghatullah Mujadadi as an example and said that, Hekmatyar must take his steps carefully.

The participants of the seminar also discussed the issue and asked questions and were of the opinion that the peace deal with HI must succeed and, after coming to Kabul, Hekmatyar must avoid ethnic and religious conflicts.

The end

Contact Us:

Email: info@csrskabul.com - csrskabul@gmail.com

Website: www.csrskabul.com - www.csrskabul.net

Office: (+93) 784089590

Contact with Officials:

Dr. AbdulBaqi Amin, General Director of CSRS: (+93) 789316120 abdulbaqi123@hotmail.com

Hekmatullah Zaland, Senior Manager: (+93) 775454048 hekmat.zaland@gmail.com

Note: Please let us know your feedback and suggestions for the improvement of Weekly analysis.

