



## Center for Strategic & Regional Studies

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## Preface

The US's Afghanistan war is the longest war in its history, which is now entered into its sixteenth year and, after the two US presidents, the next US president would decide whether it should continue or end?

15 years ago, the US, under the pretext of response to the 9/11 attack and with the slogan of maintaining peace and security, attacked on Afghanistan. Now, after 15 year, besides some progress, Afghanistan is dealing with many challenges, and insecurity has reached to its heights. In the first part of the analysis you would read about the background, purpose and achievement of the US war in Afghanistan.

In the second part of the analysis you would read about the expressions of a Pakistani senior official about linking Afghanistan to Kashmir. The special envoy of Pakistani Prime Minister on Kashmir Senator Mushahid Hussain said last week that "road to peace in Kabul lies in Kashmir". It is the first time that a Pakistani official officially relates resolving Afghanistan's issue with the Kashmir; but the question is why Pakistan is making such statements?

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

## The US war in Afghanistan (2001-2016)



Fifteen years ago on 7 October 2001, the US forces launched massive attacks on Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban regime and to eliminate the bases of Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, however, up to date Washington's war in Afghanistan is not finished.

In the past fifteen years, this war has gotten the lives of tens of thousand Afghans and is still continuing to cost lives. The Taliban's defeat in 2001 was a temporarily downfall and the Taliban are now stronger than the past. Insecurity has extended from southern Afghanistan to the north and the Afghan government does not have control over a great part of its territory.

### Why did the US attack on Afghanistan?

During the Afghan Jihad against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, thousands of Arab fighters were fighting alongside with the Afghan Mujahidin, later the Mujahidin government, under Ustad Burhanuddin Rabbani, gave refuge and even Afghan citizenship to them. Later-on, when the Taliban seized control of

more than 90% of Afghanistan, some Arabs, including Osama Bin Laden and some of his other friends, resided in Afghanistan, and gained Taliban's support after 1996.

After the 9/11 incident in the United States, the Al-Qaeda members were accused of being involved in it and the US attacked on Afghanistan and with the overthrow of the Taliban regime a bloody war was erupted in the country. At that time, Osama Bin Laden resided in Afghanistan and, therefore, on 20 September 2001, President "Bush" specified few points to the Taliban<sup>1</sup>:

- The Taliban should handover all the Al Qaida leaders to the U.S.
- The Taliban should release all the foreign prisoners that are imprisoned with them<sup>2</sup>.
- The Taliban should close the training centers of the armed militias.
- They should allow the U.S. to reach the training centers of the "terrorists", so the U.S. will investigate there<sup>3</sup>.

The Taliban government at that time, through their embassy in Pakistan, stated that the US has not provided any kind of documents proving Osama Bin Laden's involvement in 9/11 attacks. According to the Taliban's Ambassador in Pakistan Abdul Salam Zaief, the Taliban government made many efforts to investigate about the incident, but the US was not willing to reconsider its decision to not attack on Afghanistan, he says that, the 9/11 attack has not happened suddenly but the US, in order to secure its long term interests in the region, wanted to have military presence in Afghanistan even before that. The Taliban suggested Osama's trial for three times which were rejected by the US one after another<sup>4</sup>.

The US began its airstrikes on Afghanistan on 7 October 2001, and on 31 October, the Northern Alliance forces, with the support of the US airstrikes, entered Kabul and overthrew the Taliban regime. The Bonn Conference on Afghanistan was held on 25 November and, after 10 days of discussions, an interim Afghan government under the leadership of Hamid Karzai was formed.

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<sup>1</sup> "[Transcript of President Bush's address – CNN](#)". CNN. 21 September 2001. Retrieved 27 March 2011.

<sup>2</sup> It is pointed to the ten U.S. citizens that were imprisoned by the Taliban that time.

<sup>3</sup> "[Transcript of President Bush's address – CNN](#)". CNN. 21 September 2001. Retrieved 27 March 2011.

<sup>4</sup> 'Bush rejects Taliban offer to hand Bin Laden over, guardian, 14<sup>th</sup> oct 2001, see online: <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/oct/14/afghanistan.terrorism5>>

## **The legal basis of the US attack in Afghanistan**

The UN Security Council's reaction to the incidence of 9/11 appeared in the forms of 1368 and 1373 Resolutions. None of these two resolutions allowed the attack on Afghanistan, and had generally criticized terrorism and terrorist attacks. And the UN Security Council had never authorized the US to conduct military attack on Afghanistan

The Resolution-1373 has labeled "terrorism" as an international issue and had emphasized to support the people of Afghanistan. In the Resolution-1386, it was mentioned that the ISAF will be involved and it will stay in Kabul and nearby surrounding areas for keeping security and peace, but the resolution was signed on December 20 of 2001-weeks after the US attack on Afghanistan.

The UN charter, which is signed by the US and its allies, states that all members of the UN shall express their statements for peace seeking objectives and none of the UN members shall use military forces except for defensive purposes. , in the article 33 of the UN law it is mentioned that "The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice." But the US, from the moment that 9/11 incident occurred till its attack on Afghanistan, banned all the ways of reaching a peaceful solution.

In addition, the US constitution reads that international treaties such as the UN charter is approved by all the countries including the US and is part of the US supreme law.

On the one hand, there was no Afghan involved in the incident of 9/11; nor the U.S. was able to provide evidences about the people who it claimed to be involved in the incident, even up to date the evidences, which Collin Powel had promised to provide, is not released. So, the question is why did the U.S. attack a country that, if the US provided evidence of Osama's involvement in the incident to it, was not only ready to try Osama in the court, but was also ready to hand

him over to the US? But, since Washington did not have such evidence, the Taliban's suggestions were immediately rejected.

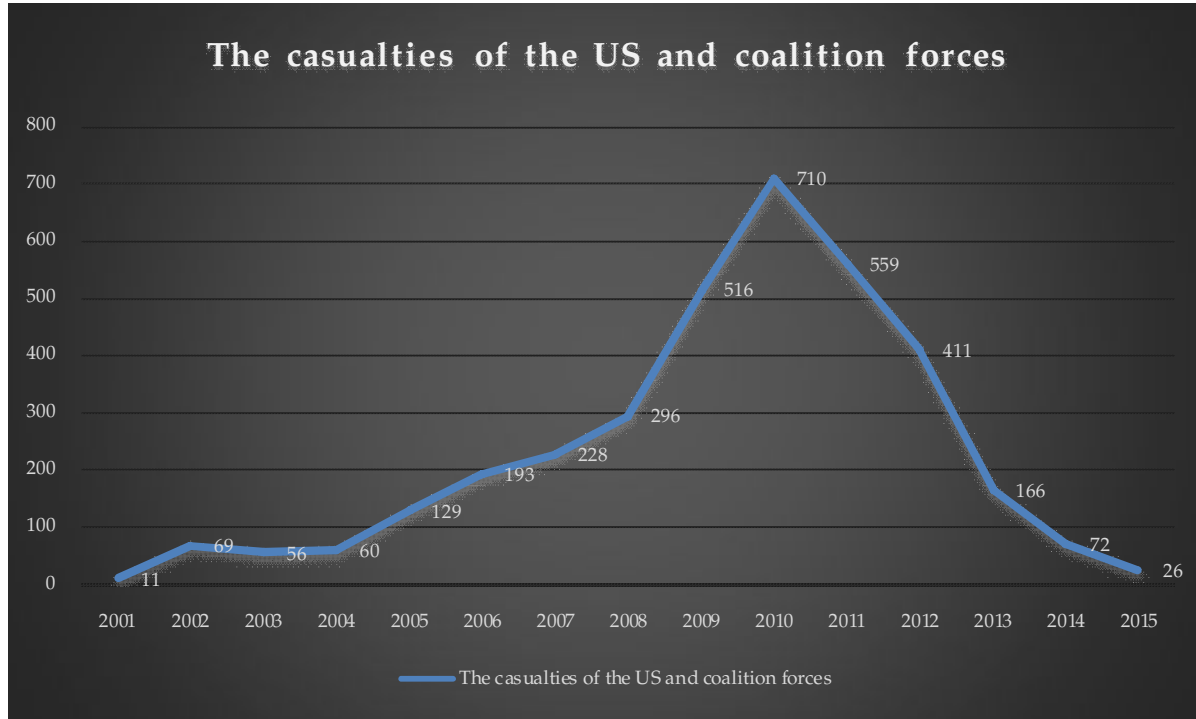
The US attacked Afghanistan based on the article 51 of the UN charter that gives the right of self-defense. Since there was neither any Afghan nor the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan involved in the 9/11 incident and also the Taliban were ready to hand Osama over if evidences of his involvement was provided to them, it did not mean that the United States had been threatened by the Taliban government.

### **Fatalities in the US war in Afghanistan**

**Foreign forces:** from 2001 to 2004, compared to the years after that, the coalition forces had fewer casualties but after that their fatalities increased. In 2004, 60 soldiers of coalition forces died but in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 this number respectively rose to 129, 193, 228 and 296 and reached to 516 in 2009. 2010 was the bloodiest year for foreign troops in Afghanistan because in this year their fatalities reached its heights. The overall fatality of foreign troops in the country till 2015 was more than 3500 soldiers.<sup>5</sup> (See Chart-1 for more info)

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<sup>5</sup> War casualties in Iran and Afghanistan, CNN: <http://edition.cnn.com/SPECIALS/war.casualties/>

**Chart 1: the casualties of the US and coalition forces (2001-2015)**

Source: CNN

**The Afghan forces:** the Afghan forces also had casualties every year after their formation in 2002. In 2007, 2008 and 2009 respectively 966, 983 and 931 Afghan soldiers were killed. In 2010, when the war was unprecedentedly intensified, 2113 Afghan soldiers were killed. Although the number of Afghan soldiers' death decreased in 2011 and reached to 1080 but in the years after 2011, this number was increasing<sup>6</sup>. In 2011, security responsibilities were transited to Afghan soldiers and, thus, after 2011, the fatalities of the Afghan force increased. In 2012, 2013 and 2014 the fatalities of Afghan forces was respectively 2765, 4350 and 4634. But in 2015, 7000 Afghan soldiers were killed and 12000 others were injured.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup>For more details about see here: <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R41084.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> For more info click on this link: <http://da.azadiradio.com/a/27491120.html>

**Civilian casualties:** in 2001, when the US and coalition forces began their attacks on Afghanistan, the number of civilian casualties were very high (2375 civilians were killed in this year). Later from 2002 to 2006, overall 2422 civilian were killed in Afghanistan <sup>8</sup>.

UNAMA began documenting civilian casualties in 2007 but, in its statistics, UNAMA has not included those incidents of civilian casualties which were not verified or were out of the reach of UNAMA; nor did it include the casualties caused by drone attacks and the foreign forces. But still, according to the statistics of the UN, from 2007 to 2015, the total number of civilian casualties was 62375. (For more details see chart-2)

**Chart-2: Civilian casualties in Afghanistan (2007-2015)**

Year	Injured	Killed	Total
2007	-	-	1523
2008	-	-	2118
2009	3556	2412	5968
2010	4368	2792	7160
2011	4709	3133	7842
2012	4821	2769	7590
2013	5669	2969	8638
2014	6833	3701	10534
2015	7457	3545	11002

Source: UNAMA's reports regarding civilian casualties in Afghanistan (2007-2015)

### **The situation in the country after 15 years**

In 1996-2001 years, on the one hand, Afghanistan was isolated in the world's politics and the Taliban's regime was merely recognized by three countries and, on the other hand, the country was in worse situations of education, economy and governance.

After the formation of interim government, under the leadership of Hamid Karzai, in 2001, international community's aids infused in Afghanistan, reconstruction

<sup>8</sup> For more details visit this page: <http://da.azadiradio.com/a/27491120.html>



started, millions of Afghans went to schools and universities, and Afghanistan established diplomatic relations with more than 100 countries of the world.

Although, in 2001, the ISAF forces entered Afghanistan with the slogans of maintaining peace, fight against narcotics and assisting Afghanistan, but 15 years after the presence of the US and other western countries in Afghanistan, besides widespread insecurity, the country is the largest supplier of drugs in the world and produces 90% of world's illegal drugs<sup>9</sup>.

After 15 years, the country is dealing with plenty of challenges. Due to worse economic and security situation, Afghans are leaving the country. In 2015, more than 250 thousand Afghans took hazardous paths to Europe and thousand others were internally displaced.

Most importantly, the country is in worst security situation and war in the country costs the lives of around 100 Afghans on daily basis. On the one hand, ISIS has emerged in the country and on the other hand, peace with the Taliban is faced with various challenges. The presence of the foreign troops on the one hand and all these challenges on the other hand has questioned the country's national sovereignty.

In the past one and a half decade, the way is paved to moral decay in the country and the media which is believed to be the sole achievement of this government, is broadcasting without taking Islamic sharia or Afghan traditions in consideration. Corruption in the government administrations is reached levels that Afghanistan is now among the most corrupt countries and, in addition, ethnic and sectarian discrimination is also inflaming.

After 15 years, still the Afghan government and security forces are dependent on the US and the NATO members.

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<sup>9</sup> May Jeong, Afghan opium crop set for record high, theguardian, see it online:  
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/12/afghan-opium-crop-record-high-united-nations>

## Conclusion

Although, apparently the US attacked on Afghanistan to suppress Al-Qaeda network and the Taliban, but the US was pursuing its long term interest in the regions. If, the Taliban's refusal of handing over Osama to the US was the sole incentive of the US attack on Afghanistan, the US would have left the region when Osama was killed in Islamabad. Some analysts believe that the US's interest in the regions is the encirclement of its rivals China and Russia which this country has not yet achieved and still the US is far away of the Central Asia's resources.

Now, after 15 years from the US attack on Afghanistan, the US's only achievement is that war continues in Afghanistan and the US has kept its military presence in the region. If the international community wants to resolve the issue in Afghanistan; the only solution for Afghan issue is that the Afghans must be allowed to make their efforts for national reconciliation and resolve their issues among themselves.

## "The road to Peace in Afghanistan is via Kashmir"



Pakistani Prime Minister's special envoy on Kashmir, and a member of Muslim League (Nawaz Sharif's party) in Pakistani Senate and head of Defense Committee in Pakistani Senate Mushahid Hussain said in a meeting in "American Atlantic Council"- an American think tank in Washington- that, "unless the Kashmir issue is resolved, peace cannot be maintained in Afghanistan".

This statement of Mushahid Hussain has raised reactions inside and outside Afghanistan. The Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Afghan National Security Council, the Afghan High Peace Council, Wolesi Jirga, the White House, and some others have condemned Hussain's statement. Because they think that Kashmir and Afghanistan are separate issues and such statements would only pave the way for proxy wars in Afghanistan.

What is the relation of Afghans with Kashmir? Are Afghanistan and Kashmir separate or one issue? Whether the road to peace in Afghanistan is really via Kashmir? These are the questions that are discussed in this analysis.

## **Afghans and Kashmir**

Afghans have very old relations with Kashmir and have also ruled them between 1752 and 1819. At that time Afghan rulers expanded markets for Kashmiri shawls and introduced it to international markets. Among Afghan rulers in Kashmir, Jawan Shir Khan was very prominent; he had built the Shirgari Palace (which is still being used by leaders of Indian-administered Kashmir), a bridge under the name of “Amiran Kadal” and some other buildings were built.

In addition, there also thousands of Afghans who have settled in Indian and Pakistani administrated Kashmir. For instance, only in July 1954, the Prime Minister of Indian Administrated Kashmir gave citizenship to more than one hundred thousand Afghans who up to that time had no citizenship.<sup>10</sup>

In the meanwhile, there are some Kashmiri migrants in Afghanistan who have come from Kashmir and now have Afghan citizenship. They have established their communities in Afghanistan and have even served in high government offices in the past. For instance, the family of Babrak Karmal had come from Kashmir and had been settled in Bagrami, a part of Kabul.

## **The background of Kashmir issue**

The Kashmir issue dates back to the time when the Indian subcontinent became independent. Based on the Mounbattan’s plan dated in June 3, Indian colony was divided into two parts; at that time, Kashmir was one of 562 princely states. According to Mountbatten plan, the 562 states were supposed to join either Pakistan or India. More than 70% of population in Kashmir Muslims but the leader of Kashmir was a Sikh and although at first he tried to remain independent but later, due to Pakistani invasion, he appealed for Indian government for military assistance. Thus, Indian and Pakistani forces fought their first war over Kashmir in 1947-1948. India captured Kashmir till Singar and “Azad Kashmir”, as Pakistanis referred to it, remained in Pakistan’s hand.

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<sup>10</sup> The Hindu, Pakhtoons in Kashmir, 20 July, 1954, see it online:<  
<http://www.thehindu.com/2004/07/20/stories/2004072001220900.htm>>

Later, the second India-Pakistan war over Kashmir broke out in 1965 when, due to Zulfuqar Ali Butto's advice, the Pakistani President General Ayub Khan ordered the "Operation Gibraltar" in Kashmir. Pakistan had estimated that due to this operation, Muslims in Indian-administered Kashmir will revolt and as a result Kashmir would become either independent or part of Pakistan; but India, in response to "Operation Gibraltar", attacked Punjab- the strategic province of Pakistan, and reached at the gates of Lahore in a very short span of time. However, the war was stopped due to international mediation and both countries signed the Tashkent Agreement.

After the second war, the Kashmir issue was only raised in diplomatic discussions; but when the Afghan Mujahidin won the war against the Soviet Union and Soviet troops were forced to withdraw from Afghanistan; inspired by the Afghan jihad against soviets, also insurgency was erupted in Kashmir. During this war, the Pakistani Intelligence played a key role in training, arming and supporting Lashkar-e-Tayeba, Jaish-e-Mohammad and some other groups and still continues to do so; thus, the Kashmir war has begun in 1990s.

On the other hand, although today's Afghan crises has roots in "Sawr communist" coup d'état and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; but the current crisis in Afghanistan is somehow more related to the US military attack and it's troops presence in Afghanistan.

### **The Kabul-Delhi ties and Pakistan's concerns**

Although, since long ago and particularly after 2001, experts and international analysts in Afghanistan, Pakistan and some other countries have related stability, security and peace in the region with the resolution of Durand line issue between Afghanistan and Pakistan and Kashmir issue between Pakistan and India; but with the statement of Mushahid Hussain, it is the first time that Pakistan officially relates peace in Afghanistan with resolution of Kashmir case.

In a meeting in Washington-based think tank (Atlantic Council), Mushahid Hussain said that, "Road to peace in Kabul lies in Kashmir in the sense that when you talk

of peace, you cannot compartmentalize peace, you can't segregate a section... ok you can have peace in Kabul and let Kashmir burn. That is not going to happen”<sup>11</sup>

Generally, these statements signify the Pak-Indian proxy war in Afghanistan and besides the recent stances of the Afghan government against Pakistan; these statements are rooted in close Afghan-Indian ties. In international politics these two cases are not related to each other. The Afghan issue is a separate issue from Kashmir case. The war in Afghanistan is due to the US presence while the crisis in Kashmir is rooted back to the Independence of India and Pakistan.

### **Why does Pakistan relate the Afghan issue with Kashmir?**

The followings are the two main factors behind Pakistan's expressions relating the Afghan issue with Kashmir:

**First: breaking the shackles of isolation:** Pakistan's isolation in international and regional affairs in the recent few months has urged Pakistan to make efforts to come out of isolation. In this regard, the Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif sent its 22 special envoys to various countries of the world and he also sent its special envoy on Kashmir to the United States.

**Second: The revival and Internationalizing Kashmir:** after the assassination of the Commander of Hezb-ul-Mujahidin Burhan Wani the situation in Kashmir became deteriorated; and then India imposed curfew in Kashmir, arrested the leaders of Hurriyat group and more than 70 Kashmiris died and more than 1000 others injured in separate demonstrations. Due to this situation in Kashmir, tension rose in India-Pakistan relations and in response to this situation in Kashmir, an Indian army base was attacked in Indian-administered Kashmir and 18 Indian soldiers were killed. Using the opportunity the senior Pakistani officials called Burhan Wani a “Martyr” and later in the UN general assembly, the Pakistani Prime Minister mentioned Burhan Wani and tried to revive the Kashmiri issue and raised it at international level.

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<sup>11</sup> For Mushahid Hussain's speech see here:

<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/events/upcoming-events/detail/dispute-in-focus-pakistans-perspective-on-kashmir>

Although, human rights are vastly violated in Kashmir and even Indian media at some occasions also reported it; However, due to Pakistan's support from Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Tayiba and other extremist groups, international community now do not value Pakistan's remarks regarding Kashmir.

On the other hand, after fifteen years of war; peace and security is yet to be maintained in Afghanistan. In addition, the Quadrilateral Peace Talks regarding the Afghan peace also did not have remarkable outcomes. Pakistan's remarks come at a time that international community is fatigued of Afghan war; therefore, by delivering such statements, Pakistan wants to give value to Kashmir case and relate it with the Afghan issue.

The end

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**Contact Us:**

Email: [info@csrskabul.com](mailto:info@csrskabul.com) - [csrskabul@gmail.com](mailto:csrskabul@gmail.com)

Website: [www.csrskabul.com](http://www.csrskabul.com) - [www.csrskabul.net](http://www.csrskabul.net)

Office: (+93) 784089590

**Contact with Officials:**

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

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

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

