

Solution for Afghanistan Crisis

“SEE”

Security, Economy, and Education

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After the collapse of the Taliban and the American involvement in Afghanistan, Afghans and non-Afghans were hoping that Afghanistan will take the path of progress with America's support. Unfortunately, not only was this aspiration vanished, but Afghanistan in return became a dangerous place for her citizens well as other world citizens to reside in, due to her narcotic trafficking. Increased poverty, lack of security, minimal justice towards the impoverished, women burning themselves due to lack of family justice, imprisonment of free thinkers made the imported American democracy questionable. This lead Afghans to question the system: Is this democracy? Injustice, poverty, lack of gender equality and so forth. The problem of Afghanistan is not only a corrupt government; however a lot more than what meets the eye. Corruption is a relative concept, it solely depends how one defines corruption around the world. We have corruption with different face, kind and approach all over the world. The biggest obstacle Afghanistan is currently facing is lack of political belief to unite the country. Borrowing ideas from the West, and implementing imported democracy has not and will not solve the crisis in Afghanistan. Afghans would generate their own political thinking that fit their own needs, creed and way of life. In another word, homegrown democracy is what they may need. In this paper, the author tries to pinpoint the problem of Afghanistan within the context of Afghan culture and Afghan politics. To approach this issue, three main factors play a major role in bringing peace and stability to Afghanistan. They are namely security, economy and education with an acronym of “SEE.”

In order to achieve her goal, Afghanistan must conceive with a political thinking of her own. It is the political thinking plus leadership that makes a cohesive political society. Unfortunately, Afghanistan is lacking both political thinking and leadership. Afghanistan is not the only country faced with these problems, thus most underdeveloped countries are faced with these issues as well.

As far as Afghanistan is concerned, Afghanistan is a Muslim country. Politics and religion are not two separate entities in Islam. So the first approach is to formulate an Islamic political system which speaks of justice for all, gender equality, and reconstruction that fits the Afghan culture and its way of life. The benefit of this approach is that the opposition forces believe that Afghanistan is under the yoke of American imperialism and their mission in Afghanistan is to destroy Afghan culture, and particularly the Islamic way of life. The opposition forces strongly believe that the United States and her allies are there to protect their own strategic interests in the region, however not the interest of Afghans.

They came to a conclusion that the entire fund supposedly accommodated for Afghanistan's reconstruction, went to American military establishment and administrative costs. The second reason for Islamic political thinking is that it fits the Afghan mainstream culture. Unfortunately, a few Afghan seculars took over the political power, of which most are American educated. The problem with this elite group is that they are detached from the Afghan needs and Afghan culture. Instead of finding ways within the Islamic culture and Afghan culture to improve Afghan lifestyle, they borrowed foreign ideas which are not practical and does not correspond well with the Afghan lifestyle. For example, Zakah (Charity due) in Islam is one of the five pillars of Islam and it is an economic principle for Muslims. It is much more practical in a society like Afghanistan to establish a Zakah institution rather than borrowing fund from the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund with interest. Imposing foreign ideas caused backlashes, created haves and have not and more importantly, deculturized the masses under the name of democracy and freedom. Afghans are the most freedom lovers of the world. It is because of love for freedom that they fought against the British, the Russians and now against the Americans. However, they love freedom not from an outsider's viewpoint but rather their own vision of history, culture and faith.

A Political thinking that the majority adheres to, a political thinking that the majority believes in it, a political thinking that connects people of Afghanistan is Islam. Unfortunately this thinking did not surfaced on the political agenda, and after the demise of Taliban those who fought for the independence of Afghanistan were called "Warlords" and those who sold out Afghanistan to the then the Soviet Union, caused millions of death, displaced millions and created a huge refugee problem are back to power. Hence, now, Western power as a power broker wants to bring the Taliban back to power, whom that they favored before 1996 and as well as being supported by the United States for their own economic and strategic plan. The question is this: Is Afghanistan going back to the Taliban era? In a tribal society, does political pluralism work where the communists, Islamists, and secular liberal cooperate with one another? I doubt it because there is 88% illiteracy, tribal affiliation, religious affiliation, and language affiliation, it would create more chaos, division, and anarchy. However, if Afghans manage to bring an Islamic agenda that fits everyone need, desire for freedom such as freedom of press, gender equality, and economic opportunity, that would lead to a peaceful coexistence. But this is an Ethiopic wishful thinking considering that Afghanistan is under a foreign occupation. To many Afghans, Afghanistan is an invaded, and an occupied country. Their democracy is not homegrown but imported, supported and fed by an outside power. Afghanistan's lack of security not only halted development, but also worried the international circles. Therefore, the first step needs to be achieved is Afghanistan's independence, in which it eventually leads to security of not only Afghanistan, but also the region. Afghans have a proverb that translates like this: *The snake does not like mint but it grows at his cave doorstep*. How could Iran, Pakistan, and the Federation of Russia in Central Asia keep quiet and not interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan when there is an enormous presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan?

Security:

With the assistance of all powers involved, Afghanistan should be declared non-aligned, neutral and return to her position of neutrality among nations. After 30 years of war, resistance, civil war and destruction, Afghanistan is currently not equipped psychologically, economically and does not possess the manpower that's needed to engage into any sort of war any more. For this purpose, Afghanistan must be demilitarized. Afghanistan's neighbors particularly Iran and Pakistan, regional powers such as China, India, Russia and Saudi Arabia, the United States and her allies particularly in case of Afghanistan, the Great Britain, France, and Germany should sign a treaty of regional peace and non-inference militarily. As it was mentioned in this peace treaty Afghanistan must remain demilitarized and non-aligned. Afghanistan will not import or export weapons or produces weapons for that matter. During the same conference, they should determine the time table for foreign troop withdraws. This plan has been implemented after World War II, used for the Swiss and the Germans. It is with demilitarization of Afghanistan that neighbors will settle down, thus not interfering in the affairs of Afghanistan. Of course, a strong police force is needed for national security. *Iqbal Lahoori*, a Farsi poet of the subcontinent of India, mentioned so beautifully in one of his poems, and I paraphrase and transliterate the poem that, Afghanistan is the heart of Asia. Her misery and insecurity is the misery and insecurity of Asia. Her peace and glory is peace and the glory of Asia. The only way to bring peace into the region is to demilitarize Afghanistan.

The other solution is that the central government should be given enough military power not only to fight but totally crush her opposition. Is this approach solving Afghanistan's problem? The answer is no, the fact that Afghanistan, in the mind of Muslim radicals is a litmus test. If the imposed democracy succeeds in Afghanistan, then countries in the region particularly the Gulf States supposedly follow suit. We need to remember that radicalism against the central government of Afghanistan is not for the sake of Islam or establishing an Islamic state, it is not to allow western democracy to succeed. Therefore, that is why the Sheikhs of the Gulf States funnel fund to protect their sheikdoms in the region by supporting the Taliban. If the Taliban succeeds, it is in the interest of the Arab Sheiks. If the reader recalls, the Taliban was officially recognized by the Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and their agent in the region, Pakistan.

Demilitarization of Afghanistan, establishing a moderate Islamic state, would make the supporters and funders of the Taliban at ease, although one of the principle agenda of the Saudi foreign policy is to introduce their Wahabi brand of Islam and stand firm against Shias especially in the region of Iran.

Economy:

It is only through regional peace that Afghanistan can think of reconstruction. Implementation of foreign ideas on Afghanistan's economy makes it a dependent nation as it did for Iran before the Shah, and in Chile in Latin America. For the last of thirty years, the United States preached neo-liberalism around the world for their own economic gain. This policy lay off million of people, caused famine, spread injustices when they tried to privatize from A to Z of the economy. This system which gives more power to the

capitalists ignores the need of the ordinary citizen, the middle class and the poor. The system makes people rely on banking interest heavily while Islam prohibits interest. Hence, not only is neo-liberalism not fit for Muslim people, but also free-market economy is not in their interest but rather a market economy. Afghanistan needs some regulation for the sake of justice for all. Afghanistan needs foreign investment that should serve the interests of both parties. One reason that underdeveloped countries never developed is because foreign investment is not in the interest of the people but the investor alone. Nigeria is a case in point. Political thinking plus leadership will result into unity while using human resources plus natural resources result into reconstruction. Afghan natural resources are untapped and human resources are not educated. To boost the economy, Afghans should not only seek investment but at the same time educate, and train their labor force. Afghanistan should become a producer nation, exporter nation not a dependent nation and importer nation that depends on foreign goods and services.

Education:

The foundation of Islam is knowledge. As a matter of fact the first word revealed to Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), was to read. According to one *hadith* (saying of the Prophet), the first thing was created was the pen. Therefore, Afghanistan must invest more money into her education rather than that of the military. Afghanistan needs to have a literacy plan. At this time of reconstruction, vocational education is a must, so people could attain jobs. Unemployment is against the law of economics in Islam. Dignity and pride of a society is her workforce. Especially in Islam that men are the providers, creating work by the government is a major task. This does not mean that women are not allowed to work. On the contrary, Islam does not discriminate between men and women. But enforce family relationship where everyone has a responsibility. An educated force will not only contribute but also produce quality products which Afghanistan needs. As men of knowledge say, knowledge is power; Afghans with the tool of knowledge should overcome their socio-economic malaise and become a role model of Islamic nations to the world without compromising their indigenous cultural values. It is utmost important that education should take the path of Islamization. Students should develop their skills on all aspects of life based upon Islamic thinking. This approach will ensure that the Afghan culture is preserved from deculturization. The principle of Islamic education will pave the path of progress, and will not alienate people from their cultural roots. Therefore, those who want peace in Afghanistan must think, formulate, and compose an agenda of Islamization that could create a challenge to the opposition forces who, in the era of the Soviet Union were under the impression that Afghanistan went towards infidelity; however, they now think that Afghanistan went towards secularity.

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