



**The Failure of the Afghan Peace Process and the Fall of Kabul:
Implications for Afghanistan and Pakistan**

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Abstract:

Unintended consequences in international relations may be tracked in three ways: Irrational policies that harm a state's interests owing to diplomatic brinkmanship. Second, tense relationships (spiraling out of control) have their own logic regardless of the best interests of those involved. Third, the outcome was unanticipated or against one's self-interests. By evacuating American and NATO troops from Afghanistan, the Taliban escalated their activities, resulting in Kabul's collapse. Obama fought Taliban fighters through military operations and drone strikes. The Afghan peace process, which failed and led to the withdrawal of American-led NATO troops under Biden, shows that this Afghan territory is a "graveyard of empires." This brinkmanship game has had little effect on the sole superpower and its allies, but Afghanistan and Pakistan may suffer from unanticipated consequences. This article concerns the Afghan peace process, Pakistan's role, and post-Taliban Afghanistan. Similarly, it examines the unintended consequences of the Afghan peace process's failure and Kabul's fall to the Taliban for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Using qualitative research interviews, this article explores Pakistan's various action options in Afghanistan.

Key Words: Afghanistan, Pakistan, Taliban, Afghan peace process, Fall of Kabul, war, US withdrawal

INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan has been at war since the Sour Revolution in 1978. Many attempts failed to fix the issue at various times. Following the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the US policy was based on a military solution. However, President Obama after taking Oval Office, started a peace process with the Taliban in 2009-10 to end the ongoing chaos in the country (Yousafzai, 2021, pp. 118-19). The Afghan peace process continued for more than a decade under Obama and then under President Trump, during which the Doha agreement between the US and the Taliban was signed, which provided for the US withdrawal and the Taliban commitment not to allow Afghan soil to be used

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against any country. Though the US-Taliban peace talks remained successful, the subsequent process of intra-Afghan talks failed. The failure of the intra-Afghan talks provided for the fall of Kabul to the Taliban in August 2021. The fall of Kabul changed the dynamics of the Afghan polity in addition to bringing implications for the neighboring countries. Before the fall of Kabul, the Afghan peace process had collapsed, which contributed to the fall of Kabul. The Taliban waged a two-decade struggle to force the US out of Afghanistan. When the Taliban overtook Kabul in August 2021, Ashraf Ghani fled the country. The Afghan government was expected to fall in six months if the Taliban and the US could not reach an agreement. On August 31, 2021, the Taliban proclaimed victory, the day after the final American soldier left Afghanistan.

Currently, Afghan economic revival and regional security are major problems. Afghanistan's economic woes have been blamed for the growth of Daesh and the refugee issue. Afghanistan's healthcare system is in disarray due to a lack of prescriptions, physician unavailability, and poor pay. From November to September 2021, the UN World Food Program (WFP) fed roughly 15 million people. The Council on Foreign Relations made a film comparing the influx of Afghan refugees into several nations, including the US, the EU, Pakistan, and Iran.

Afghanistan is a landlocked country with significant links to Pakistan. Pakistan's political and security stability depends on Afghanistan. Disagreement between the Afghan Taliban and Pakistan over the Pak-Afghan International Border is another major security hazard. Concerns include TTP-Afghan Taliban connections and the Durand Line issue, which are major causes of concern for Pakistan. In the same way, India could use ISIS to attack Pakistan again or to promote and start terrorism between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

This paper aims to analyze the failure of the Afghan peace process and how the subsequent fall of Kabul resulted in the failure of the intra-Afghan talks. Similarly, what are the implications of the failure of the Afghan peace process and the subsequent fall of Kabul brought for both Afghanistan and Pakistan? Likewise, how Pakistan could fix the issues that it is facing.

METHODOLOGY

This paper uses a qualitative methodology and inductive reasoning to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the issue. Data from primary and secondary sources are reviewed to explain such unintended consequences as a holistic approach to realism, the Afghan peace process and its failure, Pakistan's position in post-Taliban Afghanistan, and Pakistan's diverse action choices in Afghanistan. Existing literature does not address the theoretical framework of unintended consequences as an approach of realism and Pakistan's available choices. To overcome research gaps about Pakistan's future role, interviews were conducted. Inductive reasoning is utilized to interpret qualitative interview data, which aids comprehension of this topic's core themes.

CONCEPTUAL BASIS: UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Thoughts motivate people to act. Regular, planned behavior might avert some consequences but cause others. International interactions may mirror human nature. State logic mirrors its history. Past data may predict a state's actions. Predefined consequences cause nations to behave irrationally, threatening their survival. Unintended consequences are when one action causes another, etc. a never-ending snowball. Withdrawing US-led NATO forces from Afghanistan

enhanced Taliban power, leading to Kabul's collapse. This US announcement resembled the 1980s USSR.

This study is based on unexpected outcomes. A politician's legitimate actions have irrational effects. People react predictably and unexpectedly to escape their actions' repercussions. Planned acts, unforeseen outcomes, and reactions repeat forever. Richard Vernon says, "The cumulative influence of comparable behaviors conducted by a lot of persons may have unexpected repercussions" (Vernon, 1979: 55). He coined the term "unintended consequences" in political theory. This notion can't be understood without the future. Collision and partnership are instances of political events with predetermined outcomes. Individuals, states, and beyond may study conflict and harmony (Jahangir & Javaid, 2018:411)

Americans and allies fought Communism throughout the Cold War. The US armed the Mujahedin and other countries to prevent a Communist domino effect during the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. As the Soviet Union fell, the US abandoned Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden, the founder of Al Qaeda, moved to Afghanistan in the 1990s that provided Al Qaeda a base in Afghanistan that still exists as we saw the US drone strike killed Al Zawahiri on August 31, 2022 in Kabul.

The incident of September 11 changed global politics, and the US attacked Afghanistan when the Taliban wouldn't hand up Bin Laden. Thus, it started Afghanistan's eternal liberation to eliminate terrorists. Taliban, Al-Qaeda, and other terrorists threatened every war-on-terror country. Cold War allowed this, and the year of 2000 was similar for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Invasion of Afghanistan was caused by Cold War policies and actions made following the Soviet invasion and fall of the USSR. By attacking Afghanistan in 2001, the US helped India's quest in South Asia by damaging Pakistan's interests.

Afghanistan may exploit unintended consequences in two ways. In the first scenario, two or more governments' or parties' interests' conflict, triggering a confrontation that may escalate to war. Second, states endeavor to alleviate tensions diplomatically. The US and Taliban signed the Doha deal to advance the peace process in Afghanistan. No peace settlement between the Taliban and Ashraf Ghani's administration was feasible. Afghanistan has suffered from regional and non-regional growth. Both past US presidents wanted to leave Afghanistan. Other regional players played the Afghan game, complicating the peace effort. Biden's action on Trump's strategy of troop departure by May 31, 2021, violated the provision of a peaceful end to Afghanistan's war and the Afghan peace process. The US troop's withdrawal delayed till August 31, 2022. However, before the US troop's complete withdrawal, the Taliban had taken control of Kabul on August 15, 2021. It's been a year since the Taliban takeover and still interim government is working there. No Afghan political or ethnic leader is included in the government. Afghanistan's leadership vacuum is dangerous for everyone, but especially for Pakistan since the Taliban regime is unpredictable. Afghanistan's political instability threatened not just the Afghan people but also Pakistan in the shape of TTP based on the Afghan soil.

States will become self-serving logical entities if everyone is rationalist. States aren't rational entities, thus their goals in international relations usually clash. States should be self-serving and logical, say rationalists. Consider how poorly governments determine international priorities. Every diplomatic endeavor, however well-intentioned, has unintended consequences. Three ways to

monitor international repercussions are: (1) Irrational policies related to diplomatic brinkmanship. (2) Deepening conflict or tense connection (3) Unpredictable outcomes (what was intended didn't happen; outcome harmed self-interest). This article examines the failure of the Afghan peace process, the fall of Kabul, and the repercussions for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

CIVIL WAR IN AFGHANISTAN AND THE PEACE PROCESS

Al-Qaeda and its bases were destroyed during the United States' October 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, which ended on August 15, 2021, when the Taliban took control of Kabul. Since the September 11 attacks, the US has been aggressive, and less than a month later, Afghanistan was attacked. Afghanistan has witnessed several operations against Al Qaeda and the Taliban that toppled the Taliban regime. However, the Taliban started a fresh insurgency against the US-led NATO and Afghan forces.

At that time, few expected that the Taliban insurgency started in 2004 would succeed. However, the Taliban were fighting with dedication, and the insurgency gained strength with every passing year. If the Taliban had been included in the new set-up, they would not have gone on a campaign against the US-led forces. According to Francis Vendrell, one of the 2001 Bonn conference's organizers, "no one could talk about the Taliban inclusion in the Bonn process" (Coll, 2004) due to the outpouring of fury in the United States. The Taliban remnants had no place in the Bush administration's Afghan policy (Coll, 2004). It was even the Secretary of State for the US, Donald Rumsfeld, who told Karzai to cancel his amnesty deal made with the Taliban in Shah Wali Kot in late December 2001 (Dam, 2019).

Throughout both of President Bush's administrations, Afghanistan was a primary military focus. When Bush overthrew the Taliban administration, he made a mistake by not conditionally including the Taliban in the new set up (Yousafzai, 2021). Even then-US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld stepped in to stop Karzai from putting the Taliban in the new structure, even though they had stopped being violent. On the other hand, Bush focused only on Iraq, initiating an invasion in March 2003. Because of this, the Taliban were able to reorganize and renew their movement. The Taliban's activities have risen significantly this year. To put a halt to the revolt, however, the Bush administration stepped up its purge operations (Rashid, 2010). Rather than that, it just strengthened with time.

The US-Taliban negotiations started following Obama's assumption of the Oval Office. However, during the following two years, the endeavor produced no tangible outcomes. While President Obama was in office, he used military operations and drone strikes to fight the Taliban while also seeking to engage with them in negotiations. The Taliban political office in Doha gave the US-Taliban peace talks a new boost, but it took too long until the Doha agreement was signed in February 2020.

Peace Process during Obama Era

The US attitude toward Afghanistan has evolved dramatically since the Obama administration took office. While simultaneously negotiating with the Taliban, Obama promised a military buildup and increased operations in Afghanistan as well as drone strikes in the Af-Pak region. According to The New York Times interview from March 2009, Obama called moderate Taliban leaders to negotiate

peace (Sheikh & Greenwood, 2013: 14). The Taliban wanted a peace process for many reasons, including the release of Guantanamo Bay detainees, a political office in Saudi Arabia or Qatar, and the lifting of sanctions. Initially, the US tried to reintegrate the moderate Taliban into Afghan society. The Obama administration's focus shifted from reintegration to reconciliation with the Taliban in 2010–11 (Fair, 2010). At the first direct Taliban-US discussion in November 2010, Tayyab Agha (Mullah Umar's aide) represented the Taliban. The Taliban's political office was debated in 2011 in Qatar and Germany. The US and Taliban began talks in 2011, but Secretary of Defense Robert Gates called them "preliminary" (Marsh, 2014: 268). In January 2012, the Taliban's unofficial political office was set up (Sheikh & Greenwood, 2013: 14). When the Taliban were freed from Guantanamo Bay in March 2012, it was unclear whether they would attack the US. The negotiations were called off.

The talks were to take place in Doha, where the Taliban had opened an office. While the Taliban flag hung above President Hamid Karzai's office, he opted not to participate. Afghan flags were requested by Karzai. By 2014, the Taliban had acquired confidence and hoped for a total US army departure. The Afghan government and Taliban held "Murree Talks" in July 2015. There were also US and Chinese observers (Taliban and Afghan government, 2015). The Taliban's ultimate commander, Mullah Umar, died shortly after these talks ended, so they were also cancelled.

President Trump's Afghan and South Asian Policies

Trump made a crucial campaign pledge that if elected president, he would bring American troops stationed in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria home. In August 2017, he unveiled his Afghanistan and South Asia strategy, which involved increasing the number of US troops in Afghanistan and criticizing Pakistan's foreign policy. He also extolled India's virtues (Rasmussen & Safi, 2017). This was not well received in Pakistan, and the result was a deterioration of ties between the two nations. Pakistan was angry on New Year's Day when President Trump said that Pakistan was giving the US "lies and deception" (Trump attacks Pakistan's "deceit", 2018).

GOVERNMENT OF IMRAN KHAN AND PAKISTAN'S ROLE IN THE AFGHAN PEACE PROCESS

Following Pakistan's 2018 general elections, PTI Chairman Imran Khan pledged to restore peace to Afghanistan's war-torn country (Imran Khan's speech in full, 2018), reassuring them that their administration will do so. The US nominated Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, an Afghan-born diplomat, to head Afghanistan's peace efforts on September 5, 2018 (Ex-Ambassador Khalilzad to Become U.S., 2018). Ambassador Khalilzad made his first visit to Pakistan after his October 2018 appointment as US ambassador (Ishtiaq, 2018). As a result, the US and the Afghan Taliban met in Doha for peace talks, which Pakistan helped to set up. After a year of discussions, it seemed as if an agreement was imminent. Although President Trump was talking with the Afghan Taliban at Camp David (Trump cancels secret US meeting, 2019), he called off the negotiations in September 2019 after an incident in Afghanistan.

In October 2019, Ambassador Khalilzad travelled to Pakistan concurrently with an Afghan Taliban expedition (Jamal, 2019). The highlights of Ambassador Khalilzad's speech were a "productive" visit to Kabul in December 2019 and an "important stage" in the peace negotiations (US-Taliban Afghan peace talks, 2019). Following this, there was a restart of dialogue. Pakistan's influence grew in the Doha process. Khalilzad resumed the Afghan Taliban peace process, which President Trump had

terminated in September 2019. In February 2020, Pakistan's former Foreign Minister, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, was present when the Taliban and Ashraf Ghani's government failed to negotiate prisoner swaps. Pakistan met an Afghan Taliban delegation in Islamabad (as stipulated in the Doha accord). It was Pakistan who invited an Afghan Taliban delegation to Islamabad to try and move the peace process forward (Ahmed, 2020). One of the American delegations in Pakistan said that "sincere and unconditional support" from Pakistan was critical to the group's success (Ahmed, 2020).

The Failure of the Afghan Peace Process

For several reasons, the Afghan peace process was divided into two stages: US-Taliban negotiations and then intra-Afghan talks. The first part of the Afghan peace process, i.e., US-Taliban talks, succeeded when they signed the Doha agreement in February 2020, after years of negotiations in Doha. The agreement called for the US to leave Afghanistan, which was one of the Taliban's main demands. Similarly, the Taliban pledged not to allow any terrorist group to use Afghan soil against any state, including the US and its allies.

Hence, the subsequent step was the intra-Afghan talks, which had to start after ten days of the Doha deal. However, for the commencement of the intra-Afghan talks, there were some conditions, like the Afghan government releasing 5000 Taliban prisoners and, similarly, the Taliban releasing the Afghan security forces captives. However, on the next day of the Doha agreement, the then Afghanistan president, Ashraf Ghani, announced: "We will not release the Taliban prisoners." That shocked the Taliban, as it was pledged in the Doha deal that the Taliban prisoners would be released before the start of the intra-Afghan talks. Hence, this decision by Ashraf Ghani stalled the intra-Afghan talks, and the first round of the intra-Afghan talks was conducted on September 12, after six months of the Doha deal. In the same way, Ashraf Ghani government's lack of seriousness killed the intra-Afghan talks, and in August 2021, the Taliban took over Kabul.

The Taliban Blitzkrieg Strategy and the Fall of Kabul

After deciding that the Doha Agreement was a failure and that convening the first round of intra-Afghan talks would take six months, the Taliban attacked with two aims in mind: First of all, it might force the Ghani government to work with other Afghans in a real way. Kabul will be pressed by the international community, regional nations, and particularly Washington, to reach an agreement with the Taliban before the US withdraws from Afghanistan. If intra-Afghan negotiations do not continue or a deal is not reached, the Taliban will seize control of different areas of Afghanistan. Finally, but certainly not least, the Taliban selected this path. There was no pressure on Ashraf Ghani and his staff during the intra-Afghan negotiations to reach an agreement with the Taliban. President Biden, meanwhile, extended the deadline for US forces to September 2021, in violation of the Doha accord (Yousafzai, 2021). The US President promised to withdraw from Afghanistan by May 1, 2021, after signing the Doha deal in Qatar (Agreement for Bringing Peace, 2020). However, it did not. Similarly, the US launched a lot of airstrikes in Afghanistan against the Taliban. However, even after the Doha accord, the Taliban remained cautious. The Taliban made no strikes on American soldiers before the withdrawal. To stop the Taliban from taking Kabul, the Ghani government would have to give the Taliban concessions.

THE POST-TALIBAN TAKEOVER SCENARIO IN AFGHANISTAN

The Taliban's gains escalated before the US forces left Afghanistan in August 2021. As the Taliban captured town after town, Afghan forces offered little or no resistance. Because the Afghan military knew Ghani's administration will fall, they preferred to keep the country safe by turning up land. The Afghan government was expected to fall within two months if the Taliban and the Afghan government couldn't reach an accord and the US soldiers left (Starr, Atwood & Hansler, 2021). However, Kabul fell to the Taliban in a matter of days or hours. When the Taliban captured Kabul in August 2021, Ghani escaped to Dubai with his money and automobiles.

Kabul's devastation was unexpected. US military soldiers remained at Kabul International Airport. The airport was not overtaken by the Taliban, and it seems that talks between the Taliban and the US took place to ensure the safety of people leaving Afghanistan, principally US and coalition forces (Holland, 2021). The Taliban considered it a "red line" for any future US engagement with the airport (The Taliban's Aug. 31, 2021). The Taliban declared victory after the last American forces' departure on August 31, 2021. Ten days later, the Taliban took provisional control of the nation. The group has three Tajiks and one Uzbek. Despite this, the cabinet lacks diversity and inclusion. As part of their broad amnesty for opponents and former government employees, the Taliban committed to defending women's rights and press freedom (Rasheed, 2021). Afghanistan's Taliban have promised that no nation would be permitted to use Afghan soil against another. Allies like India are welcome. On condition, China, Russia, Pakistan, and Qatar all conditionally backed the Taliban regime. Until the Taliban constructs a stable structure, governments should avoid accepting the Taliban administration.

Implications of Taliban Takeover for Pakistan

Since the US invasion of Afghanistan, relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have not been good, and often witnesses a game of "who's to blame?" from across the border. Whether it was the Karzai administration or that of Ashraf Ghani, they were close to India while India had a large sway in Afghanistan. Due to the troubled relationship, Pakistan was waiting for such a setup in which Pakistan's interests were not compromised. As a result, the Taliban gave Islamabad hope that they could not at least use Afghan soil against Pakistan (Yousafzai, 2021: 149). There was this expectation in Islamabad that the return of the Taliban would bring a positive change for Pakistan. However, the acceleration of TTP attacks in Pakistan has turned everything upside down. Pakistan asked the Taliban many times not to let Afghan soil be used against Pakistan. However, nothing major happened except that the Taliban helped the Pakistani government and TPP talks in Afghanistan (Yousafzai, 2022).

Following consecutive attacks on the security forces by TTP, Pakistan launched an airstrike in April in Kunar, Afghanistan, that killed several TTP members (author's interview with a local, May 2022). Furthermore, since May 2022, a series of negotiations in Kabul between Pakistan and the TTP has failed to produce a positive outcome. The Pakistan army wants to see a peaceful end to the current turmoil in the ex-FATA region. The ex-corps commander of Peshawar, Faiz Hameed, was himself involved in the negotiations (The Express Tribune, May 17, 2022). The government also sent several delegations, including the tribal elders and Ulema headed by Mufti Taqqi Usmani, a renowned cleric. However, the ice has yet to break.

The precarious security situation has implications not only for Pakistan but also for the Central Asian states, China, and Iran. We recently witnessed the emergence of Tehrik-e-Taliban Tajikistan (TTT), which is an imminent threat to the Central Asian region and beyond. Afghanistan at the moment needs both global and regional attention so that it cannot become a hub for international terrorists. In the absence of the United States, China will play a key role, as the latter has washed its hands and left, in addition to freezing Afghan assets. China's role is important and imperative as China's BRI must pass through Afghanistan, and its security is also linked with it. Hence, a regional approach, not a global one, is needed to make Afghanistan stable and avoid any future threat that could affect the regional countries in one way or another.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE OF AFGHAN PEACE PROCESS AND THE FALL OF KABUL FOR AFGHANISTAN

The US-Afghanistan peace negotiations fell down owing to the failure of both sides. As a consequence, the US and NATO troops departed suddenly, leaving Afghanistan in chaos and driving the Afghan people into an ever-deepening disaster. Afghanistan's three primary unintended consequences are political instability, economic stagnation, and a humanitarian catastrophe aggravated by security insecurity.

Political Consequences: Taliban's Government Recognition and its Inclusiveness

Since September 20, 2021, the global response has been quiet in terms of political recognition of the Afghan Taliban government. In an effort to break the Afghan Taliban's political isolation, Pakistan has provided a variety of engagement. For instance, because of the unexpected humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, Pakistan hosted the Foreign Ministers Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on December 19, 2021. Many in the Islamic world had anticipated a Taliban-led alliance (Shah, 2021). "It is believed that an incident or terrorist assault happens when a government recognizes Taliban leadership," said Sardar Ali Yousafzai (Personal communication, Jan 16, 2022). He further added that a terrorist attack or other horrible act anywhere in the world will hold that country responsible if it recognizes their government. Therefore, no country wants to make the same mistake that was made in history" (Personal communication, Jan 16, 2022). Moreover, derived from the Dushanbe Declaration of September 17th, 2021, "the Taliban administration shall have an inclusive government structure. An Afghanistan devoid of terrorism (and violence) and drugs (as said in a declaration) (Experts react, 2021). In addition, "in Afghanistan, all ethnic, religious, and political groups must be represented". Diversity is required under Taliban control, said Pakistani former PM Imran Khan (Siddiqui, 2021). Additionally, the member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) expressed clearly that the Taliban have seized power. Rebuilding Afghanistan's economy and regional security is critical. Dr. Rabia Akhtar, senior fellow at the South Asia Center and director of the University of Lahore's Centre for Security, Strategy, and Policy Research, told the Atlantic Council that Afghanistan needs a government that includes everyone.

Several countries haven't considered legitimacy to Afghanistan's Taliban leadership, but humanitarian issues in the war-torn country compel many countries to "enter into contacts" with the new rulers in Kabul.

Economic Consequences: The Emergence of an Unplanned Crisis

Despite taking Kabul, the Taliban's chances of survival seems to be fading. Afghanistan's economic collapse, which lacks international political legitimacy, will continue to be a source of friction, both for sustaining internal order and for the country's leadership (Iqbal, 2021). In Afghanistan, economic instability has caused small problems that could grow into big ones, like a humanitarian disaster, a refugee crisis, and the rise of Daesh or ISSI.

In terms of humanitarian crisis, drought threatens millions of Afghans' lives. Afghanistan's health system is crumbling due to prescription shortages, physician absences, and low pay. In 2021, the United Nations' World Food Program (WFP) helped almost 15 million people, 7 million in November and 4 million in September. Few Afghans are fed, and nearly 3 million children are hungry. Hundreds may die from hunger this winter, experts say. Famine is expected to affect approximately 23 million Afghans by 2022 (97 percent of Afghans could die by 2021). Globally, 97 percent of Afghans would be impoverished by mid-2022. Also, by mid-decade, almost all Afghans will be destitute. Before the Taliban took over, foreign donors and financial organizations funded a percentage of government spending. UN officials have asked for a substantial increase in humanitarian aid. Michael McKinley, former US Ambassador to Afghanistan, warned that more aid might indirectly benefit the Taliban (McKinley, 2021). A surge in human rights violations and the suspension of women's rights under the Taliban. Decreased female school enrollment, increased use of force against journalists, activists, and female protestors are only a few examples.

Regarding the refugee crisis, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) created a video comparing the number of Afghan refugees flooding the US, the EU, Pakistan, Iran, and other countries (Maizland, 2021). People fled the nation in fear of retribution and escalation instability. Millions of people visited Afghanistan before the calamity. By 2020, 2.2 million Afghans will have moved to Iran and Pakistan. Nearly 80 percent of Afghan refugees presently live in these two nations. Many Afghans will likely never leave these nations to live near their families. By 2020, 2.8 million Afghan refugees will be in Pakistan. Thousands of Afghans will visit their families. By 2020, Pakistan's IDP population will be half that of Afghanistan. Many Afghans fled to Pakistan and Iran after the Taliban assumed power. By 2020, there will be 400,000 Afghans in the EU. In 2020, Germany alone will have half of all Afghans. Once in power, the Taliban welcomed thousands of Afghans, but now they want to help their neighbors. It is estimated that just 2,000 Afghans will join the US between 2000 and 2020. The White House then promised 95,000 Afghan visas by 2022. Activists claim the US and EU have no Afghan refugees. United Nations officials said they'll require food and medical treatment, a worldwide humanitarian catastrophe (Maizland, 2021).

Daish, or ISIS-K, arises as a separate anti-Taliban terrorist organization. An attack on a Kandahar Mosque in October 2021 revealed ISIS's existence in Afghanistan (Is Daesh really in Afghanistan? 2016). Locally, ISIS is 'very appealing,' the Wall Street Journal writes (Maizland, 2021). Afghan intelligence and military officers joined ISIS-K to make money. Amrullah Saleh, the security head of Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security (ANSAs), went missing in September 2021 and is now a member of the Islamic State. The former head of the Afghan National Security Directorate remarked, "They would have opposed them. ISIS is currently the sole armed group" (Maizland, 2021). They may be able to help ISIS fight the Taliban by providing important information. In Islamabad's Institute of Policy Studies, Sardar Ali Yousufzai said, "many former intelligence, military, and police personnel are frightened to leave" (Sardar Ali Yousufzai, 2022). Afghan Taliban

recruits may expect huge money and safety. Despite the Taliban's offer of amnesty, many have joined ISIS. So did the Taliban-run National Security Directorate. Their salaries have been delayed for months.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE OF AFGHAN PEACE PROCESS AND THE FALL OF KABUL FOR PAKISTAN

Influx of Afghan Refugees

Afghanistan is a landlocked nation with strong economic and cultural ties with Pakistan. Pakistan's peace is linked to Afghanistan's political and security instability. Due to the country's instability and humanitarian crisis, thousands of Afghans have fled to Iran and Pakistan. If the turbulence and hardships in Afghanistan persist until 2022, Pakistan is ready to take in a large number of refugees. As a result, the Pakistani economy will have to take more of the load. Like the Russian invasion of 1970, it could shake up our society and cause a lot of problems we are yet unaware of.

Possibilities of Increasing Militancy and Terrorism in Pakistan

One of the major threats to the country's security is (1) the possibility of resurgent militancy and terrorism. (2) TTP and Afghan Taliban close ties; (3) falsification and division among Afghan Taliban chain of command and foot soldiers; and (4) Disagreement with the Afghan Taliban administration over Pakistan's fence on the Pak-Afghan International Border (also called the Durand Line). All these elements can affect Pakistan's peace, security, and stability.

Regarding the threat from ISSI, "Daesh is here; they most surely exist," said Abdul Salam Rahimi, former chief of staff to former Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, in March 2015 (Is Daesh really in Afghanistan? 2016). ISIS's footprint in Afghanistan and along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border has increased considerably in recent months, according to Sardar Ali Yousafzai of IPS Islamabad (Personal communication, Jan 16, 2022). Pakistan's Waziristan (Bajaur and Mohmand agencies) is also involved. ISIS recruitment from Afghanistan's previous security and military institutions has Pakistani ties. India may use ISIS to target Pakistan again in the future and to support and incite cross-border terrorism between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Both Indian and Afghan media have reported Indians in ISIS. During the GBU-43/B assault in Afghanistan, the US killed thirteen ISIS fighters, including two leaders of Indian heritage (13 suspected Indian IS fighters killed, 2017). The US used this GBU-43/B MOAB to destroy a suspected ISSI network of caves and tunnels near the Pakistani border in Nangarhar, Afghanistan. Similarly, this news was also reported by Hindustan Times that Kabul-based Pajhwok Afghan News agency gave details that "13 Indian Daesh militants were also among those killed" as stated by an anonymous security official" (Kakar, 2017, April 18).

Concerning **TTP**, TTP is close to the Afghan Taliban. When Pakistan was time and again asking the Taliban to take action against the TTP, the Taliban interior minister Sirajuddin Haqqani told in a statement that we and the TTP has fought together against the Americans so we can't act against them. It's hard to rule out the possibility that non-state terrorist groups like ISIS or TTP use Afghan territory to strike Pakistan or another nation in the area. To undermine Pakistan's peace, security, and stability, several components of these systems are said to have been repatriated from Afghanistan or the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. On the other hand, such circumstances exacerbate Afghan-Pakistani animosity. Several Afghan Taliban have scaled the Pakistan-Afghanistan border,

according to footage posted on Twitter by Taliban loyalists. The Taliban allegedly clashed with the Pakistani soldiers over the Durand Line, condemning Pakistan's unilateral move as unlawful (Watch: Taliban destroy Pakistan fencing, 2022). The Durand Line is denied by the Taliban. The arrival of the Taliban led Pakistani border guards to flee, abandoning their supplies for the barrier. Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said Pakistan is trying to clear up "any confusion" (Gul, 2022) caused by diplomatic communication with the Taliban leadership in Afghanistan. A Pakistani official said the country's porous 2600 km border with Afghanistan will be fenced within the time frame.

This incident has revealed one thing: that there is a clash of interest and mindset diversity within the Taliban. This episode has demonstrated the Taliban's diverse interests and perspectives. What has happened along the Pak-Afghan border does not reflect the Taliban's top leadership's thinking, since they are fully aware of their reliance on Pakistan. This incident must understand the Taliban's chain of command and foot soldier fabrication and division. Along with a sigh of relief for Pakistan on the western border, there is also a grim fact that Pakistan does not have as much authority over the Taliban leadership as it used to. So, these kinds of things will happen from time to time, and Pakistan needs to act and respond in a smart way.

Available Options for Pakistan and Recommendations

- It is a fact that the Taliban government must speed up inclusive political system building to meet humanitarian issues, economic suffering, and the global crisis of distrust between major countries, regional states, and others. Pakistan should use diplomatic channels and multi-track diplomatic initiatives to convince the Taliban administration to create an inclusive government (Diamond & McDonald, 1996; McDonald, 2003). A delay in implementation will worsen Afghanistan's economic and security vulnerabilities. Large parts of Afghan society being part of the government would probably make the Taliban's rule more acceptable and make it easier for other countries to back them.
- Pakistan should develop an Afghan commerce strategy and track Pakistan-Afghanistan trade.
- However, Pakistan's position as a facilitator in post-Taliban Afghanistan should be clarified. Pakistan's Afghan policy is one of peace. Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai claims that Pakistan has interfered in Afghan state matters in the past. As a result, Pakistan must inform the international community and the Afghan people about its position. In my PhD research, I proposed that Indians should assess Pakistan's strategic depth in Afghanistan. So that CPEC may grow, Pakistan's leadership must embrace Afghanistan as a source of "economic depth" rather than a passing fad.
- Fast action is needed to correct this distorted view. There has never been an explicit plan outlining Pakistan's humanitarian assistance and support to Afghans. India has also begun using academic specialists on Indo-Afghan connections to enhance India's soft power through an Afghan humanitarian assistance approach. The diplomatic efforts of Indian consulates and embassies throughout the world assisted India's assistance program in Afghanistan. India-Afghan relations were emphasized, as was the need for \$3 billion in aid for Afghanistan's reconstruction and prosperity. In turn, the world has come to admire India's relentless efforts on behalf of Afghanistan. Nobody in Pakistan's foreign ministry or any other government institution came up with these ideas.

- Pakistan must create a narrative in Afghanistan and beyond. Pakistan may utilize the Pak-Afghan Cooperation Forum more effectively. Multi-track diplomacy tactics can be used to further this forum's facilitative role. The forum has two sides of the same coin of Afghanistan: Pakistan's current situation: What can Pakistan do? As a result, it is seen as weak. Since India invaded the US on September 11, 2001.

What is Pakistan's Current Course of Action?

- Scholarships are being awarded to young Afghans.
- Taking care of the huge flood of Afghan refugees is going on.
- A student exchange is now taking place.
- The focus is solely on the present Afghan scenario. Pakistan aided and supported the evacuation.

What Options Does Pakistan Have Soon?

- Scholarships should be made more accessible to a broader range of students.
- Collaboration with EU states should extend to those that cannot take in refugees but want to help Iran and Pakistan help Afghans.
- The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan should oversee an exchange program in Afghanistan for schoolteachers and university professors.
- China and other SCO members, as well as international organizations like the UN and its agencies, should be mobilized to combat climate change. A larger regional SCO and eventually international community involvement would change Pakistan's position in Afghanistan, according to Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan (Siddiqui, 2021). (1) Pakistan, like the US, must assist the Afghan people and facilitate evacuation attempts. Second, regional governments, notably those affiliated with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), helped coordinate effective international steps to reduce the negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 epidemic. (2) Pakistan aims to establish regional connectivity through CPEC and its growth in Afghanistan and the rest of the region. In 2022, Pakistan plans to conduct a virtual conference on "Transport Connectivity for Regional Prosperity." (3) Empower and maximize our youth's potential for a brighter future for our children and grandchildren. Afghanistan, Pakistan argues, needs increased foreign involvement.

Pakistan, who had suffered due to the spillover of conflict and instability in the neighboring country, had an interest in a peaceful and stable Afghanistan... It is now in the best interest of the international community as a whole to make sure there is not another war in Afghanistan and that the security situation is stable (Siddiqui, 2021).

CONCLUSION

A person's thoughts become their motivation for action. While regular and planned conduct might prevent certain repercussions, where it can also cause others. The same human nature notions may apply in international relations. A state's logic reflects its historical growth. Actions by a state may always be anticipated given past data. These predefined consequences force states to act irrationally, jeopardizing their existence. Unintended consequences may be characterized as each action having a response that affects the next action. So, it's a never-ending process. When the

Biden administration planned to withdraw US-led NATO soldiers from Afghanistan, the Taliban increased their operations significantly. This announcement from the new US leadership looked like the USSR in the 1980s. The United States' withdrawal from Afghanistan reaffirms the historical reality that this area is a "graveyard of empires." Obama undertook military operations and deployed drone attacks to target Taliban insurgents throughout his administration. On the other hand, Trump, launched the Afghan peace process, which ultimately failed and resulted in the departure of American-led NATO forces from Afghanistan during Biden's administration, sparking a rise in the Taliban activities and the fall of Kabul in their hands. There are three ways to monitor unexpected occurrences, namely that diplomatic brinkmanship adds to damaging policy even in the absence of state fault. Security and economic growth in Afghanistan and the surrounding region are critical concerns. If the Taliban and the US could not reach an agreement, the Afghan government was expected to fall within two months.

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