

LmunA 2022

# Research report

Forum: Security Council  
Issue: The question of the Afghanistan conflict  
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## **Introduction**

Afghanistan is a country whose history (especially in the last 50 years) is rooted in conflict. From the Soviet Union's attempts to control Afghanistan and influence communism in the late 70s to late 80s, to the 9/11 terrorist attacks which caused a full scaled invasion from the United States of America and NATO, Afghanistan has not seen peace in a very long time. In August 2021, the US withdrew their troops from Afghanistan after 20 years of fighting. This withdrawal saw the Taliban overthrow the Afghan government and take over the country once again, essentially nullifying the US's goal of turning Afghanistan into a free democratic country. Currently, the country is living in great poverty. Although The Taliban promised to respect women rights, they are imposing strict, debatable, sharia law, which infringe basic women rights.

## **Key words**

### **Terrorism**

Terrorism is a threat or an action which poses risk to a government or to the public and is used to intimidate and influence them. Terrorists always have a motive which could be political, religious, racial or ideological.

### **War on Terror**

A term used to describe the American-led global counterterrorism campaign launched in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001

### **Sharia law**

Sharia acts as a code for living that all Muslims should adhere to, including prayers, fasting and donations to the poor. It aims to help Muslims understand how they should lead every aspect of their lives according to God's wishes.

## General overview

### History

In 1996, the Taliban ruled Afghanistan after the soviet union had collapsed. The majority of Afghan people supported the regime, which was based on Islamic values. The production of opium was banned, and the crime rate was reduced. The position of women was worsened. Among many other things, they were refused education and employment. The US refused to accept the new government. One of the main causes for the US occupation of Afghanistan emerged a few years earlier, in 1984. Osama bin Laden, Saudi Islamist, makes the first documented trip to Afghanistan in order to help anti-Soviet forces. Four years later, a terrorist group al-Qaeda is established by bin Laden and 15 other Islamists. The US was identified as an obstacle towards the establishment of a state based on Islam and thus their main reason for jihad, holy war. In 1998, al-Qaeda bombed two American embassies in Africa. In response, the US launched a missile attack on al-Qaeda's training camps in Afghanistan, but with no success. The Taliban refused to extradite bin Laden. Afghanistan was sanctioned by the United Nations. Trade and economic development were restricted. The tensions between the US and al-Qaeda reached their peak on the infamous 9/11 2001. Four commercial planes were hijacked by al-Qaeda in the US. At 8:46 and 9:03, two planes crashed into the World Trade Center in New York. At 9:37, the Pentagon was hit. The fourth target was reportedly the US Capitol Building, yet this attempt was not successful. There were almost 3000 fatalities and thousands of injured. In reaction NATO Article 5 was invoked for the first and only time in the history of the organisation The war in Afghanistan has begun.

A month after the terrorist attack, the Taliban refused to turn over the prime suspect of the attacks, bin Laden. As the result, US and British forces bombed Taliban targets and bases that reportedly belonged to al-Qaeda. In November, the Taliban forces retreated from Kabul, while in December, they lost their last province Zabul. The rule of the Taliban has thus ended and on December 22nd, 2001, Hamid Karzai became the leader of the interim government in Afghanistan. He was also elected in the presidential elections of 2004. As the violence in Kabul increased, NATO's forces decided to take over security in the region. In 2006, NATO expanded its peacekeeping operations to the southern part of the country, since the fighting between Taliban and al-Qaeda forces and Afghan government forces escalated. On May second, 2011, it was reported that Osama bin Laden was killed in Pakistan. In 2011, under Obama's administration, the number of troops in Afghanistan reached its peak. There were 140.000 troops in Afghanistan. The combat mission of NATO officially ended in December 2014. Troops, however, remained to train and advise Afghan forces. In august 2021 all troops were finally withdrawn from Afghanistan.

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**Women's rights**

The current Taliban regime enforces a very strict interpretation of the Sharia law. This has seen women's rights get completely neglected since last August. Some laws are that women are not permitted to leave their household without their husband's permission, are not allowed to work outside of the home and are not allowed to beg for food or money since that is considered working, this affects women left by their husband immensely. The violence against women has greatly increased (especially by those close to these women). One thing that was extremely shocking is that there is no possibility for these women to be heard as the court system works in such a way that if a man swears that he didn't abuse a woman, then it did not happen.

**Health and Economic situation in Afghanistan**

Currently the situation in Afghanistan regarding health and its economy is extremely miserable. The Taliban is having many problems with forming a functioning government that is able to provide health services and economic opportunities to its citizens. Observing the current situation in Afghanistan, many say that it is turning into a humanitarian crisis as cases of famine, poverty, illness and infant death rise. At this moment more than 22 million Afghans, about 70% of the population, are relying on aid provided by NGOs.

## Major parties involved

### **Afghanistan**

Afghanistan obviously is a major country involved in this issue, giving this topic is about Afghanistan.

### **United States of America**

Given the influence that the United States of America has had on Afghanistan in the last 20 years and being the main power behind the western involvement in Afghanistan, it is undeniable that it is also a major country involved.

### **Pakistan**

Pakistan is a country bordering Afghanistan. Over the years, many Afghani Taliban soldiers have hid in Pakistan from the US. For example, the takeover of the government by the Taliban was organised and planned in Pakistan.

### **The United Kingdom**

The United Kingdom has taken part in the peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan. They also took part in the initial contour attack.

### **France**

France has taken part in the peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan.

### **Norway**

Norway has taken part in the peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan.

## Timeline of key events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of event</b>
1996	The Taliban rises to power in Afghanistan. It is an Islamic militia that upholds traditional Islamic values. They rise to power on a promise of peace. The United States does not recognize the authority of the Taliban.
September 11, 2001	9/11. Four different planes are hijacked and crashed into numerous locations in the United States, where thousands are killed. Osama Bin-Laden is seen as the prime suspect for coordinating this attack.
October 7, 2001	The United States and Great Britain launch airstrikes and bomb Taliban targets in Afghanistan.
November 13, 2001	Kabul Falls.
December 9, 2001	The Taliban falls. Al-Qaeda leaders continue to hide in the mountains.
April 17, 2002	The United States calls for the importance of rebuilding Afghanistan - they have major influence in the country.
May 1, 2011	Osama Bin Laden is killed by American Military Forces in Pakistan
October 7, 2011	This date marks the 10th year of the war.
Feb. 29, 2020	U.S. and Taliban sign an agreement that sets the terms for a U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan by May 1, 2021. At the time of the agreement, the U.S. had about 13,000 troops in Afghanistan, according to a Department of Defense inspector general report.

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August 15, 2021	The Taliban takes control of Kabul and the Afghan government collapses.
August 30, 2021	The 20 year war officially comes to an end as the last US troops have withdrawn. In the two weeks between the capture of the capital by the Taliban and the last withdrawal of US troops, more than 120,000 people were evacuated out of Afghanistan.
Present (2022)	The takeover of the Taliban has seen a major decrease in human rights, especially of those of women and girls.

### **Previous Attempts to solve the Issue**

Due to the withdrawal of US troops being so recent there haven't been any major attempts yet to solve the issue in Afghanistan right now. Nations have called upon the Taliban to protect human rights. The biggest attempt to solve the issue happened on February 25th 2022, when the Biden administration removed its economic sanctions on Afghanistan in hopes to better their economy to prevent a humanitarian crisis

### **Possible Solutions**

When it comes to possible solutions for this issue there are a couple. First of all, for the time being all economic sanctions should be removed from Afghanistan. Also, humanitarian aid should be sent into Afghanistan by the red cross and supported by UN Member states, especially NATO countries.

The Afghan economy has to increase, meaning cash needs to be injected in it. This means that nations will have to continue to donate money to the country. States also have to see this as a humanitarian crisis first (and then deal with the Taliban after). An article by the United States Institute of Peace goes in more depth on how to restore the Afghan economy<sup>11</sup>.

A solution for the somewhat radical delegates, re-invade Afghanistan and overthrow the Taliban.

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## Appendix

### Background Information:

<sup>1</sup> Vice Documentary: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIFi\\_Rgm-T8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIFi_Rgm-T8)

### Possible Solutions

<sup>II</sup> <https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/01/how-mitigate-afghanistans-economic-and-humanitarian-crises>