

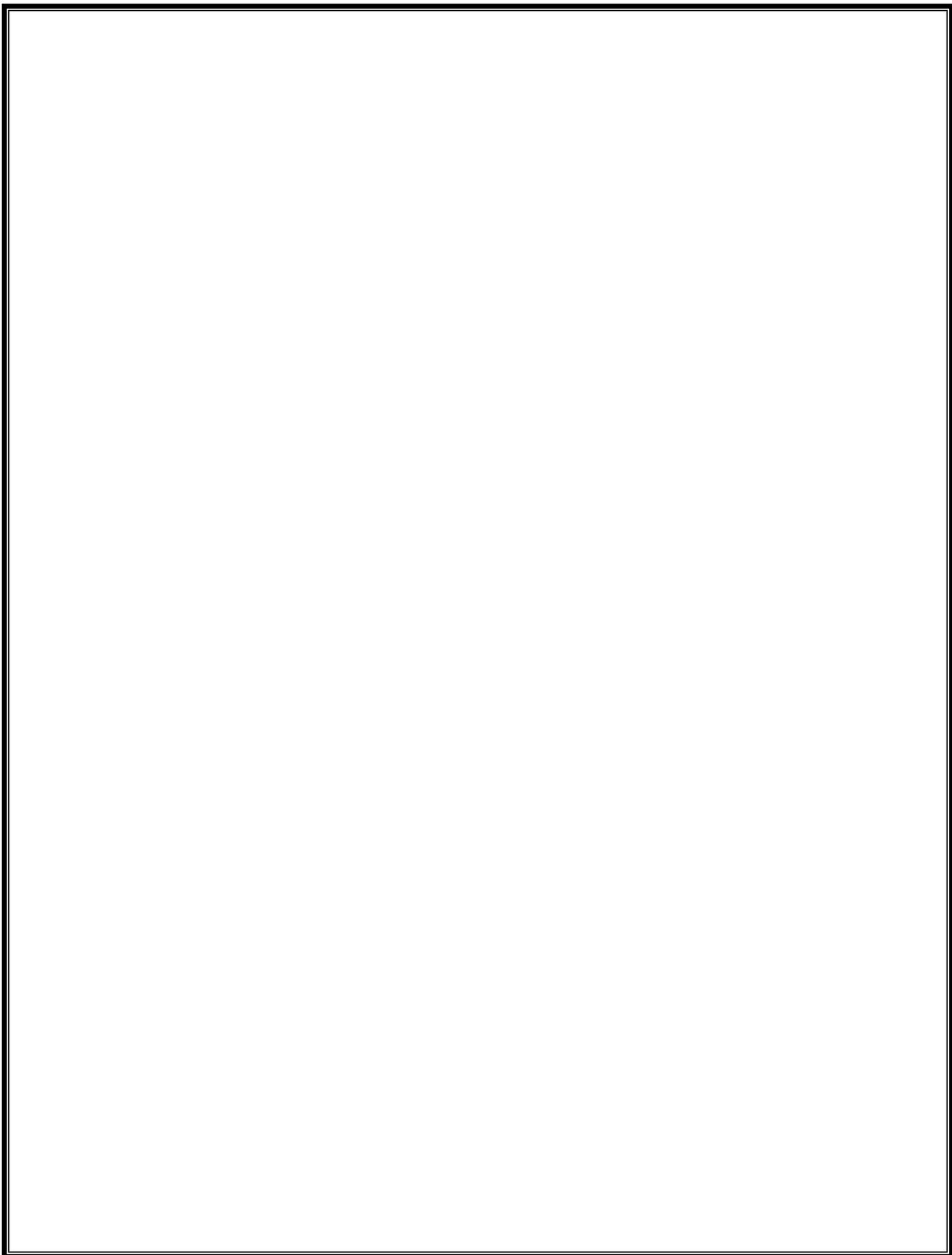


A New Era of Taliban 2021: Women Rights Violations



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Introduction

Terrorism is one of the most prominent phenomena of human life. It is an authentic phenomenon that is deeply rooted in human history and has reached the modern era with many shapes and types. It is believed that terrorism began only in the present era, especially after the events of September 11, but the fact is that terrorism is a global phenomenon with a wide history. This phenomenon has devastating consequences and is escalating continually in violence, horror and threats. Some of these threats are religious, intolerance and political instability.

Terrorist organizations and terrorist groups that are deployed regionally and internationally have imposed themselves on the international system, with enormous organizational, logistic capabilities and advanced weaponry. This highlights the main issue that each state is facing which is finding the balance between fighting terrorism and maintaining the state's national security on the one hand and the pursuit of development and respecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms on the other hand. This required the entire international community to take a range of actions and measures, designed to combat terrorism and eliminate its sources of funding as well as to take measures to counter and combat terrorism.

Terrorism has been evolved to unprecedented level. Terrorist elements benefited from developments in the era of globalization, and what inspired of skipping barriers in several sectors, including telecommunications, transportation and banking transactions. The movement of those terrorist elements is faster than movement of authorities in different countries to tighten the siege of terrorist elements and response. Such authorities, through regional and international agreements and the mobilization of regional and international organizations, exert efforts to counter terrorist acts. Terrorist practices are not confined to domestic terrorism, because terrorism has hands legs, capital, and minds abroad. It manipulates elements in the

country in order to sabotage, destroy and spread sectarianism, division, and dispersion. It impacts on the country's position and prestige, and works to weaken the system of governance and control of the internal situation in the country.

Many countries have rushed to combat terrorist practices through holding conferences and conventions in order to ensure the prevention of the spread of these terrorist practices. The state sought, internally, to motivate all efforts at the governmental level of executive and the legislative and judicial and media aspects. It mobilizes popular participation as well to in association with all the previous to address these terrorist practices, prevent the occurrence of terrorist crimes, and deter terrorism, without prejudice or violation to the rules and foundations of justice. All these efforts are exerted to eliminate all the illegal acts of violence and terrorist practices.

There has been civil war between different factions inside of Afghanistan which destroyed the country's infrastructure and wasted a lot of resources. This civil war represented a friendly environment for extremist groups to appear such as Taliban. Afghanistan being under Taliban since 1994 till our present time has suffered a lot from terrorism and internal conflict.

This report sheds light on the Afghan situation since the emergence of Taliban in the 1990s and how the interference of the two major super powers affected life in Afghanistan. This report will also discuss the emergence of how the decision of the United States to withdraw from Afghanistan on August 2021 affected the situation in Afghanistan and the consequences of this decision.

Afghanistan throughout history

During the 1950s and 1960s Afghanistan was perceived and viewed as a normal developing country as an Afghan king Mohamed Dawod Khan during the 1930s asked the world's wealthiest nations, United States and the Soviet Union, to help financing his expected reforms and he stated that the strategy in a modernized Afghanistan would come in favor of their own interests in the region so they agreed to help him modernize and reform Afghanistan. By 1960, U.S. economic aid to Afghanistan had reached \$165 million. Most of the money were directed to the development of the country's infrastructure. The Soviet Union contributed by paying loans which was nearly one billion dollars, the U.S.S.R also started investing in the regions oil and petroleum industries and as a result Afghanistan received more financial (per capita) aid from the Soviet Union than any other developing country.

All aspects of life were affected by this developmental movement and Kabul capital was mainly the first city to seem affected by this movement as modern buildings began to appear next to traditional mud structures and new roads were built all the way through the city and beyond. Women too were highly affected as they were given more educational opportunities than ever before. Khan proposed a new constitution that grants women rights and works to modernize the largely communist state. As a result girls were able to attend Kabul University and back then burqas were optional. Some wore miniskirts, defying their society's normally conservative dress standards. Tourism too was affected in a good way as the country started to attract visitors from all around the world and the tourists used to get back their homes and tell their families how Afghanistan has such beautiful gardens, stunning architecture, breathtaking mountains, and friendly locals. So for two decades along Afghanistan remained as a modernized country that is a safe place for its citizens and visitors from outside. So the question here is, *where did it all go wrong???*

It all went wrong in 1965 when an Afghan communist party was secretly formed and it was called the people's Democratic Party in Afghanistan (PDPA). The group's principal leaders are Babrak Karmal and Nur Mohammad Taraki. The people's Democratic Party of Afghanistan staged a coup against the last king of Afghanistan, Mohamed Dawod Khan and he was killed as result of this coup. They immediately started a series of changes including land redistribution and the overhaul of the largely Islamic legal system that the country wasn't ready for. This made the eastern part of the country rebel and the conflict between the Pakistani-funded mujahedeen rebels and the new government escalated to become a civil war.

Super Powers Interference: The Soviet Union and the United States

As a result, the world's two super powers found themselves forced to pick a side to stand with. The Soviet Union supported the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, and with Cold War tensions rising, the people's Democratic Party of Afghanistan had an internal schism which led to the assassination of leader Nur Muhammad Taraki the leader of the party and the appointment of a new PDPA leader. These uprisings along with internal fighting and coups in the government urged the Soviet Union to interfere in the internal affairs in the country and invading it on December 24, 1979, sending in some 30,000 troops. The Soviet Union dragged themselves into the conflict and sat up their own regime. This interference made the mujahedeen rebellions grow as they were backed by the United States and so they were spreading quickly to all parts of the country. The Soviet Union did not deal with suppressing the Mujahedeen as it was the mission of the Afghan army but the army was surrounded with mass desertions and remained ineffective throughout the war.

While at the other end of the spectrum, we'll find the United States moving quickly to counter what they regarded as *Soviet expansionism*, quietly supporting the

mujahedeen rebels. So the United States started sending financial aid to the mujahedeen and shipping weapons through the Pakistani borders to Afghanistan. The Mujahedeen used these weapons against The Soviet Union to weaken their will to stay or fight. They used *shoulder-fired antiaircraft missiles provided by the United States the rival for the Soviet Union during the cold war.*

All of these incidents along with the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union led to the withdrawal of the Soviet Union eventually. On 1988, The Soviet Union signed a convention with the United States, Pakistan and Afghanistan and agreed to withdraw its troops. The Soviet withdrawal was completed on February 15, 1989, and Afghanistan returned to nonaligned status.

Taliban Emergence/Rise to Power 1990s-2001: Origins, Identity, Beliefs

The conflict between the Soviet Union and the rebels in Afghanistan was called Soviet-Afghan War which lasted ten years and left as many as 2 million Afghans dead. It displaced 6 million as air bombings destroyed the cities and the countryside, the roads and buildings that 1960s Afghanistan had just begun to enjoy. The version of a developing, modernized Afghanistan was gone, not even the end of the war was able to bring it back. Even after the Soviet Union withdrew completely in 1989, fighting continued, and some of the mujahedeen rebels formed a new group: *Taliban*. Afghanistan sunk deeper into chaos and terror.

So the question is who are Taliban and how did they get control over Afghanistan?!!

The situation in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of the Soviet Union represented a friendly environment for chaos, fragmentation and for different extremists group to appear and be present in the scene. The most important and influential of these groups was a terrorist group called Taliban.

The Taliban, or "students" in the Pashto language, emerged in Afghanistan in 1994 around the southern Afghan city of Kandahar. It was one of the factions fighting a civil war for control of the country right after the Soviet troops Withdrawal from Afghanistan and the collapse of the government. They started by recruiting members of the so called mujahedeen who were supported by the United States. They made a promise to the Pashtun areas near Pakistan to restore peace and security and impose their own strict version of sharia "Islamic law" once they're in power.

Taliban started expanding, increasing their influence and spreading more into Afghanistan. In September 1995, they were able to enforce their power on the province of Herat, bordering Iran, and exactly one year later they were able to capture the afghan capital, Kabul, Overthrowing the regime of President Burhanuddin Rabbani, one of the founding fathers of the Afghan mujahedeen who opposed the Soviet occupation. By late 1996, Taliban started to gain popular support among the Pashtun ethnic group in the south of Afghanistan. Taliban was getting support from conservative Islamic group which enabled and helped them to seize the capital. But resistance to the Taliban group was present between particularly among non-Pashtun ethnic groups, namely, the Tajik, the Uzbek, and the Hazara in the north, west, and central parts of the country. In 1998, the Taliban controlled almost 90% of Afghanistan. By 2001, Taliban had controlled all northern Afghanistan except for a very small part.

The United States Invasion 2001:

Globally, Taliban did not get any support because of their different social policies which included, nearly, total exclusion of women from public life which included education and employment. Taliban too did provide assistance to other terrorist groups and Islamic militants including Osama Bin Laden who, as leader of al-Qaeda, stood accused of organizing numerous terrorist attacks against American interests.

Taliban refused to extradite Bin Laden to the United States following the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York city and on the Pentagon outside Washington D.C on September 11,2001 which led eventually to military confrontations between with the United states and its allies. The Taliban was subsequently driven from power. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States by al Qaeda, US-backed forces in the north swept into Kabul in November under the cover of heavy US airstrikes. Taliban had no choice but to run away and hid into the country where a 20 year-long resistance against the afghan government and its western allies had begun.

The United States along with the NATO tried to reform a failed state and tried to install democracy into this society. spending billions trying to reconstruct a desperately poor country already destroyed by two decades of war, first during the Soviet occupation of the 1980s and then during a civil war. The United States succeeded in returning girls to attend their school after they were banned from going to schools under the rule of Taliban. Women, largely confined to their homes by the Taliban, went to university, joined the workforce, and served in parliament and government. A strong and independent news media emerged too. While the United States was trying to reform Afghanistan, the Taliban were rebuilding their fighting capabilities. The United States stayed in Afghanistan, fighting with Taliban for 20 years, till its withdrawal in 2021.

Rebellion and Resistance:

Taliban continued being rebellious against the United States and the NATO after it got thrown out of power. Despite being expelled from Kandahar by the invasion, Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar continued to direct rebellions from an unknown location. He was thought by some to be in Pakistan, although the Taliban denied that. In July 2015 the Afghan government discovered that Omar had died in

2013 in a hospital in Pakistan. Mullah Akhtar Mansour was appointed his successor, and he was killed in a U.S. air strike in Pakistan in May 2016. Hibatullah Akhundzada took leadership later that month, though his role remained largely confined to the political and religious spheres. The militant wing of the Taliban came increasingly under the direction of the Haqqani network, whose leader Sirajuddin served as deputy leader of the Taliban. Taliban did not quite get total international recognition as only four countries, including its neighbor Pakistan, recognized the Taliban government when it was in Power. The majority of the other countries including the United Nations recognized a group holding provinces to the north of Kabul as the rightful government-in-waiting instead. Sanctions were imposed on Taliban by the United States and the United Nations.

The Rule of Taliban 1990s-Present:

Taliban government is considered one of the most repressive in the world. Although they promised to restore peace to Afghanistan, all they did was fighting the US troops in Afghanistan. In the begging of them gaining power over Afghanistan, Taliban did not make any promises about inclusion of different groups in the society or even preserving human rights. They were only promising peace. Taliban, being a group of Islamic mujahedeen, believed that the country should be ruled by Sharia “Islamic law” and they started immediately enforcing it. Since the Taliban reached power in 1994 in Pakistan they stated that they wanted a “*genuine Islamic state*” which would be ruled by sharia law but they started imposing strict interpretations of the sharia law all over Pakistan. The Taliban also conducted punishments in line with its strict interpretation of sharia law such as public executions of convicted murderers and adulterers, and amputations for those found guilty of theft. Men were required to grow beards and women had to wear the all-covering burka. Taliban also

banned television, music and cinema and banned girls aged 10 and over from going to schools. They were accused of multiple human rights and cultural abuses.

Taliban stayed in conflict with the American forces in Afghanistan for 20 years which came to an end by complete withdrawal of the United States troops from Afghanistan on August 2021.

In July 26, 2021 The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) reported in its Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict midyear update, that there were 1,659 civilians killed and 3,254 wounded; a 47 % increase compared with the same period last year.

UNAMA said it was particularly concerned about the acute rise in the number of civilian casualties in the period from 1 May, with almost as many recorded in the May-June period as in the entire preceding four months.

Women and children made up close to half of all these civilian casualties at 46 %, according to the report. 32% were children, with 468 killed and 1,214 wounded. Fourteen per cent of civilian casualties were women, with 219 killed and 508 wounded.

“I implore the Taliban and Afghan leaders to take heed of the conflict’s grim and chilling trajectory and its devastating impact on civilians,” said Deborah Lyons, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Afghanistan.

A Withdrawal Agreement with the United States:

In February 2020, Trump administration an agreement with the Taliban that called for all American forces to leave Afghanistan by May 1, 2021. In return, the Taliban promised to cut ties with terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in Afghanistan, to reduce violence and negotiate with the US-backed Afghan

government. But the agreement did not include any mechanism to enforce the Taliban's commitments. And the exclusion of the Afghan government from the agreement strained its relations with the United States. After the deal was signed the Taliban stopped attacking American troops. The main objectives of the 2020 agreement were for Afghan leaders and the Taliban to negotiate a political roadmap for a new government and constitution, reduce violence, and ultimately forge a permanent ceasefire.

On August 2021, the United States decided to end its so called “longest war” in Afghanistan by withdrawing its last remaining troops. The decision to completely withdraw was taken by the newly elected American president Joe Biden as his campaign was mainly about end the United States “longest war”. The main reason for the American withdrawal was the financial draining of the American resources. Maintaining a force level in place full of conflicts

Although the United States has spent at least \$4 billion a year on the Afghan military, the Afghan military was weak due to corruption, lack of proper recruitment and the theft of pay and equipment by commanders. A classified intelligence assessment presented to the Biden administration this spring said: “*Afghanistan could fall largely under Taliban control within two to three years after the departure of international forces*”. But Taliban got in control much faster than that. Biden said that the Afghan political leaders gave up and fled the country and he accused the military of laying down their arms after two decades of U.S. training.

After the United States withdrawal there were high concerns about how would the life for women there be like and whether they’ll continue going to schools and work places or not. There were major concerns about Taliban turning Afghanistan into a military base for terrorist groups but Taliban officials emphasized that they would

abide by the agreement with the United States and that their aim is to impose an “*Islamic government*” which will not pose a threat to any other country.

Taliban after the U.S. Withdrawal:

A new era started on 15 August 2021 when the Taliban managed to take over its capital Kabul and overthrew the civilian government. With President Ashraf Ghani fleeing hours after the Taliban entered Kabul, the city effectively fell under the rule of the Taliban armed group, that 20 years before had been ousted by the United States and its allies.

The takeover by Taliban represents the beginning of a new era in the history of Afghanistan. The past 20 years has resulted in some progress in the enjoyment of human rights in the country, particularly women’s rights, but the conflict has also seen thousands of civilian deaths and the commission of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and other serious human rights violations and abuses by all parties. The 20-year war is estimated to have taken the lives of at least 47,245 civilians with many more injured, in addition to over 66,000 Afghan national military and police, 51,191 Taliban and other fighters, 72 journalists, 444 aid workers and 3,846 US contractors.

Since their takeover in 15th August, the Taliban promised many times during different press conferences that they would assure amnesty for all previous government workers, respect women’s rights in accordance with their interpretation of Sharia laws, and the journalists would be protected too. A Taliban commander attended a news conference with TOLO news, conducted by a female anchor, to demonstrate their promises and commitments – days later, the anchor herself fled Afghanistan fearing for her life.

Despite Taliban’s continual assurance of providing general amnesty to all previous government workers, there was no formal decree to this effect and to protect the

rights of the journalists. Despite all this reassurance, the Taliban started its repressive as they continued to crackdown on journalists and tortured them for reporting about protests in the country. Female protestors took to the streets demanding equality and freedom in Nimroz, Kabul, Herat and many other cities and provinces in Afghanistan.

Amnesty International, International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organization against Torture (OMCT) have documented incidents of human rights violations that have taken place in Afghanistan since the takeover by the Taliban on 15 August. The Amnesty international in its report asked the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to take decisive action to establish a robust independent investigative mechanism to monitor and report on human rights abuses committed in violation of international human rights law, and to contribute to accountability for crimes under international law.

Human rights defenders, journalists, and others who are targeted for their work must be evacuated and given safe passage if they wish to leave Afghanistan; and women and girls, and ethnic and religious minorities who are targeted because of their gender, ethnic, and religious identity, must be guaranteed protection. All those who wish to leave Afghanistan must be assured the right to seek asylum. At the same time, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court must receive assistance from the international community to immediately recommence its investigations into crimes under international law committed in Afghanistan.

Life under Taliban 2021:

Taliban perceived the United States withdrawal as a victory for themselves and they celebrated it. It only took Taliban few hours to reach Kabul the capital of Afghanistan, take over the presidential palace after the country's president had fled

Afghanistan in fear of what would Taliban do after the American withdrawal as they have always represented a threat to the country. Taliban raised their flag over the presidential palace. The scene in Afghanistan was quiet like how it was 20 years ago when Taliban first took over Afghanistan in 1994. Taliban promised peace and inclusion. They assured that Afghans who worked with the previous government and foreign forces have nothing to fear from and they would live peacefully in Afghanistan. They promised that women would continue going to work and freedom of expression would be provided. But the reality was not near to these promises. Taliban broke all these promises once they found that the cultural situation in Afghanistan is not in accordance with their fundamentalist beliefs that is mainly driven from the Islamic sharia. They began to impose their strict form of Islamic sharia throughout the whole country and for women being the most vulnerable faction in the afghan society, they were the most affected. Freedom of expression and speech too was affected as all protests were met by violence and repression from Taliban who used to arrest journalists, break their cameras and beat them in prisons.

The Taliban Violations against Women of Afghanistan:

Despite promises that women's rights would be respected under Sharia law, the space for women's rights has already begun to rapidly vanish, and the hard-won gains of the previous two decades have begun to disappear. For example, on 8 September 2021, the deputy head of Taliban's cultural commission told Australian media SBS that women would be banned from playing sports, citing in particular, the national women's cricket team. Many rights too were violated such as the right to work and the right to get education. This report will focus mainly on the violations of the right of afghan women to get education.

Shortly after returning to power, Taliban leaders announced that although women and girls would not be forbidden from attending schools, there would be a ban on

co-education. On 29 August 2021, the Taliban's "acting higher education minister", Abdul Baqi Haqqani, stated the "people of Afghanistan will continue their higher education in the light of Sharia law in safety without being in a mixed male and female environment."

On 5 September 2021, the Education Ministry, now controlled by the Taliban, issued a decree imposing that all female students, teachers and staff at colleges and universities wear an Islamic black abaya robe and niqab covering the hair, body, and most of the face, as well as gloves.

- The decree also formalized the minister's 29 August announcement regarding the ban on co-education, specifying that classes must be segregated by gender, and female students only taught by women when possible, or separated by a curtain.

As universities reopened on 6 September, photographs circulated on social media showing male and female students segregated by a curtain erected in the middle of classrooms. The lack of female teachers has been a significant concern in Afghanistan in the past. On 17 September the Taliban announced that boys would begin secondary, high school and religious school from Saturday the 18 of September but made no mention of when girls would begin school.

Due to the Taliban's policies of forbidding girls from attending schools past the age of eight, in the 1990's, it remains unclear what policies they will implement for primary and middle school education. Although images of girls returning to school in Herat just a few days after the Taliban's return to power flood news and social media, there have also been isolated reports of schools closing, particularly in rural areas. It should also be noted that in areas that were already under Taliban control prior to 15 August, many schools were either destroyed by the Taliban, or girls were prohibited from attending school past grade six.

-Not only women have been deprived of education but they were also banned to go to work as Taliban asked women in the work force to send their male relatives to replace them. *"We see the Taliban as responsible for everything. They attacked, they took over but they don't know how to govern. They have betrayed the hopes of millions of Afghans. Our hopes are left in refugee camps"*. Ayesha, journalist.

Several reports have been mentioning how women being prohibited from their work places or sent home and it is known yet if these were different isolated incidents or are part of wider range incidents. In early July, as Taliban fighter began to take control of parts of the city of Kandahar, nine women were instructed to leave their offices at Azizi bank; they were sent home and were told that they would be replaced by their male relatives. The same scenario repeated itself at Bank Milli in Herat a few days later.

Women in Afghanistan aren't allowed wither to go out on their own, they have to be accompanied with a male relative even if he's just a seven years old boy. Politically, women weren't represented neither in the parliament or the government. Taliban did not keep their promises of preserving women rights. Women in Afghanistan are fighting and protesting to get their rights but the lack of support they're getting from men in the country is making the possibility of this hard. If men supported women in Afghanistan and protested with them so that women could get their rights, this would strengthen women situation and help them gain back their rights gradually. So what the reason behind men not supporting women in Afghanistan?!! The is that men rights are not affected , their rights are all preserved and of course part of the reason is that they're afraid from Taliban and how they would be punished if they went out to protest with women.

The political environment in Afghanistan after Taliban came back to rule in 2021 wasn't a very welcoming one as women and different ethnic minorities weren't

included in the Taliban new government. On September 7, the Taliban announced their "*caretaker government*," with not a single woman in a cabinet position. This is a step back from the previous cabinet and undermines women's political participation rights. Despite the important role it played in improving women's rights in Afghanistan in previous years, the Women's Affairs Ministry no longer exists in the Taliban-appointed "government. " *The Ministry of Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice*" has also been re-established, which is particularly concerning given the Ministry's role in restricting women's rights in the past. Ethnic and religious minorities are also underrepresented in all leadership positions that have been appointed, which is extremely concerning given previous attacks on the rights of women and girls, as well as ethnic and religious minorities.

Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression is a basic human right that should be provided for all human beings but the situation is not much like that in Afghanistan. With Taliban having control over the media and arresting journalists who are trying to document protests through taking pictures, freedom of expression barely exists.

-Since the Taliban took over the capital Kabul, they were portraying themselves as people who gave importance to women rights, human rights and freedom of expression and claimed that these rights would continue to be provided and respected but this didn't actually happen as journalist were arrested, beaten and then released by Taliban, particularly while covering protests. On 8 September, five journalists working for Etilaatroz in Kabul were arrested by the Taliban while covering protests in the city. They were beaten to the extent that when released four hours later, at least two of them were hospitalized for treatment, with visible blood and bruising on their faces.

Violations were not only against male journalist but also female journalists. Amnesty international spoke to two women journalists who said that they faced a lot of threats from Taliban since they took over Kabul. One of these two women had to leave the country after she had been informed by her work place that her life was at risk.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), two female journalists at Radio Television Afghanistan were taken off air by the Taliban and banned from entering their offices, shortly after the fall of Kabul. CPJ, advised the journalists to stay at home for a few days, until the group informed them on when they could return.

“The Taliban’s so-called “11 rules of journalism” prohibit publishing or broadcasting reports that are “contrary to Islam” and “distort news content,” and discourage reporting news that has not been officially confirmed. A more recent directive requires that the media refer to the Taliban by their official name: Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.” A journalist called *Eshaq Ali Ehsas* who lives in Afghanistan said that everything has changed as there is no critical programs on TV or radio. Reports say that any criticism of Taliban that would be published through the media or press would bring a warning to those who published it or even worse such as arresting them. *For example, reporting that the Taliban haven’t given women their rights is banned,”* a veteran reporter based in the remote Farah province, said via messaging app. *“Similarly, you can’t report that the Taliban don’t let girls go to school,”* the journalist said. Journalists are allowed to cover what is called bread-and-butter issues such as high food prices but first they have to get permission from local department of information and culture which is controlled by Taliban.

Conclusion

At the dawn of globalization, terrorism has become a phenomenon that is not confined to a country nor religion. There are no limits that restrict its scope. It is directed towards governments not to individuals, though individuals have become targets of terrorist acts, whether these citizens are of the same nationality of the perpetrators or foreigners visiting the country for business or tourism, or for another reason. Public utilities - which perform vital services to citizens - have become targets for terrorist attacks as well.

Afghanistan is known to be a country of conflict which resulted in sever violations and abuses of human rights for decades. Taliban, since their appearance in 1990s in Afghanistan started violating human rights claiming that they're abiding by sharia law. Taliban emerged to power in Afghanistan in the 1990s since then they have been in conflict with the two major super powers in the world, the Soviet Union and the United States. Both countries believed that interfering in Afghanistan was best for them to achieve their goals. Taliban was mainly a group of mujahedeen who sought to impose and rule by sharia law but due to their several human rights violations and protecting some of Al-Qaeda member's right after the events of 9/11, they were thrown out of power by the United States of America. The United States of America tried to reform Afghanistan, provide some rights for women specifically and for all citizens in general but they were resisted by Taliban who were hiding inside different parts of Afghanistan. The United States had spent 20 years in Afghanistan in conflict with Taliban and this was a draining situation for the United States so there was an agreement of withdrawal between the United States under the administration of trump and Taliban. This agreement stated that all American forces would leave Afghanistan by May 1, 2021 and in return the Taliban would cut ties with terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in Afghanistan, reduce

violence and negotiate with the US-backed Afghan government. After the deal was signed the Taliban stopped attacking American troops. The main objectives of the 2020 agreement were for Afghan leaders and the Taliban to negotiate a political roadmap for a new government and constitution, reduce violence, and ultimately forge a permanent ceasefire.

On August 2021, the United States decided to end its so called “longest war” in Afghanistan by withdrawing its last remaining troops. The decision to completely withdraw was taken by the newly elected American president Joe Biden as his campaign was mainly about end the United States “longest war”. The main reason for the American withdrawal was the financial draining of the American resources. It took Taliban few hours to reach the capital Kabul and take control over the presidential palace. Taliban started imposing their own strict version of sharia law. Afghanistan was greatly affected by this but the most affected faction was women who were banned from going to work and prevented from getting their education.

