

Committee: Disarmament and International Security Committee (GA1)

Issue: The resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan

Student Officer: Valia Thoma

Position: Co-chair

INTRODUCTION

The Taliban is a predominantly Pashtun, Islamic fundamentalist group that ruled Afghanistan from 1996 until 2001, when a U.S.-led invasion toppled the regime for providing refuge to al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden. The Taliban regrouped across the border in Pakistan, where its central leadership, headed by Mullah Mohammed Omar, leads an insurgency against the Western-backed government in Kabul. Both the United States and Afghanistan have pursued a negotiated settlement with the Taliban, but talks have little momentum as international forces prepare to conclude combat operations in December 2014 and withdraw by the end of 2016. The Taliban was formed in the early 1990s by an Afghan faction of mujahideen, Islamic fighters who had resisted the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (1979–89) with the covert backing of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and its Pakistani counterpart, the Inter-Services Intelligence directorate (ISI). They were joined by younger Pashtun tribesmen who studied in Pakistani madrassas, or seminaries; taliban is Pashto for "students."

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Taliban

"a fundamentalist Muslim movement whose militia took control of much of Afghanistan from early 1995, and in 1996 took Kabul and set up an Islamic state. The Taliban were overthrown by US-led forces and Afghan groups in 2001 following the events of September 11."¹

¹ "Taliban | Definition of Taliban in English by Oxford Dictionaries." *Oxford Dictionaries | English*, Oxford Dictionaries, en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/taliban.

Pashtun

“a member of a Pashto-speaking people inhabiting southern Afghanistan and north-western Pakistan.”²

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Pashtuns comprise a plurality in Afghanistan and are the predominant ethnic group in much of the country’s south and east.

The movement attracted popular support in the initial post-Soviet era by promising to impose stability and rule of law after four years of conflict (1992–1996) among rival mujahideen groups. Talibs entered Kandahar in November 1994 to pacify the crime-ridden southern city, and by September 1996 seized the capital, Kabul, from President Burhanuddin Rabbani, an ethnic Tajik whom they viewed as anti-Pashtun and corrupt. The Taliban regime controlled some 90 percent of the country before its 2001

Pashtuns comprise a plurality in Afghanistan and are the predominant ethnic group in much of the country’s south and east. The movement attracted popular support in the initial post-Soviet era by promising to impose stability and rule of law after four years of conflict (1992–1996) among rival mujahideen groups. Talibs entered Kandahar in November 1994 to pacify the crime-ridden southern city, and by September 1996 seized the capital, Kabul, from President Burhanuddin Rabbani, an ethnic Tajik whom they viewed as anti-Pashtun and corrupt. The Taliban regime controlled some 90 percent of the country before its 2001.

Allegations of connection to 'The West' or to the United States

After the Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan in 1979, Islamic mujahideen fighters engaged in war with those Soviet forces. Some of those Islamic fighters would later transform into the Taliban according to Professor Carole Hillenbrand

² “Pashtun | Definition of Pashtun in English by Oxford Dictionaries.” *Oxford Dictionaries | English*, Oxford Dictionaries, en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/pashtun.

who stated: "The West helped the Taliban to fight the Soviet takeover of Afghanistan".

Although there isn't any evidence that the CIA directly supported the Taliban or Al Qaeda, some basis for military support of the Taliban was provided when, in the early 1980s, the CIA and the ISI (Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency) provided arms to Afghans resisting the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the ISI assisted the process of gathering radical Muslims from around the world to fight against the Soviets. Osama Bin Laden was one of the key players in organizing training camps for the foreign Arab volunteers, although his organization, Maktab al-Khidamat, was exclusively Saudi funded.

Emergence in Afghanistan

During the power vacuum created by the Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, the country was torn apart by warring mujahideen groups and the ISI of Pakistan grasped the chance to wield power in the region by fostering a previously unknown Kandahari student movement. They continued to support the Taliban, as Pakistani allies, in their push to conquer Afghanistan in the 1990s. Taliban initially enjoyed enormous good will from Afghans weary of the corruption, brutality, and the incessant fighting of Mujahideen warlords. Pakistan's cooperation is crucial for effectively countering terrorism in Afghanistan, even if as yet largely not forthcoming.

The first major military activity of the Taliban was in October–November 1994 when they marched from Maiwand in southern Afghanistan to capture Kandahar City and the surrounding provinces, losing only a few dozen men. Starting with the capture of a border crossing and a huge ammunition dump from warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a few weeks later they freed "a convoy trying to open a trade route from Pakistan to Central Asia" from another group of warlords attempting to extort money. In the next three months this hitherto "unknown force" took control of twelve of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, with Mujahideen warlords often

surrendering to them without a fight and the "heavily armed population" giving up their weapons. By September 1996 they had captured Afghanistan's capital, Kabul.

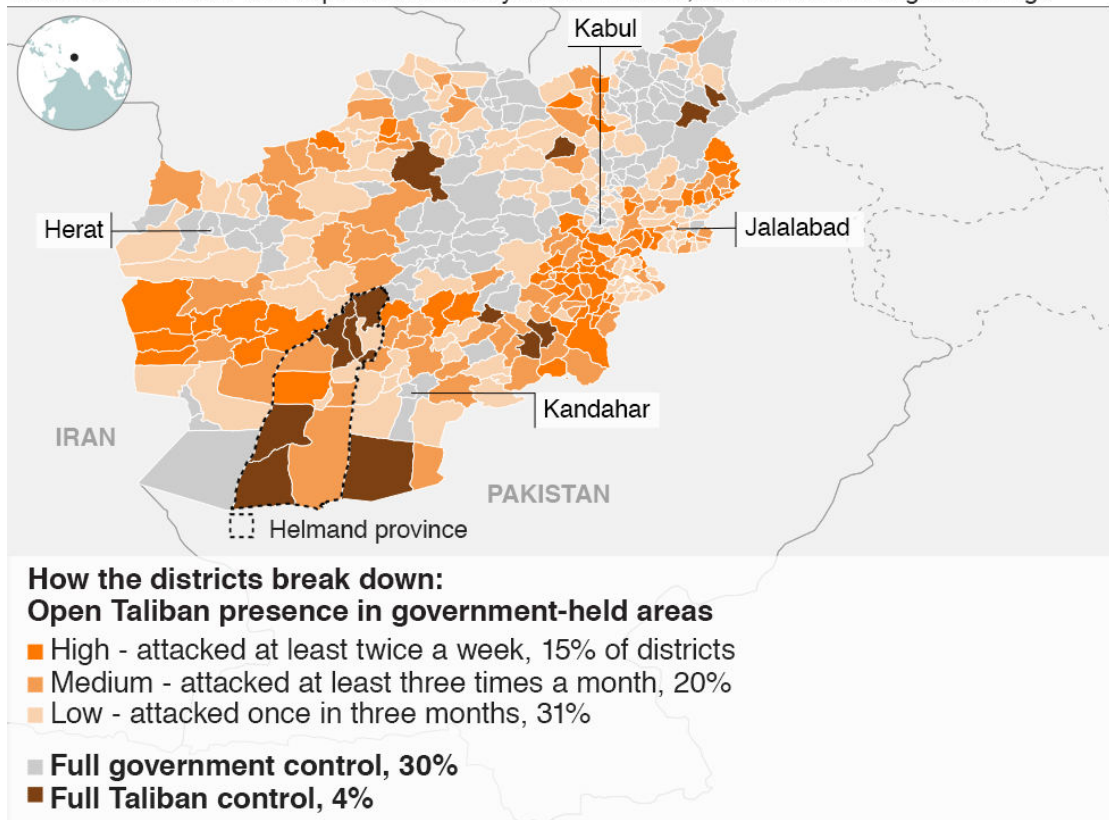
Although most of the trends are problematical, Afghanistan is not on the cusp of defeat. While undermined by corruption and ethnic and patronage rifts and struggling, the Afghan military has not collapsed or ethnically fragmented. The Taliban still does not hold large cities nor does it have anywhere near the territorial control that the Islamic State temporarily achieved in Iraq and Syria. The current Afghan government has adopted many better policies and approaches than the previous administration of Hamid Karzai.

RESULT

-in 17 years from the beginning of the war major cities have become ruins, tens of millions of human beings have been displaced from their homes, refugees by millions across borders, upsetting even more areas, terrorist groups have become prominent on much of the planet, and the American world continues to be militarized. we are faced with a new kind of disaster, a militarization of the planet that we have never seen before. We are faced with a new kind of disaster, a militarization of the planet that we have never seen before.

Taliban presence in Afghanistan by district

Labelled cities have also experienced deadly suicide attacks, car bombs and targeted killings



Source: BBC research, 23 August - 21 November 2017

BBC

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

United States of America

USA's goals are to fight against Al-Qaida and its affiliates in Afghanistan and strengthen the country in order to be save again from the terrorist groups including Taliban. The United States, in partnership with the international community, is conducting a coordinated civil-military effort in support of GIRoA. Efforts in security, governance, the rule of law, and socio-economic development, together with Afghan efforts to promote an inclusive political dialogue leading to national reconciliation, should allow the USG to make substantial progress towards achieving U.S. national goals in Afghanistan.

Russian Federation

United States claims that Russia and Taliban are strongly connected. According to the allegation Russian Federation supports economically the Afghan Taliban. Also, the US government with the government of Afghanistan and a number of high-ranking US officials,

mainly military, similarly claims that except from economical support they offer arms and weapons. Of course, the Russian government and the Taliban deny all the allegations and they state that USA and Afghanistan have no evidence. US Defense Secretary James Mattis told the House Armed Services Committee in October 2017 that he wanted to see more evidence about the level of Russian support for the Taliban, adding that what he had seen "doesn't make sense".

Pakistan

Pakistan and Afghan Taliban are associated since the birth of Taliban in the 1990s. The ISI provided support to Mullah Omar when he founded the organisation in Kandahar. It had trained Omar even earlier in the 1980s at one of its training camps for the mujahedin that fought the Soviet occupation of the country. Pakistan was one of only three countries that recognised the Taliban’s Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan as the legitimate government of Afghanistan in the late 1990s (Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were the other two). “The relationship between the Afghan Taliban and Pakistan has become more important than ever. It is a complex and complicated nexus. Without doubt, Pakistan and its intelligence service, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate of the army (ISI), have more influence over the Taliban than any other country or intelligence service. It provides critical safe haven and sanctuary to the groups’ leadership, advice on military and diplomatic issues, and assistance with fund raising. But its influence is not complete, and whether it could persuade the Taliban to settle for a political settlement in Afghanistan, is unclear at best.”³

Yemen

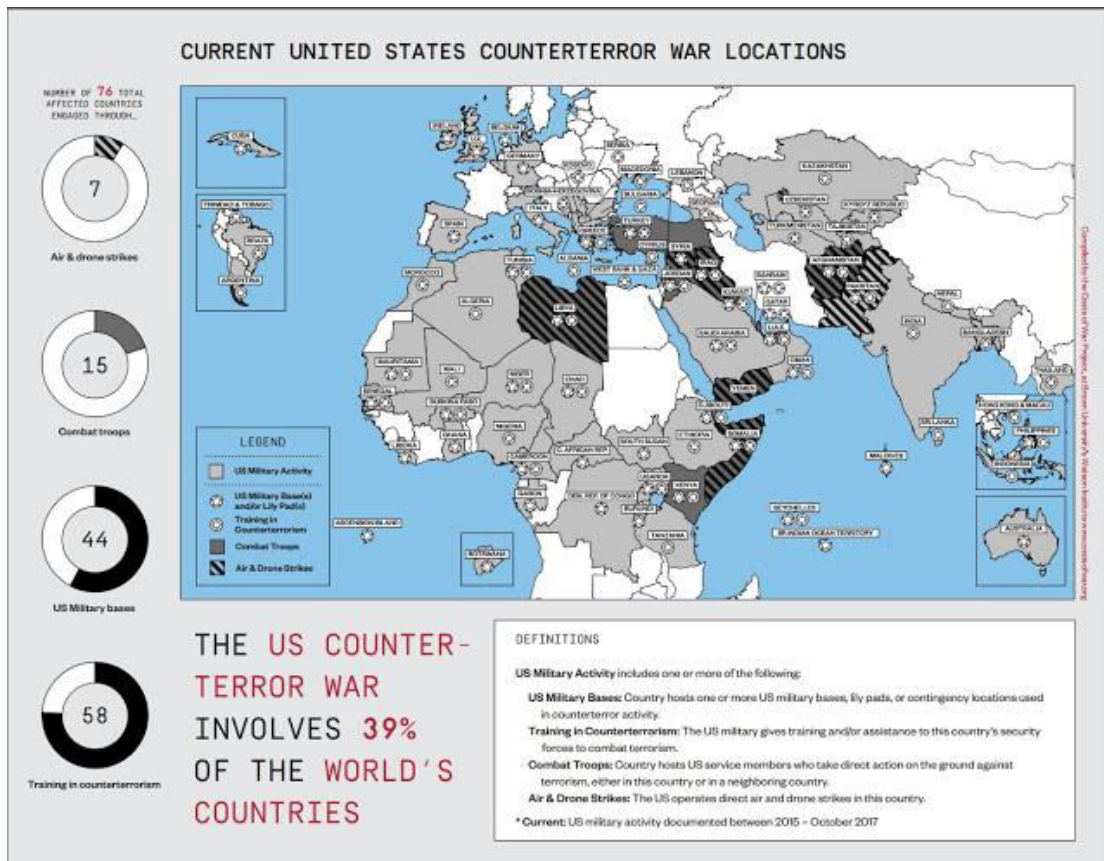
Yemen is facing the same threats and problems with terrorist groups at the moment. So, is one of the states that support Afghanistan because it understands the situation. Yemen with USA, who supports Yemen fight against terrorism, are trying together as an alliance to help Afghanistan with Taliban.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
1994	The Taliban military body was formed in the southern regions

³ Riedel, Bruce. “Pakistan, Taliban and the Afghan Quagmire.” *Brookings*, Brookings, 28 July 2016, www.brookings.edu/opinions/pakistan-taliban-and-the-afghan-quagmire/.

	of the country on the grounds of the unification of Afghanistan.
1996-2001	Taliban led Afghanistan
December 2001	The Taliban were violently expelled from power after the Afghanistan-US warfare
- January 2015	The Taliban swore faith in the Islamic State, and to prove their devotion to the Islamic State, they deacidified a Pakistani soldier holding prisoners.
2001	At the beginning of this war, which had contributed to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Afghanistan was partly ruled (not entirely) by the Taliban. Osama bin Laden was also there, along with a relatively modest military body.
October 2001	Washington launched the war on terror. At that time, the target was only one country, the same country where, over a decade ago, the US had completed a "dealership" war against the Soviet Union, which during that time had financed, equipped and supported a series extreme, Islamic, fundamentalist groups, including a rich young Saudi woman named Osama bin Laden.
2002	Osama bin Laden left for Pakistan, leaving many of his comrades dead and his organization, al-Qaeda in a state of dissolution. The Taliban, defeated, was accustomed to being allowed to hand over their weapons and return to their villages -the occupation of Baghdad in 2003, the recent destruction of the Islamic state's "caliphate" in Syria and Iraq
September 2003	The biggest terrorist attack Against USA that has occurred so far and are a hub of world history, having caused many changes in international relations, in social and political life all over the world. The attacks were carried out by Islamic terrorists, organized by the al-Qaida organization and its leader, Osama bin Laden, in order to hit their biggest enemy.
October 2001	War attacks launched by the United States against Afghanistan in the context of the war on terror.
March 2003	War attacks launched by the United States against Iraq respectively, in the context of the war on terror.



UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

The UN has adopted many resolutions in order to solve the issue and make the situation better. The resolutions are the following:

In the thirty- fifth session of the General Assembly the resolutions [A/35/144](#) and the resolution [35/37](#) were adopted. In the thirty-sixth to forty-sixth sessions the General Assembly continues to discuss the issue and adopts the resolutions [36/34](#), [37/37](#), [38/29](#), [39/13](#), [40/12](#), [41/33](#), [42/15](#) and [46/23](#).

In the following sessions, the General Assembly adopted and other resolutions, [50/88](#), [51/195](#), [52/211](#), [53/203](#), [54/189](#), [55/174](#), [56/220](#), [57/113](#), [58/27](#), [59/112](#) and [60/32](#).

All of these and many more resolutions have been adopted in order to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan and find ways to minimize the terrorism in the area. But all these resolutions weren't really effective and they didn't solve the issue

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Previous resolutions that have been conducted like the Working paper no. 66 which was negotiating with the Taliban toward a solution for the Afghan conflict at January 2010 or the latest resolution is UNSC Resolution 1868, of March 23, 2009, which states: 'Unanimously adopting resolution 1868 (2009), the Council instructed the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to lead international civilian efforts to, among other tasks, promote coherent international support to the Afghan Government and adherence to the principles of the Afghanistan Compact; strengthen cooperation with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF); and, through an expanded presence countrywide, provide political outreach.'

And with the latter part, 'to provide political outreach', was first part of the UN mandate for Afghanistan in March 2007. This was further developed in Resolution 1868 (UNSC 2009), which reads: 'Provide political outreach through a strengthened and expanded presence throughout the country, provide good offices in support of Afghan-led reconciliation programs. 'But they did not have the best results.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The first thing that we have to consider is the causes of the Taliban resurgence in Afghanistan. Taliban can be deemed as an extreme version of populism. They use religious beliefs as an excuse to acquire political power and to engage in illicit activities. Plus, there are many countries or firms that keep providing them with money, drugs (as they also engage in drug dealing) and many more. Thus, in order to tackle this specific problem, we need to:

- Work towards a better social environment in Afghanistan, for example by endorsing the education of young people and the application of human rights.
- Convince all countries to condemn the Taliban as a terrorist organisation and render the drug or weapon trade with them completely illegal
- Confront the illegal drug and weapon trade in the area in general. That can be done in many ways, depending on how lenient we want to be. From surveillance methods to complete disarmament programs, such measures will be a major impediment to the Taliban's economic activities and will reduce their political power.
- Work towards a more transparent economic environment.

For all these to become a reality, we need the cooperation of all nations and of NGOs. During our meetings, we are to find out the optimal way for the aforementioned goals to be achieved.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gentile, Carmen. "The Russians Are Providing Weapons to the Taliban in Afghanistan but No One Is Listening." *USA Today*, Gannett Satellite Information Network, 6 Apr. 2018, eu.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2018/04/06/russians-providing-weapons-taliban-afghanistan-but-no-one-listening-column/483069002/.

Azami, Dawood. "Is Russia Arming the Afghan Taliban?" *BBC News*, BBC, 2 Apr. 2018, www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41842285.

"Bombs Aren't the Answer: A Case for Vigorous Diplomacy in Syria, Afghanistan and Yemen." *Thousands of Garment Factory Workers Across Cambodia Are Fainting on the Job*, inthesetimes.com/article/21049/afghanistan-syria-yemen-diplomacy-airstrikes.

In-text Citation

"The Taliban in Afghanistan." *Council on Foreign Relations*, Council on Foreign Relations, www.cfr.org/background/taliban-afghanistan.

In-text Citation

Riedel, Bruce. "Pakistan, Taliban and the Afghan Quagmire." *Brookings*, Brookings, 28 July 2016, www.brookings.edu/opinions/pakistan-taliban-and-the-afghan-quagmire/.

In-text Citation

"Taliban Fast Facts." *CNN*, Cable News Network, 26 Mar. 2018, www.cnn.com/2013/09/20/world/taliban-fast-facts/index.html.

In-text Citation

Sharifi, Shoab, and Louise Adamou. "Taliban Threaten 70% of Afghanistan, BBC Finds." *BBC News*, BBC, 31 Jan. 2018, www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-42863116
www.nytimes.com/topic/organization/taliban.

"Who Are the Taliban?" *BBC News*, BBC, 26 May 2016, www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-11451718.

"Pashtun | Definition of Pashtun in English by Oxford Dictionaries." *Oxford Dictionaries | English*, Oxford Dictionaries, en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/pashtun.

"Main Organs." *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/main-organs/.

“United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly.” *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/en/ga/62/plenary/afghanistan/bkg.shtml.

“Taliban | Definition of Taliban in English by Oxford Dictionaries.” *Oxford Dictionaries | English*, Oxford Dictionaries, en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/taliban.