

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind

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Women's Meaningful Participation Ensures Peace Quality, Durability

Participation of women in peace negotiations plays a key role in durability of peace. Peace studies show that women's participation in peace negotiations have a positive impact on the quality and the durability of peace, independent of international peacekeeping, the participation of civil society actors, and other factors related to gender equality. Furthermore, there are competing theoretical explanations as to why and how women's participation positively impacts peace durability. Case studies research focused on women's participation as civil society activists who pressure warring parties to conclude an agreement, and as delegates who set agendas that often prioritize women's rights and broader issues related to the quality of peace show that women's direct participation positively impacts the durability as well as the quality of peace after civil war. Some policy documents remain unhelpfully rooted in essentialist assumptions about women's inherently peaceful nature to explain their assumed positive influence on peace processes. However, such assumptions cloud our understanding of the mechanisms that causally link women's participation to durable peace. To date, one comparative study conducted by O'Reilly indicates that women's participation in peace processes contributes both to the likelihood of reaching a peace agreement and to its successful implementation. According to Caprioli women's security and the socioeconomic and political status of women directly impact the likelihood of renewed civil war. Based on these findings, we test whether women's meaningful participation in peace negotiations positively impacts the quality and the durability of peace.

According to Bell C Ensuring women's right to participation in peacemaking and peacebuilding cannot be equated with inserting gender sensitive language into peace agreement texts. Recent research suggests that it often peace agreements with the most holistic references to women that suffer from chronic implementation failures because these tend to be highly internationalized accords with little real agreement between the conflict parties. Research findings further imply that the policy discourse on women's inclusion in peace processes needs to take the diversity of women groups and potential female delegates into account. Attention has to predominantly be focused on including women civil society activists in peace negotiations. Collaboration between women delegates and women civil society groups broadens the civilian support base for peace and results in networks that can persistently advocate for the adoption of policies that empower women.

Afghan women make up 50 percent of the population, and they are well below 50 percent of the problem in what drives the conflict. It's important that they see themselves represented in the discussion and in the debates that will come with the Taliban. They shall take advantage of the opportunity coming up to explore and begin discussing with the Taliban in order they understand the determination of wider society to move forward and not to go back.

In sum, women's participation in peace negotiations with voice and influence leads to better accord content, higher agreement implementation rates, and longer lasting peace. Finally, women's direct participation in peace negotiations with voice increases the quality and durability of peace.

Necessity for Preventive Measures Against Natural Disasters

By: Mohammad Zahir Akbari

Last Thursday and Friday the west and north provinces of the country were severely damaged with heavy rainfall and flood spate. These floods have badly affected across seven provinces, especially Herat, Balkh, Faryab and Badghis. According to the Local authorities, the event caused 35 deaths and many more have been wounded in northern and western Afghanistan. Of these, 12 have killed in Faryab, 10 in the western province of Herat, 8 in Badghis and 5 other in Balkh. In addition, Another 12 people were missing and more than 700 houses were destroyed or severely damaged which caused thousands of family displacement. "There is huge destruction caused by floods," quoted from Ahmad Jawed Nadem, head of refugees and repatriation for Herat. In one area, he said he saw more than 200 destroyed houses. The ministry of dealing with natural disasters predicts farther persistence of heavy rainfall in the coming weeks.

The floods worsened an already desperate drought hit and war-torn situation. Earlier this month, were also killed at least 20 people by flash floods caused by heavy rains that swept away thousands of homes and vehicles in southern Kandahar province. Hundreds of thousands of people remained displaced as a result of last year's severe drought across 22 provinces of the country. Floods in early March also caused destruction and put this year's wheat harvest at risk. Children waded through muddy, knee-deep floodwaters that flowed through tent camps for displaced people after the rain stopped. Mir Gulabuddin Miri, director of the Afghan Red Crescent in Herat, said access to some areas had been cut off, preventing teams from reaching affected people. "The destruction is huge. Over 12 areas in the province have been badly hit, people have lost their houses. We've only been able to provide them with some food and blankets so far," he said. Some Badghis residents were calling it the worst storm in 20 years, it said.

Given the past and present natural disasters, it seems that Afghanistan is country which always subject to danger of flood spate. The 21 provinces of Afghanistan are more vulnerable to floods and landslides, and there is a greater risk in areas of eastern and north-eastern provinces. Seasonally, Afghanistan is more vulnerable against natural disasters such as earthquakes, landslide, storms, floods and severe snowstorms during the winter and spring season. Despite above mentioned fact, being one of the countries with a high probability in occurrence of natural disasters, the government and the people of Afghanistan have no readiness to deal with natural disasters and are often shocked, and the number of victims is also highly increased. This trend has increasingly intensified simultaneous with general climate change in several last year.

However, the ministry of dealing with natural disasters is active in dealing with natural incidents but it has not the capacity to deal with

such huge disasters, and so has failed to appropriately respond or prevent natural disasters. The activities of this ministry are limited to the relief and treatment of the injured after the incident; therefore, it has been less successful in awaking people or taking necessary measures before incident. Failure to provide timely information is one of the main challenges of combating natural disasters in Afghanistan. Timely information is one of the essential prerequisites for success in combating natural disasters. Unfortunately, In Afghanistan, beside the fact that students at school and universities are not trained on dealing with natural disasters, there is no public awareness in this area and people are not told what to do when a natural incident occurs. They do not know how to help each other to prevent from increase of human casualties and fiscal losses.

In other countries, there is always a previous alert system for such incidents. But in Afghanistan, unfortunately, there is no such system and the citizens of Afghanistan have not received any information about the probability of a natural accident in the foreseeable future. Thus, after the occurrence of natural events, timely assistance is not provided. In recent years, it has been seen that responsible institutions have began helping several days after the incident occurred. Failure to provide timely assistance indicates that the Afghan government is not prepared to combat natural disasters, which will increase the casualties and losses caused by such incidents.

Seemingly, there is also Managerial and technical weakness in dealing with natural events. As seen in recent years, many government ministry staffs did not have sufficient skill and expertise in combating natural disasters. To have a successful fight against natural disasters, the government of Afghanistan needs to make a specialized ministry with modern equipment and facilities. Meanwhile, the ministry should have plans to raise awareness of people how to deal with such incidents and show people how to take probable measures in the event of such incidents.

Moreover, it is imperative upon the government of Afghanistan to predict and be able to manage any type climate incident may occur in the future. According to experts the implementation of Afghanistan National Development Strategy, the country's second most important national document after the Constitution, would be the best way to overcome the climate issues. However, some parts of this document has received enough government's attention like building water infrastructure but within ANDS the country's agricultural sector and climate change issue must be given more priority and climate change effect should not be neglected.

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The Transatlantic Continental Drift

By: Christopher R. Hill

The Earth's continental plates broke apart and first began to shift hundreds of millions of years ago. But anyone visiting European capitals or following events in President Donald Trump's Washington can be forgiven for thinking that another tectonic divergence is underway.

Of course, transatlantic mistrust is not new. In the run-up to the 2003 Iraq War, then-US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld sparked controversy by drawing a line between "old Europe" and "new Europe," the latter comprising the ex-communist states that were more enthusiastic about following the US into war. In the eyes of many Europeans, Rumsfeld's goal was to sow division within Europe.

Now Europe must deal with another difficult American named Donald. The Trump administration has pursued an even more aggressive approach to Europe, deeming the European Union a strategic competitor and raising doubts about America's long-term commitment to European security. In keeping with the Trumpian worldview, the US now views Europe as a freeloader that has taken advantage of American largesse. Demonstrating his tenuous grasp of US interests, Trump seems intent on weakening the forces of European integration. He also has tried to drive wedges between Europeans, and not just between "old" and "new" (among whom he has a number of cheerleaders). For example, Trump makes no secret of his sympathy for the Brexiters, even as they continue to discredit themselves in the eyes of most Europeans, and perhaps even among a majority in the United Kingdom, too.

Trump's "America First" worldview makes no room for a partnership between the US and Europe, or for any allies who do not automatically throw their support behind US policies. US Vice President Mike Pence made this all too clear at the Munich Security Conference in February, where he scolded Europeans for undermining US sanctions against Iran, and rather resembled a teacher reciting a list of overdue assignments.

American paternalism toward Europe will not necessarily end with Trump. As we have seen, it reflects a longstanding attitude within the US national-security establishment, including among neoconservatives, many of whom have openly refused ever to work for Trump. On issues ranging from the Balkans to the Russian threat against Ukraine, the prevailing American view is that Europeans are weak. Or, as a popular 2003 foreign-policy book put it, "Americans are from Mars, Europeans are from Venus."

To be sure, Europe also bears some of the blame for transatlantic tensions. When the EU began its expansion process some 20 years ago, Poland and other EU applicants complained to US diplomats about being told by European envoys to choose between America and the EU, as if there were two different sets of values and interests. Europeans' supposedly more evolved views on climate change, the death penalty, the uses of soft power, and many other issues were marshaled in support of

a single European identity, with interests distinct from those of the US. Of course, much has changed since then, and some Europeans have come to realize that they must do more to strengthen transatlanticism, not least by increasing their defense spending, streamlining EU decision-making processes, and settling economic disputes. (One major holdout is Germany, whose defense spending as a share of GDP remains well below the 2% target set by NATO.)

But an even more fundamental challenge for Europe is internal. Across a wide array of issues, Europe's leaders need to do a better job of explaining to their constituents what the European project is really about. To earlier generations, the answer was obvious: European integration is necessary to prevent another world war. But while that was true 70 years ago, it is clear that the project's raison d'être needs to be updated to address European voters' current concerns.

Europeans originally thought they were joining together in a civilizational undertaking. But with the deepening of the bloc's structural integration and the inclusion of a unified Germany, many Europeans started to feel like they had been forced into the world's most onerous bureaucracy. And as social and economic pressures from immigration have increased, more Europeans have begun to feel as though they have lost their national identities. Their minds are not likely to be changed by lectures about moral responsibility and the needs of the less fortunate.

Hence, for some member states - including some that have benefited tremendously from EU membership - the instinct now is to shut the door and roll out the barbed wire. But as any serious European leader knows, migrant and refugee crises - and immigration policy more generally - must be addressed comprehensively at the EU level, including with a robust foreign policy focused on addressing the root causes of the problem.

As Europeans grapple with fundamental issues of identity, bureaucracy, and sovereignty, US policymakers, whatever their political pedigree, need to take a deep breath and reflect on the causes of the current transatlantic rift. Specifically, they should consider whether high-handed paternalism is really the best approach to a continent whose values and interests so overwhelmingly overlap with their own.

At the risk of stating the obvious, the rising threat to democracy - and even to civilization itself - demands that the US and Europe demonstrate more mutual respect and cooperation. There is no reason to expect anything to change under the current US administration, but we still need all hands on deck to prepare for a better future for transatlantic relations. It's time to push the continental plates back together.

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