

April 13, 2019

**Disabilities and its Humanitarian Status in Afghanistan**

Due to persisting war and abandoned improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Afghanistan, the numbers of people with disabilities are dramatically increasing throughout the country. Though there is no clear and timely information to specify the exact number of disabilities in the country, the estimated figures as quoted from Ahmad Zia Langari, the commissioner of Afghanistan independent human rights commission, there are around 5 million disabled people, including severe and ordinary disabilities in the country. However, the latest Survey which jointly conducted by the Government of Afghanistan and Handicap International was in 2005 had found a general prevalence rate of 2.7% for severe disabilities and 4.7% with less severe disabilities equalized from 660,000 and 1.2 million persons with disabilities. It is said that about 12 thousand of these are pertained to national security forces.

The disabilities are mainly categorized into physical, sensory and mental disabilities. While all of them have limitation to access basic services, and there are many barriers and obstacle for their accessibility in public places including schools, hospitals, libraries and mosques; the public building do not have ramps, suitable washrooms for person with disabilities. Therefore, they face more challenges than other person in order to continue their higher education, eventually they forcibly leave the education and cannot continue their higher education, and due to full of depression, dire economic circumstance they become despondent and they live with dismal, especially adolescent girls, they experience significant difficulties.

In the current unemployment environment, nearly 10% of people with disability (PwD) earn living through begging on the Road-side, streets, and in front mosques or markets which intensified the already congested city. While majority children with disabilities estimated 200,000, do not go to school. The National Disability Survey found that over 72% of persons with disabilities are over six years old that not received any education. Women and girls with disabilities are living in extremely difficult situations being discriminated both as females and as persons with disabilities e.g. legal and economic obstacles, exclusion and stigmatization.

It is estimated that 90% of PwD living in extreme poverty, joblessness and also lack professional skills to join public or private sector of the country. Therefore, a large number of people with disabilities do not access to job opportunities and basic humanitarian needs. It seems that our country is unable to address the problems and challenges of people with disabilities due to a lack of resources (financial and professionally trained staff), and adverse security challenges throughout the country. If the International community can provide financial opportunities to PwD, they are capable to play a major role in social, cultural and also economic growth of the country. Studies show that all people have the potential for self-sufficiency when given access to educational and economic opportunities and remove physical and social barriers.

In addition to the aforementioned challenges, they suffer from loss of identity and social status with sense of dislocation and isolation which put a huge psychological tension on older persons posing serious threat on their lives. According to World Health Organization (WHO), there are more than 600 Million Person with Disability worldwide, which means from 10 up to 15 percent of world population are disabled and they have suffered with multiple problems such as poverty, mental trauma and social isolation related issues. The disabilities are often marginalized to due to the physical fault imposed by social and political environment. They are also subject to extreme isolation and vulnerability in Afghanistan, especially in the remote insecure provinces of the country they are unable to access the basic health care, sufficient food items and facilities they need.

It seems that the National Authority for the Families of Martyrs and People with Disabilities and other related ministries are not in a position to provide adequate fiscal or employment support to mitigate the pain of poverty and disability from this part of our community. However, some efforts have been carried out but not enough. For example, out of 34 provinces 21 have physical rehabilitation services. Thus, international and national NGOs have taken part in providing services for people with disabilities. On the other hand, the contributing factors to disabilities such as landmines and explosive devices, have not removed from the country. According to the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), there are 4,681 minefields and 192 battlefield areas that threaten the lives and livelihoods of 1,655 Afghan communities in the country.

Legally and ethically, the people with disabilities must be supported by both government and society. Article 53 of national constitution of Afghanistan recognize the rights of people with disabilities and advise for taking necessary measures to promote their lives. Accordingly, Afghanistan has adapted the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities which offers sufficient standards of protection for the civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights of persons with disabilities on the basis of inclusion, equality and non-discrimination. It makes clear that persons with disabilities are entitled to live independently in their communities, to make their own choices and to play an active role in society. Thus, the general spirit of national and international law indicate that all citizens have equal right to have access to education, health care services, public facilities and other services in order to meet their basic needs of lives.

Finally, the Person with Disabilities are part of human community, the humanitarian NGO and government of Afghanistan should make efforts to provide necessary services and program to strengthen and extend rehabilitation, assistive technology, assistance, community-based rehabilitation, and overall to include the person with disabilities and respect for the inherent dignity, individual autonomy, including the freedom to make one's own choices. In view of that independence of persons, non-discrimination, full and effective participation and inclusion in society, respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities are part of human diversity and humanity.

**Wars, Their Vitality and Their Outcomes**

By: Dilawar Sherzai

Wars have always played a dominant role in human societies, if not positive all the times. There are many people in the world who consider that wars are necessary, though wars bring a lot of miseries with them. They even go to the extreme by calling them as a precondition to peace. But, on the other hand, there are many people who believe that wars are destructive and they destroy human civilization and annihilate human race. Therefore, human beings must not pursue wars; rather they have to run after the opportunities that can lead them towards peace and tranquility. However, such thinking is considered very much ideal; the desire that wars should not happen is a dream, while the fact that wars happen is very much a reality. Therefore, it is necessary to understand wars, their objectives, reasons and their effects, so as to have a proper understanding of politics and human societies.

Wars are basically launched to coerce wills. The Prussian military general and theoretician Carl Von Clausewitz defined war as follows: "War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will." Thus, wars are basically launched when wills are not attained or they are not agreed upon by the opposing party. Most of the times, wars are followed by failed political or diplomatic endeavors. Finding no compromise or agreement, the parties jump in the war and try to solve the issues through force.

War is not a new concept in human societies; rather they have been parts of different phases of history. But in the modern world of ours it has become more lethal. Earlier human societies were not very complex and even their interactions were not very much often. Today human societies are very much complex and they have very frequent interactions; further, unlike past, today the resources are getting scarce with each passing day while the number of people living on earth are increasing. Moreover, with the development in science and technology, there has been advancement in the field of modern weaponry, making wars more possible and more lethal. There are possibilities that the modern wars can well end in nuclear wars which if not controlled properly can really lead to the extinction of human race.

The reasons and motivations for wars are different. It should be noted that the motivation for war may be different for those ordering the war than for those undertaking the war. The people ordering the war form leadership, while the people undertaking the war form the military and even the people. It is quite possible that the leadership may be pursuing the war with the motivation of exerting its dominance over the enemy, while the soldiers forming the military may be fighting the war just because they are more motivated towards the money they are getting for the war. Nonetheless, it is necessary for a state to have the will of its leadership, its military and its people behind a war otherwise it may result into a failure (that is what happening in the war against terrorism). The motivations may differ, but there should be motivation. War uses force and force requires energy, which is provided by leadership, military and people, once that energy ends, the war cannot coerce its objectives.

The reasons of the war may differ on different occasions. According

to Jewish Talmud, described in the BeReshit Rabbah, there are three universal reasons for wars; 1). Economic, 2). Ideological/religious and 3). Power/pride/love (personal). The reasons described by him are really one of the basic reasons but not the only reasons. Today with the development of the states and the growing importance of politics in them, political reason is one of the most dominant reasons. And it should be mentioned as well that it is not necessary that a particular war should have only a single reason. There can be different reasons for a single war and because of a single reason there can be various wars. John G. Stoessinger, in his Why Nations Go to War says that the parties who go for the war claim that morality justifies their fight. He further mentions that the rationale for beginning a war depends on an overly optimistic assessment of the outcome of hostilities (casualties and costs), and on misperceptions of the enemy's intentions. In short, there are different theories describing different reasons for war. These theories include psychological theories, economic theory, demographic theory and many others. They talk about the different reasons of war but none can be considered as a universal theory.

As there is no constant and universal reason for war, in the same way the strategic and tactical aspects of war keep on changing with the changing nature of human societies. According to Carl Von Clausewitz, "Every age had its own kind of war, its own limiting conditions, and its own peculiar preconceptions." The single factor that has always been constant is war's employment of organized violence and the resultant destruction of property and lives. The conducts of wars have changed with the changing societies as well. In the words of Ralph Peters, "The nature of warfare never changes, only its superficial manifestations. Joshua and David, Hector and Achilles would recognize the combats that our soldiers and marines have waged in Somalia and Iraq. The uniforms evolve, bronze gives way to titanium, arrows may be replaced by laser-guided bombs, but the heart of the matter is still killing your enemies until any survivors surrender and do your will."

The effect of the wars is the most tragic aspect of war and it can be measured by the amount of losses incurred by the involved parties. The losses of the war can be in the form of property and valuable human life. The result of the war can be measured by the outcomes of the war. The difference between the conditions before the war and after the war basically constitutes the outcomes. Sometimes the outcomes are in the favor of a particular party in the war, but on most of the occasions the outcomes are in the favor of none of the parties.

The ongoing war against terrorism in Afghanistan may become one of the same types of war that ends in the favor of none of the parties in the war. Eighteen years after the war, as the war is being concluded, none of the parties, US authorities and people, Afghan authorities and people, Pakistani authorities and people and Taliban, seems to be contended with the result of the war and each one finds its objectives not achieved. If not pursued properly from now onwards, this war is going to result in nothing more than a share tragedy.

Dilawar Sherzai is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at Outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

**The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Recent Developments and Next Steps**

By: Gabriel M. Picillo

**O**verview  
The international community is concerned about stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace prospects, and the knock-on effects on regional stability, and international tranquility. 25 years of diplomatic initiatives have failed to bring peace to Israelis and Palestinians. In 1991, at the Madrid Peace Conference, the two sides met and negotiated in person for the first time. It was internationally agreed upon that with time and diplomatic efforts, Israel could peacefully coexist alongside a new Palestinian state comprised of Gaza and the West Bank.

Such hopes have gone unrealized. Recently, many have called for reconsidering alternatives to the two-state solution such as the creation of a binational, federated state — inhabited by Israelis and Palestinians with equal rights. Though the political future of Israel and Palestine remains uncertain, it is critical that constructive dialogue aimed at bringing consensus and progress must continue.

Since its start, there have been innumerable diplomatic initiatives aimed at resolving the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. There was the Camp David Summit in 1978, the Oslo Accords from 1993 – 1995, the Clinton Parameters in 2000, the Taba Summit in 2002, the Arab Peace Initiative in 2002, the Mitchell talks from 2010 – 2011, and the Kerry talks from 2013 – 2014. Though all have contributed to advancing Israeli-Palestinian peace, the collective progress is nonetheless negligible. Despite limited outcomes, efforts must continue. New efforts should focus on areas where previous talks fell short, and shift the focus from all-encompassing peace to smaller victories on an accumulation of social, economic, and political issues.

Though the prime challenge of establishing territorial boundaries remains, secondary obstacles have become more difficult to resolve. Such considerations require flexibility and respect for the historic and ethnic backgrounds of both parties. More delicately, steps need to be taken to reach a durable consensus regarding Jerusalem and its contested status.

This must be done in a way that is conscientious and forward-looking if it aims to mitigate recurring territorial disputes in years to come. Negotiations must also clearly lay out the future of Palestinian refugees, where they will be resettled, what programs will assist their resettlement, as well as how they will become self-sustaining. Further, parties must discuss Israeli settlements expansion during the last decade. A joint report from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Baker Institute about a two or a one-state solution asks the perennial question: Do we need new ideas, or new determination and political will behind previous ones?

**Background**

Understanding the conflict's long and tangled history is vital to addressing it. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict began at the end of the Arab-Israeli War in 1948 when the land surrounding the Jordan River was divided into the Jewish state of Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank. Disputes over

boundaries, contestation over resources, and ethnic tension brought continued strain between those governing the territories. The conditions created subsequent wars in the ensuing years which led to boundary amendments. The Yom Kippur War of 1973 broke out when Egypt and Syria attacked Israel in response to Israel's occupation of the Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula. The conflict ended with a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel agreed upon at the 1979 Camp David Accords. But since then, violence and instability have continued due to the same social, political, and historical factors that drove the conflict decades ago.

Negotiations must clearly lay out the Palestinian refugees' future: where will they be resettled? what programs will assist? How they will become self-sustaining?

An uprising of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1987 became known as the Intifada. The conflict dragged on for five years, ending with the 1993 Oslo Accords which established a process through which Palestinians could achieve self-governance. Formal relations were established between the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Israeli government, but peace was short-lived. The second intifada in 2000 saw the conflict's most unprecedented violence. It ended in 2005 with the construction of the Israeli West Bank Barrier amidst renewed calls for peace and dialogue from political exponents in Israel, Palestine, and the international community. Ever since smaller violent episodes have occurred regularly along the Palestinian territory and Israeli border.

In 2015, after sustained violence and a failure to progress toward Palestinian Statehood, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas claimed Palestine no longer considered itself bound by the Oslo Accords. He stated Palestinians did not believe Israel had taken steps toward their objectives. This was an excruciating setback.

However, it was not fatal. It became a call for renewed commitment to Palestinian statehood, protection of Palestinian rights, and dialogue between the two governments. In August of 2014 fighting between the Israeli military and Hamas, the Sunni Islamist fundamentalist group deemed a terrorist organization by the US, killed 2,251 Palestinians and 73 Israelis. Clashes between Palestinian protesters and Israeli security officers resulted in Hamas launching 3,000 rockets at Israel. Israel launched a full-scale military operation against Gaza. When all was said and done it was the Egyptians who helped broker the ceasefire.

Gabriel M. Picillo is Vice President for Conflict, Stabilization, and Reconstruction at the International Institute for Peace, Democracy, and Development (IIPDD). He is based between the Middle East and Washington, DC... **To be Continued**

Gabriel M. Picillo is Vice President for Conflict, Stabilization, and Reconstruction at the International Institute for Peace, Democracy, and Development (IIPDD). He is based between the Middle East and Washington, DC.

Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Moh. Reza Huwaida

Vice Chairman / Exec. Editor: Moh. Sakhi Rezaie

Email: outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

Phone: 0093 (799) 005019/777-005019

www.outlookafghanistan.net