

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



August 20, 2017

## Emphasizing Responsibilities on 98th Independence Day

During the past few days, people in Afghanistan celebrated their 98th Independence Day, in different parts of country. There were different kinds of festivities and both the government officials and the common people expressed their joy and happiness in different ways. For Afghans the occasions of merriment and celebration are very sporadic, as the country is going through serious insecurity; therefore, these instances should be utilized in the best way possible. Nevertheless, during the celebrations and expression of affection for the country, both people and the leaders should have in their minds that they have responsibilities towards the country as well and taking advantage of the day they should reiterate their commitments towards their responsibilities and promise that they will accomplish them in every possible way. It can be detected in our society that our people tend to evade the negative consequences both consciously and unconsciously. We like to hold to the positive impressions of an action but tend to circumvent the disappointing outcomes and even put throw it on others' shoulders. However, the question that demands an answer from us is that if someone enjoys the outcomes as a result of the actions, why not to face the adverse consequences on top? While we cry for our rights and relish while receiving them, why don't we realize that we need to perform some very important responsibilities as well.

If a businessman appreciates the profit in favorable days as return and in bad days he faces the loss and feels himself responsible for all the decisions that have led the company to loss, then what on earth has happened to our nation, particularly the politicians that they do not accept their mistakes, and often blunders? Why has this society been ruined in terms of responsibility? Every single man in the hierarchy of the society blames the other person and frees himself? Why on earth is the top hierarchy of the country not accountable to law? Why is it that the poor and the weaker are expected to be more responsible than the rich and the authoritative people? Can the poor perform better than the rich in contributing for the society and supporting the people in coming out of troubles and problems? The poor, themselves, are caught in the quagmire of troubles, how can they be more responsible to the society?

The politicians, on the other hand, are keeping themselves aloof of all the responsibilities. They are, in fact, practicing the blame game to score points because the political culture demands so.

Rectifying the mistakes is a resolving step but arrives when someone admits the mistakes. The blame game turns to no point and there is no any win-win situation, we only have loss-loss situation in the game theory of the blame games. It is a debate of egos and the egos never surrender. Blame games, political conspiracies and personal self-interest achievements have resulted to a huge damage to the country's economic and political development.

It can be experienced in our society that the children are not nourished with a sense of true responsibility. As they grow up, they do not seem to realize what their responsibilities are towards their fellow human beings and towards their society. Mostly, they are taught to fulfill certain responsibilities which are limited to their individual lives. They do not seem to realize how they fit within a society and what their responsibilities are as responsible citizens. Another observation is that mostly people expect the society to fulfill their rights, but they themselves do not want to be held responsible towards others. Every individual thinks others are responsible to take care of their rights but does not realize that thinking in such a way will divide the whole society in alienated individuals whose goals are to pursue their own motives. They seem to fear responsibility and that is one of the worst things to do as a social being. It is important to remember that rights bring responsibility, and the responsibility makes you accountable and accountability sees no blame. Passing the buck would never solve the problem. The responsibility would keep on being transferred to others and would never reach to the stage of realization. The great nations of world have, as a matter of fact, realized this golden principle that they themselves have the responsibility of building their nations and solving their issues. And, that's why they can be easily differentiated as more prosperous and developed nations of the world.

Certainly, all the members of the society must perform their responsibilities but the leaders of the nation must be the trend setters. They need to set examples for others by performing their responsibilities without any sort of negligence. The governments that realize their responsibilities and do not fall short of providing the people their rights are mostly appreciated and at the same time supported by their people. People, finding the governments and leaders, responsible citizens tend to do the same and thus lend a hand for the development of the country.



## Lacking the True Soul of Independence

By Hujjatullah Zia

Afghanistan left great political upheavals behind throughout the history. Both bloody wars and civil unrest violated the rights and dignity of our nation and inflicted heavy casualties upon Afghans. Dictatorial regimes, colonial powers and radical groups ruled Afghanistan with the barrel of gun. After all, Afghanistan has also been the hotbed of liberal and radical mindsets. Kings, Emirs and Sultans ruled Afghanistan under the mask of religious sanctity and claimed to implement caliphate. The last group which claimed caliphate was the Taliban - the current guerilla militants carrying out terrorist attacks and suicide bombings across the country.

A number of Afghan kings ruled the country under the aegis of religious slogans claiming to be the divine caliphs. They imposed their own mindsets on Afghan people at gunpoint and the rights and freedoms of men and women were trampled under the boots of their soldiers. Discrimination on the basis of caste, color, creed and gender was widespread and all individuals suffered in one way or another. The rights of women were one of the highly challenging issues in Afghanistan's history within the different regimes. Although kings and their men were deeply engaged in carnal pleasure, women had to be restricted within the four walls.

On the other hand, King Amanullah Khan, who declared Afghanistan's independence in 1919, sought to pioneer modern movement in the country and impose liberal ideas and practices upon people. In other words, he intended to change Afghanistan overnight in spite of the fact that traditional mindsets and custom ruled the country for long years. He liberated women, banned discrimination - mainly on the basis of gender - and approved the constitution in 1301 Afghan calendar in Jalal Abad Loya Jirga (Grand National Assembly) with the participation of 872 people including nation's representatives and officials. Amanullah's constitution was a milestone in the history of Afghanistan since it declared equal rights for all tribes and for men and women.

He also established schools and sent a number of girls to Turkey for getting education.

His swift and sudden movement in the traditional society of Afghanistan backfired on him. Religious elements and traditional figures called his regime against the Islamic sharia and cultural values of the society. Even though he restricted his movement with the public sensitivity, the political turmoil continued against his regime and led to its fall - which was a great blow to the country.

With the fall of Amanullah's regime, the ground was paved for civil unrest. Amidst political turbulence, religious elements and kings capitalized on the issue and triggered public sensation. Worst of all, the colonial power of the time applied the policy of divide and rule with fueling tension and prompting people to fight against one another under religious terms. To cut short, the liberal mindset of Amanullah, who was influenced by the idea of Afghanistan's intellectual and his father-in-law Mahmud Tarzai, was replaced by fundamental mentalities.

The political turmoil continued with deadly wars and civil conflicts which led to colossal destruction and heavy casualties. In 1996, the Taliban claimed to establish Islamic Emirate and implement the divine rule in the divine land. Similar to former kings, the Taliban's founder Mullah Omar announced himself Emir-ul-Momineen (the commander of the faithful) and launched a war against Mujahedeen. The civil conflict was compounded with the Taliban's regime and too much blood was shed. Afghan men, women and children underwent indescribable pain and sufferings. Religion was again exploited within the Taliban's regime which imposed its radical mentality on it. Following the 9/11 terrorist attack on Twin Towers in the US, the Bush administration attacked on Afghanistan which led to the collapse of the Taliban's regime. There was a pregnant silence when the Taliban organized themselves and resorted to militancy against Afghan government and foreign troops.

By and large, Afghan nation celebrated the establishment of a democratic government following the Bonn Conference, held in 2001, and the approval of the constitution in 2004. The constitution was approved on democratic bases and recognized the equal rights and dignity for all Afghan tribes regardless of their racial, religious and factional backgrounds.

However, peace and stability still remain a dream for Afghan nation. Neither the establishment of a democratic government nor "war on terror" put an end to militancy or protected the rights and liberty of Afghans. The nation celebrated Afghanistan's Independence Day in 19 August, but Amanullah's reign seem to be nostalgia for them. In short, the Independent Day was celebrated while people are victimized by terrorist groups on large scale and there is fear and disappointment in the air. It is hoped that Afghan nation celebrates a real independence; i.e., our rights and freedoms are protected and our territorial integrity is respected.

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## The Lost Lesson of the Financial Crisis

By Mohamed A. El-Erian

Ten years ago this month, the French bank BNP Paribas decided to limit investors' access to the money they had deposited in three funds. It was the first loud signal of the financial stress that would, a year later, send the global economy into a tailspin. Yet the massive economic and financial dislocations that would come to a boil in late 2008 and continue through early 2009 - which brought the world to the brink of a devastating multi-year depression - took policymakers in advanced economies completely by surprise. They had clearly not paid enough attention to the lessons of crises in the emerging world.

Anyone who has experienced or studied developing-country financial crises will be painfully aware of their defining features. For starters, as the late Rüdiger Dornbusch argued, financial crises can take a long time to develop, but once they erupt, they tend to spread rapidly, widely, violently, and (seemingly) indiscriminately.

In this process of cascading failures, overall financial conditions quickly flip from feast to famine. Private credit factories that seemed indestructible are brought to their knees, and central banks and governments are confronted with tough, inherently uncertain policy choices. Moreover, policymakers also have to account for the risk of a "sudden stop" to economic activity, which can devastate employment, trade, and investment. Marshaling a sufficiently comprehensive response to extreme financial stress becomes even more difficult, if not enough was done during the good times to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth. It becomes harder still when politicians are actively playing the blame game. In the end, the sociopolitical and institutional effects of a crisis can far outlast the economic and financial ones.

All of these lessons would have been useful to advanced-economy policymakers ten years ago. When BNP Paribas froze \$2.2 billion worth of funds on August 9, 2007, it should have been obvious that more financial stress would be forthcoming. But policymakers drew the wrong conclusions, primarily for two reasons.

First, it took some time for policymakers to come to grips with the extent of the financial system's latent instability, which had accumulated under their watch. Second, most policymakers in the advanced world were too dismissive of the idea that they had anything to learn from emerging countries' experiences. Unfortunately, these problems are yet to be fully resolved. In fact, there is a growing risk that politicians - many of whom are distracted and sidestepping their economic-governance responsibilities - may be missing the biggest historical insight of all: the importance of an economy's underlying growth

model. Indeed, advanced-country politicians today still seem to be ignoring the limitations of an economic model that relies excessively on finance to create sustainable, inclusive growth. Though those limitations have been laid bare over the last ten years, policymakers did not strengthen adequately the growth model on which their economies depend. Instead, they often acted as if the crisis was merely a cyclical - albeit dramatic - shock, and assumed that the economy would bounce back in a V-like fashion, as it had typically done after a recession. Because policymakers were initially captivated by cyclical thinking, they did not regard the financial crisis as a secular or epochal event. The result was that they purposely designed their policy responses to be "timely, targeted, and temporary." Eventually, it became clear that the problem required a much broader, longer-term structural solution. But by that time, the political window of opportunity for bold actions had essentially closed.

Consequently, advanced economies took too long returning to pre-crisis GDP levels, and were unable to unleash their considerable growth potential. Worse, the growth that they did achieve in the years after the crisis was not inclusive; instead, the excessively wide income, wealth, and opportunity gaps in many advanced economies endured.

The longer this pattern persisted, the more advanced economies' future growth prospects suffered. And what was previously unthinkable - both financially and politically - started to become possible, even likely.

A decade after the start of the crisis, advanced economies still have not decisively pivoted away from a growth model that is overly reliant on liquidity and leverage - first from private financial institutions, and then from central banks. They have yet to make sufficient investments in infrastructure, education, and human capital more generally. They have not addressed anti-growth distortions that undermine the efficacy of tax systems, financial intermediation, and trade. And they have failed to keep up with technology, taking advantage of the potential benefits of big data, machine learning, artificial intelligence, and new forms of mobility, while managing effectively the related risks. Policymakers in the advanced world lagged in internalizing the relevant insights from emerging economies. But they now have the evidence and analytical capability to do so. It is in their power to avert more disappointments, tap into sources of sustainable growth, and tackle today's alarming levels of inequality. The ball is in the political class's court. (Courtesy Project Syndicate)

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