

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



July 17, 2018

### Constructing a Security Community: Equality, Equity, and Justice

The issues of terrorism, political rivalries and regional turbulence, which have inflicted heavy casualties upon people and wreaked havoc on regional economy, are a great cause for concern. All human societies suffer as a result of political turmoil in some ways or the others. The rights and dignity of people are violated flagrantly around the world, mainly in the Middle East and parts of Africa.

In the current "global village", all mankind share a common destiny. The outbreak of a disease jeopardizes the life of all, the economic crisis hurts prosperity everywhere, the danger of nuclear attacks threatens all nations, the operation of extremists puts the life of all at risk, and the violent death of an individual outrages the collective conscience.

In this global village, all nations need to play their role constructively to safeguard people's rights and eliminate violence and militancy. To share their opinions in keeping world peace and regional stability, a number of high-ranking officials, including the former President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai, had exchanges and delivered speeches in the 7th World Peace Forum themed "Constructing a Security Community: Equality, Equity, and Justice" which was organized by Tsinghua University and Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs in Chinese capital of Beijing.

The speakers emphasized the importance of combating terrorism, which has turned into a global threat, and ensuring the rights and freedoms of all individuals around the world. Addressing the Forum, Yang Jiechi, member of Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, pointed out the active role of Chinese government in global peace keeping. He said, "China is the largest contributor of peacekeepers among the P5, having dispatched more than 37,000 peacekeepers to 24 UN peacekeeping mission." He added that China has taken active part in international cooperation against terrorism. Regarding China's role toward Afghanistan, Yang said, "on Afghanistan, China supports its peace and reconstruction efforts, and backs an inclusive political reconciliation process that is Afghan-led and Afghan-owned."

He also said that China will pursue "win-win outcomes" through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and integrate the BRI's cooperation with its reform and opening-up adding that "China will never shut its doors."

To be honest, China played a constructive role in peace keeping and brokering talks between states. Meanwhile, China has frequently emphasized cooperation rather than confrontation and partnership rather than alliance. Chinese officials champion building a community with shared future in which all nations have equal rights and freedoms and could exercise their rights and liberties without obstacles.

Chinese officials believe that win-win outcome will be a prerequisite for lasting peace and stability around the globe; whereas "beggarly-neighbor" approach will undermine peace for putting the interests of other side at stake.

It is self-explanatory that terrorism and violence will pose threat to the entire world since we live in the global village. If a state, which is secure for the time being, turns a blind eye to the instability going on in its neighboring countries, it will be doomed to the same destiny in the future.

The ongoing violence and bloodshed and flagrant violation of human rights in the Middle East, i.e., Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Palestine must outrage the conscience of the world. Streams of blood of men, women and children are spilt without an iota of mercy. Sixty people were killed in a single day in Palestine. These are shocking for every sound conscience.

To mitigate the public sufferings and eliminate terrorist networks, all countries will have to play their role in the best possible way. It goes without saying that the sufferings of one nation as a result of terrorism will benefit no single nation. The smoke coming from this fire, which burns people in the war-torn countries, will go to the eyes of all nations. It is rightly said that "better late than never." Although it is late, further continuation of the political chaos and unmitigated violence will generate ugly consequences. No country will remain immune from the harm of terrorism and instability. Hence, it is time that all countries combat terrorism with strong force and seek common ground and pursue building a moderately prosperous society, which is emphasized by China, so that all could live a happy and prosperous life.

### Afghan Government Needs Defined Strategic Lines in Its Efforts to Bring Long-Lasting Peace

By Mohammed Gul Sahibzada

Government and the people of Afghanistan need peace more than any other necessities in the country as war has taken huge toll on the very social fabrics, politics and economy of the country since last more than forty years. Three generations of Afghans have been fighting and are embroiled in this senseless war in the span of last forty years. Devastating effects of this war continue to take immense toll on families and young people in the country, and has resulted in higher rate of illiteracy, poverty and destitution, lack of economic opportunities for young generation, lack of provision of quality education, good governance, empowerment of corrupt individuals and warlords and suppression of enlightened individuals; prevalence of endemic corruption, creation of ungoverned space within the geographic boundaries of Afghanistan for terrorists to plan, stage and operate terrorist groups and attacks across the world etc. Most important and devastating effects of ongoing war are losses of precious Afghan lives in frontlines and as victims of terrorist attacks in cities in the shape of suicide attacks, bombings and target killings. This trend continues as efforts to bring peace by Government of Afghanistan, friends of Afghanistan and international community. But these efforts seem spasmodic and lack effective strategic framework, which should encompass factors that contribute to the war, a deep retrospective study of the last forty years history of the war and a study of important regional and international players who are directly and / or indirectly involved in fueling this war. Most importantly, it is for Afghan Government to strengthen its war machinery and deny proxy fighters ground, resources and manpower inside the country to gain upper hand to reach peace.

A retrospective study of this war exhibits disruption of regional political and geographic order in the shape of partition of Indian subcontinent in August 1947 and complete dismantling of 'British Raj' in India. Creation of Pakistan under religious slogan and formation of Pakistan society out of sheer force - in the case of Baluchistan - and dissatisfaction of her citizens and members of Pakistanis society, and pursuit of hegemony and geographical expansion by Pakistani military and political leadership under the name of religion have founded the basis of distrust, wars and instability in the entire South-Asian sub-continent.

The ensuing three wars of 1948, 1965 and 1971, which Pakistan had started and waged against India and suffered humiliating defeats, have entrenched fear and fright in the minds and thoughts of Pakistani military and political Junta, which resulted in adoption of hostile strategies and foreign policies by Pakistani establishment against India and most of her immediate neighbors - especially the ones enjoying historic good relations with India - such as Afghanistan.

In the process afterward, government of Pakistan ventured attempts to form proxy forces inside Afghanistan during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's stint in the office during 1970s, and Government of Afghanistan under the Presidency of Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan had retaliated in the form of support to Baluchistan leaders, who had been against Pakistan right from her inception, and was annexed by force to Pakistan with the help of the Shah of Iran in 1948.

In the advent of ex-USSR invasion of Afghanistan and the prevailing world political order had provided golden opportunity for Pakistan to destabilize and weaken central Afghanistan Government by instigating so called Jihad and encouraging thousands of Afghans to fight against their government. United States and other European countries had already been at loggerhead with ex-USSR under their global political and economic rivalries - rallied behind Pakistan in pursuit of defeat of ex-USSR in Afghanistan hence stage was set to funnel hundreds of millions of dollars and hundreds of tones of munitions to Pakistan, destined to destabilize Afghanistan. A kind of legitimacy was granted to this destructive campaign against Afghanistan.

This campaign lasted the entire decade of 1980s, and in the process, Afghan national institutions including military, police, air force and other civil government organizations were completely destroyed, central government was annihilated, national Afghan brand and pride was replaced by clandestine, religious agenda by forces at play in Afghan arena, which were trained, indoctrinated and sent into Afghanistan by Pakistan to be there as Pakistan's permanent and institutionalized proxy forces to make sure Pakistan's control over Afghanistan

perpetuate and that Afghanistan would never stands up on her feet again. But to see things in black and white is the greatest blunder of all times, and Pakistan committed exactly the same blunder. To elaborate a bit more on this, it is not easy to control a nation in whose veins run blood of freedom and pride. Afghan scenario perplexed Pakistan, and in attempts to damage control, she continued to invest in proxy groups such as Taliban and recently, Daesh, under religious slogan and blatantly interfered in Afghanistan with the aim to destabilize central government and the country as a whole.

In light of the above facts and figures, it is not difficult to conclude where central command of Afghan insurgency is, and who is behind all these destruction, bloodshed and killings of Afghans. To continue to pursue peace is a noble task and should be in place and be part of any and all Afghan government agendas at present and in the future, but peace cannot be earned by begging. They say, 'if you want lasting peace, always be ready for war'.

It is incumbent upon the sitting president of Afghanistan to clear the lands taken by insurgents - be them Taliban, Daesh or any other groups. These are proxy groups supported by aliens who are against Afghanistan's national interests and stability. Therefore, without denying safe havens and geographical territory to insurgents and other terrorist groups, peace or any other deal cannot last longer. Instead, these groups and the territory controlled by them will definitely be used as leverage and tools to exert pressure on Afghanistan by outside parties to suit their interests.

A fitting microcosm of what will entail in the future if Afghan land is not cleared of insurgents and terrorist groups, was exhibited during the three days Eid truce between Afghan government and insurgents. Equal to no violence was reported during the three days truce (minus three incidents in Jalalabad and another province), and immediately after the truce was over, insurgents talked from the position of power on the negotiation table with government, and once government denied them their demands, fierce fighting evolved. Government ended the truce and announced military operations across the country. The result? Back to square one! Afghans are being killed in frontlines in fierce fights day in and day out. It is unfortunate reality, but there is no way out. Afghans and Government of Afghanistan should understand and take resolute pledge to win their country, their pride, their freedom and their future by getting ready and prepared for a noble war.

Afghanistan's friends should support this noble and genuine cause. A viable, encompassing and all inclusive war and economic strategy should be developed and put at play, which should include eradication of corruption and corrupt officials at their entirety from the ranks of Government, attempts and provision of enough resources to develop economic opportunities and economic activities in the country, and to batter and strike hard enemy positions and territories consistently and enduringly, with plans to fill the liberated territories with government security forces and a commitment to move forward in the frontlines - NOT to evacuate forces after liberating areas held by insurgents and other terrorist groups. In order for this to happen, Government and friends of Afghanistan should put more resources into intelligence services organizations in the country. Information is power, and without having enough information at hand, no military or economic agendas, strategies and plans can succeed.

A Chinese general once said, 'by so elusive that your enemy does not understands your next move, only then you can conquer'. At this point in time, it seems insurgents have high hands over Government forces in this area. Afghan government enjoys unparalleled international legitimacy, and receives aids in billions of dollars annually. President Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah should appreciate this opportunity and endeavor to take maximum benefits of it. They should assign / employ individuals with knowledge, loyalty and commitment at strategic government positions in order to assist in formulating and implementing these kinds of national agendas.

Neopotism, corruption and wastage of resources, time and prevailing opportunities can only result in continuation of present deadlock, destruction and continued debacle. They will be responsible if this happens.

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### Fossil-Fuel Doublespeak

By Lili Fuhr and Hannah McKinnon

Since the Paris climate agreement was signed in 2015, too many policymakers have fallen for the oil and gas industry's rhetoric about how it can help to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions. Tall tales about "clean coal," "oil pipelines to fund clean energy," and "gas as a bridge fuel" have coaxed governments into rubber-stamping new fossil-fuel projects, even though current fossil-fuel production already threatens to push temperatures well beyond the Paris agreement's limit of well below 2° Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that in 2016, investment in the oil and gas sector totaled \$649 billion, and that fossil-fuel subsidies within the G20 countries amounted to \$72 billion. And by 2030, investments in new gas projects across G20 countries are expected to surpass \$1.6 trillion.

Clearly, the industry has pulled out all the stops to expand production and profits before the world moves to a decarbonized economy. And so far, it is succeeding, because it has convinced governments of multiple falsehoods.

For starters, there is the claim that natural gas can be a "bridge fuel" to a stable climate even though its climate impact often equals that of coal - or worse. In reality, a "dash for gas" would consume almost two-thirds of G20 countries' combined carbon budget by 2050. Worse, new gas production often displaces not coal, but wind- and solar-energy projects, both of which are now cheaper than coal and gas in many regions. The fact that most new investments in gas production assume at least a 30-year operational timeline should be evidence enough that they are not geared toward reducing emissions anytime soon.

One would expect the European Union to lead the way toward a decarbonized future. But, if anything, it seems to be doing the opposite. Since 2014, the EU has allocated €1 billion (\$1.16 billion) to the natural-gas sector. And though the European Commission's proposed 2020-2027 budget would reduce such funding, it would allow member states to continue spending taxpayers' money on fossil-fuel production. Yet, according to a study by British climate scientists Kevin Anderson and John Broderick, in order to meet its climate commitments, the EU must phase out all fossil fuels by 2035.

Another industry canard is that income from oil and gas expansion is needed to fund the transition to a clean economy. This incoherent claim has underpinned policy in Canada, where the authorities continue to push for major new tar-sands pipelines. Most recently, the government stepped in and paid the Texas-based energy firm Kinder Morgan \$3.4 billion for a 65-year-old pipeline in order to ensure its planned expansion,

which the company had deemed too risky.

This use of public funds is particularly objectionable because it threatens to lock in the very energy sources that are driving dangerous climate change. Implicit in any major new investment in energy infrastructure is that operations will continue for decades, as even if demand and prices fall dramatically, an owner or investor will prefer some income return on that capital rather than nothing. As a result, politically and legally, it is much harder to shut down a project than to stop it before it starts.

A third ingredient of fossil-fuel flimflam is so-called clean coal, often relying on carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies. Governments and the energy industry have long framed CCS as a silver bullet for climate change, and thus as a perfect excuse for postponing meaningful reductions in fossil-fuel use. And now, CCS is even being promoted as an enabling technology for magical schemes that can "suck" carbon out of the atmosphere.

CCS was originally developed for enhanced oil recovery (EOR), whereby pressurized CO<sub>2</sub> is pumped into older oil reservoirs to extract otherwise inaccessible crude oil, significantly boosting production, and thus greenhouse-gas emissions. The main reason that oil companies have become such strong proponents of CCS is that it offers them a source of subsidized CO<sub>2</sub> for use in EOR. Companies such as Shell and Statoil have spent decades and billions of dollars on CCS research and development, and all they have to show for it is a few commercial-scale CCS operations.

A final claim often made by oil and gas companies is that they can execute any given project more "cleanly" than anyone else. But, as with the rest of the industry's doublespeak, this logic more often than not leads to further lock-in, as firms sink ever more funding into unproven negative-emissions technologies and other measures that will perpetuate dependence on fossil fuels. For example, the Canadian province of Alberta, home of the tar sands, is investing \$304 million explicitly to "help [oil sands] companies increase production and reduce emissions."

The global climate movement is redefining leadership on this issue, but nongovernmental organizations and activists alone cannot usher in a decarbonized future. Governments that claim to be committed to the Paris accord must offer a robust plan for phasing out fossil fuels, rather than supporting that sector's continued expansion.

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