

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



July 31, 2016

## World Day against Trafficking in Persons

July 30, was celebrated as World Day against Trafficking in Persons or Human Trafficking in many countries around the world. The day was adopted by United Nations General Assembly in 2010, through the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Person. The main objective of the Plan was to urge governments worldwide to take coordinated and consistent measures to defeat this scourge. The Plan, in fact, calls for integrating the fight against human trafficking into the UN's broader programs in order to boost development and strengthen security worldwide. One of the crucial provisions in the Plan is the establishment of a UN Voluntary Trust Fund for victims of trafficking, especially women and children. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said on the occasion, "Human traffickers prey on the most desperate and vulnerable. To end this inhumane practice, we must do more to shield migrants and refugees -- and particularly young people, women and children -- from those who would exploit their yearnings for a better, safer and more dignified future."

Human trafficking is, undoubtedly, a serious international issue these days. As poverty and discriminations have escalated in different parts of world, there have been increased probabilities of human trafficking. Each day hundreds of people are trafficked from one place to another for different purposes. Throughout the process, the people who are trafficked serve as a commodity that can be bought and sold whether they agree upon it or not. In most of the cases they do not even realize that they are being bought and sold. It is now a complex phenomenon and it involves different individuals and groups. The whole process actually includes these individuals and groups as various players at different locations that take the victims to their desired place. The techniques used by different individuals and groups differ from one another and they include both legal and illegal ways of transactions, travels and even crossing the borders. Human trafficking is a trend in the countries where the standard of life is not satisfactory and people suffer because of lack of economic facilities or they are threatened by instability that has even jeopardized their lives. Feeling dissatisfied from life or threatened by danger, they develop hopes to bring about better changes in their lives and fall easy prey to human traffickers who promise with them better future, which are never turned into action.

In Afghanistan, recently it has been observed that there has been a rise in human trafficking. IOM has also noted a steady increase in young females trafficked from bordering countries in Afghanistan. Many victims are children who end up in carpet-making and brick factories, domestic servitude, sexual exploitation and drug smuggling. This is really a matter of great concern.

The dissatisfied, insecure and poverty stricken life has compelled the people to search for unconventional and easy ways of earning livelihood. Moreover, the series of civil wars and religious fanaticism have made the life miserable for most of the people and many have migrated out of the country, and many others are now being victimized by human trafficking. Since the downfall of Taliban the circumstances have seemed to improve but there are serious concerns after the withdrawal of international forces and return of instability. People are not sure about their futures. There are many who do not know what to do with their lives. Uncertainty prevails everywhere. There is no solace for the victims of poverty, instability and war. Families just think of finding ways of guaranteeing their survival. They send their children and even daughters out of their houses to earn some morsels of food. They do not hesitate even if they become the targets of the curse of begging, street crimes and now this monster human trafficking.

Human trafficking is really a serious crime and all the ways that strengthen the process must be checked properly through strong legal measures. The support and assistance provided through different NGO's can play a role in highlighting this issue and taking certain measures to control it but it will not be possible to solve the problem without the involvement of the government and the people as a whole. Unfortunately, Afghan government has seemingly diverted its attentions completely towards the issue of insecurity, where it has not been able to achieve anything worthwhile. Therefore, it requires diverting attentions to some of the other major issues as well that are influencing the people to a large extent and pushing them into jeopardy. Above all, the issues like human trafficking do not only influence the individuals who are being trafficked but also their entire families; and ultimately such issues will bring bad name to the nation as whole. Therefore, the government must make all sorts of effort to nip the evil in the bud.

At the same time, Afghan government must make sure that ordinary people are provided the rudimentary requirements of life and stable political and social circumstances so that they should not go for such options.



# Terror Attacks Cause Anger and Hatreds

By Mohammad Zahir Akbari

Every day seems to launch a new global wave of bloody murders across the world including developed countries of the world equipped with modern security features while thousands of innocent men, women and children dead or broken, increasing international hatreds and cultural tensions mostly denouncing Islam as the spreading plaque of time. Death and injury have been dealt out by truck, ax, handgun, machete, bomb and etc. The victims have included families out for a national celebration, teenagers hanging out for entertaining activities, tourists on a train and the people striking for justice likewise a number of defenseless handicaps killed by an insane in Japan. Four of last seven attackers in less than two weeks professed loyalty to the Daesh or ISIL, but none appear to have been directed by the radical group, and all of the assaults seemed to blur the line between ideological terrorism and violence driven by anger, grudge or mental instability.

That very murkiness — the absence of a centrally organized plot or a singular villain or acceptable global definition — has made it all the more complicated. The lack of straightforward answers has made things trickier at a time of political flux in Europe. Even before the latest string of attacks, the Continent was seeing a rise in nationalist and anti-immigrant sentiment, and far-right parties were using the atmosphere to try to gain new legitimacy and power. Populist, anti-immigration sentiment was a powerful factor in Britain's vote last month to leave the Union.

The recent surge in high-profile violence has only given further opportunities to those who advocate taking a tougher line on immigration by Muslims, in many ways echoing the platform being promoted by Donald J. Trump in his presidential campaign in the United States.

In France, which displayed remarkable unity after two terrorist attacks in 2015, there has been growing political infighting and finger-pointing since the July 14 attack in Nice that killed 84 people. In Germany, the latest attacks have further strained ties between Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative party and its ally in the southern state of Bavaria, where there has long been simmering opposition to her decision last year to admit one million asylum seekers. Concern about the security and social ramifications of a new surge in migrants coming to Europe from Syria, Afghanistan and other poor and war-torn countries has left the European Union in dealing with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey as he cracks down on opponents in the wake of a failed coup this month. Mr. Erdogan had agreed to a deal with the European Union to hold back the tide of asylum seekers, a deal that Europe is deeply reluctant to endanger, especially with new security concerns attached to the migrants.

The same sorts of attacks have occurred elsewhere, including last month in Florida. But the concentration of attacks over less than

two weeks in Europe has given the issue particular resonance on the Continent. Finding answers is in part a familiar security and intelligence challenge. But it is also in some cases a problem of immigration, assimilation and tolerance. And it is a reminder of the lure of the burst of fame, or infamy, available to troubled, violence-prone people in an age of social media and instant global communication. "If you turn every individual into a self-contained agent, some will take unpleasant initiatives and act out their fantasies in real time, but they still feel the need for an anchoring identity," said François Heisbourg, chairman of the International Institute for Strategic Studies. For some, he said, about jihad.

"It can happen in Orlando and Nice," he said, "and without a lot of prior consultation or structure or networking." Ali Sonboly, the 18-year-old who killed nine people in Munich last Friday, may have been Iranian-German, but he took his inspiration in part from Anders Behring Breivik's massacre five years ago in Oslo, Norway, which was driven by the hatred of a white supremacist. Mr. Sonboly "wanted to make his mark as an individual" by hacking into Facebook to entice people to McDonald's, "the intertwining of complete barbarity and utter modernism," Mr. Heisbourg said. Mr. Sonboly was acting not as a state or an organization but as an individual, and individual actors are extremely hard for security services to stop. Yet their individual acts, captured on smart phones and sent around the world, can resonate louder than any gunshot or explosion. The attack in Nice, France, was carried out by a Tunisian-born man with a rented truck. It has set off a new battle over blame and added another volatile element to the early stages of a presidential campaign where the governing Socialists, led by President François Hollande, are falling further behind the right and far-right.

Consider the views about universal successive terror attacks, the first thing found in common is the public anger against inability of the governments: It can interpret as doubt about police efficiency to keep people safe in spite of having access to advanced security features or lack of strong political determination in fighting terrorism rather than use them as remotely-controlled weapon. The second problem seems to be ordinary; terror attacks are committed by young men between 18 and 30, many with psychological and/or social problems, responding to a need to punish everyone for perceived injustices. But the last thing is the increase of Islam-phobia and prejudice about Islam widely denounced in western countries. Anyway, terrorism is a global challenge and the worst enemy of brotherhood, development, healthy and a peaceful world. It is strongly needed to an international definition about terrorism and agreement on a common strategy to entirely erase the world from the existence of spreading plague of current era.

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## Who Will Win?

By Hujjatullah Zia

The Afghan-Pak relation has hit rock bottom following the decade-long ebb and flow. With the Taliban's militancy, Pakistani officials persisted in peace talks and promised to nudge the Taliban to come to negotiating table. Afghan officials welcomed the decision and pursued it with great trust and interest. Despite this fact, the Taliban elements engineered far-reaching attacks from across the border and refused to hold talks. On the surface, peace talks seemed to be a piece of cake but changed into a complicated game with players around trying to win. Although Afghan government sacrificed heavily, the game continued endlessly. Kabul insisted on Islamabad to fulfill its promise.

The continuation of the game took its toll on Afghanistan, mainly on the High Peace Council (HPC) which was established in 2010 to hold talks with the Taliban outfits. During Hamid Karzai's administration, the struggles for peace talks did not bear the desired fruit and militancy did not cease in spite of the fact that he showed great tolerance towards the Taliban through calling them "discontented brothers" and released a number of the Taliban prisoners as peace offering.

Although Muhammad Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah formed a unity government following the election held in 2014, the game continued in which Afghanistan was already embroiled. Alike his predecessor, President Ghani urged Pakistani officials to broker the talks between Afghan government and the Taliban. Pakistan gave its word again to bring the Taliban to the peace table via using its "leverage".

Subsequently, Pakistan hosted a talk, in late July 2015, between the Afghan government and Taliban representatives at the popular tourist resort of Murree. Senior officials from Pakistan, China and the United States also attended closed-door talks suggesting that the Murree process had the backing of all major international players. But Mullah Omar's death, which was revealed just a day before a second meeting was supposed to take place, brought the peace talks to a standstill. Consequently, Mullah Akhtar Mansour, the Taliban's former aviation minister, was appointed as Omar's successor. Mansour called peace talks as "enemy's propaganda" and staged heavy attacks against the Afghan government. He also declared "spring offensive" which led to great civilian casualties in the country. On December 2015, Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and the United States formed the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) to maintain their efforts for peace talks and on January 18, 2016, the four nations held second round of talks in Kabul and called warring parties to stop violence and join negotiation. Similarly, the third meeting was held in Islamabad on February 6 and urged for direct talks between Afghan government and the Taliban and added that the roadmap to peace talks was agreed upon. The fourth one was again in Kabul, on February 23. In the fourth meet-

ing, a joint press statement was issued which stated that the first round of direct talks between the Afghan government and Taliban would take place by the first week of March in Islamabad.

But Mansour refused sitting around the peace table and declared "Omari Operation" to intensify attacks against Afghan and US forces.

Despite the Taliban's frequent refusal for talks, the QCG held its fifth round meeting — not in March as it announced earlier — on May 18. Mansour was called on obstacle before peace talks and targeted by a US drone strike in Baluchistan — his death was confirmed on May 22. Pakistan condemned the attack with strong anger and remarked it as violation of its sovereignty while Afghanistan was in favor of his death and said that there was no good and bad Taliban. This incident led to mistrust among the four-nation group and would be the death knell for QCG. So, Mansour's death, which was the game's denouement, aroused tension not only between Islamabad and Washington but also Islamabad and Kabul.

The appointment of Mansour's successor, Haibatullah Akhundzada, orchestrate attacks in Afghanistan, has compounded the Afghan-Pak tension. Pakistan put pressure on Afghan refugees and its foreign policy chief Sartaj Aziz told a television channel that Afghan refugee camps had become "safe havens for terrorists." Additionally, police in Peshawar reportedly increased raids on Afghan refugees and detained hundreds of them amid this worsening diplomatic relations. However, the UN refugee agency head urged Pakistanis not to blame Afghan refugees for terrorism in their country, warning that the roughly 2.5 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan risked becoming a "forgotten" crisis.

On the contrary, Afghan officials said that Pakistan was a safe haven for terrorist networks and held council freely for appointing their leaders and staged deadly attacks against Afghan nation. In his recent statement, President Ghani has said that he could provide the addresses of the Taliban leaders in Quetta city of Pakistan. In the interview with Geo News, he reiterated that Pakistan provided sanctuaries to terrorists and trained them. According to him, Afghan forces had bombed the chief of Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Mullah Fazlullah, eleven times along with attacks on his close aides and asked, "Can you show me a single operation against the Haqqani network, against Mullah Omar, against Mullah Mansour? Mansour traveled on a Pakistani passport out of Karachi, does Fazlullah travel on an Afghan passport out of Kabul?" The Taliban's foul play in peace talks and Pakistan's failure in fulfilling its promise left no motives for resuming talks. Now, bridging the gap between the two countries is next to impossible. Who is responsible for worsening the situation? It is the readers to pass judgment over the issue.

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