

**(1) Peace Jirga...**

involved parties to respect the demands of the Jirga delegates and take practical steps to reduce violence in the war-torn country.

The delegates in their resolution called on the international community to coordinate their peace efforts with the Afghan government and that give Kabul a central role in the reconciliation process.

The Jirga lend their support to the security institutions of the country saying for durable peace, territorial integrity and national dignity the role of security and defence institutions was vital.

They demanded both sides to enter the prisoners swap on the bases of the Islamic spirit and took steps for the release prisoners which could build trust on both sides and create encouraging environment.

The body of elders also demanded to government to stress over the policy of good neighbour and lodge formal complain to the UN in case of interference from outside.

The Jirga delegates called on the Afghan government, Afghan political parties and other stake holders to enter peace talks from a unified address. The delegates demanded the Afghan government to prepare a timeline for a responsible withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan in coordination with the international community.

They called on the involved parties and countries in the peace process to facilitate opening of the Taliban's political office in Afghanistan.

The Peace Jirga stressed all rights of Afghans, including women's rights, should be preserved in the peace process.

The communique says that the Afghan Constitution must be protected but if amendment was needed it should be brought through a legitimate procedure. They also stressed that peace should ensure in the country by preserving the Islamic Republic system. (Pajhwok)

**(2) Afghanistan...**

"I accept the decision of my people and would prove it in practice and now I would see that if Excellency Maulvi Haibatullah is ready to accept the demand of the people and what can he do."

The president pledged to release 175 prisoners of the Taliban in the honour of the holy month of Ramazan and as gesture of good will and asked the Taliban to dispatch their representatives to Kabul and other provinces to receive their colleagues.

Ghani said that a peace in Afghanistan will help economic development in Pakistan. He said the Afghan govt wants a relationship with Pakistan which is based on mutual respect and friendship, which is clear and is an equal government-to-government relation.

"I want to tell the Pakistanis lets work for peace and cooperation and prove that it is not only the western countries who could resolve their issues but a rich civilization of human being existed in this part of the world as well and our rich Islamic civilization is rich than every other civilization," he said. (Pajhwok)

**(3) Afghan Peace...**

Islamabad needed to work closely to deepen people-to-people exchanges and steer the two counties and the region towards a brighter future. (Pajhwok)

**(4) On Foreign Service...**

"Other memorial plaques mark many of those from other agencies lost while serving overseas. I joined the Foreign Service in 1988. Since then, we have added the names of 85 colleagues lost while serving abroad. Most were victims of terrorism."

He said in Afghanistan, even as they supported Ambassador Khalil Khalilzad's efforts, the Americans remained in the midst of a long conflict. "We have lost many on this hard road: Colleagues, friends. Each month, we have mourned with Afghan friends and colleagues, and with our brothers and sisters in uniform."

Bass said they honored the memory of local colleagues who died protecting the Americans two years ago. "We honor the memory of colleagues who died while seeking to help the people

of this country build a brighter future."

One of them was Ambassador Adolph Dubs - known to his colleagues as "Spike." Shortly after Ambassador Dubs' death, one of his colleagues had this to say about his life - about how he had served.

"What was extraordinary about Spike was...his loyalty to those who worked for him. He gave us the courage and the confidence to reach beyond our grasp, to stretch, to dare."

"It is the qualities Ambassador Dubs personified - character; generosity of spirit; a life of service - that separate us from our adversaries. They are why I remain convinced that we will prevail in this long fight, here and elsewhere, against extremism, hatred and intolerance." (Pajhwok)

**(5) Peace Jirga...**

views from the core of their heart. He hailed efforts by internal and external stake holders and added every one desired for peace and support every effort in this way. (Pajhwok)

**(6) Uzbek, Russian...**

of government to consider priority areas for further expansion of trade and economic ties.

During the meeting at the Foreign Ministry, the parties discussed the issue related to opening in Uzbekistan branches of four leading Russian universities including National Research Nuclear University of Moscow Engineering Physics Institute, All-Russian State Institute of Cinematography, Moscow Power Engineering Institute and Russian University of Chemical Technology.

The heads of the foreign affairs agencies paid special attention to the interaction of Uzbekistan and Russia in the Afghan area including activities within the framework of international efforts to launch inter-Afghan peace talks and the socio-economic rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

The ministers also exchanged views on the prospects for strengthening security and cooperation in the region.

The meeting was attended by Russian Ambassador in Uzbekistan Vladimir Tyurdenov.

Sergey Lavrov also plans to take part in the 11th meeting of the States Parties of the Memorandum of Understanding on regional cooperation on drug control. (Trend)

**(7) Almost 100 Media...**

The RSF says that for Afghanistan's journalists, 2018 was the deadliest year since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001.

A total of 15 journalists and media workers were killed in a series of bombings that began early in the year, nine of them in a single day, the RSF says in a report on its website.

"The Press Freedom Day is marked at a time that limitations from all parties still continue to be imposed on media," said Hamid Mayar, a reporter.

"Reporters want to have access to the information they need but sometimes the face with problems in this respect," said Ainuddin Bahaduri, Chairman of Access to Information Oversight Commission.

One reporter, Fereshta, said the press freedom should be a red line in the peace talks with the Taliban as the peace efforts continue at national and international levels. (Tolo news)

**(8) Khalilzad Asks...**

reported that the two parties will discuss the four components of the framework agreement, which was agreed upon in the last two rounds of talks, which are: foreign troop withdrawal, guarantees that will prevent the use of Afghanistan soil by any groups or individuals against the security of the United States or any other country, intra-afghan dialogue and negotiations, and reduction in violence leading to a comprehensive ceasefire.

Qatar, which acts as the mediator in this conflict, welcomed the current round of talks between the United States and the Taliban and considered this round of an important development to achieve peace in Afghanistan. Furthermore, the State of Qatar hopes that these rounds of talks will achieve the desired results to achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan, it says.

In response to Khalilzad's comments, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the US envoy should never think that the Taliban would put

down their weapons.

He urged the US to accept reality, avoid the use of force and support to the fragile government in Kabul.

He also asked Khalilzad to stop the repetition of failed strategies because it would yield no result and stressed the US envoy should acknowledged reality instead of being involved in confusion. (Pajhwok)

**(9) Don't Tell us...**

about the idea of us putting down our arms," he said.

"Instead of such fantasies, he should drive the idea home (to the U.S.) about ending the use of force and incurring further human and financial losses for the decaying Kabul administration."

He said the United States must stop repeating failed strategies while expecting different outcomes.

"It would be better if @US4Afghan-Peace musters the courage to call a spade a spade, not a gardening tool & accept the current realities."

Intense fighting continues across the country with the Taliban controlling or influencing more territory than at any point since their ouster at the hands of U.S.-led troops following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States.

The United States has about 14,000 troops in Afghanistan as part of a NATO-led mission, known as Resolute Support, that is training and assisting Afghan security forces in their battle against Taliban fighters and extremist groups such as Islamic State and al Qaeda.

After five rounds of talks, Khalilzad reported some progress towards an accord on withdrawing U.S. troops and on how the Taliban would prevent extremists from using Afghanistan to launch attacks.

The Taliban insist that talks cannot move ahead until foreign forces leave.

"Peace will require that we find common ground on four inter-connected issues: troop withdrawal, counter-terrorism assurances, intra-Afghan dialogue & negotiations, and reduction in the violence leading to a comprehensive ceasefire," Khalilzad said in his tweet.

"Nothing will be final until we agree on all 4 issues."

"THERE'S HUMAN CIVILIZATION HERE"

In Kabul, President Ashraf Ghani renewed his appeal to hold direct talks with the Taliban and called for an agreement on a ceasefire.

"The Afghan government is ready to announce a ceasefire if the Taliban show readiness in this regard," he said at the closing ceremony of a Loya Jirga (grand assembly) called to set possible conditions for peace talks.

"Let us prove that only Western countries cannot solve this conflict," he said. "There is also human civilization here."

The Taliban, seeking to restore strict Islamic rule, refuse to talk to the Afghan government which they dismiss as a U.S. puppet.

They also rejected an invitation to the Loya Jirga, attended by 3,200 religious leaders, politicians and representatives from across the country, meeting under a giant white tent in Kabul.

The assembly recommended that a ceasefire should be declared ahead of the holy month of Ramadan, a timetable for U.S. troop withdrawal be set, the Taliban should move their office from Qatar to Afghanistan and amendments to the Afghan constitution be made after a peace agreement is signed.

Opposition figures boycotted the assembly, labeling it an expensive election campaign event for Ghani to secure a second term. (Reuters)

**(10) 'Opening of...**

issues. The most important leaders of Taliban are here in Qatar who are in continuous touch with the Qatari ministry of FAs."

"Our government will be promptly informed of any positive Taliban gesture for peace through the Qatar embassy channel. We were playing this rule to some extent, but an ambassador of Qatar in Kabul could do better," he added.

The ambassador could also counteract a negative effort by some of Qatar's rivals who do not wish Qatar to get credit as a peace maker, he believed. According to Karkar, "such negative efforts will delay the peace process

but an informed diplomat can expose such efforts and that is good for our country's struggle to bring peace."

Earlier, the government of Qatar for the first time has appointed Saeed Mubarak Al Khayarin Al Jajri as its ambassador to Afghanistan, according to a statement on Wednesday.

The appointment of new envoy is in compliance with decree issued by the Amir of Qatar. (Pajhwok)

**(11) Afghan Goods...**

This shipment is being transported under the framework of TIR carnet by the Afghan TIR company and soon will arrive in Turkey," Qowanj said.

Officials from Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) said the private sector had the preparations to export 13 trucks of goods to the UK through the Lapis Lazuli Corridor, but only one truck was sent due to problems visa problems for drivers.

Atiqullah Nusrat, the CEO of the ACCI, said that the only problem for Afghan exports to Europe through the Lapis Lazuli route is the visa problem. "Our investors cannot use this route effectively unless the visa problem is resolved. The only problem that has remained unsolved is the visa problem," said Nusrat.

The Lapis Lazuli Route agreement was signed in October last year between Afghanistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia and once implemented will become a key international trade and transport corridor to connect Afghanistan with Europe directly.

The Lapis Lazuli Route will begin in Afghanistan's northern Aqina port in Faryab province and Torghandi in western Herat province and will run through to Turkmenbashi in Turkmenistan.

From there it will cross the Caspian Sea and will link the Azerbaijani capital Baku to Tbilisi and Georgia's Black Sea ports of Batumi and Poti.

It will then connect with Kars in eastern Turkey before linking to Istanbul and Europe.

The Lapis Lazuli Route agreement was finalized after three years of talks and was signed during the 7th Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA VII) in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. (Tolo news)

**(12) NATO Committed...**

to make sure that Afghans demands and Afghans concerns are fully factored into peace negotiations and in any final peace agreement," he said.

The NATO envoy added that a reduction in violence could be the best way to engage in purposeful peace talks.

He condemned the Taliban's spring offensive announcement and asked the group to respond positively to the Afghans' voice for peace and stop war and violence in the country.

This comes as the sixth round of talks between the US and the Taliban are ongoing in Doha, Qatar, where the two sides reportedly discussed some key issues, including a timeframe for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, assurance that Afghanistan's territory will not be used as a threat against other nations following a peace agreement, a potential ceasefire, and intra-Afghan talks.

Meanwhile, in Kabul, the Grand Consultative Jirga on Peace continued for the fourth day where Afghans from various regions of the country are exchanging views on the prospects of peace in the country. (Tolo news)

**(13) Civilian Casualties...**

women and children in the Narkh district of Maidan Wardak province.

In March, 484 people suffered casualties (184 killed and 300 injured).

In April, most of the casualties took place in Nangarhar where 52 civilians were killed and 43 others injured.

After Nangarhar, most casualties happened in Ghazni province where 18 civilians were killed and 15 others injured. Southern Kandahar province stood third in terms of civilian casualties, where 15 civilians got killed and 13 others injured.

Most of the casualties happened as a result of Afghan security forces night raids, in which 72 civilians were killed and 15 others injured.

Fourteen persons were killed and four others injured in targeted attacks. Fifteen persons were killed and 49 others injured in landmine blasts, while 13 people lost their lives and 44 others sustained wounds in bomb blasts.

On the other hand, around 300 families were displaced as a result of Taliban and Daesh fighting in the Khogyani district of Nangarhar.

The CPAG in its report said it was disappointed over continuation of ongoing conflict in the country and asked the conflicting parties to pay attention to the lives of civilians. (Pajhwok)

**(14) Daesh, Taliban...**

initial information, 63 per cent (5,073 families) of the displaced people have moved to Surkhrod district, followed by Behsud (1,145 families), while 981 families have settled within Khogyani district (Chamtala settlement and district center). A number of others have moved to Jalalabad city, Kama, Rodat district.

Two registration sites were established in Sherzad and Surkhrod districts along the road to register people on the move.

The centers were run by two teams of Sherzad youth volunteers and supervised by the district authorities with information shared on a daily basis with the local authorities and humanitarian agencies.

Registration was concluded on 30 April 2019 as displacement for the time being has stopped. (Pajhwok)

**(15) Pentagon Sounds...**

Pentagon's report minced no words to blame Beijing for using "coercion" and employing "tactics short of armed conflict."

Such activities "are calculated to fall below the threshold of provoking armed conflict with the United States, its allies and partners, or others in the Indo-Pacific region," it claimed, habitually mentioning the rising tensions in the South and East China Seas as an example.

The document laments Chinese maritime and aircraft patrols in the contested waters, but again, the mention of Washington's naval deployments in the area - seen as provocative in Beijing - is nowhere to be found.

The US Navy sent two warships, the USS William P. Lawrence and the USS Stethem, through the Taiwan Strait on Sunday. There was no immediate reaction from Beijing, although observers warned that the incursion risked adding fuel to mounting tension around Taiwan - one of flashpoints in the US-China relationship. (RT)

**(16) Solid Jobs Report...**

yield on the 10 year Treasury fell to 2.53%.

The week is ending with another round of company earnings news. United States Steel, Weight Watchers and Monster Beverage are among the latest companies to give investors surprisingly good results.

KEEPING SCORE: THE S&P 500 index rose 0.5% as of 10 a.m. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.5%, or 135 points, to 26,445. The Nasdaq composite rose 0.8%

SOLID QUARTER: United States Steel surged 11% after a sharp increase in sales helped push profit far beyond Wall Street forecasts. The sharp gains come amid a weak year for the company. Its stock is down 12.5% so far in 2019 while the S&P 500 index is up nearly 17%.

ENERGIZED EARNINGS: Monster Beverage rose 7% after the energy drinks company powered past Wall Street's first quarter profit forecast. The company reported a solid increase in sales of its namesake energy drink that helped drive a surge in profit. (AP)

**(17) Indonesian Woman...**

attorney general stunningly dropped the murder charge against Aisyah, following high-level lobbying from Jakarta. Huong sought to be acquitted after her co-defendant was freed, but prosecutors rejected her request.

Huong pleaded guilty to a lesser charge of causing injury last month after prosecutors dropped the murder charge against her. She was sentenced to 40 months in prison from the day of her arrest and was released early for good behavior.

In a letter of gratitude written by Huong and read by her lawyer at the airport, she thanked the Malaysian and Vietnamese governments.

"Thank you, Lord Jesus, for he loves me so much. I am very happy and thank you all a lot. I love you all," she scribbled in the letter shown to reporters. (Fox News)