

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



September 11, 2018

## The Democratic Legacy of War on Terrorism for Afghanistan

Eleven September 2001, is one of the most important days in the history of the United States that has a tremendous impact on Afghanistan. On the morning of 11 September 2001, 19 hijackers took control of four commercial passenger jets flying out of airports on the east coast of the United States. The terrorists members of Al-Qaeda deliberately flown two of the airplanes into the main two towers (the Twin Towers) of the World Trade Center in New York, with a third hitting the Pentagon in Virginia. However, the fourth plane never reached its intended target, crashing in Pennsylvania. It is believed that the passengers and crew overpowered the hijackers and took control of the plane.

### The situation in Afghanistan before 11/9, 2001

Afghanistan came under harsh Taliban rule in 1996 and by 2001, the country was depleted, dependent on certain foreign countries that had recognized the Taliban regime and it was almost entirely cut off from the rest of the world and was a safe haven for Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups. Afghanistan was beset by drought and was on the brink of famine. In such a situation mainly Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Emirates supported the Taliban regime.

The city of Kabul and other major cities looked like a ghost city; the city of Kabul felt dead, crushed by poverty and trauma. If a person could afford to leave the city, had already migrated elsewhere. The city nearly had no electricity and other urban service. All the roads were pocked and destroyed, with sparse traffic. The city was filled with terror and fear. No one wanted to encourage curious eyes. Kabul was the symbol of the ghost cities during those miserable days. In such a situation, under the Taliban law, men had to grow beards and wear turbans. Girls were not allowed attend school. Women had to wear burqas and their shoes should not make noise. Most women were forbidden to work outside home and a man should have accompanied them if they wanted to go outside.

### Persisting Discrimination as the main characteristics of Taliban regime

Taliban law was a harsh interpretation of Islam; based on such an interpretation no pluralistic value was tolerated; they neither tolerated pluralism of region, nor pluralism of ethnicity. Though the latter is not a religious phenomenon, but Taliban did not tolerate it; because Taliban is a political group with a political agenda that uses religion as a mask to deceive the people and justify their wrong ideology under it. As a result, religious and ethnic discrimination reached to its peak during the Taliban regime and many Afghan citizens left the country because of religious and ethnic persistent discrimination.

### US attack on Taliban as the message of freedom to the oppressed Afghans

As mentioned before, living under Taliban regime was a nightmare for many Afghans; they were totally hopeless and no symptoms of an end of conflict and oppression was perceivable in political horizon of the country. In such a context, the news of attacking the United States on Al-Qaeda and Taliban as the main supporter of the terrorist groups was the best news for many Afghans. After the fall of the Taliban, a new democratic governance system was put in Place in Afghanistan; A new constitution was developed and enacted; Presidential, Wolsi Jirga and Provincial Councils elections were held. Girls returned to schools and opportunities for women participation at the different levels, including leadership level, was provided in the public and private institutions. Further, equal participation and roles have been given to all religious and ethnic groups of Afghanistan. During the rule of the Taliban, Afghanistan experienced one of darkest periods during the course of its history. After the attack of international community led by the United States, a new shining chapter was opened in the history of Afghanistan; a democratic governance process started in the country that considers all the citizens of Afghanistan as the equal members of the country. This democratic legacy enables Afghanistan to ensure a balanced political, economic and socio-cultural development and provides a conducive environment that all the citizens of Afghanistan to live in harmony beside each other. As a result, Afghan citizens deserve credit for their commitment to democracy, and take that aspect of our history for granted.



## Enlightenment for China-Afghanistan Cooperation from China-Africa Cooperation

By Liu Jinsong

The Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation was successfully held during September 3rd to 4th. H.E. Chinese President Xi Jinping chaired the Summit. 40 presidents, 10 premiers, 1 vice president as well as the Chairman of the African Union Committee and UN Secretary-General attended the Summit. After the Summit, all sides published "The Beijing Declaration -- Towards an Even Stronger China-Africa Community with a Shared Future". This is the largest diplomatic event hosted in China this year, and has won applause and hearts of the African people. The summit opened a new era of China-Africa cooperation and demonstrated the new attitude of the major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, aroused the attention and interest of Afghan friends.

The interest is natural, as African countries and Afghanistan are all China's good friends and partners. We are all developing countries, used to be colonized and bullied by external powers. We all share the common mission of embracing peace and development, and are jointly building the Belt and Road Initiative, facing unprecedented challenges such as hegemonism, power politics, protectionism and unilateralism and etc. Therefore, every step of China-Africa cooperation will resonate with Afghan friends.

The summit is a historical handshake between the world's largest developing country and the continent with the largest number of developing countries. The summit sent a strong signal to the world that regardless of what happens in the past, present or future, no matter how much China's overall GDP and per capita GDP is, China will regard itself as a developing country and take developing countries as the base of its diplomacy. China will take the realization of the common development, solidarity and cooperation of developing countries as its due cause. All these are decided by China's national orientation, institutional attributes and value orientation.

Through the Summit, Afghan friends may have a further understanding of China's good traditions and good ideas:

First, "A favor of a drop of water received should be repaid with a surging spring". The African countries firmly support China's efforts to safeguard its national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity, "lift the People's Republic of China into the United Nations" with their votes together with other friendly countries including Afghanistan. China will never forget this. In this regard, China has always been emphasizing the "four insist on", that are insist on treating each other as equals, balancing the righteousness and interest, practical and efficiency, openness and inclusiveness. China advocates giving more and taking less, giving before taking and giving without asking for return. With open arms, we welcome African countries and Afghanistan aboard the express train of China's development.

Second, the Chinese cherish the friendship in humble circumstance and hardship very much, and never despite the poor and curry favour with the rich. We respect Africa, love Africa and support Africa. We breathe together and share the common future with African people. President Xi met with all the African leaders attending the Summit, and exchanged views heart to heart. One African leader said sentimentally that China is helping African friends with practical deeds, and is a friend that will help you stand up when you are falling down.

Third, the Chinese will never accept anyone's leadership, nor to be the leader of others and don't wish the re-emerging of any group politics in the world. We advocate jointly building the China-Africa community with a shared future. This community is neither a military or political alliance, nor have any hierarchies. Its essences are joint responsibility, win-win cooperation, happiness for all, cultural co-prosperity, common security, and harmony co-existence. The above principle is also applying in Afghanistan.

Fourth, the Chinese emphasizes that "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others" and follow a "five-no" approach in the relationship with Africa that are: no interference in African countries' pursuit of development paths that fit their national conditions; no interference in African countries' internal affairs; no imposition of our will on African countries; no attachment of political strings

to assistance to Africa; and no seeking of selfish political gains in investment and financing cooperation with Africa. We do as what we say. African countries are deeply impressed by the "five no" approach and many African representatives attending the summit said China has always been listening to Africa, understanding and supporting Africa, treating Africa as equals, jointly advocating justice with Africa, and fully safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of African countries as well as other developing countries. The approach is a sharp contrast with the inequality that has been long time exist in the international relations.

During the Summit, China decided to launch eight major initiatives in close collaboration with African countries in the next three years and beyond. Some of these initiatives are already being implemented, and some of them are of reference significance for the China-Afghanistan cooperation.

These includes: Implementing of the industrial promotion plan, encouraging Chinese companies to increase investment in Africa, building and upgrading a number of economic and trade cooperation zones in Africa, carrying out agricultural assistance programs; Implementing infrastructure connectivity projects, opening more direct flights between China and Africa; Implementing trade facilitation activities, increasing imports from Africa, particularly non-resource products and setting up relevant mechanisms to promote e-commerce cooperation; Undertaking aiding projects on green development, and ecological and environmental protection in Africa, strengthening exchanges and cooperation with Africa on climate change, ocean, desertification prevention and control, and wildlife protection; Setting up Luban Workshops in Africa to provide vocational training for young Africans, carrying out tailored programs to train 1,000 high-caliber Africans; Upgrading medical and health aid programs for Africa, particularly flagship projects such as the headquarters of the African Center for Disease Control and Prevention and China-Africa Friendship Hospitals, training more medical specialists for Africa; Implementing people-to-people exchange programs, establishing China-Africa Joint Research and Exchange Center and China-Africa Media Cooperation Network; Setting up a China-Africa Peace and Security Fund, continuing to provide military aid to the Africa Union, launching security assistance programs to advance China-Africa cooperation in the fields of law and order, UN peacekeeping missions, fighting piracy and combating terrorism.

All of the above-mentioned eight major initiatives are the result of deep consultations and strategic coordination between China and Africa. They are based on African countries' conditions and urgent needs, and are within China's capacity. These initiatives are closely related to African people's livelihood, grassroots, youths, and high-techs, and will enhance common people's sense of security, sense of gain, sense of happiness. The initiatives worth studying for the Afghan friends, and use it for reference in promoting China-Afghanistan cooperation.

Although it is far away from China, Africa cares for the Belt and Road Initiative very much and gives support to it, set off a wave of jointly construction. Afghanistan, the heart of Asia and a neighbor of China, has the natural emotion and unique connectivity advantages to revitalize the ancient Silk Road, and it is also an important partner for China to achieve shared growth through consultation and collaboration. Afghanistan can be down-to-earth and adapt to its own conditions, become a practical promoter and early beneficiary in the jointly construction of the Belt and Road Initiative.

After the summit, Mr. Deby, President of Chad said that, "it was impressive to see so many African leaders attending a summit and exchanging ideas on working together towards a China-Africa community with a shared future in a fraternal and friendly way. It reflected Africa's trust in President Xi and China, as well as their expectations and confidence in the Africa-China partnership", "Chad hopes to learn from China's development experience, welcomes Chinese investment and technology, and continuously deepens cooperation between the two countries in various fields". I do believe that, it is also the Afghan friends' feeling to this summit, and expectations to China.

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## AFGHANISTAN: Way Forward (Last Part)

By Mohammed Gul Sahibzada

In the beginning of post-Taliban Afghanistan, when Doctor Khalilzad was the Ambassador of United States in Afghanistan, the administration of George W. Bush devised a clever policy towards reconstruction of Afghanistan. Mr. Bush's government allocated huge resources to build roads in the remotest provinces and districts of Afghanistan. The motive behind this decision was to foster national unity among the various clans of people dwelling in different regions in Afghanistan. Building and opening up new roads in the most isolated districts of the country would bring economic prosperity, interaction between people of different provinces and regions - who were isolated due to tough terrains and absence of road before. This phenomenon has brought huge changes in Afghan society. Economic situation of thousands of families improved due to construction of new roads. This policy should continue when next government come into power in Afghanistan. Resources should be allocated towards sensible reconstruction programs - sensible in a sense that significance, immediate economic and political impacts of projects undertaken should be kept into consideration.

The ministry of rural development of the government of Hamid Karzai adopted a program called National Solidarity Program (NSP) in 2004. This program was already tested in many countries including Bangladesh with positive impacts on society. Under this program, the international assistance for the reconstruction of Afghanistan was used as per the requirement of local beneficiaries. Programs such as NSP should continue to be in the agenda of the next government of Afghanistan.

The next government of Afghanistan should focus on supporting the talented, educated entrepreneurs of Afghanistan. Corruption, which is at present the main hurdles behind lack of economic development, should be routed out. It is not easy a task to do, but a government has the apparatus and resources to implement its plans. Corruption is deep rooted and many high level officials and regional power masters are involved. Though a careful move is needed to look in the eyes of those involved, the most viable and wise move for the next government to handle with this problem is to mobilize country's constitutional institutions. The office of the Attorney General of Afghanistan and the Judiciary, the two independent bodies, should be empowered to pursue the issue of corruption. State and its institution should remain neutral while fighting against corruption. Advance warnings, and behind the door meetings should be conducted with those senior political figures involved in corruption before all out purge begins.

The State should put its institutional support behind successful entrepreneurs and companies. Banks are the backbone of economic health of a country. We have witnessed the collapse of Kabul Bank due to irregularities - both in running the Bank by its owners and the Central Bank of Afghanistan - and the continued poor performance of other Banks in the country. Businesses are not supported. A strong Banking law should be promulgated and implemented by the next government and parliament of Afghanistan that should give new directions to the Banking industry towards contributing significant involvement in the economic development of the country. Banks and government institutions should support successful companies through a system of transparency

and inclusiveness. At this stage, institutions must be designed around inclusive mechanisms - as described earlier.

Agriculture is the most important traditional and historic economic sector in Afghan society. Almost more than 85% of populations, living in rural areas, depend on agricultural products and the subsequent income. During the last almost three decades of war in the country little has been done to provide irrigation infrastructure, canals and utilize river basins for irrigation of arid land - which exist in thousands of acres across Afghanistan. The potential of developing a prosperous agriculture sector in Afghanistan is huge. This country has ample of water sources. But due to lack of infrastructure, planning and proper funding, the millions of cubic meters of water flows unused outside the country to neighboring Pakistan and Iran. In the Northern fringes of the country, the Oxus river flows untapped which has the potential to irrigate millions of acres of arid lands in the Northern provinces including Badakhshan, Takhar and Kunduz. Building of Dams will provide opportunities for production of electricity. Afghanistan is buying its electricity from neighboring Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. There are some Dam building projects undertaken by the present government. Focus should be intensified in speeding up such projects because this will irrigate millions of acres of land across the country in addition to production of millions of KW of electricity.

Modernization of agriculture sector and building of irrigation infrastructure across the country are two critical areas where the next Afghan government and international community should step in soon. Afghanistan was self-sufficient in food supplies during the reign of Sardar Muhammad Daud Khan, the last member of the Musesheban era that reign in Afghanistan for more than six decades beginning early 20th century. This is a gigantic task before any Afghan government, but with the existence of institutional ability and with support from the international community the task can be achieved. Strong commitment and resolve is needed.

### CHALLENGES:

It is obvious challenges are rampant everywhere when we look at Afghanistan's present situation. I just want to quote Winston Churchill who once said: "Sure I am that this day we are master of our fate, that the task which has been set before us is not above our strength; that its prangs and toils are not beyond my endurance. As long as we have faith in our own cause and unconquerable will to win, victory will not be denied us".

The difficulties and hard time that silent majority of Afghan nation is currently suffering will one day end. I would quote the Stockdale Paradox, which is named after admiral Jim Stockdale, who was a United States military officer held captive for eight years during the Vietnam War. Stockdale was tortured more than twenty times by his captors, and never had much reason to believe he would survive the prison camp and someday get to see his wife again. And yet, as Stockdale told Collins, he never lost faith during his ordeal: "I never doubted not only that I would get out, but also that I would prevail in the end and turn the experience into the defining event of my life, which, in retrospect, I would not trade."

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