

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



September 18, 2017

The Unending Global Conflict

Peace remains a fragile issue around the globe. Serious threats are posed against human societies in one way or another. All nations are likely to fluctuate between hope and fear regarding peace and stability. Life-threatening issues increase on day-to-day basis that inflict sufferings upon nations and take its toll on human societies. The world is in the midst of social and political crises and strategies do not bear the desired result.

There are a lot of words and statements to break political deadlocks. However, strategies move back and forth at international level without fruitful result. The history of human societies is replete with bloody wars that rooted in social, cultural, political and ideological issues. This history still records the world's wounds and anguish. The cycle of political conflicts and ideological tension never comes to an end. People pursue their interests at the cost of others' life. To put it succinctly, the cycle of violence does not end and human societies keep on claiming racial and religious superiority which has constantly triggered public sensitivities. History, the infected wound of which continues bleeding, has not been an eye-opener for the world. Political stability is in a state of flux since nuclear arms, terrorism, religious-ideological differences, racial superiority, and atrocities rule the world. The serious challenges leave the past simple life as nostalgia for many individuals when pressing a switch could not kill thousands of people or air pollution did not threaten their life.

Currently, there are serious threats before human societies. For instance, the issue of terrorism, nuclear arms, air pollution, bomb blast, racial and religious discrimination, human casualties, etc. are making the news at national and international levels. The merciless killings of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, which stems from racial superiority, the hydrogen bomb test of North Korea, the bloody war in Syria, the Qatar-Saudi tension, the Israel-Palestine conflicts, the violent acts of terrorism, etc. result in deep political gaps, human casualties, and sense of hatred and revenge. It is an unmistakable fact that in this 'global village' all nations will be affected by a threat occurring in a corner of the world, at least mentally, if not physically.

Calling it the most serious threat, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) recent nuclear test. He also denounced sectarianism in Myanmar and issued a call to 'get serious' on climate change after unprecedented natural disasters spanning the globe. He said that 'the solution must be political,' and warned, 'the potential consequences of military action are too horrific.' Stemming the tide of the persisting crises is a great obstacle before the world and challenges continue unabated despite being debated hotly for adopting a fruitful strategy in this respect.

Contrary to hot discourse about a peaceful life and 'spirit of brotherhood', political threats, terrorist networks and human casualties increase. Ideological conflicts have led to the establishment of many fundamental groups. The sudden emergence, swift growth, radical mindset, and violent practices of the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) will be recorded in the history in the wake of shedding streams of blood and dishonoring thousands of women out of radical ideology and destructive mindset. Martin Luther King rightly pointed out in his Noble Lecture that 'in spite of these spectacular strides in science and technology, and still unlimited ones to come, something basic is missing. There is a sort of poverty of the spirit which stands in glaring contrast to our scientific and technological abundance. The richer we have become materially, the poorer we have become morally and spiritually. We have learned to fly the air like birds and swim like the sea like fish, but we have not learned the simple art of living together as brothers.'

Extending the spirit of brotherhood - which will necessarily minimize violence and bloodshed - is believed to be the lifeblood of peaceful life in human societies. A hostile approach or violent strategy towards a nation or individual on the basis of their race, color, or creed will not remedy the ongoing challenges of human societies. Indeed, the armed conflicts will continue unless the world learns the 'art of living together as brothers'. Similarly, to mitigate political conflicts and ideological tension, the world needs to respect territorial integrity and exercise religious tolerance - lack of both is the root cause of bloody wars.

After all, the world, including the international community, must not remain indifferent to the outrageous violation of human rights. The international community should seek to bridge the gap between nations and place emphasis on non-violent strategy in the event of challenging issues.

It should be taken into consideration that violating the rights of an ethnic minority, segregating or discriminating a group based on their racial or religious backgrounds, and murdering one due to their skin's color will have serious repercussions rather than resolving a problem. We are all 'members of the human family' and have to respect the rights, dignity and liberties of one another so as to promote peace and stability around the globe and stop the relentless cycle of violence and brutality.



Flawed Mechanisms in Political Interactions

By Jafar Mohammadi

People's obedience to the government is on the condition that it should protect physical and mental peace of the society and pave the ground for development through efficient use of economic, political and administrative resources. It is possible if poverty, instability, discrimination, and unemployment come to an end and the public be able to participate in national processes.

Establishing a strong, continued relation and sustainable interaction among government institutions, social organizations and private sectors will smooth the path for the implementation of the government's agenda. In addition to being influential and significant for the efficiency of the state's policy, this will also be accounted as democratic values and principles. The political system in Afghanistan is based on democracy which has been embodied in the constitution as the state's rule of law.

Based on democratic principles, the power should be decentralized and one's desire for monopolizing power or wealth need to end. That is to say, the separation of power is recognized as a principle and national power is distributed constitutionally among the legislative, executive and judicial systems. What's more, a logical balance among the three mentioned systems should be formed so as to prevent from the centralization of power in the hand of the executive system. The reason behind distribution of power among the three systems is establishing a logical balance and prevent from individual and collective disorders. Furthermore, the balance among the governmental, civil and private institutions will strengthen order in a community and pave the path for a peaceful and quiet life. It goes without saying that if the balance of power is ruined, it will lead to two horrible consequences: Institutionalizing democracy will be hampered on the one hand, the process of cooperation and interaction among different institutions will be eroded on the other hand. So, the wall of mistrust between the nation and state will grow taller.

The principle of separation of power is included in Afghan Constitution and it is observed up to now. Our political system is formed of three principles: government, parliament and judicial power and their authorities are specified in the Constitution and all three are supposed to identify their realm of authorities on the basis of law. There seems no legal problem in this regard since the law has specified the authorities and responsibilities of all three powers. However, the problems handed down from the past political culture and the inabilities that can be observed in the current government, some of the powers could not fulfill their duties to the public satisfaction. The true sense of balanced separation of power is not witnessed in the country, but this can be reformed in long term through strengthening legal mechanisms. Currently, the problem lies regarding the way of interaction among three organizations: state, civil society, and private sector. Within the past years, the government was not

able to establish an organic and stable relation among state, civil society, and private sectors. In another item, although the growth and activity of civil society and media have been impressive over the past fifteen years due to the presence of the international community; a reasonable, stable and organized interaction among the civil society, the media and government institutions was not formed.

Needless to say, the government paved the ground for the activities of civil society and the media and many private media are operating freely across the country, yet a constructive interaction among the three institutions is lacking.

For instance, the civil society seems to act as an opponent to the government rather than a cooperative institution, and the media criticize the government severely. This issue reflects the fact that the relation between social-cultural institutions and government has not been formed in its true meaning. Civil society and social organizations can organize the public and spread awareness among them regarding their rights and responsibilities. They have to galvanize the citizens to take active part in social and political life and reinforce the spirit of brotherhood, unity, and solidarity among them which will necessarily lead to interaction and tolerance.

The national media claimed that 2016 was the worst and the most violent year for journalists and the government institutions were widely involved in this issue, according to the reports. Few days ago, a media staff was battered by a member of police. To one's unmitigated surprise, both sides claim, in such issues, that they are right and accuse one another of breaking the law. All in all, the problematic issue among the government and social institutions and the media bespeak of the fact that there is much left to be done in this respect. To sum up, either the realm of authorities, responsibilities and activities of these institutions was not identified in terms of mutual interaction or sufficient awareness was not spread in this regard.

The mutual interaction between private sectors and government is more ambiguous. The state economic institutions yet to organize its cooperation with private sectors. In other words, the government institutions ignored that private sectors can play a constructive role in production, employment, and development of human resources and pave the ground for development of economic infrastructures in the country.

The government will be able to establish this interaction if it attracts the public trust.

In short, if national policies are formed on the basis of law, democracy and social justice, the fair distribution of power and wealth is accepted as a principle among different layers of the society, the impeccable implementation of law will be possible in a society and the cornerstone of cooperation and interaction will be laid between the nation and state.

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The Villains and Heroes of Afghan War

By Mohammad Ishaq Arifi

The protracted war in Afghanistan which inflicted heavy casualties upon Afghan soldiers and US troops still remains a maze of war strategies. Only those who sacrificed their lives with great bravery are the protagonists. The villains in this ideological-political war are a number of religious fundamentalists who shed streams of humans' blood indiscriminately and played their destructive role without feeling a sense of guilt. The heroes and villains are recognized publicly; however, this war continues like an interminable serial.

Despite the genuine intention and selfless acts of the nobles and heroes, the villains (militant fighters) never hesitate to abandon their destructive role. The horrific issues and gory incidents in this political game have filled the survivors and the viewers with a great sense of hatred and fear although this will be a hobby for the masterminds behind the scene. Afghan nation bears the brunt of violent acts of the villains who play under the mask of humanity and chant sacred slogans.

Many political pundits predicted the outcome of this game and much was spoken and written in this regard, but the sufferings of Afghan nation seems endless. The militant fighters did not only refuse to cease violence and bloodshed but also changed their war strategy with strong determination that has resulted in great despair for the public, particularly for those who are in the front lines and those who are targeted without being involved in this game.

With the unmitigated insurgency within the recent years in Afghanistan, the determination of warring factions for continuing war and persistent refusal to negotiation seem a forgone conclusion despite the fact that Afghan and US governments called the militants, especially the Taliban, to come to negotiating table. The Taliban's ideologue leader Haibatullah Akhundzada, along with his deputies Sirajuddin Haqqani and Mullah Yaqub - son of former leader Mullah Omar, is masterminding heavy offensives against Afghan and foreign troops.

The US soldiers also sustained heavy fatalities and made great sacrifices in this war. Adam Goldman and Matthew Rosenberg maintain in an article titled "A Funeral of 2 Friends: C.I.A. Deaths Rise in Secret Afghan War" as, "The deaths are a reflection of the heavy price the agency has paid in a secret, nearly 16-year-old war, where thousands of C.I.A. operatives have served since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. The deaths of Mr. Hoke, 42, and Mr. Delemarre,

47, show how the C.I.A. continues to move from traditional espionage to the front lines, and underscore the pressure the agency faces now that President Trump has pledged to keep the United States in Afghanistan with no end in sight."

The US President Donald Trump said earlier that his government was going to "win" the war, but defined winning, not in terms of victory, but merely preventing the Taliban from winning. He said, "Our troops will fight to win. We will fight to win. From now on, victory will have a clear definition: attacking our enemies, obliterating ISIS, crushing al Qaeda, preventing the Taliban from taking over Afghanistan, and stopping mass terror attacks against America before they emerge."

The harsh tone and threatening words used against warring parties on the one hand, and the militants' intensified attacks on the other hand, make this game too ambiguous to be predicted. What's more, warring factions, mainly the Taliban, will keep on their deadly offensives and destructive role. Hence, Afghan nation will be burning in the midst of violence and bloodshed, which is a highly painful story. So, there seems no light at the end of the tunnel for Afghan nation.

Furthermore, the militants are left with two choices either to come to negotiating table or will come under severe attacks. Gen. John W. Nicholson, the top United States commander in Afghanistan, hoped earlier that the Taliban would enter the peace process - which was refused so far by the Taliban - saying that the military would continue to put pressure on their sanctuaries inside and outside Afghanistan. He added that while it was possible to find a diplomatic formula in Afghanistan, the US would continue its military efforts in the country and help Afghan forces improve their capabilities.

It is self-explanatory that Afghan nation is exhausted from this endless war for suffering severely as a result of terrorist attacks and suicide bombings. Hence, the nation has no option other than hoping and praying for the end of the war. It is no more a mystery for the nation that those who make sacrifices with bravery are the real protagonists and heroes. Their names will remain permanent in the history of this country and they are paid great tribute by the nation forever. On the contrary, the warring factions, who play the role of villains via harsh practices and indiscriminate killings, will be cursed by the history.

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