

A Proposal for Peace in Afghanistan

A Position Paper by the Islamic Peace and Reform Movement for Afghanistan (IPRMA) on the Bilateral Security Agreement between the US and Afghanistan: A Continuation of the Status Quo Policy

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For more than twelve years massive military and civilian forces from the US and NATO and Non-NATO countries along with close to a trillion dollars amount of funds for their military and civilian contingents from these countries have been applied to implant a system of governance and control over Afghanistan that the policy makers from these countries thought would bring security, political stability and progress along the lines chosen by these foreign leaders and their special interest groups.

The choice of Hamid Karzai as the “interim” leader in the post invasion period in late 2001 and then the “elected” leader in 2004 all signified to these foreign leaders ‘success’ of their war strategy if one were to read what they wrote and listened to what they said in their statements aimed at their own public. All along the stories coming out of Afghanistan were much different in all areas. On October 8, 2013 Karzai in response to another airstrike that killed five Afghan children and women in eastern Afghanistan stated that, “the entire NATO exercise was one that caused Afghanistan a lot of suffering, a lot of loss of life and no gains because the country is not secure.”(MailOnline.com).

At the same time, the sentiment among 67 % of the American people, viz., a clear majority has been that “ the war was not worth it” according to the latest ABC Poll of July, 2013. This is interpreted by many that the “war against Afghanistan was a mistake and continuing this war is clearly a greater mistake”.

The vast majority of the Afghan people have been saying the same all along in part indicated by a survey in 2010 in the south west including Kandahar showed that 92% of the Afghan people did not know why did the US and British invade Afghanistan, and most Afghans have been demanding an end to the war and occupation. To find out these facts, the policy makers in Washington should go talk and listen to the tens of thousands of refugees at the Qambar Circle and in other parts of Kabul who have fled from the aerial bombardments and night raids in Helmand, Kandahar and Uruzgan and eastern provinces.

They need to hear what these Afghans have to say about the war against them and about the war based policies.If we closely look at the results of the imposed war on the ground forcing the Afghan people to defend themselves alongside with the vast amount of scientifically based research and inquiries and their results obtained by thousands of Americans refuting the official story contained in the 911 Commission Report, which blamed Afghanistan about the events of September 11, 2001, a clear picture appears about the war against the Afghan people.

In Afghanistan the war could not have been declared “unwinnable” repeatedly stated by

officials from the US and NATO without the support of the majority of the Afghan people. The research results by thousands of American scientists, engineers, architects, firefighters, military, professors, pilots, lawyers and other American professionals and similar professionals from other countries asking the same questions through the Internet such as those questions raised on www.PatriatsQuestion_9/11 and www.911Truth.org among many other web sites as part of the www.9/11TruthMovement.com clearly show the illegality and immorality of the war against Afghanistan. The Afghan people had no role in the crime of that day; and these American professionals and professionals from other countries around the world are demanding a new Congressional investigation of the terrorist attacks of that day from officials in the Administration and Congress to find out what really happened. These demands are not going away as stated on these sites. For more research on this topic see extensive writings on www.globalresearch.org and the Wisdom Fund (listserv@twf.org) among other sources such as Wikipedia which offers summaries and references.

During May 20-21, 2012 at the NATO summit in Chicago an irreversible decision was announced by the member countries including the US to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan by the end of December, 2014. While the other countries continue to withdraw their troops, the US has been in search of an exit strategy to leave Afghanistan 'responsibly' as official US statements have declared. The injection of the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) as part of the 'Strategic Partnership Agreement' (SPA) between the US (NATO) and Afghanistan has been the main such exit strategy. The US is seeking nine military bases all over Afghanistan to leave as many as 10,000 US and possibly NATO soldiers behind after the withdrawal deadline of 2014 to 'train, advise, and assist in missions', according to the State Department web site. The clear message and aim is to continue with the war unless a peace deal is struck.

There is no explicit movement for peace as part of the exit strategy (other than vague statements about wanting peace and reconciliation on part of the US), something which nearly all the American civilian and military leaders including Robert Gates and General David Petraeus have repeatedly stated in recent past. The US also demands immunity for its military and civilian personnel from Afghan laws under the 'Status of the Forces Agreement', a provision for the American personnel at some 730 bases that the US has around the world. In the case of a similar request from Iraq for stationing US troops there after the withdrawal of US and British troops the Iraqi Parliament rejected the request and the US was forced to withdraw all its troops.

The discussions on BSA has been held in secret between officials in Washington and Kabul. Some issues came out on October 12, 2013 in a press conference held by John Kerry and Hamid Karzai the details of which are available on the State department web site. Apparently all items in the agreement has been signed by Karzai except the item on immunity which he has delegated to a Loya Jirga Mushwarati (Advisory Loya Jirga). This Jirga is based on selecting individuals who will attend and is to be gathered during November 19-20, 2013. Karzai has put Sybghatullah Mojadedi in charge of organizing the Jirga, who declared on October 19, 2013 in Kabul that "there was a lot of pressure for this Jirga from inside and outside sources" and that "there was no need for the Jirga" meaning it is all agreed upon. At the same time on October 24, 2013 at the NATO meeting in Brussels the present Afghan Minister of Defense Bismullah Khan gave assurance that "the agreement will be signed by the Loya Jirga".

This Jirga is called illegal by many Afghans since for such an important national issue the

members are not elected, they are selected. Members of this kind of Jirga can be easily influenced by foreign sources and those in the regime wanting to protect themselves, something which has happened several times since the invasion in 2001. Two television programs (Ariana at 7 pm Pacific time during a program called Negarish and RTA state run TV at 8 pm) on October 20, 2013 from Kabul had discussions on the issues surrounding the BSA. The discussants called the Jirga illegal and demanded that the issue be taken up by the Parliament. Ms. Shakiba Hashemy a member of the Parliament also raised the gruesome killing of the 16 Afghan civilians by Sargent Bales in March 2012. The Afghan people have questioned in several TV programs 'how can the agreement be accepted in view of the killings and the fact that he was taken out of the country'.

The Afghan people were demanding justice inside Afghanistan. Another panel discussion on Ariana TV network from Kabul on November 5, 2013 in Negarish program again called the Loya Jirga Mushwarati illegal and one commentator said the Afghan people will "throw the agreement out " using the tip of the fingers as a common Afghan usage of rejecting something. There have been demonstrations against the BSA and this Jirga in Kabul in recent days. A Jirga under the name of Counter-Jirga was held at the Mumtaz Hotel in Kabul with some 3,000 delegates from different parts of Afghanistan according to reports from Kabul on November 11, 2013 strongly condemning the BSA document and calling the Mushwarati Jirga illegal. Another debate in the newly formed program 90-Minutes on Ariana TV network in Kabul on November 12, 2013 had participants on both sides of the issues on the BSA, pro and against it. The general commentary clearly showed every one demanding peace and as some discussants stated the BSA will not bring peace nor will it solve any problems, but, rather will extend the war and occupation as several participants stated.

Fresh on the minds of the Afghan people are the pictures of the victims of the massacre of 16 Afghan children, women and men while they were asleep in their homes at two villages at Panjwai district in Kandahar on March 11, 2012 by Sargent Robert Bales who admitted to the killings in order to escape the death penalty according to US laws in a military court. He tried to burn every one by setting fire to their homes. Horrific witness testimony from Afghanistan were provided via video by relatives of the victims including Mullah Kamal Adin who had lost 11 members of his cousins family seeing the bodies in despair (see, "At Soldier's Hearing, Grisly Description of Chaos and Horror" , Kirk Johnson, New York Times, November 10, 2012). This horrendous crime was also mentioned during the 90-Minutes program on TV.

The Obama Administration has warned that all American soldiers will leave under the so-called "zero-option" unless the personnel are given immunity from prosecution under Afghan laws when committing a crime in Afghanistan. This argument has raised the fear of civil war among certain circles once all the foreign soldiers leave, something that was experienced following the Soviet troop withdrawal in 1989.

However, it cannot be overlooked that the sentiments of the majority of the Afghan people has been strongly against this imposed war, the occupation and war based policies. These sentiments clearly support establishing peace and avoidance of past mistakes. At the same time there are reasons for Afghanistan to keep good relations with all countries while the country regains its sovereignty and be able to be self-reliant going forward. To regain its sovereignty, it cannot rely on foreign military and foreign support for its government while neglecting the needs of the people. This has taken place during the past twelve years, most observers would agree. This cannot continue with the signing of the BSA as many Afghans

argue. Most observers see the signing of the BSA as a historical mistake as the path to continued war, instead of the search for peace to end the war and genuinely rebuild the country and the lives of the Afghan people.

Looking at the history of the past 34 years a similar historical mistake was made in the post-Soviet troop withdrawal period. The Geneva Accords signed on April 14, 1988 provided a means for the exit of Soviet troops, but, left conditions unchanged in Afghanistan. The communist regime remained in place to which the Soviet Union, until its disintegration in December 1991, and then Russian government continued provide support. The US signed the Accords as a witness. Pakistan and the regime in Kabul were the direct signatories leaving the demands of the Afghan people for peace and the struggle of the Resistance (the Mujahideen) without any acknowledgement or a role. The war continued for three more years and was followed by the devastation and chaos of the civil wars especially during 1992-1996 in Kabul. The US and the West have acknowledged their historical failure in ignoring the problems of Afghanistan and the needs of the Afghan people during that period.

Signing the BSA also ignores the vast needs of the Afghan people and the present Resistance (the Taliban and Hezbi Islami). The invasion of Afghanistan since October 7, 2001 has added massive problems to the Afghan society and Afghan economy, and their dimensions, their attended and unattended consequences continue to plague Afghanistan and the Afghan people. To mention just a few, a corrupt regime where corruption is rampant among its members and the amount of bribes received by its members amounted to over \$4 billion in one year according to many Afghan and international media sources. On October 21, 2013 Arania TV broadcasted the list of officials of the regime who have seized 4.44 million jereeb (2.22 million acres) of private and public land throughout Afghanistan including Kabul; on some of these properties warlords and officials of the regime have built townships surrounding themselves with their own, at the same time 3.5 million refugees outside the country and 500,000 in Kabul alone are waiting for an uncertain future, thousands of young Afghan children are leaving Afghanistan through the help of smugglers to third countries and many have perished at the coasts of Greece, Italy, and as far as Australia in route seeking escape according to UN data, while a political system where 'elections' are to be held on April 5, 2014 where warlords with the blood of thousands of innocent victims on their hands acknowledged by international human rights organizations and Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission can stand for high office.

There is lack of proper justice at all levels, abuse of Afghans by foreign military and Afghan security forces have gone without investigations and justice. The majority (60%) of the Afghan people are suffering from mental and emotional illnesses according to the Ministry of Health, while over a million Afghans mostly the unemployed and the young have become drug addicts with many seen right in Kabul, prevalent poverty prevail where Afghanistan is ranked as the 172 country among 178 by the UN Human Development Index. There are many problems that become obvious visiting Kabul and elsewhere, such as Afghan women begging for help and children working for survival on the streets.

Yet, all these problems are ignored by officials of the regime in Kabul and by US officials whenever they discuss or even visit Afghanistan. The most recent example is the unfortunate statement by Senator Carl Levin, Chairman of the Senate Arms Services Committee, visiting Kabul along with Senator Jack Reed painted a positive picture of what is going in Afghanistan and ignored all the prevailing problems and declared on October 25, 2013 (Foreign Policy) that, 'there will be no more US aid to Afghanistan unless the agreement is signed', almost an ultimatum to the whole Afghan nation.

What will the stationing of 10,000 US soldiers do for solving these problems do when the presence of over 300,000 foreign military and civilian contingents have failed to do for twelve years? This question has been asked by many in Afghanistan, American politicians should answer the Afghan people? The only matter that can help solve the current state of crisis in Afghanistan is establishing peace. Establishing peace is less costly to both the US and Afghanistan as the alternative to the proposed BSA to solve the issues on security and a host of other problems. The signing of BSA will guarantee continuation of war and the preservation of the status quo policies which have built a corrupt system of governance based on abuse of power that are not acceptable to the Afghan people or the American people. The time for restarting the peace process is now for there is plenty of time until December 2014 to achieve peace. The need for peace is obvious both in Afghanistan and in America; a vision for peace and peace making effort is required. It is the responsibility of the present policy makers to create the vision and fulfill the demands of the people.

We have proposed the establishment of an Afghan led comprehensive **Peace Commission** first in 2008 posted on our web site www.Afghanresearchsociety.org and revised in 2010 and posted on our web site, www.Afghanprm.org. Here we offer an outline of our proposal: The idea of a **Peace Commission for Afghanistan (PCA)** is derived from the agreement between the UN and OIC of July 2008 in Geneva that proclaimed support for searching for peace, peace promotion, and peace keeping in areas of conflict in the Middle East. In the case of Afghanistan, this proposal can be initiated

- 1) by a joint commission of the UN and OIC at this critical period in Afghanistan especially when an Afghan candidate is competing for one of the five Vice President's post of OIC. 2) The PCA should be organized and run by an Afghan majority consisting of three groups each with equal number of delegates.
- 3) These groups are to be members of the present regime who do not have blood of the Afghan people on their hands; members of the Armed Opposition (Taliban and Hezbi Islami) and members of the professionals and technocrats from inside Afghanistan and from the Diaspora.
- 4) The UN and OIC will have observer-supporter membership and the US and European countries will have observer delegates.
- 5) The neighboring countries will also have observer delegates.
- 6) The purposes will include structuring the framework for peace and support for a peace agreement that the Afghan groups have formulated and agreed upon; financial support for the agreement by the UN, OIC, US, Europe and the world community.
- 7) Long term commitment to rebuilding Afghanistan by the international community similar to the Tokyo donor commitment of 2012, and for the return and resettlement of the more than 3.5 million refugees and more than 500,000 Internally Displaced Afghans. 8) Guarantees for the sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan by all outside players under UN-OIC observance. It is clear that we are proposing compromises to end the suffering of the Afghan people experienced during the longest war in the history of the country added to the cumulative effects of 34 years of wars. We strongly feel establishing peace through consensus is the most critical issues in present day Afghanistan and we are calling on all sides to honor the demands of the Afghan people.

The Islamic Peace and Reform Movement of Afghanistan (IPRMA) is an independent international movement supporting peace, end of war and occupation and rebuilding of the Afghan economy to support the absorption of the refugees and long term development and economic growth of the Afghan economy for the support of the Afghan people.

Our position paper seeking peace through the establishment of a Peace Commission instead of signing the BSA document is supported by members of IPRMA and Afghans and friends of Afghanistan in the US, Canada, Europe, Afghanistan, and Malaysia. A partial list of names is attached.

Members of IPRMA: *M. Siddieq Noorzoy, Chairman, Ph.D., Professor of Economics, Emeritus (US, Afghanistan), Sayed Khalillullah Hashemyan, Ph.D. former Professor Kabul University, editor and publisher, Afghanistan Mirror (US), Eng. Fazl Ahmad Afghan , M.S. (Canada), Aref Mohammadi M.A. Agriculture Specialist (US, Southern Afghanistan), Mohammad Qayum Mohmand, Ph.D. Lecturer on Middle East subjects, Department of the Middle East, University of Utah, Nabi Misdaq, Ph.D. Anthropologist, author and investigative reporter (US), Hanifullah Salarzai, MD (US, Afghanistan), Eng Osman Mohmand, IT Specialist (US), Eng. Fareed Wardak, IT Specialist (US), Azam Arsalai former mujahid and civil servant (US), Eng. Ningyalay Ameri IT Specialist (US), Toryalai Ameri, MD (US), Ali Ghorri, Ph.D. Professor of Mathematics, De Anza College , Bay Area, (US), Hamid Durani businessman, (Northern Afghanistan) Bruce G. Richardson, author and a friend of the Afghan people, (US), Jamal Noorzoy, BA., Businessman, Realtor (US), Hamid Noorzoy, Gulf Consultant, (US), Torpekay Haidari , M.A. Former Associate Professor Kabul University, Kazim Jalalyar, Civil Engineer (US), Hedayatullah Jalayar, Doctor of Pharmacology (US), Ahmad Zia former Afghan Army Officer (US), Latif Ahmad, MD (US, Germany, Afghanistan), Nasir Ahmad, B.S. Civil Engineer, (US), Wahid Wahab, Owner and CEO Kobe Co. (Germany), Wali Wahab, Eng. Kobe Co. (Germany).*

Supporters of our peace proposal for negotiating a peace settlement

Professor Mohammad Hashem Kamali, President of the Islamic Institute , Malaysia , author of seven books on Islamic issues , among them Introduction to Sharai (2008) , and Constitutionalism in Islamic Countries , Oxford University Press (2011), Eng. Azim Abromand, spokesperson for the Commission for Peace and Freedom (Germany), Rahim Aziz, Ph.D. Independent Scholar(US), Eng. Ghani Andar , Chief Operation Officer, Afghan Tower (Kabul), Akbar Izami, businessman, (Kabul), Hafizullah Wardak, Eng. former Professor of Engineering Kabul University (US), Amanullah Staneczay Eng.(US), Aziz Rahmani Eng. (US), Mohammad Aman Osman, B.A.(US), Mohammad Basir Osman (US), Civil Engineer, Mohammad Kabir Osman, MD (Germany), Mohammad Sadiq Osman, artist, (US), Aziz Jamali, Eng. (US), Abdul Sabbor Atta, Eng. (US), Javid Kamiab (US), Rafique Noori (US). Abdullah Poyan, analyst, commentator, Abdul Janhani, poet, Sayed Rahim, journalist.

Via phone calls received during November 12-14, 2013 assurances were given by Afghans that there are 'thousands in Kabul and in northern Afghanistan supportive of our initiative for peace'. Technical difficulties prevent collecting and adding their names.

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