

U.S. & the Afghan vote

Geopolitical Review

By Geopoliticalmonitor.com

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FORECAST

Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission (IEC) has cancelled the nation's presidential elections, ostensibly to allow U.S. President Barack Obama's troop surge to take full effect and improve Afghan security. However, the delay will enable U.S. troops to manipulate the election and oust President Hamid Karzai from power in order to stem the Taliban insurgency.

Although the Afghan constitution calls for an election 30 to 60 days prior to the end of the president's tenure, currently May 22, 2009, the election commission of the U.S.-backed and installed Karzai government has illegally reset the presidential election to August 20, 2009.

Ostensibly, the illegal cancellation of the Afghani presidential election is to provide the U.S.-backed government four more months to increase its security capacity and enable free and fair elections, however the four months will be utilized by the U.S. to insert the bulk of the expected 30,000 U.S. troop surge into Afghanistan in order to control, manipulate, and determine the Afghan election under the American gun. To this end, the Obama administration last week diverted 3,000 U.S. troops scheduled for deployment in Iraq into Afghanistan.

The end goal is to oust from power current President Hamid Karzai, who is seeking reelection. Once the darling of the West and a staunch Bush ally in the "war on terror", Karzai the asset has now been viewed by the Obama administration as a liability to Afghanistan's stability. Endemic corruption, increased violence, a resurgent Taliban, and weak leadership have eroded both international and domestic support for Karzai's government. From Karzai's vantage, U.S. and NATO air strikes that killed civilians have exacerbated instability by angering the electorate and facilitating the Taliban insurgency.

Until recently, it was believed there were no viable candidates that could challenge Karzai, however four key figures composed of three ex-ministers and a serving governor have now emerged: ex-foreign minister Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, ex-finance minister Dr. Ashraf Ghani, ex-interior minister Ali Ahmad Jalali, and Gul Agha Sherzai, governor of Nangahar, an eastern province with a U.S. troop presence.

Karzai's challengers traveled to Washington last week for meetings with Obama officials, potentially to form a "dream ticket" that would see them run together in order to unite Afghanistan's various ethnic groups, defeat Karzai, and work effectively with U.S. and NATO forces to stem the insurgency.

It should be noted that although U.S. troops will be utilized to control and manage the electoral process in order to ensure a favourable and “democratic” outcome, the actual job of voting manipulation (including but not limited to, assassinations, bombings, abductions, attacks, intimidations, bribes, and threats) will be left to newly U.S. organized Islamic militant groups.

The U.S.’ plan to counter the Taliban insurgency by training, arming, and funding non-Taliban Afghan militias or mujahedeen, first developed under the Bush administration and carried forward through the Obama administration by Bush appointed Defence Secretary Robert Gates, has officially begun as of yesterday according to Afghan government officials.

However, this strategy has been tried in the past and has not worked out so well for the U.S.

The last time the U.S. initiated a program to train, arm and fund Afghani Islamic militant groups, al-Qaeda emerged and the Taliban took control of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan’s presidential elections will be the latest in a long list of foreign elections that the U.S. has challenged or manipulated via funding and arms. In the Palestinian territories, the U.S. refused to recognize the democratically elected government of Hamas; in Somalia the U.S. overthrew the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) via the invasion of an Ethiopian proxy army despite the Islamist government’s broad support and ability to bring security to the war-torn nation; in Algeria, the U.S. backed a military coup that installed a military dictatorship after the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) won democratic elections in 1991; in Lebanon, the U.S. continues to refuse to recognize the participation of Hezbollah in government despite the fact that the people of Lebanon have so decided; in Pakistan, the Bush administration supported the military dictatorship of Musharraf. Closer to home, the U.S. has supported the undemocratic suspension of Canada’s Parliament by Stephen Harper, and in 2000, the Supreme Court installed George W. Bush despite Al Gore winning the popular vote.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

January 26 – February 2, 2009

WORLD

The United Nations’ crime and drug watchdog has indications that money made in illicit drug trade has been used to keep banks afloat in the global financial crisis, its head was quoted as saying on Sunday.

Chinese and Russian leaders Wen Jiabao and Vladimir Putin hit out at U.S. capitalist excesses for sparking the economic crisis as the Davos political and business summit made a gloomy start.

NORTH AMERICA

United States

The House Judiciary Committee chairman subpoenaed former White House adviser Karl Rove on Monday to testify about the Bush administration’s firing of nine U.S. attorneys and its prosecution of a former Democratic governor.

The interception of an Iranian arms ship by the US Navy in the Red Sea last week likely was conducted as a covert operation and is being played down by the US military due to the lack of a clear legal framework for such operations, an American expert on Iran told The Jerusalem Post on Saturday evening.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is calling on the Justice Department to release Bush administration documentation pertaining to torture, surveillance and other controversial national security policies.

President Barack Obama's new Mideast envoy sought Wednesday to boost a 10-day-old Gaza cease-fire that was thrown into turmoil, as Israeli warplanes pounded Gaza smuggling tunnels in retaliation for a Palestinian bombing that killed a soldier.

Israel must investigate allegations that its army violated international law during its three-week war against Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip, the new U.S. envoy to the United Nations said on Thursday.

Attorneys for U.S. citizen Jose Padilla — who was convicted of material support for terrorist activities in 2007 — say that high-level Bush Administration officials knew their client was being tortured during the time he was held an enemy combatant in a South Carolina brig, because of the command structure that then-Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld employed in approving harsh interrogation tactics.

Four days before leaving office, and ten days before House Judiciary Chairman John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI) subpoenaed him to testify, President Bush's White House Counsel instructed Karl Rove not to appear before Congress or turn over any documents relating to his time at the White House.

WESTERN EUROPE

Britain

Britain was just three hours away from going bust last year after a secret run on the banks, one of Gordon Brown's Ministers has revealed.

EASTERN EUROPE

Russia

Russia will start building a naval base this year in Georgia's Black Sea separatist region of Abkhazia, Russian media reported on Monday, a step Tbilisi said would violate its sovereignty.

Russia's state arms exporter, Rosoboronexport, plans to grow the volume of Russian armament and military equipment to Africa over the next four to five years, coming on top of allegations that Russia is selling arms to smuggling and contraband rings, thereby contributing to conflict on the war-torn continent.

Ukraine

Russia has no right to make a unilateral decision on rearming its Black Sea Fleet, based in Ukraine, a senior Ukrainian diplomat said on Tuesday.

MIDDLE EAST

Al-Qaeda groups in Yemen and Saudi Arabia have announced they are merging their operations, raising fears of new attacks in the region.

Israel

Israel has carried out an air attack in Gaza and sent tanks into the Strip, after Palestinian militants killed an Israeli soldier.

Israeli troops will continue pinpoint strikes on militant groups and their infrastructure in Gaza despite truce, the Haaretz newspaper said on Friday.

Palestinian Territories

A Palestinian man has accused Islamist Hamas militants in control of the Gaza Strip of torturing and killing his brother for publicly criticizing them.

EAST ASIA

China

China's commerce ministry says that country hasn't manipulated the value of its currency to promote exports, refuting US claims.

North Korea

North Korea announced Friday it is scrapping all political and military agreements with South Korea, accusing Seoul of pushing relations to the brink of war.

SOUTH ASIA

Pakistan

Pakistan said Wednesday it wanted closer cooperation with the United States in the fight against al Qaeda and the Taliban but had no understanding with Washington that allowed missile strikes on its territory.

A Pakistani investigation into the Mumbai attacks has shown they were not planned in Pakistan, the country's high commissioner to Britain told an Indian television news channel on Friday.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan soldiers captured the last major town held by Tamil Tiger separatists on Sunday, moving a step closer to finishing off one of Asia's longest-running insurgencies, the army commander said.

Thailand

Thailand's government has "categorically denied" mistreating migrants following reports it towed hundreds of desperate boat people back out to sea and abandoned them.

AFRICA

Madagascar

At least 68 people died in a wave of rioting in Madagascar this week, a police official said Wednesday, as President Marc Ravalomanana accused his main rival of stoking political unrest.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's opposition decided on Friday to join a government with President Robert Mugabe next month, ending a paralyzing political deadlock that has worsened the desperate economic and humanitarian crisis.

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