

United States Imperialism Continues War in Afghanistan and the Destabilization of Africa

From Central Asia to Chad, Togo and Libya, Western states seek to maintain dominance of the oppressed nations

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In just one week the United States government will commemorate its 16th anniversary in the bombing and occupation of Afghanistan.

This war did not really begin in 2001 resulting from the attacks on September 11 where planes were hijacked and flown into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon headquartered right outside of Washington, D.C.

U.S. involvement in the destabilization of Afghanistan goes back to the late 1970s when the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDP) led a socialist-oriented administration which advanced the cause of working people and farmers as well as providing fundamental civil rights to women. During this period Afghanistan was aligned with the Soviet Union and other progressive and non-capitalist states. Modernization programs were underway aimed at enhancing the standard of living and educational levels of the masses of people.

The PDPA was formed in 1965 by uniting several factions within the Socialist Party of Afghanistan. Later in 1973, the party assisted in the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Factional disputes within the PDPA led to the ascendancy of **Barbrak Kamal** as head-of-state in Afghanistan in December 1979. This move was supported by the Soviet leadership which deployed military forces into Afghanistan to ensure the stability of the new government.



Taking advantage of the discontent among feudal, monarchist and other counter-revolutionary elements in the country, the U.S. through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Pentagon armed rebels with specific aim of derailing the revolutionary process. The formation of al-Qaeda occurred in these years while thousands of fighters were recruited within Afghanistan and abroad to join the campaign against the socialist government.

This war of destabilization was coordinated at the highest levels of the U.S. government under the administrations of both **Jimmy Carter** and **Ronald Reagan**. The anti-communist rebels were promoted in the U.S. as freedom fighters seeking to reclaim the historical traditions of Afghan people. Much was made of the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan evoking the notion of the red menace and overtaking of states by Communism.

The war in Afghanistan continued through the 1980s into the early 1990s, when the Soviet Union withdrew its support for the government of Najibullah. By 1992, the Mujahideen had taken over the capital. In later years, the Taliban became dominant soon establishing another regime in Kabul.

From the mid-to-late 1990s, al-Qaeda was considered to be more of an adversary to the U.S. resulting in it being projected through the corporate media as a major threat. The August 1998 bombing of U.S. embassy buildings in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania prompted the **Bill Clinton** administration to bomb Afghanistan and the Republic of Sudan under the guise of both states serving as a base for **Osama bin Laden**.

Since 2001, the Pentagon under purported NATO command has been bombing and conducting ground operations in Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan. As of one year ago, the official statistics supplied by the U.S. military says 2,386 U.S. troops have been killed and over 20,000 wounded. Also 1,173 U.S. civilian contractors have been killed in the theater of war.

Troops from other NATO states account for another 1,000 or more deaths. Other casualties such as closed head injuries, psychological disorders, etc. extend into the hundreds of thousands. In regard to the number of Afghans and Pakistanis killed, the numbers are largely incalculable.

In what I consider to be a conservative estimate, the Washington Post reported in 2015 that:

“War has directly resulted in the deaths of 149,000 people in Afghanistan and Pakistan between 2001 and 2014, according to estimates in a new report released by the Costs of War project at Brown University’s Watson Institute. That figure includes U.S. military members, contractors, and opposition fighters – as well as at least 26,270 civilians in Afghanistan, and 21,500 in Pakistan.”
(June 3)

This same article carries a quote from the study’s author, Boston University professor **Neta Crawford** which says:

“While the U.S. formally ended combat operations in Afghanistan in December 2014, U.S. uniformed troops remain advising the Afghan security forces and engaging in combat. The war has not diminished in intensity. Rather, in several ways, most notably, in the numbers of civilians and Afghan military and police killed, the war has escalated.”

Figures included in the report show that civilian deaths in Afghanistan appear to have grown over the past few years. Bombings, drone attacks and ground operations have continued under the administrations of **George W. Bush, Barack Obama** and now **Donald Trump**.



Another article from the New York Times dated June 11, 2017 indicates that all of the reported U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan this year were related to military engagements with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) local affiliate called the Islamic State of Khorasan. Therefore, the principal enemy of U.S. forces has gone from al-Qaeda to the Taliban and the Haqqani Network to now ISIS.

President Trump recently announced that he is deploying an additional 4,000 Pentagon troops to the country. At his infamous United Nations speech last week he attacked Pakistan as well for being partly responsible for the problems Washington is having in the region. Pakistan has denied the allegations from the U.S. leader.

Consequently, the war in Afghanistan and Pakistan will continue until the U.S. suffers an outright military defeat or is forced to withdraw by the people in this country. The Vietnam War, which is the subject of a controversial documentary by **Ken Burns** now being shown over PBS, ended as a result of the combined revolutionary military resistance of the Democratic Republic in the North and the National Liberation Front in the occupied South.

Reflections on Imperialist Militarism and the African Crisis: The Cases of Chad, Togo and Libya

In closing I want to make a few remarks on some aspects of the political and security situation in Africa. Although not routinely addressed by the antiwar and peace movements in the U.S., the imperialists are continuing their efforts to halt development and exert total control over African Union (AU) member-states.

Chad, an oil-producing former French colony in western Central Africa, has been placed by Trump on the list of countries whose nationals are banned from entering the U.S. This came as a surprise for some considering the pro-Washington and Paris stance of successive Chadian governments.

An article published by Africa News noted:

“The inclusion of Chad is hinged on the failure of Ndjamena to share terrorism-related and other crucial information the U.S. required, the White House confirmed. Trump signed the order on March 6 banning travelers from six Muslim-majority countries – Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen – for

90 days and locked out most aspiring refugees for 120 days.” (Sept. 25)

Only Iraq has been removed so far from the list in exchange for the targeting of Chaldean and other nationals from the country in the U.S. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela were added to the latest list issued by Trump.

Newsweek magazine said in a report published on September 25, that:



Chadian President Idriss Déby
(Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#))

“Given Chad’s long history of cooperation with the United States and other Western powers—such as France—on counterterrorism, it appears strange that Chadian **President Idriss Déby** would withhold information from his counterpart in Washington. After 9/11, the State Department set up a counterterrorism program to assist Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger in monitoring the movement of people and goods. This initiative was succeed in 2005 by the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative, of which Chad remains a member. U.S. troops have also engaged in training their Chadian counterparts, and President Barack Obama sent 80 troops to the region in 2014 to help in the search for the almost 300 schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram. The troops operated surveillance flights and drones from Chad.”

The West African state of Togo has been rocked in recent months by mass demonstrations demanding the resignation of longtime **President Faure Gnassingbe**. The Gnassingbe family has ruled this nation since 1967, when **Eyadema Gnassingbe** engineered a military coup on behalf of France.

These demonstrations and strikes in Togo have been attacked by the government in Lome. Last month 15 leading members of the Pan-African National Party (PNP) were arrested and quickly prosecuted.

Togo’s parliament dominated by the Gnassingbe-allied party has attempted to pass legislation to liberalize the political system. Moreover, one of the most significant aspects of these developments is that the state of Israel was forced to postpone a planned summit

meeting between **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** and numerous African states. Several of the AU member states have rejected the summit in solidarity with the Palestinians and other peoples of the region.

Finally, the North African state of Libya is being subjected to yet another United Nations plan to bring stability to the oil-rich nation, which prior to the intervention by the Pentagon and NATO in 2011, was the most prosperous nation on the continent. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed and wounded in Libya over the last six years.

The country is now a source of instability and human trafficking throughout North and West Africa along with the Mediterranean regions in southern Europe. Dozens have died in recent weeks in failed attempts to flee to the European Union states.

Libya can never know peace until the people unite behind a national program of reconstruction. Pentagon and NATO troops as well as Western advisers should be forced to leave the country since they are the source of the ongoing crises. It will only be under such a movement towards unification and renewal that genuine peace, security and development will be realized in the country and region.

The above text was presented at a public meeting entitled "Stop Imperialist War at Home and Abroad!" organized by Workers World Party Detroit branch on Saturday September 30, 2017.

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