

Answer to Question

Political Repercussions in Afghanistan

(Translated)

Question:

On 17 July 2021, a high profile round of negotiations was announced in Qatar between two high-level delegations, seven representatives from the Taliban and a seven-member [Afghan] government delegation, to discuss critical outstanding issues between them, after the US President announced on 8 July 2021 that the withdrawal of his forces from Afghanistan would be completed by 31 August, bringing withdrawal forwards from the deadline that he had previously set. The gains of the Taliban movement have been observed over large areas of Afghanistan, reached to 85%, as announced by the movement... According to the Doha Agreement of 2020, negotiations between the movement and the government are tasked with reaching a political power-sharing formula. Will the Taliban take control of the government or merely share power? Will America actually exit or will its influence continue?

Answer:

To arrive at the most preponderant opinion on these matters, we considered the following:

1. When the United States began seriously planning its withdrawal from Afghanistan, since late 2010 and early 2011, America sought to start negotiations with senior Taliban leaders seriously, with Pakistan as the facilitator in these negotiations. The US displayed flexibility towards the Taliban, such that in 2014 the negotiations led to a prisoner exchange. Five Taliban prisoners from Guantánamo Bay were released in exchange for the Taliban's release of one American, Private Beaudry Robert "Bowe" Bergdahl, who was being held captive by the Taliban... Then the developments in negotiation picked up pace under two men with long services to the respective authorities they represented. On 5 September 2018, Zalmay Khalilzad was appointed as the US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, tasked with ending the US military occupation of Afghanistan. Within two months of Khalilzad's appointment, on 22 October 2018, Pakistan has released Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, who had been detained in Pakistan since his arrest in Karachi, following a raid on 8 February 2010. After his release, Mullah Baradar was appointed chief of the Taliban's diplomatic office in Doha. [BBC Arabic News](#) reported on February 25, 2019, that, "The name of Mullah Baradar came at the top of the lists of prisoners whose release the movement demanded, in its successive negotiations with US officials and the Afghan government, until his eventual release in October 2018, after negotiations mediated by Qatar." It is these two men that played a prominent role in subsequent negotiations.

2. These negotiations culminated in the Doha Agreement of 29 February 2020, the most prominent aspect of which was reported by [BBC Arabic News](#), which stated, "US and Afghan officials announced that the United States and its NATO allies would withdraw their forces from Afghanistan within fourteen months, if the Taliban fulfilled their obligations, under an agreement that was signed in Qatar in Doha today. The announcement came in a joint US-Afghan statement issued in Kabul. President Donald Trump said it had been a "long and hard journey" in Afghanistan. "It's time after all these years to bring our people back home," he said." The BBC added, "More than 2,400 US troops have been killed during the conflict."

3. After the Doha Agreement, the statements and meetings accelerated, despite continuing skirmishes, with highs and lows.

[CNN](#) reported on 14 April 2021 that Joe Biden announced, "I am now the fourth American president to preside over an American troop presence in Afghanistan. Two Republicans. Two Democrats, he went on. "I will not pass this responsibility to a fifth... It is time to end America's longest war."

Biden then delivered a speech, followed by a [press conference](#) broadcast on American and international television, on 8 July 2021, saying, "We're ending America's longest war... We went for two reasons: one, to bring Osama bin Laden... The second reason was to eliminate al Qaeda..."

We accomplished both of those objectives — period.” He also said that, “Our military mission in Afghanistan will conclude on August 31st.” He added, “We did not go to Afghanistan to nation-build. And it’s the right and the responsibility of the Afghan people alone to decide their future and how they want to run their country.” Biden also stated, “And we also need to focus on shoring up America’s core strengths to meet the strategic competition with China We have to defeat COVID-19... We need to establish international norms for cyberspace... And we will be more formidable if we fight the battles of the next 20 years, not the last 20 years.”

The US White House Press Secretary, Jen Psaki stated more bluntly, “we’re not going to have a “Mission Accomplished” moment in this regard. It’s a 20-year war that has not been won militarily.” ([Anatolia Arabic](#) 8 July 2021), meaning that America did not achieve a victory in Afghanistan, despite 20 years of trying. On 2 July 2021, the US evacuated its most important and largest base, Bagram, having previously closed other bases, effectively ending its crusade before the official date announced by US President Biden previously, 11 September, and before the second date he set next, 31 August.

During that time, the Taliban movement expanded its military attacks and the districts began to fall in the north, south, west and then the center. The speed of the Taliban movement’s control over many Afghan lands became remarkable, particularly on the borders of neighboring countries, as well as their seizure of crossings with neighboring countries. Shahabuddin Delawar, a member of the Taliban’s negotiating team to Moscow, stated on 9 July 2021, “85% of the territory of Afghanistan has come under the control (of the Taliban),” whilst the spokesman for the Afghan security forces, Ajmal Omar Shinwari, vigorously denied this, saying: “This is not true. Fighting continues in most areas.” (Agence France-Presse Arabic, 11 July 2021). However, the Taliban delegation pledged, “not to interfere with neighboring countries and friendly countries”... He (Delawar) said that his visit to Moscow aims to provide all the information concerning what he called ‘the Islamic Emirate.’ He added that the Taliban will not allow the expansion of ISIS in Afghanistan and stressed that the movement will fight it. The delegation also confirmed that the movement is conducting negotiations with societal representatives to define the general structure of the state and that this work is nearing completion... and that the movement does not aim to usurp power completely.” ([Al-Jazeera Arabic 9 July 2021](#)).

4- Then it was announced on 17 July 2021, that, “The two parties to the conflict in Afghanistan agreed today, Saturday, in Doha, to form a committee consisting of fourteen members, equitably, to discuss the agenda of the negotiations, which will discuss outstanding matters. The Al-Jazeera correspondent quoted a source in the Afghan negotiations in Doha, as saying that the opening session of the talks ended in a positive atmosphere. The new round of negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban movement was launched today in the Qatari capital, Doha and this round discusses matters and issues described as crucial. Abdullah Abdullah, Afghanistan’s Chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation and head of the government delegation, said that achieving peace in the country requires flexibility on both sides, adding that the ground is now suitable for peace. For his part, the head of the Taliban’s diplomatic office in Doha, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, said that they will do their utmost to reach a positive result in the Afghan peace talks that started today in Doha.” (Source: [Al-Jazeera Arabic](#) and Agencies).

5. Then the committee concluded its work today, 18 July 2021, with a joint statement that was issued about the meeting. It was reported that, “The Al-Jazeera correspondent in Doha said that the delegations of the Afghan government and the Taliban movement reached an agreement on a joint final statement for their ongoing negotiations, in Doha with Qatari mediation, to hold another meeting soon upon the Doha track. The two sides agreed to expedite negotiations to find a just settlement to the conflict that has been raging in the country for decades. The joint statement of the delegations of the Afghan government and the Taliban stipulated an agreement to expedite negotiations in order to reach a just solution, committing to their taking place at a high level until a settlement is reached. Thus, ended the second round of Afghan peace talks, which aim to reach a political settlement that leads to peace in the country, after decades of war. A source in the Taliban delegation stated that the movement submitted a proposal that includes confidence building measures between it and the government, by releasing prisoners on both sides and

declaring a temporary truce during the period of Eid al-Adha....” (Source: [Al Jazeera](#) and agencies.)

6- It is worth mentioning the stance of the most prominent states that America actively uses in negotiations with the Taliban in Afghanistan:

a. Pakistan: It was Pakistan that pressurized the Taliban into holding talks with the US in 2018. Zalmay Khalilzad thanked Pakistan for facilitating Taliban’s travel for talks in Doha, whilst the US Secretary of Defense, Lloyd James Austin III, in a [telephone conversation](#) on 21 March 2021 with Pakistan’s Chief of Army Staff, General Bajwa, “expressed gratitude for Islamabad’s continued support for the Afghan peace process.” (Pentagon Chief Praises Pakistan’s role in Afghan Peace Process, Al-Fajr Magazine, March 23, 2021). Senior military officers and the political elite in Pakistan have played a major role in the US strategy for Afghanistan.

Thus, Pakistan’s role is a major role, both now and historically. The Afghan Taliban movement has Pakistani origins, such that both Pakistan’s ISI and other intelligence agencies have their influence in Afghanistan, with their contacts and men within the Taliban. Thus, America relies considerably upon the role of Pakistan.

b- Turkey: As it did in Syria and Libya, Turkey is moving towards Afghanistan, so as to assist the foreign policy goals of the United States. During an [international meeting](#) in the Turkish sea resort of Antalya, Turkish Foreign Minister, Mevlut Cavusoglu, suggested the operating and securing of Kabul Airport by Turkey... Washington welcomed Ankara’s commitment to playing a key role in securing the Kabul International Airport, following Biden’s meeting with Erdogan in Brussels last month. The US wants Turkey to perform guard duty at the airport, whilst it still maintains about 500 soldiers of its own near the international airport. In his [speech of 8 July 2021](#), Biden indicated that, saying, “we are coordinating closely with our international partners in order to continue to secure the international airport in Kabul.” Erdogan said, “We have determined with the United States and NATO the arrangements for the future mission and what we accept and what we do not accept. We raised this issue during the NATO meetings, during my meeting with Biden and during discussions between our delegations. We will implement this operation in Afghanistan in the best possible way.” ([Al Jazeera Arabic](#), 9 July 2021). It was reported on 2 July 2021, regarding the Turkish Presidential Spokesman, [Ibrahim Kalin](#), “Turkey will likely continue to guard Kabul’s airport even after NATO troops withdraw from Afghanistan this summer, ([Al-Awsat](#), 3 July 2021), whilst the Taliban movement rejected the Turkish presence. The Taliban announced in a statement, “Its refusal to keep Turkish forces in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of the international forces led by the United States from the country and stressed that such a decision is reprehensible. The decision of Turkish leadership is ill-advised, a violation of our sovereignty and territorial integrity and against our national interests... And we strongly urge Turkish officials to reverse their decisions due to it being detrimental for both countries.” ([Al Jazeera](#), 13 July 2021)

c. Central Asia: The United States has been talking with leaders in Central Asia about repositioning some of its forces there. The New York Times reported that US officials have been in contact with Kazakh, Uzbek and Tajik authorities about the possible use of bases in the area. The US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, said in a series of tweets that he spoke on 22 April with the foreign ministers of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan about the use of military bases by US and other NATO forces. The New York Times stated that, “Drones, long-range bombers and spy networks will be used by the US and Western allies in an effort to prevent Afghanistan from re-emerging as a terrorist base.” ([The New York Times](#) 27 April 2021)

7- In light of the above mentioned, it is clear that:

a- Continuing negotiations will not lead to America’s removal from Afghanistan, but instead to deception, such that the US exits from the front door, only to re-enter through the back door, that is guarded by agents and followers in Pakistan, Turkey and Iran and those who revolve with them from America’s agents within Afghanistan itself, whilst these states play pivotal roles for maintaining the US influence in Afghanistan...

b - As for Qatar, it is preparing the atmosphere for negotiations for two purposes: the first, is for the sake of bartering with America to lift the Saudi embargo or “siege” against it, and this is what has been the case... particularly after the Doha Agreement was concluded on 29 February,

2020 during the Trump administration... and the second purpose is that Qatar, with the British behind it, have started using their contacts with the Taliban to embarrass America. This is from the angle of deliberate interference, for they provide financial assistance to the Taliban movement and provide both a diplomatic office and a media platform for them, such that the US then needs the role of Qatar to facilitate its contacts with the Taliban movement... And this is how the British keep themselves in the picture. And the British use this to serve their interests in Qatar and the Gulf, taking advantage of America's need for Qatar's role in facilitating contact with the Taliban...

C - Taliban's entry into negotiations with America and its agents in the Afghan regime was a huge mistake... We ask Allah (swt), the Mighty and Powerful, to protect the Muslims in Afghanistan from their evil, for the colonialist kuffar only negotiate to achieve their interests, because of the circumstances compelling them. The one who scrutinizes the circumstances compelling America now finds them to be evident. So, for everyone who has a mind, listens and observes:

Firstly: China's emergence as a military and economic power in this century threatens American interests... The American re-orientation towards it has become a priority. The statements of American officials confirm what we mentioned earlier of Biden's speech of 8 July 2021, in which Biden stated, "And we also need to focus on shoring up America's core strengths to meet the strategic competition with China and other nations that is really going to determine — determine our future."

Secondly: The losses incurred by America in Afghanistan during its occupation of Afghanistan. As we mentioned above, the BBC report of 29 February 2020 added, "More than 2,400 US troops have been killed during the conflict."

All of this indicates that America was leaving Afghanistan with its tail between its legs, without leaving through negotiations that secure an influence for it that it could not achieve through war!

d- We realize that there are honest and sincere brothers in the Taliban, so it is to them whom we direct ourselves now:

- That they rectify matters by ending these negotiations, so that they do not enable America to achieve what it could not achieve through war...

- And that they are certain that the foremost issue for Muslims is the restoration of the Khilafah (Caliphate) after a long absence, for it is a Fard (obligation) mandated by Allah (swt) and an obedience to the Messenger of Allah (saw)...

- And that they know that participation in the rule of a mixture of Islam and secularism is not acceptable to Allah (swt), for the All-Powerful and Almighty does not accept anything but what is good...

This is the truth for Allah (swt) said, ﴿فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ﴾ **“So what is there after Truth but for misguidance?”** [TMQ Surah Yunus 10:32]. And following the Truth alone is what saves the Taliban, the country, its people and all the Muslims... This is what Hizb ut Tahrir advises you now, just as we advised you at the beginning of your rule to declare the Khilafah. However, you refused and then you knew that you had made a mistake by that refusal, as was stated by Mullah Omar, may Allah (swt) have mercy on him, in one of his sittings, but by then it was too late... and here we are repeating the same advice, so is there a positive response now?

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ﴾

“O believers! Respond to Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) when He calls you to that which gives you life. And know that Allah stands between a person and their heart, and that it is to Him that you will all be gathered.” [TMQ Surah Al-Anfal 8:24]

09 Dhul Hijjah 1442 AH

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