

# **RYAN-MUN Clubs**

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Ryan Model United Nations Club



# **Online RIS-MUN Conference**

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Online Ryan Model United Nations Conference

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**UNGA 4th Committee  
(Special, Political &  
Decolonization)**

**24<sup>th</sup>  
25<sup>th</sup>**

**AUGUST**

## **Background Guide**

# Contents of the Background Guide

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# Greetings

## Respected Delegates of the General Assembly

It is a privilege to welcome you to your very own RISMUN. Through this background guide we have tried to give you the basic knowledge of the agenda and important events which we believe will become central in the course of debate during the two days.

The General Assembly is the most important committee of the United Nations and a demanding one. The 4th committee of the UNGA i.e., SPECPOL focuses on political issues beyond the scope of the other 5 UNGA committees. This guide is merely a facilitator to kick start your research; feel free to go beyond the scope of this guide.

From each one of you, we expect diplomatic conduct which includes diplomatic courtesy, effective lobbying and above all good research.

Please take note that the council shall be strictly adhering to the UNA-USA rules of procedure at all points of time.

Feel free to your respective Executive Boards regarding your doubts. We expect these two days to be an immense learning experience for all of you.

**Best of luck!**



## What is a Background Guide?

The background guides are documents written by the Executive Board for delegates to understand the topics to be discussed in the committee session. It guides the delegates and informs them of the core issues of the debate. It also ensures delegates understand the scope of the debate, provides important information about committee procedures and what documents are valid proof.

## How to use a Background Guide?

The Background Guide has an index section to simplify the major sections within the guide. This includes the Mandate of the committee which in a nutshell means what power the committee has and what actions it can take, followed by proofs and reports in the committee. Then we proceed to discuss the major topics within the agenda.

The issue has been explained in sections with important questions delegates should ponder upon in each section. These questions are important with regards to the debate. There are several sources for further reading if a delegate wishes to get more knowledge of the basics.

Please read each topic thoroughly to get a basic understanding of the agenda. There are links for external reading. Please feel free to research beyond the scope of the background guide.





The Fourth Committee of the UN General Assembly, referred to hereafter as the Special Political and Decolonization Committee or SPECPOL for short, has a somewhat more fragmented mandate than other committees of the General Assembly, such as DISEC, ECOFIN, or SOCHUM. The UN itself describes the committee as concerning itself “with a variety of subjects which include those related to decolonization, human rights, peacekeeping, mine action, outer space, public information, atomic radiation in short, SPECPOL covers both the issue of decolonization, as suggested by its full name, as well as any other political issues not directly dealt with by the mandates of any other UN General Assembly committee.

It should also be noted that, as this is a General Assembly committee, all resolutions are non binding. This also means that any peacekeeping operations or punitive measures (such as economic sanctions) cannot directly be authorized by this committee, although it is within the committee’s power to suggest or recommend that the Security Council take these actions in a manner stipulated by the committee.



## What is valid proof in the Committee?

Evidence or proofs from the following sources will be accepted as credible in the committee:

### 1. News Sources

**A. Reuters** – Any Reuters' article which clearly makes mention of the fact stated or is in contradiction of the fact being stated by another delegate in council can be used to substantiate arguments in the committee. However, Reuters reports claiming to quote any individual affiliated in any manner to any government may not necessarily reflect the views of that government in totality. Thus, Reuters reports can be denied by any member state subject to their policy and it is only when the report is accepted by the government that it shall be admitted as persuasive proof.

**B. State operated News Agencies** – These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any country as such but in that situation, they can be denied by any other country in the council. Some examples are,

- RIA Novosti for Russia
- IRNA for Iran
- Xinhua News Agency for China

**2. Government Reports:** These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country. However, a nuance is that a report that is being denied by a certain country can still be

accepted by the Executive Board as credible information. Some examples are:

- Government Websites like the State Department websites
- Multilateral Organizations like the NATO, OPEC, EU, ASEAN etc.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various nations
- Reports by Permanent Representatives to the United Nations

### 3. UN Reports:

**A. Reports from UN Bodies:** All UN Reports are considered as credible information or evidence for the Executive Board. Resolutions of UN Bodies like the UNGA, the UNSC etc. and rulings of the ICJ

**B. UN Affiliated bodies:** the following bodies are examples

- International Atomic Energy Agency
- World Bank
- International Monetary Fund
- International Committee of the Red Cross etc.

**C. Treaty Based Bodies like** the Antarctic Treaty System the International Criminal Court  
Please note that under no circumstances will sources like

- Wikipedia
- Amnesty International
- or newspapers like The Guardian, Times of India etc. be accepted as legal proof by the Council.

**NOTE:** Please confirm each document's source before its presentation in council. Please keep the required reports in soft copy (saved directly from the source and unedited). Also, the background guide cannot be used as proof in the committee. You may use any material for research purposes but valid proof has to be limited to the aforementioned guidelines.



## The Crisis In Afghanistan

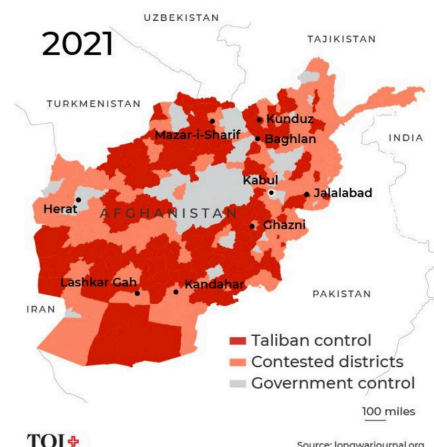
### INTRODUCTION:

Afghans face the confluence of multiple crises just as President Biden withdraws American forces. Beyond the pandemic, drought and a dire economy, they confront a resurgent Taliban movement that now controls or contests more of the country's territory than at any time since 2001. Afghan security personnel are struggling to hold territory, and the political elites have thus far been unable to unify against the common threat of the Taliban. Many Afghans are searching for alternatives to both the Taliban and President Ashraf Ghani. Meanwhile, anti-Taliban militias are mobilizing, and reports of Taliban killings and abuse are rife. A number of Afghans fear they have no hope but to flee the country.

The challenges are primarily political in nature. The Taliban want to return to power, and the support of Pakistan remains an enormous asset in their favour. Meanwhile, the system of government established largely by the Bush administration in 2001 for a post-Taliban Afghanistan has proved incapable of fulfilling the aspirations of the dynamic society that has emerged in the country in the last two decades. It is a tightly centralized political system. The president enjoys autocratic powers. To simplify, it is a "winner take all" scenario that offers few avenues for political engagement or contestation. Meanwhile, elections, a relatively free and pluralistic mediascape, the expansion of education and the entry of more and more women and representatives of diverse ethnic communities into nearly all aspects of public life have

produced a society whose expectations are at odds with both political scenarios. Beyond the presidential palace, the Afghan political landscape offers a wide range of views, ideologies and voices clamouring for inclusion.

However, the American withdrawal has encouraged the Taliban to stake their future on the battlefield, not at the negotiating table or ballot box. The question now is whether the Afghan government – or perhaps some other international force – can prevent the Taliban from using violence to monopolize power.



:Here is a timeline of some key dates in Afghanistan's 40 years of wars:

**Dec. 25, 1979** — Soviet Red Army crosses the Oxus River into Afghanistan. In neighbouring Pakistan, Afghan mujahideen, or Islamic holy warriors, are assembling, armed and financed by the US for an anti-communist war. More than 8 million Afghans flee to Pakistan and Iran, the first of multiple waves of refugees over the decades.

**1980s** — CIA's covert Operation Cyclone funnels weapons and money for the war through Pakistani dictator Mohammed Zia-ul Haq, who calls on Muslim countries to send volunteers to fight in Afghanistan. Bin Laden is among the thousands to volunteer.

**1983** — President Ronald Reagan meets with mujahideen leaders, calling them freedom fighters, at the White House.

**September 1986** — The US provides the mujahideen with shoulder-held anti-aircraft Stinger missiles, which turns the course of the war. Soviets begin negotiating withdrawal.

**Feb. 15, 1989** — The last Soviet soldier leaves Afghanistan, ending 10 years of occupation

**April 1992** — Mujahideen groups enter Kabul. The fleeing Najibullah is stopped at the airport and put under house arrest at a U.N. compound.

**1992-1996** — Power-sharing among the mujahideen leaders falls apart and they spend four years fighting one another; much of Kabul is destroyed and nearly 50,000 people are killed.

**1994** — The Taliban emerge in southern Kandahar, take over the province and set up a rule adhering to a strict interpretation of Islam.

**Sept. 26, 1996** — The Taliban capture Kabul after sweeping across the country with hardly a fight; Northern Alliance forces retreat north toward the Panjshir Valley. The Taliban hang Najibullah and his brother.

**1996-2001** — Though initially welcomed for ending the fighting, the Taliban rule with a heavy hand under Mullah Mohammed Omar, imposing strict Islamic edicts, denying women the right to work and girls the right to go to school. Punishments and executions are carried out in public.

**March 2001** — The Taliban dynamite the world's largest standing Buddha statues in Bamyan province, to global shock.

**September 2001** — After 9/11 attacks, Washington gives Mullah Omar an ultimatum: hand over bin Laden and dismantle militant training camps or prepare to be attacked. The Taliban leader refuses.

**Oct. 7, 2001** — A US-led coalition launches an invasion of Afghanistan.

**Nov. 13, 2001** — The Taliban flee Kabul for Kandahar as the US-led coalition marches into the Afghan capital with the Northern Alliance.

**Dec. 5, 2001** — The Bonn Agreement is signed in Germany, giving the majority of power to the Northern Alliance's key players and strengthening the warlords who had ruled between 1992 and 1996. Hamid Karzai, an ethnic Pashtun like most Taliban, is named Afghanistan's president.





**Dec. 7, 2001** — Mullah Omar leaves Kandahar and the Taliban regime officially collapses.

**May 1, 2003** — President George W. Bush declared “mission accomplished” as the Pentagon says major combat is over in Afghanistan.

**2004 and 2009** — In two general elections, Karzai is elected president for two consecutive terms.

**Summer 2006:** With the US mired in Iraq, the Taliban resurgence gains momentum with escalating attacks. Soon they begin retaking territory in rural areas of the south.

**April 5, 2014** — The election for Karzai’s successor is deeply flawed and both front-runners, Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, claim victory. The US brokers a deal under which Ghani serves as president and Abdullah as chief executive, starting an era of divided government.

**Dec. 8, 2014** — American and NATO troops formally end their combat mission, transitioning to a support and training role. President Barack Obama authorizes US forces to carry out operations against Taliban and al-Qaeda targets.

**2015-2018** — The Taliban surge further, staging near-daily attacks targeting Afghan and US forces and seizing nearly half the country. An Islamic State group affiliate emerges in the east.

**September 2018** — After his election promises to bring US troops home, President Donald Trump appoints veteran Afghan-American diplomat Zalmay Khalilzad as negotiator with the Taliban. Talks go through 2019, though the Taliban refuse to negotiate with the Kabul government and escalate attacks.

**Sept. 28, 2019** — Another sharply divided presidential election is held. It is not until February 2020 that Ghani is declared the winner. Abdullah rejects the results and holds his own inauguration. After months, a deal is reached establishing Ghani as president and Abdullah as head of the peace negotiating committee.

**August 18, 2019** — The Islamic State group carries out a suicide bombing at wedding in a mainly Hazara neighbourhood of Kabul, killing more than 60 people.  
**Feb. 29, 2020** — The US and the Taliban sign a deal in Doha, Qatar, setting a timetable for the withdrawal of the around 13,000 US troops still in Afghanistan and committing the insurgents to halt attacks on Americans.

**Sept. 12, 2020-February 2021** — After months of delay, Taliban-Afghan government negotiations open in Qatar, sputter for several sessions and finally stall with no progress. Ghani refuses proposals for a unity government, while the Taliban balk at a cease-fire with the government.

**March 18, 2021** — After the US proposes a draft peace plan, Moscow hosts a one-day peace conference between the rival Afghan sides. Attempts at a resumption of talks fail. Taliban and government negotiators have not sat at the table since.

**April 14, 2021** — President Joe Biden says the remaining 2,500-3,500 US troops in Afghanistan will be withdrawn by Sept. 11 to end America’s “forever war.”



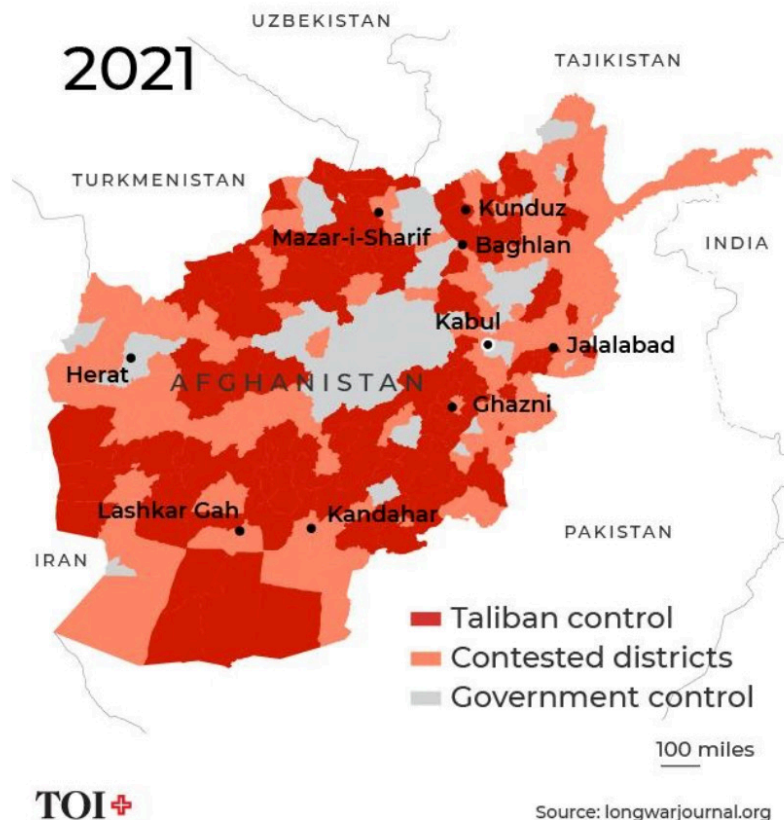
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## Timeline of the Crisis Part 3

**2019-Present** — Violence grows in Kabul. IS carries out brutal attacks, including on a maternity hospital and a school, killing new-borns, mothers and schoolgirls. Also growing is a wave of random attacks, unclaimed and mysterious, with shootings, assassinations and sticky bombs planted on cars, spreading fear among Afghans.

Afghan military control after the last troops in the base leave. The transfer of Bagram, the heart of the US military's presence in Afghanistan throughout the war, signals that the complete pull-out of American troops is imminent, expected within days, far ahead of Biden's Sept. 11 timetable.

**May 2021-Present** — Taliban gains on the ground accelerate. Multiple districts in the north, outside the Taliban heartland, fall to the insurgents, sometimes with hardly a fight. Ghani calls a public mobilization, arming local volunteers, a step that risks compounding the many factions.



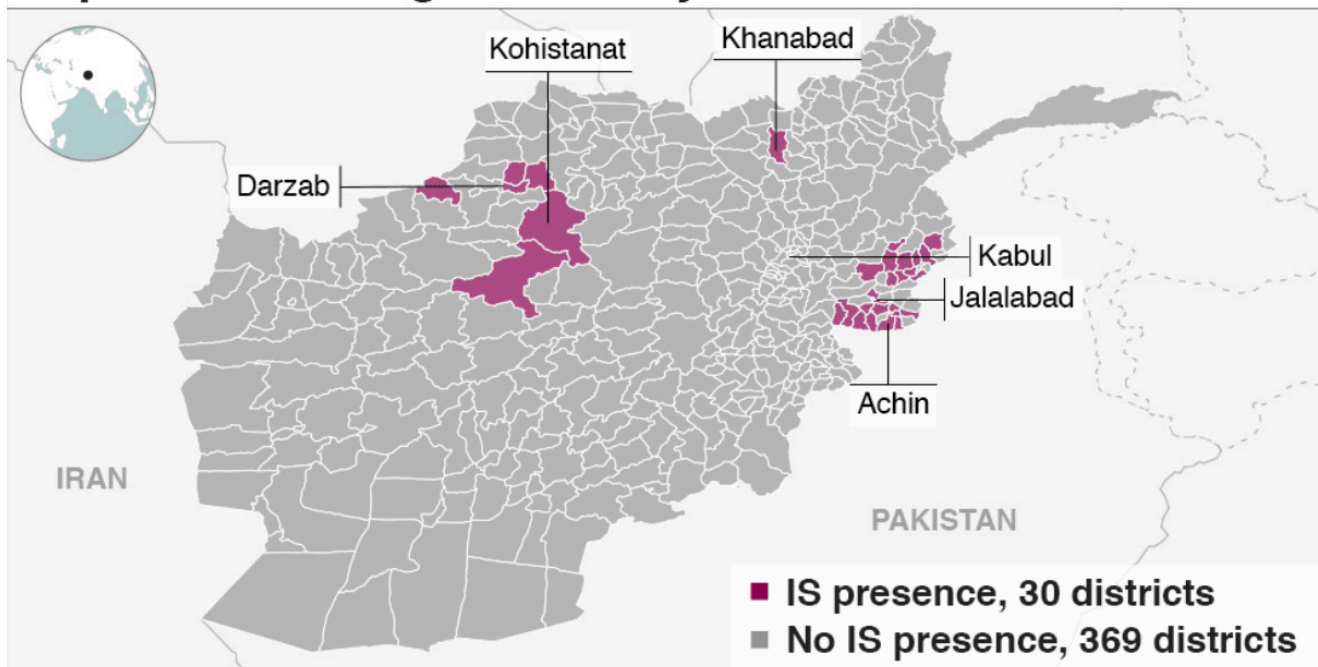
# The IS and other Terror Groups

Experts are worried about increasing IS presence in the region and suspect an eventual Taliban IS conflict in the region which would further destabilise an already imploding Afghanistan. The country has almost for the past 40 years constantly been grappling with terror outfits starting with the Mujahideen to Al-Qaeda and now the Islamic State

## Some important Questions to ponder are

- How do these groups continue to receive local support?
- How do these terror groups recruit locals?
- Which Foreign Governments have supported terror outfits in Afghanistan in the past and why?
- How do these terror groups finance themselves?
- What role do the governments in the immediate vicinity play in this conflict?
- How can Terror Financing and Money Laundering risks in the Area be mitigated?

## IS presence in Afghanistan by district



Source: BBC research, 23 August - 21 November 2017

BBC



The Pakistan government has repeatedly denied that it provides any military support to the Taliban in its diplomacy regarding its extensive operations in Afghanistan. Of all the foreign powers involved in efforts to sustain and manipulate the ongoing fighting, Pakistan is distinguished both by the sweep of its objectives and the scale of its efforts, which include soliciting funding for the Taliban, bankrolling Taliban operations, providing diplomatic support as the Taliban's virtual emissaries abroad, arranging training for Taliban fighters, recruiting skilled and unskilled manpower to serve in Taliban armies, planning and directing offensives, providing and facilitating shipments of ammunition and fuel, and on several occasions apparently directly providing combat support. In April and May 2001 Human Rights Watch sources reported that as many as thirty trucks a day were crossing the Pakistan border; sources inside Afghanistan reported that some of these convoys were carrying artillery shells, tank rounds, and rocket-propelled grenades. Such deliveries are in direct violation of U.N. sanctions. Pakistani landmines have been found in Afghanistan; they include both anti personnel and anti vehicle mines. Pakistan's army and intelligence services, principally the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), contribute to making the Taliban a highly effective military force

Pakistan's notoriously porous border with Afghanistan has facilitated the transshipment of men and materiel. The territories contiguous with that border are formally designated "tribal agencies," semi-autonomous regions administered directly by a political agent appointed by the federal government. The ethnic identity of the population in the agencies is for practical purposes identical to that across the border in Afghanistan. The less formal administration of these agencies has facilitated a variety of illegal cross-border activities, particularly smuggling.

**Some important questions that need to be thought about are**

1. Is there Sufficient proof of collusion between Pakistani Agencies and the Terror organizations based in Afghanistan?
2. What precedence do FATF evaluations of Pakistan hold in this matter?



In 2001, the US invaded Afghanistan in pursuit of the War on Terror with the support of NATO and over 40 countries. For almost two decades, the USA has legitimized its military operations as 'Operation Enduring Freedom' (2001–14) and 'Operation Freedom's Sentinel' from 2015 to the present. During these military endeavors, over 100,000 civilians and over 60,000 security forces have been killed. Now President Biden has announced that the United States will not meet the deadline set under the U.S.-Taliban agreement to withdraw all troops by May 1 and instead releases a plan for a full withdrawal by September 11, 2021. The remaining 3,500 troops in Afghanistan will be withdrawn regardless of whether progress is made in intra-Afghan peace talks or the Taliban reduces its attacks on Afghan security forces and citizens. NATO troops in Afghanistan will also leave. Biden says Washington will continue to assist Afghan security forces and support the peace process.

The American intelligence community has concluded, according to The Wall Street Journal, that Kabul could fall within six months. None of the American leaders, from General Austin Miller to President Biden, is certain about the survival of the Afghan government. When Mr. Biden didn't say that the government would survive, but said, "They have the capacity to sustain the government". One thing is certain — the American withdrawal has turned the balance of power in the battleground in favor of the Taliban. They are already making rapid advances, and could launch a major offensive targeting the city centers and provincial capitals once the Americans are out.

So, there could be three scenarios, according to experts. One, there could be a political settlement in which the Taliban and the government agree to some power-sharing mechanism and jointly shape the future of Afghanistan. As of now, this looks like a remote possibility. Two, an all-out civil war may be possible, in which the government, economically backed and militarily trained by the West, holds on to its positions in key cities and the Taliban expand its reach in the countryside, while other ethnic militias fight for their fiefs. This is already unfolding. A third scenario would be of the Taliban taking over the country.

### **Some issues that might be important to the course of the debate**

1. America's initial support of the mujahideen
2. The motive, ethics and legality of the invasion
3. The nature of R2P and "Jus ad Bellum"
4. Previous power sharing agreements
5. Non state actors other than the Taliban
6. The recent peace talks in Doha, Qatar



On July 20th Russian tanks deployed near the Afghan-Tajik border on Tuesday ahead of military exercises next month and Moscow announced more drills in neighbouring Uzbekistan as regional tensions over the Taliban's territorial gains in Afghanistan remained high. Taliban fighters have made major advances as U.S. forces pull out after 20 years of war, a security headache for Moscow which fears refugees may be pushed into its Central Asian backyard and its southern defensive flank destabilised tank crews from Russia's military base in Tajikistan, its largest on foreign soil, completed a 200 km (124-mile) journey to a military range near the Afghan border, the TASS news agency cited Russia's Central Military District as saying in a statement on Tuesday. During the deployment, the T-72 tank crews practised protecting convoys and repelling enemy fire. Silsila Alikhil, 26, the daughter of Afghanistan's ambassador to Pakistan, told Pakistani police she was assaulted and held for several hours by unknown assailants on Friday, following which Kabul pulled out its diplomats from Islamabad. The Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences state hospital where Alikhil was treated had confirmed she had swelling and rope marks on the wrists and ankles as well as swelling in the brain's rear occipital region. The incident has further eroded already frosty relations between the two neighbors at a time when Taliban insurgents have taken over territory in Afghanistan as U.S. troops withdraw.

As of 9th July 2021, Taliban fighters have seized control of a key district in western Afghanistan that includes an important border crossing with Iran, Afghan security officials said, as the armed group continues its rapid military advances around the country. In the last week, the Taliban has overrun areas bordering five countries – Iran, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, China and Pakistan – as foreign forces end their 20-year intervention and the domestic security situation deteriorates.

Afghan Army Chief General Wali Mohammad Ahmadzai visited India from July 27 to 29 and interacted with top security officials. This visit comes against the backdrop of an ongoing conflict between the Taliban and security forces in Afghanistan. The Afghan government has requested for India's military assistance specifically air support numerous times in the past months, India's assistance to the Afghan cause has previously been limited to a non-combat role. On the other hand, Indian officials have contacted Taliban officials for diplomatic talks, in order to safeguard India's investment in the region and to ensure no support from the Taliban is given to anti India elements based in Pakistan.



- How can the IS resurgence be curbed?
- What are the interests of key neighboring states?
- How is the Taliban financed?
- Is a negotiation between the Afghan government and the Taliban possible? If not then what options does the international community have left?
- What options do regional parties have in case of a migrant crisis?
- Who is the Taliban relying on to safeguard its interests?
- Who is liable for the current situation?
- What role do the domestic Intelligence agencies play?
- What is the legality of the interventions that have happened in Afghanistan?
- How can the Taliban's Opium trade network be stopped?
- Potential Power sharing structures between Afghan government and the Taliban ?





- <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-conflict/foreign-missions-in-afghanistan-call-for-taliban-ceasefire-idUSKBN2EP0D8>
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