

Takeover of Afghanistan by Taliban

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May 24, 2022

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Prepared for
UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

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Certificate

This is to certify that the Report titled - Takeover of Afghanistan by Taliban-embodies the original work done by Hardik, Devansh Agarwal and Shaurya Chichra under my supervision.

May 20, 2022

Prof. Navdeep Dhillon

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Letter of Transmittal

Hardik

B.Tech C-022

Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology

May 24, 2022

The United Nations Security Council

Subject: Report on Afghanistan's takeover by Taliban

Respected Sir,

With due respect, we would like to submit our report entitled "Takeover of Afghanistan by Taliban" which discusses the current effects of this takeover on the general public and economy, and also the future impacts the country could face.

We hope for the best actions that could be taken for the benefit of the country.

Yours sincerely,

Hardik

B.Tech Student

Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology

Acknowledgement

In the accomplishment of this project successfully, many people have bestowed upon us their blessings and the heart pledged support, this time we are utilizing to thank all the people who have been concerned with this project. We would like to express our special thanks to our teacher Prof. Navdeep Dhillon who gave us the golden opportunity to do this wonderful project on the topic 'Takeover of Afghanistan by Taliban'. We would like to express our gratitude towards our parents & our fellow mates for their kind cooperation and encouragement which helped us in completion of the project.

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Abstract

The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan accelerated the country's human rights crisis and humanitarian catastrophe. After the Taliban took control of the country on August 15, 2021, they rolled back women's rights advances and media freedom – the foremost achievements of the post-2001 reconstruction effort. Many secondary schools for girls remained closed by the end of the year, and women were largely prohibited from working in jobs outside of teaching and health care. The chaotic evacuation of thousands of Afghans left behind many who remained at risk of Taliban retaliation. Taliban forces executed many former members of the Afghan government's security forces. A freeze on Afghanistan's currency reserves and the loss of foreign aid accelerated an economic collapse, leaving millions of Afghans at risk of famine. The collapse of the country's health services meant that many Afghans faced a loss of most physical and mental health care. This report focuses about the major challenges faced by Afghanistan (dire economic conditions, compromised media freedom and violation of human rights) after Taliban's takeover and provides a set of key policy recommendations for UN concerned with stability and prosperity for all Afghans.

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Chapter-1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Following al- Qaeda's September 11, 2001 strikes, the US invaded Afghanistan after the Taliban administration refused to hand up terrorist leader Osama bin Laden. The Taliban leadership swiftly lost control of the country and fled to southern Afghanistan, just over the Pakistani border. They launched an uprising against the Western-backed Kabul government, Afghan national security forces, and international coalition troops from there.

The ANDSF was put in responsibility of Afghanistan's security when the US-led coalition formally finished its combat operation in 2014. The ANDSF*, however, struggled to maintain land and defend population centres, while the Taliban continued to target rural regions and carry out suicide attacks in major towns. For nearly six years, the conflict was basically a stalemate.

The US administration and the Taliban signed a peace agreement in February 2020, after more than a year of direct negotiations, that established a schedule for the departure of US troops from Afghanistan. Under the terms of the agreement, the US promised to reduce its troop strength to around 8,500 within 135 days and execute a full pull-out within 14 months. In exchange, the Taliban agreed to prevent terrorist groups from using area under their control and to engage in talks with the Afghan government. However, no formal cease-fire was implemented. The Taliban promptly resumed attacks on Afghan security forces and civilians after a brief lull in hostilities. The Afghan government and the Taliban initiated direct discussions months after the agreed-upon start date.

In 2020 and 2021, violence in Afghanistan rose as the US launched air strikes and operations against the Taliban. Meanwhile, the Taliban launched attacks against Afghan government and security forces, gaining territory.

Over the last few years, civilian casualties in Afghanistan have remained high. In 2018, the United Nations recorded a then-record number of 10,993 civilian deaths. Despite a minor decrease in 2019, civilian casualties surpassed 10,000 for the sixth year in a row,

bringing the total UN-documented civilian casualties to more than 100,000 since 2009. Despite another drop in 2020, the Taliban increased their military onslaught in the first half of 2021, resulting in a record number of civilian deaths as international soldiers withdrew.

The Afghan economy has been pressured by the uncertainty surrounding the future of international support. Although the US and its partners promised to continue supporting the Afghan government in late 2020, aid could be reduced following the Taliban's takeover. A move like this might exacerbate Afghanistan's already dire economic position.

1.2 Purpose and Scope

This report attempts to give information about the dire economic conditions, compromised media freedom and violation of human rights in Afghanistan after Taliban's takeover so that the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) can provide aid to everyone affected by the takeover in order to better the economic position.

1.3 Authorisation

We have been assigned the authority by Prof. Navdeep Dhillon to write this report.

1.4 Research Methodology

For the detailed analysis of Afghanistan's economic position and state of human rights after Taliban's takeover we have used secondary data which include interviews, local news and online articles from reliable sources. This has been presented in the form of graphs to clarify the role Taliban has played on Afghanistan's economy and people.

The data has been collected majorly from credible websites and reports based on the incident.

1.5 General Structure

This report consists of four chapters i.e. Introduction, discussion, conclusion and recommendations. The first chapter gives a background of the events that led to the takeover of Afghanistan by Taliban. The second chapter discusses the effects it had on the country which include the violation of women's rights, effect on general public, economy and job security. It also describes how it hampered media freedom, speech and assembly.

These have been supported by some pictorial representations including graphs depicting inflation, job insecurity and some important future indicators. The third chapter lists the conclusions that we tend to derive from this report based on which the recommendations have been listed in the fourth and last chapter.

*ANDSF- Afghanistan National Defence and Security Force

Chapter-2

Discussion

2.1 Effect on the General Public

Taliban forces were responsible for approximately 40% of civilian deaths and injuries in the first six months of 2021, despite the fact that many cases went unreported. Nearly half of all civilian deaths were women and children. Assassinations and a handful of deadly explosions were among the ISKP's* attacks.

Many attacks targeted Afghanistan's Hazara Shia community. On May 8, three explosions at the Sayed al-Shuhada school in Kabul killed at least 85 civilians, including 42 girls and 28 women, and injured over 200—the vast majority from the Hazara community. The attack was unclaimed but occurred in a predominantly Hazara neighbourhood that ISKP had repeatedly targeted. On October 8, a suicide bombing during Friday prayer at a Shia mosque in Kunduz killed at least 72 people and injured over 140; the ISKP claimed responsibility. On March 4, gunmen fatally shot seven Hazara laborers at a plastics factory in Jalalabad.

At least dozens of former officials and security force employees were killed in retaliation by Taliban fighters in numerous districts. The Taliban killed at least 19 security force employees in their hands, as well as a number of civilians, after seizing control of Malistan, Ghazni, in mid-July. After the Taliban conquered Spin Boldak in July, at least 44 former security force members were slain by advancing Taliban troops in Kandahar. The Taliban had taken them all. Other provinces, as well as Kabul, had reliable allegations of detentions and killings.

Civilians, including government personnel, journalists, and religious leaders, were targeted by both the Taliban and the ISKP. Unidentified gunmen killed two women justices working for Afghanistan's supreme court and wounded their driver on January 17, 2021. Between March and June, the ISKP claimed responsibility for the deaths of nine polio vaccine workers in Nangarhar. ISKP claimed responsibility for the killings of ten humanitarian deminers in Baghlan on June 9. An ISKP suicide bomber killed 170 civilians at Kabul's airport in August, including many Afghans attempting to exit the country.

Taliban forces also violently evicted civilians from their houses in a number of provinces, including Daykundi, Uruzgan, Kunduz, and Kandahar, in revenge for the locals' alleged support for the previous administration. Hundreds of Hazara families from the Gizab district of Uruzgan province and nearby districts of Daykundi province were forced to abandon their homes and flee in September, in the greatest of these expulsions. In indiscriminate mortar and rocket attacks, both the Taliban and Afghan government security forces killed and injured people, while civilian casualties from previous government forces' airstrikes more than doubled in the first half of 2021 compared to the same period in 2020.

According to witnesses, as the Taliban advanced into Kabul, a strike force unit from the former government's National Directorate of Security kidnapped and executed 12 recently released former inmates. On August 29, the US launched a drone strike on a car allegedly carrying explosives on its way to Kabul's airport. The car was really driven by an NGO employee who was supposed to be evacuated to the United States. The US Defense Department stated two weeks later that the strike was a "tragic blunder" that killed ten civilians, including seven children.

2.2 Abolition of Women's and Girl's Rights

Taliban officials published a regular stream of laws and regulations restricting women's and girls' rights in the weeks following their takeover. These included restrictions on employment and education, as well as restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly. The Taliban also targeted high-profile women, denying them the right to leave their homes.

Although the Taliban have stated that they encourage female education, on September 18 they ordered secondary schools to reopen only for boys. In a few provinces, some secondary schools for girls reopened, although the vast majority remained closed as of October. On August 29, the interim minister of higher education said that girls and women would be able to attend university but would not be able to study with boys and men. Due to a shortage of female teachers, particularly in higher education, many girls and women will undoubtedly be denied access to education as a result of this policy.

In certain regions, women who had taught boys in levels above sixth grade or men in mixed classes at university have been fired because teaching males is no longer permitted. Taliban officials have prohibited or restricted female humanitarian workers in

several places of Afghanistan, potentially jeopardising access to health care and humanitarian aid. Almost all female government officials have also been fired by the Taliban. Women's return to work was "postponed" until the Taliban's Ministry of Rural Development created a "system for how they will work," the Taliban's Ministry of Rural Development said in September. When women were allowed to return to work, they were subjected to workplace gender segregation restrictions.

The Taliban abolished the Ministry of Women's Affairs in September and repurposed its building as the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, an institution tasked with enforcing rules on citizens' behaviour, such as how women dress and when or whether they can leave the house without a male relative. Shelters for women fleeing domestic violence are closed, and some of the women who stayed there have been transferred to women's prisons.

2.3 Effects on Economy

2.3.1 Inflation

Prices for several basic consumables have risen everyday as the currency rate has fallen, squeezing people who have seen their pay checks disappear and their savings put out of reach due to bank closures.

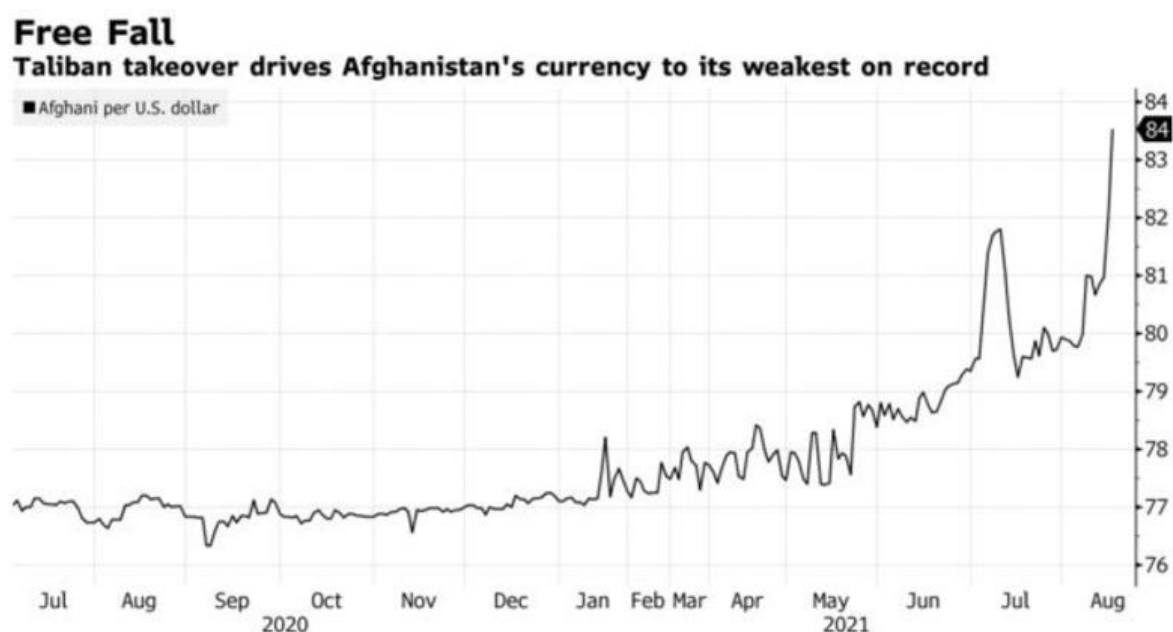
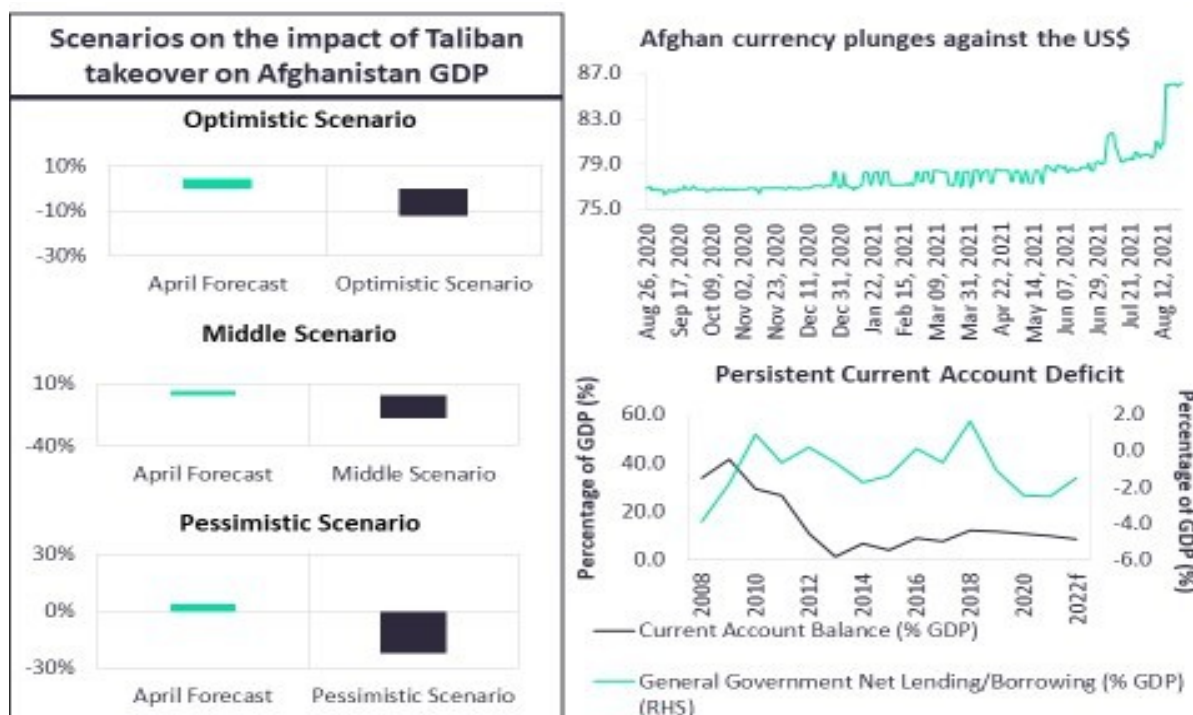


Fig 2.1 Afghanistan's currency vs U.S. Dollars



Source: GlobalData Business Fundamentals

Fig 2.2 Key economic indicators for Afghanistan, 2021

Market sellers in Kabul said a 50 kg bag of flour was selling for 2,200 afghanis, roughly 30% more than it was before the city fell, with similar price increases for other necessities like cooking oil and rice. Vegetable prices increased by up to 50%, while gasoline costs increased by up to 75%. The closure of money transfer services like Western Union has also cut off remittances from overseas, and a growing number of people are seeking to sell jewellery or household goods, even if they have to sell them on the street even if they have to accept a fraction of their value.

2.3.2 Ban on Opium Production

Afghanistan is the world's top opium producer. In 2021, the country generated over 6,000 tonnes of opium before the Taliban took control. According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, this amount of heroin could create 320 tonnes of pure heroin. The country produces more opium than the rest of the world put together. Despite the fact that the United States and the international community have spent billions of dollars to destroy the production, this vast quantity persists. The United States spent more than \$8 billion in an attempt to cut manufacturing in the country.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates that the country generates more than 80% of the world's opium products. Opium harvesting is the primary source of revenue and employment for millions of farmers. According to UN estimates, Afghanistan earns about \$1.8 billion per year from the production of opium products.

Farmers who broke the rules would be imprisoned and their crops would be destroyed. "If anyone violates the decree, the crop will be destroyed immediately and the violator will be treated according to the Sharia law" the directive says. Furthermore, the sale of heroin, hashish, and alcohol is illegal. The economy of the country is already in freefall, and many international funders withdrew support once the Taliban took control in 2021. Jobs are already scarce, and this move could exacerbate the issue. The current scenario may escalate, maybe leading to civil war. According to a UN estimate, opium products brought in between USD 1.8 and USD 2.7 billion in 2021. This amounts to more than 7% of Afghanistan's GDP.

2.3.3 Job Insecurity

After the United States withdrew its forces in August 2021, the Taliban took control of the country. The country is still experiencing an extraordinary humanitarian crisis as a result of decades of instability and insecurity. The decision will have a greater impact on the country's poorest residents. The public health care industry is in shambles. People are struggling to meet their basic demands because government employees are not paid.

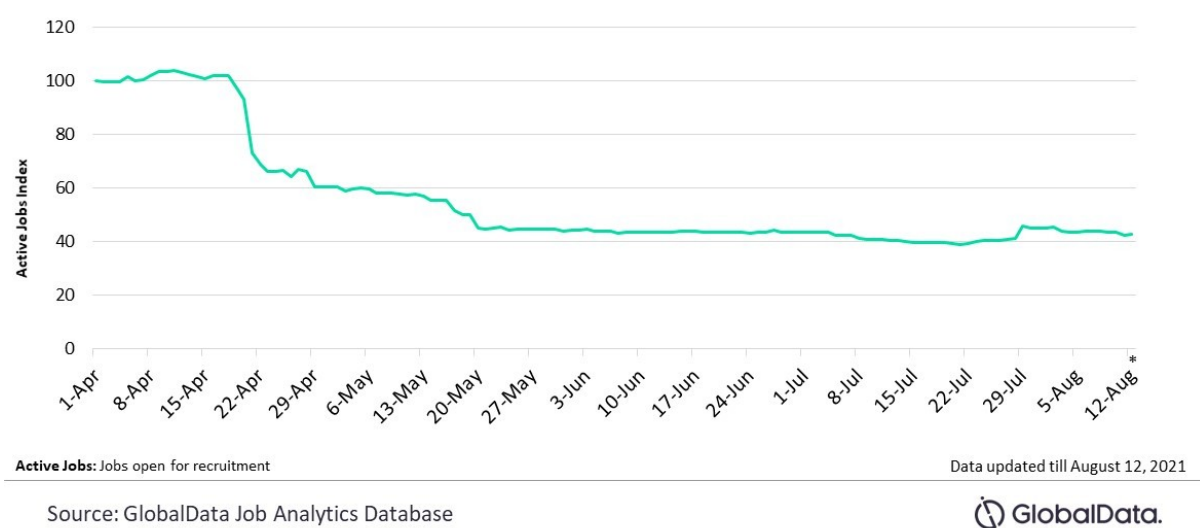


Fig 2.3 Active Job Index since April 2021

2.4 Breach of media freedom, speech and assembly

Nearly 70% of Afghan media outlets closed once the Taliban took control, while others were threatened and self-censored. The Taliban imposed broad limitations on the media and free speech in September, including prohibitions on "insulting national figures" and reporting that could have a "negative impact on public opinion." Two journalists from the Etilaat-e Roz media organisation were detained by Taliban security forces on September 7 and severely beaten in captivity before being released. The journalists had been reporting women's protests in Kabul. After seizing power in Kabul, the Taliban imprisoned at least 32 journalists.

On July 6, the former Afghan government declared that broadcasting news "against the national interest" was illegal. After returning from Spin Boldak, Kandahar, where they had been investigating the Taliban's capture of the district, four journalists were arrested by the former government's intelligence service on July 26. They were not released until August 13, when Kandahar fell to the Taliban.

Afghan women staged protests in numerous locations beginning September 2 to oppose Taliban practises that violate women's rights. Taliban fighters in Herat slashed demonstrators and shot weapons at random to disperse the gathering, killing two individuals and wounded at least eight more. Protests that did not receive prior authorisation from the Justice Ministry in Kabul were later outlawed by the Taliban. Despite this, some protests continued.

*Islamic State- Khorasan Province

Chapter-3

Conclusions

With the sudden Taliban takeover in August, Afghanistan now faces severe, multi-faceted, and interlocking humanitarian, economic, and political crises. The evacuation of thousands of Afghans, some of whom are highly skilled and educated, has impacted the institutional functioning of Afghanistan's public sector. Taking the above scenario into consideration, enduring peace in Afghanistan is not only seeking to eliminate violence, but also to bring positive interaction between state and society. As the country stands on the precipice of a major catastrophe, there is one global actor that can help the country pull back from the brink: the United Nations.

Prior to and during Afghanistan's nearly four-decades of continuous wars—and in particular when the country was all but forgotten by the international community during the Taliban's previous period of rule—the UN remained engaged. It is vital that the organization continues its life-saving support to Afghanistan today. Founded in 1945 in the wake of World War II, the United Nations is, first and foremost, a conflict management organization with a tested peace-making, humanitarian response, and development assistance toolkit. During the post-cold war era, the UN has demonstrated the ability—even in the most difficult circumstances—to forge a common approach among major and regional powers in pursuing peace and safeguarding the most vulnerable within a war-shattered society. Precisely by providing a continual forum and field presence, the world body can create favourable conditions for peaceful dispute settlement, while also discouraging and inhibiting unilateral foreign interference that often inflames a conflict.

With some persuasion along the way by the United Nations, whose influence draws heavily from regional and Security Council support, it is conceivable that the Taliban can be persuaded to work with a new, educated generation of Afghans—before yet more depart—on a new course that steers away from violent brutality, exploitative corruption, and widespread deprivation. To navigate the severe, multi-faceted, and interlocking humanitarian, economic, and political crises Afghanistan now faces, the United Nations is well-placed to offer critical life-saving assistance and to help Afghans avert another major catastrophe. With the backing of major global and regional powers and the cooperation of

both Taliban and non-Taliban factions alike, the UN can help to place Afghanistan on a new political path for a more stable country that, over time, improves the prospects for all Afghan citizens.

Chapter-4

Recommendations

Emergency appeals have been launched by international assistance organisations in anticipation of increasing workload. While Afghanistan's HRP[#] is underfunded and in need of further help, Afghan-led organisations will be carrying a heavier role in the short term. The UN should commit to raising money for Afghan-led groups immediately, and collaborate with partners in Europe, the Gulf, and abroad to fully fund the humanitarian response. To achieve this degree of engagement, bureaucratic will is required to overcome structural barriers that prevent direct sponsorship of local organisations. This can be accomplished through pooled finance or other established methods that secure the safety and operational continuity of community-led organisations while also providing for spending monitoring and responsibility.

Navigating an Afghan leadership that comprises persons and organisations classified as specially designated global terrorists (SDGTs) which forbids some economic activities and has no humanitarian exceptions. The Taliban is also sanctioned by the United Nations, complicating direct contact between UN agencies and member states. The UN should design humanitarian carve outs right away, ensuring that sanctions and other restrictive measures do not deviate from providing humanitarian goals of saving lives and alleviating suffering. This should include granting a general operating licence to assistance organisations in Afghanistan. the administration should ensure the legal and regulatory obstacles are removed for operations in Afghanistan and work with the United Nations and other key donors to ensure they do the same.

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