

Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS)

Herat Security Dialogue-VI

«The Future of Nation-States»

13-14 October 2017 - Herat

Conference Report

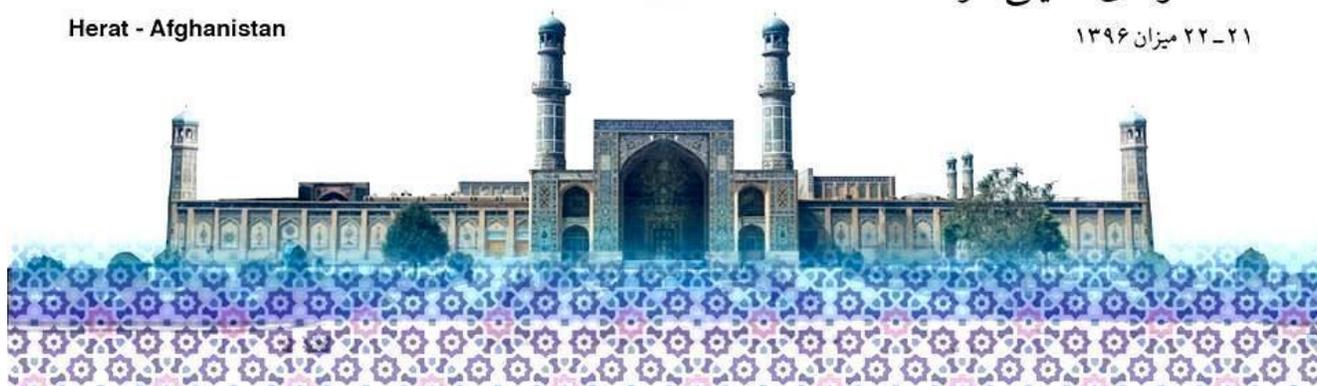
Herat Security Dialogue-VI

13 -14 October 2017

Herat - Afghanistan



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About AISS

Mission:

The Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) was established in October 2012 and has since become a premier research institution in Afghanistan. It aims to create an intellectual space for addressing strategic issues pertaining to Afghanistan in the wider regional and international contexts. AISS seeks to foster timely discussions on Afghanistan by publishing high-quality research reports and promoting dialogue amongst a wide spectrum of stakeholders. All our activities and programs are based on the principles of Professionalism, Independence, Internationalism and Progressive Values.

Objective and Goals:

The AISS is an independent, not-for-profit research institute dedicated to providing qualitative, non-partisan and policy-oriented research, publication, translation of books/reports, professional training and policy advocacy with distinct focus on Afghanistan. A cross-cutting priority of AISS is to empower the youth through specific programmatic initiatives, as the youth represent the future of the country.

Means and Activities:

In order to contribute to ongoing efforts in consolidating Afghanistan's fragile achievements and realize the nation's immense human and natural resources, the AISS uses a series of instruments, including:

- Conducting independent researches
- Entering partnership agreement with respected and like-minded research institutes
- Publication (books and journals)
- Translation of important books/articles from English into Farsi/Pashto and vice versa
- Organizing seminars, conferences, workshops (provincial , national, international) and briefings
- Offering executive type leadership training programs
- Initiating and sponsoring annual public awards for recognizing outstanding Afghan youth and international personality

- Integrating conventional and modern social media tools/networks in all its activities.

Research Focus Areas:

The AISS conducts timely research in a broad range of political, economics and societal issues. Our current research areas include: Democratic-state building process; National Security; Sustainable Economic Development; Regional Cooperation/integration; US/West-Afghanistan Strategic partnerships; Islamic Renaissance; and Khorassan of ideas (national/regional cultural integration/renewal).

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A Short Introduction to the Herat Security Dialogue Series

Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) organized the sixth round of “Herat Security Dialogue” in Herat, Afghanistan. The two-day conference, held on October 13-14, 2017, was attended by high-ranking government officials, legislators, academicians, representatives of international organizations, media outlets and civil society

The sixth round of Herat Security Dialogue was held under the umbrella theme of “Future of Nation-States.”

The Herat security Dialogue (HSD) is an annual international conference held by the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies in the historical city of Herat. The essential aim of this conference is to provide an opportunity for representatives of the countries to discuss on issues concerning cooperation and collaboration on areas of security, politics, culture and development, both domestically and internationally.

Conceptual Note on the Conference

The institution of the “nation-state” has been the leading model of political organization since 18th century. While primarily a European invention, it has become a universal model, though often reluctantly and externally-imposed in the case of non-European/Western communities. However, the massive socio-economic, political, and technological changes in today’s world pose new challenges to the viability and the structure of the nation-states, both from within and externally. These challenges and questions are multi-dimensional and often contradictory. On one hand, the advancement of globalization trends in politics, economy, technology and society have created supra national-states entities, actors and concepts such as Multinational Corporations, the Internet, Global Governance, Transnationalism, Hegemonic powers (global/regional) and Islamists’ notion of the Caliphate. On the other hand, anti-Globalization trends aim to shrink the space and the role of nation-states. Trends such as Devolution, Identity politics, Isolationist politics and Sub-nationalism challenge the primacy of nation-states from within.

The Sixth Herat Security Dialogue (HSD-VI) welcomed individuals from across Afghanistan and around the world to discuss these and related issues to acquire better understanding about the future of nation-states, particularly in the case of conflict-ridden nation-states such as Afghanistan. Participants of the conference attempted to discuss the topic by bringing together diverse perspectives from Afghanistan, the region and the wider world. The conference, in addition to the opening and concluding sessions, divided into six working panels.

Objective of the Conference

Herat Security Dialogue serves as a forum between scholars, politicians, experts, analysts, and statesmen to engage in a dialogue aimed at developing practical and broad cooperation and collaboration. Herat Security Dialogue as an international forum aims to promote mutual understanding and find common grounds in the areas of political dialogue, security coordination, and confronting religious extremism in the region. One of the significant objectives of this conference is connecting and bridging between countries. The conference aims at strengthening dialogue between countries and civilizations.

The national, regional and international participants raised their opinions and provided comments and recommendations on a variety of themes, issues and areas, including:

- Interaction between National Sovereignty and Interdependence, Alliance, Dependence, Hegemony and Globalization;
- Paradigm of Failed/failing States; lessons learned;
- State-system in the age of Global War on Terrorism;
- Democratic state: challenges and opportunities;
- Non-Western concepts of Nation-states;
- Concept of State in Islamic thoughts and practices; the modern Caliphate: Grievance or Ideology?
- Decentralized/Devolved State VS Centralized State;

- Constitutional design for divided/post-conflict societies;
- The post 2001 State-building experience in Afghanistan & the way forward;

The conference set out to address the need for a permanent forum where both national and regional stakeholders can engage in dialogue aimed at developing practical and broad security cooperation, as well as overall enhancing cooperation and collaboration between Afghanistan, and the countries in the region. Herat Security Dialogue aims to identify the reasons for distrust between states, endure of conflicts, insurgency and terrorism in the region and beyond.

Inaugural Session

The sixth round of Herat Security Dialogue, started with recitation of verses of Quran, national anthem, recitation of Hymns of Kahja Abdullah Ansari, Sufi musical performance and welcoming remarks by the Governor of Herat, Mohamed Asif Rahimi.

Mr. Rahimi commenced his welcoming remarks hoping that this dialogue could be helpful to the ongoing peace talks. He called upon the armed groups in the province to seize the opportunity to join the peace process. Talking about Herat's cultural, political and economic potentials, Mr. Rahimi emphasized that if we put an end to foreign interventions in Afghanistan's internal affairs, the country would prosper and reach out to peace and at the same time, mutual interests could be preserved. "Last year, Herat province has seen more than \$100 million investment in various fields of infrastructure and industry. During this time, more than 30 factories started production only in our industrial park and about 60 other factories improved their work. Herat is an example of development and potentials for improvements. If you put an end to the foreign interventions – especially harmful interventions, each and every provinces are going to enjoy their economic potentials such as promoting tourism." Highlighting the fact that Herat's local government appreciates any investment in the province, the Governor emphasized the need to invest in the educational sector in order to train young and professional human resource in the country. In conclusion, Mr. Rahimi emphasized that in order to analyze national objectives and defeat the enemy, it is essential to support Afghan national security forces.

Next, Dr. Rangin Spanta, former Foreign Minister of Afghanistan and head of AISS's Board of Advisors took the stage and talked about the topic of the conference. He welcomed all participants and guests of the conference. During his remarks he emphasized that the globalization trends and military interventions based on the neoliberal system are the most important factors behind the weakness and falling down of nation states in the so called third world. "Globalization is going to proceed and consequently it will reduce the scope of nation states authority over their internal affairs.



Although the spread of big international institutions and NGO, s and privatization of public services such as educations, healthcare and security, is not going to crash powerful nation states, but it has proven harmful to the third world / post- colonial countries. From this perspective, implementation of radical neoliberal policies by the powerful states, combined with corruption and lack of proper understanding of a nation state, has been a main factor of full downs of the contemporary governments.” Mr. Spanta emphasized that during the last couple of years, all efforts have been focused on imposing democracy forcefully in Afghanistan, but it all failed. He called for revising the principles of democracy based on internal social forces in Afghanistan. “The problem we face in Afghanistan is that we didn’t have a popular and powerful democratic movements in the country and that’s why we are having difficulties in our push for establishing a democracy. It’s difficult to sustain democracy forcefully. The reason why such efforts have been successful in Germany post-Second World War, is that Germany had a long history – over a century – of democratic inclination through various democratic and liberal movements. Social democrats, liberals and even Christian democratic movements made it possible to push for democratization of Germany after the Second World War. This is what we lack in the third world countries such as Afghanistan. That’s why democratization efforts are not successful in this part of the world. We have to revise our understanding of democracy in Afghanistan and figure out how to explore our internal potentials to implement democratization.”

Dr. Spanta concluded his remarks by introducing the next speaker, Ambassador Kai Eidi, former UN special envoy to Afghanistan. He talked of Ambassador Eidi as his close friend who worked with him supportively during his campaign for promoting Human Right in Afghanistan.

Ambassador Eidi started his speech thanking the AISS for holding important dialogues on pertaining regional and international problems.



With regard to the subject of conference, he emphasized that there is no clear cut definition for the Nation- State, “other than to emphasize that it has never been defined as a state exclusively composed of one nation. It is always been seen as an entity which include several nations with different ethnic groups and often different languages.”

Shedding light on the history of nation- state, he said “when the nation - states gradually emerged, members of empires and tribes became citizens of nation states.” Then he spoke about multilateral platforms for international cooperation- such as EU integration platform, as part of efforts to fix the tragic errors of the nation states- namely the Second World War. “This multilateralism has served us well. We experienced a technologic and economic revolution never believed as possible. Though it is very unevenly shared. We have seen local and regional wars, invasion and large scale oppression. But we have not

seen the all-out wars that affected the global community in 1940. We entered a period of relative stability. But we also entered a period where economic control was shifting away from nation- states to currency markets and to multinational companies. Government authority was reduced and transferred to multilateral institutions and organizations.... Today a very significant part of all legislation that is passed in the European Union countries originates from Brussels.” Ambassador Eidi then spoke about some of the new challenges facing the international community - such as international terrorism, climate change, cyber conflict, and migration and globalization trend. Regarding the threat of international terrorism he emphasized that hiding behind national walls would not change the situation, because these challenges are worldwide. “International terrorism is growing and manifesting itself not only in the Middle East or other war-torn countries like Afghanistan, but it has become a serious threat across Asia and Europe. Our response is more fragmented and inadequate. There is tendency to hide behind national walls, rather to invest in future cooperation.” According to him, in 2015, Germany received 900,000 asylum seekers. He warned that migration will be continued due to problems such as overpopulation and poverty. Ambassador Eidi called for cooperation based on common policies to cope with the situation.

Panel 1: Nation-States: Blessing or Curse?



Moderator:

Dr. Christine Fair, Associate Professor, Georgetown University, USA

Speakers:

- Dr. Anwar ui-Haq Ahady, Scholar, former minister of finance of I.R Afghanistan
- Prof Paolo Cotta-Ramusino, Secretary General of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, Italy/USA
- Professor Magnus Marsden, Director of Sussex Asia Centre, University of Sussex, UK
- Professor Abdul Salam Mohammad Nazarov, Tajikistan National University

Dr. Fair welcomed the audience as well as the speakers. In his introductory remarks, she criticized the US president as a populist lunatic who is undoing many positive things that Americans fought wars to protect. She emphasized that nowadays populist regimes are threatening the nation -states across the world.

The first speaker of the panel, Dr. Anwar ul- Haq Ahadi, talked about the overall situation of nation- states in the contemporary world. In the beginning, he mentioned some of the prominent international organizations across the region and the world, which affected the role of nation states and encouraged globalization. Then, he reviewed the history of

evolution of nation states, emphasizing that the spread of heterogeneous populations across the boundaries of countries is one of the most important problems of nation states, as they struggle to sustain national identities. "Nation states have been struggling to bring together people of different cultural backgrounds under one single national identity in order to have their loyalty and keep peaceful coexistence with neighboring countries. Establishing national unity would have been impossible without undertaking some egalitarian policies such as ensuring equal rights for citizens and putting an end to religious, ethnic and racial discriminations. After the Second World War other features including development of national markets, transportation networks, establishing governmental bureaucracy, providing public services, securing the borders, introduction of passport and visa regime, standardization of education curriculum and the rise of media – especially radio and television, also empowered the nation states, energizing the overall process of nation building across the world. Unfortunately, the nation states have not been so successful in peaceful settlement of their disputes."

Highlighting some of the advantages of regional integrations- through exemplifying the European Union, he pointed out some of the negative consequences of the globalized movement of capital and workforce, emphasizing the need for keeping the balance between nationalism and globalization trends. "Unemployed workers in most industrial countries put pressure on their politicians in order to empower their national economy and prevent the globalization trends. Migration of people from the poor countries of the east to the wealthy countries of the west such as to Europe, is another concern, created under the EU regime of easy movement. This concern is also affecting the USA. President Trump's "America First" slogan, is in fact an approach to address such concerns in order to strengthen US national economy and culture... of course, since the industrial revolution, such fluctuations occurred within national economies as well, but nation nations would introduce safety net programs to protect their citizens. Maybe it's time for the nation states to introduce some new safety net programs to deal with negative social changes."

The second speaker, Professor Paolo Cotta Ramusino, commenced his speech on “The Nation State and Afghanistan” by stressing that the cohesion and stability of nation-states are put under stress by linguistic, ethnic, and religious divisions within states. Afghanistan not only has *all* of these divisions, but it also borders with other States that have linguistic, ethnic and religious affinities with different parts of Afghanistan. Mr. Ramusino stressed the unique challenges facing Afghanistan as conflict has been going on for almost 40 years, during which time it has been occupied by the two major superpowers, and has had problems with neighboring countries that, incidentally, have absorbed a few million refugees from Afghanistan. Since shortly after the Soviet withdrawal, internal fighting among different groups has devastated the country. He mentioned how approximately 40% of the territory is out of the government’s control. The Taliban, whose government was dismantled in 2001, still control significant parts of the Afghan territory. More recently, new groups of insurgents have been created, some of whom are ideologically related to Daesh-ISIS (the so-called Caliphate of Khorasan). Foreign (NATO) troops in Afghanistan are on the order of 10,000, and are bound to increase if the “new Afghan Strategy” of the U.S is in various ways implemented. Mr. Ramunsino stressed that any prospects for “winning the war”—whether by the Taliban, other insurgent groups, the Government (that would like to control the entire Afghan territory), or foreign forces (whose counterinsurgency strategy has failed after 16 years)—are practically zero. Furthermore, a solution will not come from neighboring countries. He stressed that talking with the Taliban may not be an easy task, but it is a necessary step if one wants to restore peace in Afghanistan. While the Government of Afghanistan wants, in principle, to talk with the Taliban, still the message transmitted has been basically an invitation to “surrender”. The upcoming elections further complicate the situation. He closed by stressing that though the prospects are not bright, the only sensible thing to do is to facilitate talks with the Taliban.

The third panelist, Professor Magnus Mardsen, focused on the nation-state project from different sociological and philosophical perspectives. Prof. Mardsen explained that a key reason for the scholarly interest in the origins of nation-states and nationalism in modern times was the importance of movements of anti-colonial nationalism in the

1940s, 50s and 60s. Such movements and the emergence of the independent nation-states of the postcolonial world led to a first wave of analytical work. More recently, the collapse of the Soviet Union, as well as the subsequent emergence of ethnic conflict in its former territories, led scholars ask a related though different set of questions about the relationship of ethnicity to the nation-state. Prof. Mardsen continued by explain how the rise to prominence of various religious fundamentalist movements that position themselves as opposing the nation-state system because they see it as a culturally Western mode of organising human society that was imposed during decades of colonial domination has once again excited scholarly interest in the origins and future of the nation-state. His presentation focused around four main themes. Firstly, he reviewed the theories of the nation-state that interpret this mode of organising political life as the product of modernity. These theories argue that the nation-state and nationalists are modern constructs. Secondly, he focused on theories that depict nationalism as something related to historic identity formations. Scholars who make this argument are often labelled primordialists. Third, he explored theories of the nation-state that emphasise the role of power, authority and control in explaining the rise to prominence of this mode of organising political life. Fourth and finally, he briefly addressed the way in which sociologists and philosophers have addressed the relationship of Islam to the nation-state. He closed by mentioning how a new wave of scholarship has challenged the notion that Islam has shaped the political thinking of Muslims regarding the nation-state in a singular way that is exceptional to that of the modern west. Prof. Mardsen cited Cemil Aydin's recent book, *The Idea of the Muslim World*, which states, 'For devoted and learned Muslims, text and tradition did not demand any one sort of politics. It was possible, depending on circumstance, to support a variety of political projects while retaining strong religious commitment'.

The fourth speaker, Professor Abdul Salam Mohammad Nazarov, brought the experiences of Central Asia to the discussion in his speech entitled, "The lessons learned from Central Asia's Golden Age". Prof. Nazarov focused his presentation on recent book by Dr. Fred Starr entitled *Lost Enlightenment, Central Asia's Golden Age from the Arab conquest to Tamerlane*, published by Princeton University Press in 2013. His presentation

consisted of two parts. The first consisted of an overview of the book. The second part focused on lessons for Central Asia. The book goes through Central Asia's mediaeval enlightenment through the lives and accomplishments of various prominent historical figures –Ibn Sina, Biruni, Buzjani, Farabi, Farghani, Balasughani, Behzod and others. While these individuals wrote in Arabic, they were of Central Asian origin and heritage. The aim of the book was to introduce to the readers, particularly those in western countries, to the Central Asia's Golden Age during a 400-year period from the 8th to the 12th century. His work was based on a review of over 1400 works. Turning to the lessons for Central Asia, Prof. Nazarov stressed how despite differences in language, ethnicity, nationality, and geography, the inhabitants of all these areas belonged to a single, but highly pluralistic, cultural zone, which included Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Chinese province of Xinjiang. He stressed how Central Asia was not only a “crossroads of civilization”, but also a “crossroad civilization,” as caravans and scholars passed through this civilization, learnt from it, translated the works of the greatest mind of this civilization into their own and transferred and spread the knowledge of this civilization both in the East and in the West. He closed by emphasizing importance of fighting ignorance through enlightenment.

Discussion Session

- How do you explain the situation of failed states like Afghanistan?
- How Afghanistan can develop power?
- How Afghanistan can guarantee equality between its citizens?

Professor Mardsen, answered the questions as saying “the way which the question is posed is always been problematic. From my perspective, it's not that we can talk about a failed state; it's that we can talk about a part of the world that has been failed by the international state system, given the geographical location of Afghanistan and its history. And that is all too often been overlooked. Another thing that has been overlooked all too often is the fact that even in that very difficult position that this country or this region of the world has been placed in, its people have managed to create their own structures and their own relationships and their own resources to survive.

More broadly in terms of this question, I think we need to be specific. Of course globally there are some countries in the so-called third world that have done very well from the nation state system. There are other countries like Afghanistan that have been treated a lot less unfairly by it. But we also know that within Afghanistan there are some groups or sections of society that also profited rather handsomely from the nation state system and there are other groups that have been treated rather less positively by it. So there is always a need to be specific about these issues. Unless a country like Afghanistan is able to find ways and relationships of extending its influence more broadly and benefiting from the wider region, then the nation state system is always going to be something of a burden.” He emphasized that “for Afghanistan to develop its power I think it’s about recognizing its own potentials both nationally and also internationally.”

Professor Ramusino, answered the first question as saying “the answer to this question doesn’t matter. It’s irrelevant. The point is that whatever we do, politics is not dependent on what we think. In my opinion, all states have been created by a series of random events including war. There is no state that is perfect in terms of identifying its nations and its boundary. Europe is full of these states that have mixed cultures and languages. The way the problem is been solved is a combination of devolution and international cooperation, eliminating the boundary. This is the point. We have to think about political solutions. You want to construct the unity of the country. Then we have to maximize the effort in which dialogue and communication can improve the situation on the ground. Is the situation on the ground positive? I don’t want to discuss in general terms about failed state and non-failed state. I think the sense is that the situation on the ground is not so positive, otherwise people would be saying something different. So, in this sense, something should be done. There is a lot of important richness in Afghanistan – not only in terms of cultural and political background, especially in terms of goods and resources that should be used to offer better opportunity to the new generations. So, I think one has to create opportunities here for the people and opportunities are only there if you have a non- war environment.”

Dr. Ahady answered the questions by saying “in my opinion the development of a nation state and national community is a blessing in the political evolution of the societies. It’s very important for human beings to hold national identities. The difficult problem is that what constitutes a nation state. I think states start with some sort of primordial identities. It’s important to guarantee equality between all citizens within a state. It’s an accepted philosophy since the French revolution and I think it is enshrined in our constitution.”

Panel 2: Can Nation-States Survive the 21st Century?



Moderator:

Dr. Gholam Ali Cheginizag, Professor of Political Science, Allama Tabatabai, Tehran, Iran

Speakers:

- Dr. Nasser Andisha, scholar-diplomat, Deputy Foreign Minister, Afghanistan
- Major Gen Rajiv Narayanan, distinguished fellow at United Service Institution of India
- Dr. Zakia Adeli, professor of political science at Kabul University, Afghanistan
- Dr. Jeffrey A. Stacey, scholar-diplomat, Managing Partner of Geopolicity in the U.S.A.

Dr. Gholam Ali Cheginizag welcomed all of the panelists to discuss the pressing question of whether nation-states would be able to survive the 21st century or whether they faced

a crisis in the globalized world with new forces entering the international arena, both from below and from above. In his introductory remarks, he emphasized that Herat is a unique city as it is a unique center of civilization in the region. He said that during the last decades of the past century the main question was development and now we are concerned with security. “Unfortunately as time passed our concern is more pressuring. Nowadays we are questioning why we do not have security. So, it would be good to discuss the notion of nation state from this perspective.”

The first speaker of the panel, Dr. Zakia Adeli, focused on “the influence of international regimes and organizations on the nation states”. He reviewed different approaches towards the issue, emphasizing on the positive implications of liberal approach for improvement of nation states.

“With globalization taking momentum and national boundaries prone to external influences and entering of non-state actors into politics, the level of authority and the scope of sovereignty of nation states is decreasing. At the same time, international organizations are getting stronger and stronger, challenging the agency of nation states. Beside globalization trends, there are also other features such as the spread of communication technology, the rising role of non-state actors, the growth and wide scale dissemination of Liberal Democracy, international law and international regimes that also affecting the function of nation states.

Regarding this issue, some thinkers argue that there is a reciprocal relationship between the nation states and globalization. Others believe that globalization reduces important socio- economic functions of the government.”

Ms. Adeli suggested that to assess the function of nation states within international arena we may examine their efficiency, sovereignty and authority. “Currently, governments are trying to share power and authority with non-state actors (institutions and organizations) in order to increase their efficiency; though this would challenge their power and authority. International organizations and regimes also put some serious limits on lawmaking, executive and judicial role of the nation states.” He concluded her

remarks by highlighting some of the positive postures of international regimes and organizations as well. “Besides limiting implications of international regimes and organizations on national governments, we can also talk about some positive aspects here. International institutions, organizations and regimes can also encourage governments to work together based on common interest in order to prevent war. They also provide uniform patterns of behavior for effective interactions.”

Major Gen Rajiv Narayanan presented his speech entitled, “The World in Transition: Relevance of Nation State Concept in the Era of Global Interdependence.” The dynamic presentation focused on how the emerging World Order is tending towards multipolarity leading to another period of jousting due to the ‘balance of power’. Globalisation since the 1980s, and interdependence that has resulted from it, makes a clash of arms less economically viable between these powers (the North), leading to creation of spheres of influence amongst the semi-peripheral states and smaller countries (the South) through regime change, geo-strategic compulsion or geo-economic coercion by the North, leading to ‘small wars, terrorism and other such upheavals. Gen. Narayanan’s presentation emphasized that the narrative of nation-states has not protected the South from being able to exercise their sovereign autonomous right to protect their national interests. He also sought to propose a model where international institution could provide a balance based on greater multilateralism or regional multilateralism. He mentioned that a state is specifically a political and geopolitical entity, while a nation is a cultural and ethnic one. The term “nation-state” thus implies that the two coincide, in that a state has chosen to adopt and endorse a specific cultural group as associated with it. The spread of ‘Globalisation’ has resulted in a much more integrated ‘Global Interdependence’ that has resulted in the use of geo-economic coercion and geo-strategic compulsions to gain strategic space. Two countries are considered economically interdependent if any change in one causes a predictable change in the other. Importantly, he pointed out that this global economic interdependence will invariably lead to a clash of ‘perceived’ national interests, leading to the economic coercion of the Third World. Gen. Narayanan thus sought to find a solution to the current conundrum, which he proposed to be a ‘Regional Multilateral Federal Structure’, where each nation surrenders some economic,

diplomatic, political, defence and socio-political sovereignty for the larger interest of the region. This structure would interlink the region as one entity, thereby providing security as well as certain protections against any outside state to enter into any agreement with a country therein. The presentation ended with four points that should be included in any such structure:

(1) Maintaining an integrated infrastructure and energy grid to facilitate economic integration; (2) maintaining a common integrated domestic base for economic, socio-economic and socio-political strength; (3) maintaining an integrated geo-political and geo-strategic balance; (4) better managing the open International Trade and Multilateral regimes.

The third speaker, Dr. Jeffery A. Stacey, spoke about today's political crises in the west and the challenges that Afghanistan faces. "We have got a list of threats: warfare, terrorism, geopolitics, globalization, cyber threats, climate change, refugee flows, population growth, cessations movements, pandemics and then my favorite nationalism/populism and the lack of democratic legitimacy. If the great game is on again in Afghanistan, there is a new game happening in the west and it's also a negative one. As you are all aware there is a wave of right wing nationalism that has engulfed North America and Europe in the past two years. This is caused by severe economic dislocation of the working class, stemming from competition from integrated trade and financial markets as well as - to a lesser degree, some racially discriminatory views of portions of these populations. Another factor to focus on is the crises in the leadership in the west. We can use the EU as a good example of this. The EU will survive just like the nation-states that will survive. The question is will they thrive. The leaders in the EU fell down on the job by failing to talk to their citizens about what was at stake in this progressive transfer of sovereignty. This catastrophic failure has caused part of this waves of populism; the vote to leave the EU by the UK, the election of President Trump and the rise into the German parliament by the AfD right wing nationalist party are the three biggest most consequential examples of rise of nationalism in Europe... nation- states are going to survive; the question is will they thrive."

Regarding Afghanistan he pointed out some of the recent positive developments such as increased and sustained strength of the national security departments and institutions, increased India's commitment to Afghanistan and President Trump's recommitment to Afghanistan that should be maintained. "President Ghani and the ministers have a real opportunity to engage Afghans in a new dialogue in preparation for a dialogue with the Taliban. There is a new kind of potential for achieving some balance in a broad sense in Afghanistan." Dr. Stacey also warned that negative trends - such as increased strength of the Taliban, their control of the opium, the increased civilian casualty, and the fact that great game is on, overtime degrades the legitimacy and the effectiveness of this government. He emphasized on the need for consistent identification of common interest and joint action.

The final speaker, Dr. Nasser Andisha, commenced by commenting on perspective of the survival of weak nation states. He said that based on evidence, nation states are going to survive, but the question of is are weak state going to survive too. "The modern nation building process- especially during the past fifty years and the beginning of this century, is mostly intertwined with democratization process. Hopefully, if it is applicable in our countries, as it's been in other parts of the world after the Second World War, nation states are going to prosper. In this century, two more countries (Kosovo and South Sudan) are added to the list of nation states; so there is room for foundation of nation states. The question is whether the existing democratization process works or we need some serious revision in this regard. As mentioned before, weak nation states are under threats." He concluded his remarks by reviewing a theoretical framework on the issue, emphasizing that the most important threat to the weak nation states is "the tension between informal rules and formal institutions."

Discussion Session

- How do you negotiate with someone – like Taliban, Al-Qaeda, who wants to exterminate you and destroy the concept of nation- state itself?
- What would be the consequences of Kurdistan's independence referendum on our region?

Dr. Andisha answered the questions as saying “even the so called Islamic State claims that it is a state. So, those are not going to pose a threat to the existence of a nation state. With regard to the Kurdistan’s independence referendum, it will effect Kurdistan’s neighboring counties not necessarily our region.”

Dr. Stacey commented on the first question saying that to get rid of current problems we need multisided efforts.

Dr. Adeli commented on her own remarks emphasizing that nowadays relations between countries are more based on economics, and therefore Liberal approach is going to lead into more cooperation and provide better resolutions for international conflicts.

Major Gen Narayanan, explained some of the elements in his presentation as saying: “what should be the regional structure? The structure would vary from region to region. When I say a region, we need not go by the western construct of the region that they have given. We as an entity within Asia, Africa or America should decide what this region should constitute. The major issue here is that in every given region – like South Asia, you have one very big country which have borders with all other countries and the others don’t have borders with it. So, there is always a question about what this big country will do. I propound that at a minimum, big powers should be available within that region in order for you to be able to get some balance. The next question is how much time it would take. It won’t happen overnight. It takes time. We have to take lessons from the ASEAN and EU, see where they went too far which created problem. You have to go step by step. Your major issues like economics, commerce, energy, security, environment and diplomacy could be decided by the region and the rest, nation states would look after themselves. When you try to exceed that limit and go faster, you will create problems.

The next issue is the rising of Asia. Within Asia only few entities are rising. The whole of Asia is not rising. And finally I don’t agree with the notion of International Society. We are multiple societies that function in international sphere. There are multiple societies that have their own compulsions and they come together at the international forum to look at how to compromise and go ahead. From this perspective I say that smaller and weaker countries have a problem.”

Panel 3: The State in Islamic Thought & Practices: Idealism; Realism; Disappointment



Moderator:

Mrs. Homaira Saqib, President of Afghan Women News Agency, Afghanistan

Speakers:

- Mr. Ali Amery, university lecturer at Ibn-Sina University, Kabul
- Dr. Sayed Hamza Safavy, university lecturer and director of the Institute for Islamic World Future Studies (IIWFS) in Tehran, Iran
- Mr. Mohammad Osman, Deputy Editor in Chief of Al-Ahram Newspaper in Egypt.
- Professor Michal Barry, Professor, Princeton University/ American University of Afghanistan

Ms. Saqib, welcomed all the speakers to the panel. In his introductory remarks she emphasized that Muslim countries must establish nation states that provide social justice for their citizen including women.

Mr. Ali Amery kicked off the panel giving a speech entitled “the impossibility of nation state in Islam”. “Nation-state is a recent phenomenon and particularly a European one.

During the 20th century the European nation- state model spread to other parts of the world, as different countries implemented the system with different degrees of success. But the Islamic world, failed to follow the course successfully.

In Islam, the notion of “nation- state” is unfeasible. This is not a logical or philosophical stagnation, but it’s a historical and cultural failure, which persists to this time. In Islam, government did not evolved around the notion of “nation state”. In fact across the Islamic world different people merged together based on a general identity called “Ummat”. Within the framework of “Ummat”, governments established, but none of them built as nation states.

The first government in Islam established by Mohammad in Madina city; it was a “government of Daawa”. But after his death, the government of “Kholafa-e Rashidin” was a “government of conquest”. This form of government sustained by its successors during the reign of Umayyad, Abbasid, Abbasi, Fatimid and Ottoman Caliphate. The Caliph functions as the prophet’s successor, leading the “Ummat” in all aspects of life. There is no such thing as “national caliph”. In the modern time, after the fall down of classic system of government in Islamic world, Muslims have been trying to restore the “Caliphate system”; there is no theoretical approach for establishing nation states across the Islamic world. In fact, after decomposition of Ottoman Caliphate, some semi- nation states were formed across the Islamic world, but with the absence of a clear theoretical framework, they ended up becoming authoritarian regimes. These states were established based on an artificial nationalism, so they turned into authoritarian and hegemonic regimes. Therefore, in the Islamic world the question is not about the survival of the nation states, but is it about the very idea of establishing a nation- state.”

The second panelist, Dr. Sayed Hamza Safavy, presented his speech entitled “deconstruction of governance in the region and its relationship with security. “A number of scholars believe that prolonged conflicts in the region are the core cause of its backwardness. But form my point of view this does not explain the situation. Because since the 17th century until the mid-19th century, Europe was stunned by war, but at the same time, it experienced some developments too. Others would say that nationalism has not taken roots in the region and that’s why we lag behind in state building process. But

nationalism is not a causal factor for development; during the first and Second World War, ultra-nationalism caused destruction and pain. Some scholars emphasize on the role of religion. They argue that Europe was developed because European got rid of religion and this region is not developing because its people still stick with religious traditions. I disagree with this point of view; because it's not about being religious, it's about how to interpret the religion. So, what is missing here? There are three important factors explaining our stagnation:

- 1- Lack of mutual understanding among the elites and the people in west Asia
- 2- Lack of evaluation system
- 3- lack of prioritization of problems

Dr. Safavy emphasized that sustainable development and good governance provide guidelines for the elites to move forward and change the situation. From this perspective, we may use universal experiences to evaluate ourselves. "From my point of view, while applying the universal indexes of good governance -such as the rule of law, in our region, we must take into consideration sensitivities with regard to local traditions and religious concerns. If we don't respect these two characteristics of social life in the region, every plan is going to be a failure."

The third panelist, Mr. Mohammad Osman, presented his speech entitled "establishing the nation-state in the Islamic/Arab world; artificial orientation and existential threats". At the start, he emphasized that colonialism and ignorant elites are the main causes of existing problems of Islamic/ Arab world. Pointing out the fact that the concept of "nation- state" coined in the west, he talked about the historical record of formation of nation states in Islamic/ Arab world. He said that although Islam was the main mobilizing force among Arabs, Islamic governments failed to sustain unity among Muslims, until it plagued by colonialism.

The Islamic government gradually diverted from its fundamental values and principles. It gradually became weak and divided into several small states. The Islamic territory divided into different parts through the European strategy of "divide and rule." nationalism is contrary to Islamic values. Nowadays, there is no government representing Islam. In fact, Western institutions are ruling Islamic countries through national elites."

He concluded his speech highlighting some of the more challenging problems of Arab nations. “Administrative corruption, lack of rational politics, lack of democracy and transparency, weak political institutions and fragile security system, are some of the most important imposing problems. Natural connectivity among Arab countries vanished or it is disappearing. Arabs are divided into different blocks. Arab uprisings (I don’t call them revolutions), failed to improve the situation of Arab countries. What happened in some of the Arab countries was just some sort of popular revolt. The Arab League failed as it couldn’t represent the community. Its failure became obvious amid the recent crisis amongst Qatar and four other Arab countries. Nowadays, Arab youth are dreaming about getting out of their countries in search of better opportunities overseas.”

The final speaker, Professor Michael Barry, started his presentation emphasizing on the importance of Herat city as a trade route across the region. “When was the last time that Afghanistan was completely independent, extremely wealthy, had an imperial capital, whose culture was admired and imitated from India all the way to Turkey? It was with the kingdom of Herat, when the Pul-e Malan was built.” He quoted from a Portuguese agent of East India Company who writes “to the shore just across Hurmuz, every day come four thousand camels from Herat loaded with silk.”

“We are talking about a time when Herat represented the heart of what we can call a body. If you come from the Iranian Plato, all of a sudden you see the mountains rise like a wall in front of you. You stop at Herat and you go around the mountains if you want to go to Central Asia and China or you go around the mountains the other way and you go down through Qandahar to Quetta and to the Indian world. This was the prosperity of Herat. When this great inter Asian trade root disappeared? When the European powers captured the Indian Ocean roots, the civilization of this part of the world in the urban centers began to stagnate and fall into economic decline. So, as the urban centers declined you have the disappearance of the great dynasties, the great art, the great philosophy, and the magnificent achievements of that old world.”

Regarding the influence of Islam at the time, Professor Barry spoke about how Sufi Islam would supervise the kings. “I would invite you into this castle. In the year 1494, Behzad-the painter, with the advice of Jami and Mirali Shir Nawae, the spiritual consolers to the

Sultan, paints for the Sultan an image of this castle which will be reproduced for you very soon. In his painting of Herat castle, he depicts the king as turning his back on his castle and kneeling in front of a cave which happened to be home to a holy man / Sufi. This is what Sultan asked Behzad to paint. Every week Sultan would go to the Sufi to listen to his spiritual advice. At the time, there was a mechanism in the society for the Sufi (the poorest man of the kingdom) to tell the king watch out.”

Discussion Session

- What is the main problem of Islamic world? Where does all these sectarian divisions come from? What is the role of Islamic governments to deal with the situation?
- What is the difference between Islamic government and nation state?
- What do you think about the future of Islamic governance? Are we heading toward a new order or just experiencing regress?
- In Iran, Sufism is considered to be a backward movement. Who do you consider it as a positive force?
- What is the status of non- Muslims in Islamic Ummat?
- Given the fact that in Islam, the concept of Islamic brotherhood is always advertised, what is the status of women in Islamic Ummat?
- Don't you think that separating religion from politics could be the main reason of backwardness?
- To what extent we can attribute Afghanistan's backwardness to the fact that this country has never been colonized?
- Given the fact that relations between Iran and Afghanistan are so close, how could you use that to curb the conflicts in Afghanistan?
- How do you explain lack of consensus among our elites? Is it because of not having self-confident in the face of western progress?

Mr. Ameri answered the questions as saying “we do have Islamic government; both in theory and in practice. But, we are not talking about the Islamic government here. We are talking about national government. We don't have national government in Islam. During the history of Islam, we got caliphate, not national government. That's because, in Islam

we don't have such concept. What is caliphate? During the Umaweed reign of power, the caliph is considered to be successor of the prophet. But the second and third caliph of Abbased dynasty called themselves "khalifatullah" meaning God's successor. This concept is being imported in Islamic world from Sasani dynasty. The caliph in Islam is somebody who represents God; it doesn't matter if he provides you security or not, you must obey him anyways. Don't please yourself with the stories history tells you about overwhelming justice under the Islamic caliphate. The same caliph who would pay for somebody's misfortune in one occasion, enslaved thousands of people across the Central Asia and sold them overseas. During Umar-ibn Abd al-Aziz reign of power, in occasions when people wanted to become Muslims, the agents of caliph would oppress them; because if people became Muslims, then they wouldn't pay "Jazia" anymore (special tax that non- Muslims had to pay under caliphate). That government, was not a welfare state and it didn't care about people's consent at all. In fact, the caliphate doesn't need people's consent, because people are not recognized under Islamic caliphate; people are identified as "Ummat" who must sever God and serving God must be through obeying religious principles. Caliph is the religious authority.

Chaos in Islamic world is because we consider ourselves as part of Islamic Ummat. Loyalty to the nation in meaningless. It's important that you be loyal to the Ummat. What is called nationalism in Afghanistan is not nationalism. But it is some sort of hegemonic domination. We want to establish nationalism through hegemonic regimes and that is wrong. In Afghanistan, nationalism doesn't exist; because there is no theoretical framework conceptualizing the nation. Furthermore, nation state, intrinsically is a secular state; not necessarily anti- religion, but it is not a religious state. Nation state is built upon people's consent, it is not based on religious principles or God, s consent."

Professor Barry answered the questions as saying "one important element of nationalism is "common pain" or "sympathy"; like the pain that everybody here feel over 40 years of war. For this common pain you would say that we have a common destiny and therefore we are "insiders" and those who don't feel our pain are "outsiders".

With regard to the role of Iran, we must know that Iran's Islamic revolution was a Pan-Islamic revolution. Therefore, its purpose was not to protect either Iran or Shia community. Iran made two fatal mistakes with consequences that we still suffer. The first mistake was to call for the overthrow of the Saudi Arabian government, calling it illegitimate, calling it not worthy to be the protector of the holy places. And when a group of radicals seized the great mosque in Macca, the government in Tehran supported this. This Saudi Arabia never forgave. The other mistake of Iran was holding demonstrations that said "death to America". You talk about nationalism, you never hold demonstrations where you call for the death of entire people. You can say "down with this regime" and this is fair. But never say death to a country, because the people of America who would like to trump among others, felt that this was a direct attack against them as a people. Iran antagonized these two powers which allied against Iran and sought in every way to restrict the influence of Iran. Now, if Iran makes an Islamic appeal – for example by supporting the Palestinians cause and other causes, then Saudi Arabia has to demonstrate and has been demonstrating that Iranians are not Muslim, Shia people are not Muslim. And as a result we have seen such antagonism arise between Sunni and Shia like had not occurred in the region for almost three hundred years. In every society where you have both Sunni and Shia in various proportions, you have social disintegration; Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Bahrein all have social disintegration. Pakistan and Afghanistan are left. This is a tremendous responsibility of the Afghans to demonstrate the justice of their system, of their civilization, of their society. Here we shall not allow this sectarian hatred. I too plead for the resumption of good relations between the United States and Iran. I think it is necessary for the peace of the world, I think it's necessary for the peace of this region."

Mr. Osman answered the questions as saying: "you have to separate practices from Ideals of Islam. Because the states which claimed to be Islamic were not ideal. Second thing is about foreign intervention. I think Afghanistan is an exemplification of the loss and destruction caused by foreign intervention including the British, the Soviet Union and lately the American and western powers. If the Afghan people were left to themselves from the beginning and were not the subject of intervention, I think we could have seen Afghanistan as a thriving nation."

Dr. Safavi, answered the questions as saying “with regard to the role of religion in politics, as I said before, it depends on how you interpret the religion. Islam clearly defines the reciprocal obligations of the people and the government towards each other. We are being told that “live your life as if you are going to live forever, and think of hereafter, as if you are going to die right now.” This narrative conveys an important message for Islamic government and that is the importance of development. If the ruler believes in constant development of his country, he will work hard to do a god job. I believe that our interpretation of Islam must be compatible with the sustainable development. A non-Islamic government does not work in this region. If you try to forcefully implement secularism in this region, you will encourage more radical movements like the Taliban. Regarding Mr. Barry’s remarks about Iran, I personally don’t like the slogan of “Death of America”. But you need to remember that during the revolutionary period, Iranians were upset about how they have been treated by Americans; Americans treaded Iranian people with disrespect. Nowadays, we see that President Trump is following the same approach toward Iran. I afraid that such behavior encourages radical reactionary movements. Regarding the lack of consensus among the elites, I think of some important factors; first of all we miss a culture of tolerance in this region. Secondly, we are interested in bureaucratic procedures, rather than being interested in results. Thirdly, selfishness is being preferred over collective work and finally, we got weak institutions.”

Panel 4: The Arduous Road of State-Building in Afghanistan: Legitimacy; Capacity; Hegemony



Moderator:

Dr. Shakti Sinha, president of Nehru Memorial Museum library, India

Speakers:

- Dr. Mujib Rahimi, scholar & Spokesperson to Afghanistan's CEO
- Dr. Timor Sharan, scholar & Deputy Director of Afghanistan' Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG)
- Mr. Kawun Kakar, Managing Partner of Kakar advocates, Afghanistan
- Professor Thomas Johnson, Professor, Naval Postgraduate School, USA
- Mr. James Armstrong, political adviser to NATO Senior Political Representation

Dr. Sinha welcomed the various panel speakers and their diverse background. In his introductory remarks he emphasized that stability is only guaranteed through political participation. “At the end of the day stability arouses from a sense of participation. Service delivery for the state is important, but service delivery does not equal the state. State’s legitimacy ultimately comes from a feeling of identification- imagined or otherwise. So, you need a very good sense of elections, a very good identity between the voter and the elected. The elected must be accountable in whatever form of government you have. Accountability also comes from rotation. Monopoly of power is a bad idea anywhere. You don’t want to replace one elite with another elite. You want to widen the elite in that sense to allow people into the system at different levels. And that ultimately is state- building which a society has to do on its own.”

The first panelist Dr. Rahimi commenced the session giving a speech based on his PhD thesis about “the Afghan State, its Emergence, Logics and Crises”. “My finding is that the narrative the power provides for us in Afghanistan is very exclusionary and biased and for us to have a new understanding of ourselves within Afghanistan and also in the region, we need to rewrite and provide for a more plural and inclusive narrative.” He continued his speech addressing Afghanistan’s constitutional choice for developing a political system. “The system that we have chosen in Afghanistan is based on US model; exclusive presidential system which is not fit for a post conflict diverse and divided society. I argue for a constitutional design in order to maximize political inclusivity and also a parliamentary system to consolidate the democratic system and at the same time provide

more space for representation.” Dr. Rahimi concluded his speech pointing out that “the most eminent problem for the legitimacy currently we are facing in Afghanistan is the issue of reforms; especially the electoral reform and the constitutional reform.” Giving some information about the background of the National Unity Government, he spoke about two camps currently competing for political legitimacy in Afghanistan. “The first camp is arguing for decentralization, more pluralist society based on more inclusivity and the second camp is arguing for more centralized government and at the same time reviving the past history of Afghanistan.”

The second panelist, Dr. Sharan, in his presentation focused on practical aspect of state building process in Afghanistan using the notion of “network state”. “What we have in Afghanistan is a network state which is rooted in Ahmad Shah Durani,s foundation. With that foundation, what we have is the transformation of political networks that shaped the Afghan state formation. During the post-Bon Afghanistan, “competing former Jihadi Networks came to occupy the strategic parts of the Afghan state both the military and the bureaucracy. What we are seeing is a contestation between western allied political elite who have come from the west and former Jihadists who used to be in power, but now predominantly see themselves excluded. Political networks are defined as a distinct hybrid hierarchal structures whose members share power and resources through informal and constantly renegotiated deals and pacts. In moments of contestation like the 2009 and 2014 elections, we saw the emergence of a coalition of different networks- what I call whole network. And right now deals are being made among different political networks – what I call individual networks, who have got their own resources and various sources of informal legitimacy, but they are indeed interdependent. According to him, these political networks need three elements to survive, including: 1) an expensive patron -client relationship. 2) The ability to control different parts of the economy through rent seeking and illegality. And 3) the ability to mobilize the constituency through politicizing identities; not only ethnic identities, but also tribal identities, regional identities, clan identities, family identities and so forth. He concludes his speech emphasizing that “more importantly we need to understand how the power contestation between the national and local elites is shaping the nation building in Afghanistan.”

The third panelist, Kawun Kakar, talked about his assessment of executive branch of the Afghan state based on a recent research paper he articulated on the issue.¹ He suggested that if evaluated through Legitimacy, Flexibility, Accountability, Effectiveness and Stability, the current executive system proves to be capable of handling the situation in Afghanistan. Although he stressed that the system requires some amendments and reforms such as decentralization of power and promoting political parties. Mr. Kakar argued that a parliamentary system in Afghanistan is not going to succeed as the country is not prepared for it. His recommendations include the following: “The efficiency of the state would most likely improve if the decision-making processes were more streamlined, and if other institutions both at the center and the provinces were empowered.

Key government functions such as the Civil Service Commission or an Anti-Corruption should be given constitutional standing, their stature and legitimacy greatly increased and their effectiveness enhanced.

To strengthen stability, the language of the Constitution granting the authority of Constitutional interpretation to the Supreme Court should be unambiguous, which is currently it is not, or in keeping with modern international constitutional practices, the authority to interpret the Constitution should be vested in a newly-created Constitutional Court.

Establishing an environment where legitimate political parties can flourish, and candidates can freely declare party affiliation, will enhance the political process and expand the country’s executive branch options.

Overdue Lower House elections should be conducted to ensure that the participation of National Assembly members in the Loya Jirga is viewed as legitimate. Similarly, local elections should be held for heads of District Councils as they make up a significant number of the Constitutional Loya Jirga. There are concerns that a Loya Jirga, once convened, might become embroiled with identity and ethnically-charged issues and

¹ *Evolution of the Executive Branch in Afghanistan, AREU, 2017*

discussion of fundamental rights. In order to address these concerns, the scope of the issues should be limited to those involving and relevant to the structure of the Executive Branch”

Professor Thomas Johnson was the fourth panelist and provided an engaging lecture on “Structural Problems of Afghan Elections – Implications of Ethno-linguistic Voting and the Single Non-Transferable Vote.” Prof. Johnson focused on two critical structural problems associated with Afghanistan’s electoral system: (1) ethno-linguistic voting patterns; and (2) the Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV). While issues of voter fraud also plague elections, he stressed the need to address these structural issues with the current system. He went on to stress that each Afghan elections since 2004 has been dominated by ethno-linguistic block voting. Put simply, Pashtuns have a strong tendency vote for Pashtuns, Tajiks vote for Tajiks, Hazaras vote for Hazaras and Uzbeks vote for Uzbeks and so forth. His finding was based on extensive research conducted on many of Afghanistan’s elections in Afghanistan. The clear result was that no candidate received significant support outside of his or her particular ethno-linguistic group. As a result, Prof. Johnson submitted that the elections appear to have been more procedural than substantive. For example, presidential elections have been unsuccessful in uniting the divided country behind a single candidate. Prof. Johnson continued by looking at the Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV) system currently in place for the Wolesi Jirga. The SNTV leads to very odd outcomes. For example, in Kabul, the leading vote getter in Kabul, Haji Muhammad Mohaqiq, secured only 3.6% of the vote (!). Overall, 21 of the 33 candidates elected to the Wolesi Jirga from Kabul were elected with less than 1% of the total vote in their district. He ended his speech by commenting that these finding suggests that Afghan elections as well as the entire Afghan electoral process is fraught with deep structural problems that ultimately undermine both the credibility and legitimacy of the Kabul regime.”

The final panelist of the session, Mr. James Armstrong, spoke on the continued role of NATO in Afghanistan. He commenced by stating that while the primary objective is to prevent the country from becoming a safe haven for terrorists, that objective has also changed over time. Under the previous International Security Assistance Force mandate

that NATO provided direct security support to the Afghan government and thus they were engaged in a combat role. Under the post-2014 Resolute Support mission the NATO mission transformed into training, advising and assisting Afghan security forces rather than having an active combat role. Mr. Armstrong noted that there was no intention for NATO to return to a combat role. He mentioned two significant steps that had been taken by the Afghan government in reforming the security sector. First, in terms of leadership, a new generation of Afghan leaders will be appointed into senior military positions by 2020. Second, concerning corruption, the establishment of the Major Crimes Task Force and the Anti-Corruption Justice Centre has enabled the government to investigate and prosecute senior government officials, including within the security sector. Mr. Armstrong noted that NATO's support also went beyond training, advising and assisting. NATO heavily invested in providing guidance in developing a strong rule of law within the security sector aimed at reducing corruption and improving the civilian governance of the security sector. He ended his speech by emphasizing that NATO support to the security sector does not equate to reliance on a military solution. He stressed the importance of the government to make substantive efforts towards reconciliation.

Discussion Session

- Regarding the process of state building, where does Afghanistan stand right now?
- To ensure fair and transparent elections, what should we do?
- Why the international partners of Afghanistan didn't conduct a census in early stages, to ensure transparency of the elections in the country?
- How long Afghan women should wait for proper reforms regarding women's rights in Afghanistan?
- Don't you think that the root cause of the problem in Afghanistan is lack of the rule of law?
- Apparently NATO failed in Afghanistan, what should be done?
- Given the existing problems of electoral system, are we going to experience another round of rigged elections?

- Afghan political networks have been able to manipulate ethnic identities, what is the government's plan to make sure that this people are isolated and no longer influential in the society?

In terms of making peace with the Taliban, what do you think about use of devolution to ease the situation?

Dr. Rahimi answered the questions as saying "I agree with Mr. Johnson's findings. Indeed, the electoral system is one of the main problems in Afghanistan. Until now, they prevented reforms in electoral system. I disagree with what Mr. Kakar's remarks; he is trying to justify the dominant narrative. There are scientific evidences supporting the notion that a parliamentary regime provides better environment for democratic reforms in this country. If Afghanistan was a homogenous society, the type of political system did not matter. But in a multi-ethnic society like Afghanistan, the presidential system - with only one winner and many losers, makes trouble. In a post- conflict society we need to broaden the scope of power sharing mechanism. In Afghanistan we need such a structure that encourages the formations of big alliances representing all people. Currently, due to the monopoly of power, the Afghan government is in deadlock. All decisions are taken by one single person. The only argument against the parliamentary system is that we don't have political parties, but you don't let political parties to thrive.

Regarding the constitution, there are contradictions. Practically the constitution is useless; it doesn't work.

Dr. Sharan, answered the questions as saying "the notion of decentralization is interesting and currently we are working on it within the government. Currently we are working on the policy of local governance; it's a comprehensive policy, which empowers us to create a decentralized government in Afghanistan. We want to adjust the problems of political representation in different localities. Last year in Urozgan province, a tribal dispute, almost lead to the fall down of the Trinqot city. We don't want it happen again. We are going to increase the authority of people's representatives. We believe that all reforms must be in accordance with local social and political structures. In Afghanistan, the system of "Jirga" and "Shura" (local councils) works. Maybe in the future we consider other options like having governors elected through provincial Jirgas for fixed terms. We

think about alternative options. But these are political questions. Are we prepared for that? We work on these concerns in order to be able to transfer more authority to the provincial and district level officials.

With regard to the ethnic politics, we must be very careful. If we talk about it too much, it could be manipulated by our traditional / tribal politicians. So, we must take it seriously; it should not be limited to the election times.”

Mr. Kakar answered the questions as saying “there is a tendency to intensify the debate by making dichotomies suggesting that in one hand we got dictators and on the other we got democrats. We need deeper and more serious debates. The type of politic system by itself doesn’t matter. America has a presidential system and also Venezuela has a presidential system. The parliamentary system is applied both in Britain and Iraq. But, look at them and see the differences by yourself. Political systems need certain criterion to guide actions. It’s not necessary that all people be represented in the government. We need more serious talk in that regard.

With regard to the next elections, unfortunately I’m not so confident that the next election will be much better. There are some important concerns. Number one is that the election commission has lost its credibility. How do you build the credibility? Serving in the election commission should be an honorary job carried out by those people who have high degree of credibility; cannot be pressured for money, cannot be incentivized to be a minister or something else. That’s how you are going be build the credibility.

On the issue of devolution, giving the local government more authority is something good, but the suggestion that governors should be elected- in the current situation that you have so much foreign interference, could pose a lot of issues.

Regarding the parliamentary system, we know that we don’t have national political parties. I think the issue that they should be just incentivized through electoral law- basically give them seats in parliament, is not enough. Don’t we have the right to ask the political parties to act responsibly? Don’t we have the right to ask them to actually hold

elections internally? Do we see any political party in Afghanistan that can form a government? No.”

Professor Thomas Johnson, answered the questions as saying “I want Afghanistan to succeed. The ironic thing that I found in Afghanistan is that at the local level Afghans have been following pure Greek democracy based on consensual votes for centuries. I think the United States actually made a mistake. We tried to create a small Jeffersonian democracy in Afghanistan with an absorbed political road map that came out of Bonn. Americans are extremely arrogant; they think what works for us, will work for you. I agree that many of the problems have basically been American.

Relative to the census, the American taxpayer gave the Karzai government in 2004, \$25 million, to conduct a consensus. Karzai said no, because he did not want the world know that Pashtuns only represented 42% of the population. That’s my hypothesis.

Clearly you have got to get rid of Single None Transferable Vote system (SNTV) or create districts within provinces. You have to do that. It is destroying your electoral process.”

Mr. Armstrong answered the first question as saying “we are part of the international community effort here. We rely on the Afghan government and the international community to support comprehensive reforms across the Afghan government. A lot of issues that you brought up here are really issues that are beyond NATO, s capabilities to influence.”

Panel 5: Democratic State; Democratic Society; Future of Democracy



Moderator:

Ms. Shaharзад Akbar, Women Rights Activist & Founding Member of Afghanistan 1400

Speakers:

- Ms. Naheed Fareed – Member of Parliament, Afghanistan.
- Mr. Kabir Salei, Scholar, Islamic Studies
- Mr. Slyamzhar Akhmetzharov - Researcher Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies, Under the President of Kazakhstan
- Mr. Mohammad Naeem Ayoubzada, Head, Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA)

Ms. Akbar welcomed all of the panelists and the audience to the session and asked that all those present critically examine the idea of ‘democracy’.

The first speaker, Ms. Naheed Fareed, gave her speech entitled “Women role in Nation Building; Gender Irony of Nation”. She stressed that “nation identity is about difference, a mixture of various race, ethnicity, religion and gender that share the same national values in an imagined community by the name of nation.” Mentioning some theoretical frameworks, she spoke about the role of Afghan women in nation building process in recent history. “In the past 17 years, many policymakers and development agencies feared that pushing for a stronger role of women in nation-building could lead to instability, while my information and evidence suggest otherwise. Our experience shows that the role that women have played in the recent reconstruction activities is profound and its impact on the post-conflict nation is exemplary... Women voted, signed petitions, ran for public office, were outspoken critics of corruption, served as provincial governors and ministers and joined the Afghan security force — even in highly conservative provinces.

My observation indicated to me that Afghans generally were supportive of women's social and economic participation.” Her recommendations include the following:

1. Nation builders should work to reconcile traditional values with progressive ideas involving women's participation in society.
2. Nations should place a greater emphasis on the broader concept of human security from the earliest phase of nation-building efforts.
3. Leaders should establish governance, based on principles of equity and rule of law, and should include women in the earliest economic reconstruction activities.
4. Narratives about the creation of the nation, which posit the proper behavior of women as mothers and defenders of culture and national values must be a fundamental fact in every move of Afghanistan government.
5. In order to survive and to justify its existence, the nation must preserve its uniqueness by constructing national project of personalized image of the nation and inclusion of all, including women.

The second speaker, Mr. Kabir Salei, spoke about the contemporary Islamic discourses about democracy. He emphasized that there are different approaches towards democracy, but generally there are three important approaches. “The first approach condemns democracy completely. According to this approach, democracy is not acceptable at all; it is being considered inappropriate and not compatible with Islamic values. Most radical Islamists– such as Hezb ut- Tharir, ISIS and all Salafists, belong to this block. They say that caliphate is the only legitimate political system in Islam, therefore all other political systems are un-Islamic. The second approach that I call “select and adopt” approach, emphasizes that we cannot reject democracy completely as it contains some certain positive elements as well. All reformists belong to this block. They suggest that we need to review the democratic principles and make amendments, in order to make it compatible with Islam. If you look at Mawdudi’s works, he spoke about “theo- democracy” or Dr. Shariati talks about “committed democracy”. Others suggest that we build a “Shura” based religious government. The main problem with this approach is that it doesn’t care about the core democratic principles such as human rights, women rights, justice and freedom. If you examine our post-Taliban government, you see that we applied the same approach. In other word, we tried to reconcile Islam with democracy. We see

contradictions in our constitution. On the one hand, in the preamble, emphasizes its adherence to democratic principles and on the other hand, in article three asserts that “no laws should be against the tenets of the holy Islam.” That’s why we couldn’t implement the democratization process.

The third approach supports democracy. According to this approach, democracy is the most successful experiment in human history, therefore we must appreciate it, with all its implications and requirements. Reformist figures like Abed Jaber and Abdulkarim Soroush belong to this block. They got three processes for examining Islam in order to make it compatible with democracy. The first is interpretation; they believe that in some cases- like decrees about amputation, we need to reinterpret the Islamic principles. The second process is amendment; they say that in some cases- like decrees about uneven shares of men and women from heritage, we must make amendment to Islamic law and finally through the third principle, they suggest that we should halt some Islamic rulings, such as decrees about killing apostates. Regardless of whether it is practical or not, I think we must pick up the latter approach in order to strengthen democracy in our societies.” He concluded his remarks talking about internal and external barriers. “I think westerners don’t want us to practice democracy properly, because their interests are always protected through radical Islam.”

The third panelist Mr. Mohammad Naeem Ayoubzada, spoke about Afghanistan’s electoral system and its problems. In the beginning, he emphasized that lack of legitimacy is one of the main problems across the third world countries. “If we compare the new democratic governments with the old communist regimes, there is an ironic feature. The communist regimes ruled by the slogan “don’t say anything, I’ll give you everything.” And nowadays, democratic government tells people that “say whatever you want, I give you nothing.” This account of history indicates that in this country government’s level of legitimacy is not promising. Unfortunately in Afghanistan, we initiated democracy from above. We didn’t try to build a bridge between the elected and the electors. One of the shortcomings of this government is that it failed to hold district council elections and mayor elections. They could have made positive differences. The other issue is that we don’t have any internal conceptual framework with regard to democracy. We only

imported some foreign concepts and tried to imitate, without taking into consideration local sensitivities. Another important issue is that instead of relying on institutional principles, we relied on our personal or ethnic orientations. All these prevented Afghanistan from becoming a democratic state.

What are our suggestions?

Democracy is not a bad system; if you adhere to its principles. For now, our priority is to reform and amend the political parties' law and the elections law. If we don't do that, political parties cannot develop and we cannot hold general, fair, transparent and free elections. We must bridge the gap between the rulers and the ordinary people. We should put an end to illegal politics. The constitution must be amended. In 2004, when the constitution was approved, we have been in different situation with different worldviews. Now the situation is changed, therefore there is a need for reforming the constitution based on new realities and requirements in order to deal with the new challenges.

Nowadays, elections became an important source of hope for the people. But, are we ready to hold elections? According to our recent survey, we face some serious challenges: firstly, insecure areas are not known. Secondly, the issue of identification of the electorates is not addressed. Thirdly, government does not have political will. Ignoring the timetable of the elections is a clear indication that the government is not interested in electoral process. The other challenge is the weakness of the electoral institutions, especially at provincial level. We are not prepared yet to hold elections. In our recent survey, we examined the level of people's sense of confidence in electoral institutions. About 41% of the respondents told us that they don't trust the existing electoral institutions. 30% of the respondents didn't know what is going on at all. Only 29% of the respondents trust the election commission. Regarding the neutrality of the government, 38% of the respondents believe that the government would interfere in the election process. Only 25% of the respondents believe in government's impartiality. The other question we asked was whether they participate in the next elections. Interestingly, 53% of the respondents say that they will participate in the next elections. This is a positive point. But people's participation in the next elections is conditional. They emphasized that election commissions need to be independent, professional and remain impartial."

The fourth panelist, Mr. Slyamzhar Akhmetzharov, delivered a lecture on “The institution of public councils as the effective way of decentralization of power in the democratic states.” The premise of his speech was that the participation of ordinary citizens in the public administration process is the essential need of any country. One of the popular methods is the provision of a platform for states’ consultations with the society regarding the particular issues. Mr. Akhmetzharov drew attention to the particularly important role public councils could play in engaging the public. He explained that the main purpose of public councils in the international practice is the participation of civic society in the provision of consultation to the government sector. Depending on the objectives of councils, they may be divided into two categories, ones that consider the wide range of problems affecting many people and ones that deal with specific problem affecting a small number of people. He further explained that public councils could be formed at the local or national level. Public councils generally function by holding regular public hearings, where members of the council could discuss issues regarding economic, social, environmental, and related developments. Mr. Akhmetzharov ended his speech by mentioning three steps needed to ensure the success of public councils. First, there should be genuine interest from the government officials toward considering the opinion of the population. Second, public councils could be considered as the platform where interested parties of the society meet in order to promote their interests. Third, councils have certain legal protection from undue government pressures.

Discussion Session

- If western countries do not want us to be democratic, how could we preserve our religious values and at the same time benefit from the advantages of democracy?
- Is there any common definition of democracy? What is the approach of democrats towards religion?
- What is the exact opinion of the Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan about the election commission?
- Although Islam is considered to very important in Afghan society, in reality people behave differently. What is your suggestion regarding this problem?

- What are your suggestions to ensure effective participation of women in politics?
- How do you see the future interaction of democracy and governance in Afghanistan?
- Amending the constitution or respecting the constitution, which one is the better strategy?

Mr. Salehi answered the questions as saying “if we look at religious principles, we can distinguish between the fixed principles and varying ethics. From my point of view, those principles that explain the vertical relationships between human being and God, are stable principles and those principles that are about horizontal relationship between human beings are mutable principles. If we interpret these principles according to the requirement of time, we can reconcile Islam and democracy. When I use the word “democracy”, I use it through the perspective of Liberal discourse. Although there are various types of democracy, the Liberal approach is the dominant discourse. I believe that we cannot distinguish between democracy as a discourse and democracy as sets of values. If we only think of democracy as a procedural phenomenon, it becomes a lion with not tooth and we may end up in dictatorship. In fact, democratic values are the guiding principles for the organization of society. If you look at Iranian government, it calls itself a “religious democracy”, but the government actually discriminate against minorities such as women, Sunnis and dissident individuals who would reject the “Welayat-e Faqih”.

To reform the society, we need comprehensive strategic approach involving the participation of all people from different walks of life. From my point of view, if we follow the same path, there is not much hope for better interaction between democracy and governance in Afghanistan. Today, public opinion towards the parliament and the electoral institutions is very negative.”

Mr. Ayoubzada, answered the questions as saying “the problem with elections is a political one. There are technical problems in every country. In every election, you have technical challenges, but gradually people learn how to fix those technical problems. But to address political problems that are complex problems, you need national consensus and comprehensive strategies. Why we need to revise the elections law and the political

parties' law? In my point of view, the process of amendment is an essential part of structures such as political parties and the electoral institutions. Laws are guiding principles in every organizations. If we don't revise laws, we cannot change individual's behavior. The government tries to bring reforms through replacing figures, but it does not work. It only provides a trading environment for personal interest. The political parties' law has lots of problems. The procedures for registration of political parties cause stagnation of political parties. The existing political parties hold their own criterion for doing politics.

If you study the elections law, unfortunately the latest decree, indirectly undermines the independency of the elections commission. The commission's employees are being recruited by another organ and its budget must be approved through the government and the international community. Another important issue is that the commission's proposals must be approved by the government and this is troubling. For example seven months ago the elections commission made a proposal for making the electoral districts smaller and it is still waiting for the approval of parliament. What is the solution? Nowadays, elections are founding principles in democratic societies, but you need to pave the way for holding elections. The government must not be afraid. According to our findings, the government's main concern regarding the next elections is that the government fears that it may not be able to handle the elections based on its own projection. That's why we couldn't hold proper elections in Afghanistan."

Ms. Farid, answered the questions by saying "unfortunately, in our debate, we forgot about the basic definition of democracy. The point is that we want to empower people to govern themselves. This is the basic principle of all egalitarian agendas. The question is how we manage to satisfy people.

Regarding the participation of women in politics, we see that there is less interest. We must not forget that state building is an artificial project. Government should have a plan to provide better environment for participation of women in politics. I believe that unless and until the role of women in state building process is institutionalized, we cannot improve the situation of women."

Panel 6: Special Session on US' New Strategy for Afghanistan/Region



Moderator:

Mr. Mujib Mashal – The New York Times Correspondent for Afghanistan

Speakers:

- Mr. Tamim Asey, Deputy Afghan Defense Minister for policy and strategy
- Ambassador Gautam Mukhopadhyaya, former Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan, India
- Mr. Juma Khan Sufi, Professor, University of Peshawar
- Ambassador Hossein Malaek, deputy director General of Iran's Center for Strategic Studies, I.R, Iran
- Ambassador Professor Su Ge, president of China Institute for International Studies under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China
- Professor Briann Todd, Professor, National Defense University, USA

Mr. Mujib Mashal opened the closing session by emphasize the need to critically examine the new US strategy in Afghanistan. To this end, he welcomed the distinguished panelists and pointed out some of the factors related to the new US Afghan strategy. “The first point is that the war has been very violent the past two years. We have had record casualties; both civilians and the Afghan security forces. The second pint is that the Trump strategy

was announced in a context when there is an erosion of regional consensus over the mission in Afghanistan. The third point is the question that is the Afghan government a reliable partner in Kabul.”

The first panelist Mr. Tamim Asey spoke about the context and the consequences of the new US strategy for Afghanistan. “For the first time, we see a clarity of purpose and a clear identification of the problem by US administration. And this policy came as a result of months of deliberation. This was a military security decision based on extensive study and consultation with the Afghan government and also with various partners across the region. This was not a political decision. To understand why the US is here in Afghanistan, first of all we need to look at the evolution of US policy in Afghanistan, the characteristics of this policy and the resources. The US policy in Afghanistan evolved over three phases. 1) From 2002 to 2004; at that time the discussion was Operation Enduring Freedom which led to a counter terrorism mission by the US and the NATO expansion across Afghanistan. 2) The second phase was more annual based or term based policies. During this phase they wonder if there is an external element in the Afghan conflict, so they would talk about Af- Pak policy (Afghanistan- Pakistan dynamics). And 3) now we have a South Asia policy. Every time the US policy was announced it was challenged by Pakistan and elements in the region and they were very political. But this time it is different. First of all the name is different. It is South Asia policy. Secondly it is a condition-based policy; there is no time table. Thirdly, this policy identifies Pakistan as the key enabler of terrorism. The fourth point is the recognition of the role of India as a major contributor in the region. And finally, new authority is given to NATO team here. In terms of their counter terrorism mission they have more flexibilities. Afghan soldiers are going to carry most of the burden. In terms of financing, Afghan Security Forces are heavily supported.

How people of Afghanistan perceive this?

Inside Afghanistan there are three different approaches towards the new US policy; the ordinary Afghans welcome this policy. There are certain political groups who are against

it and I think if we address their concerns, they would take our side. Finally there are bystanders.

How regional countries perceive this?

The risk is heightened regional tensions. My question is when we didn't have heightened regional tensions. We always had. We have never had a consensus about Afghanistan.

What are US and Afghan interests?

More than 21 US designated extremist groups operate here in Afghanistan. If the US does not intervene, there will be regional instability. And finally US trustworthiness and reliability would be at the line if they go. We want peace, security, and economic development.

We are going to win this war if we own it. We have already owned it, because the ANSF is fighting. The ANSF is at the front line of the region to fight terrorism. Finally it's a realistic policy and you have a willing Afghan leadership and a reformist government in place. Maybe it's too late for the region, but the region must support rather than involving themselves in pity geopolitical games."

The second panelist Ambassador Gautam Mukhopadhyaya spoke about Indian perspective on some of the positive and negative aspects of the new US strategy. In the beginning of his speech he gave some general information about the positive characteristics of the new US strategy in Afghanistan. "On the prosecution of the war, President Trump has been very clear that he intends to give much greater freedom to the forces on the ground, without too many caveats and without micromanagement. No public declaration of artificial timelines or timetables. No talk of troop numbers that the enemy could take advantage of... There is a place for a political process and reconciliation talks, but that is clearly towards the end of the road. Talks with the Taliban would only come after the war had turned the corner from a position of strength. The fact is that Pakistan is named as the source of the problem and as a safe haven of terrorism welcomed both by Afghanistan and India. But it is to be seen, how it is to be achieved. And the refreshing element is that the new US Strategy in Afghanistan was not going to be about democracy or state building. There is a clear statement that this should be a homegrown process. Lastly the

strengthening of the Afghan Security Forces and clear recognition that they would be doing most of the job is a positive thing. Also there is a clear message that systemic reforms are important and that there would be no blank check anymore. India broadly supports these aspects of the new US strategy to Afghanistan.” He continued his speech pointing out to some of the weaknesses in US strategy. “Firstly, while it claims to be a kind of comprehensive and total strategy, it remains a purely military strategy to the conflict. Secondly, there is a complete absence of any civilian support; whether it is development assistance, technical assistance or building of the polity in terms of the role of law, elections and so forth. Third, completely missing of any concentration on internal political process and internal political cohesion. Forth, there is a missing regional strategy that includes Iran, Russia, China, Central Asian states. It includes India in a positive frame, but it’s not clear about the diplomatic strategy to support the military strategy. Finally – and it is very crucial point, is the question of staying the course. I think US policy in Afghanistan have been prone to changes; Whether we go back to the end of the Soviet intervention or 2003 when the US focused on Iraq or for that matter in 2009 and 2010, when it announced a surge and then a drawdown.”

The third speech was delivered by Mr. Jumah Khan Sufi who presented a Pakistani perspective on the current stance of the US in the region. He commenced by commenting on how Trump’s strategy changed gears and came under the influence of Pentagon’s views. He cautioned that while for Pakistanis, the current position of the US contained veiled threats, one should not read too much into them as there have been ups and downs in the relationship between the two countries. He commented on how China and Iran rebuffed comments levied at them, respectively. Mr. Sufi stressed that neither America nor NATO are in a position to be able to alter geographical and historical reality of Pakistan and the region. He emphasized that Pakistan and Afghanistan are interconnected and no global superpower would be able put hurdles in their intertwined destinies. He ended by noting that Afghanistan as a sovereign country has every right to form ties with any country, especially India. However, he cautioned that in the past, India has used Afghan soil against Pakistan.

The fourth panelist, Mr. Hossein Malaek focused on Iran's point of view regarding the new US strategy in Afghanistan. He stressed that the new US strategy for Afghanistan is in line with overall objectives of the US in the region. "The first question is how Iran looks at the America in Afghanistan. From Iran's point of view, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the essence of this strategy has remained the same. This strategy consists of three point: 1) check on Iran. 2) To find alternative way for Central Asian countries to go out of the control and influence of Russia and China. And 3) containing China and supervising the close relationship between China and Pakistan. US presence in Afghanistan is also a leverage for the Americans to check on China and balance it with the South China Sea presence of the United States and also Indian inclination to US policy in the region. This strategy has not been changed. I think the presence of 21 terrorist organizations in Afghanistan is not a matter of importance. Off course United States has firsthand experience of dealing with Taliban. If Taliban is the main source of instability in this region, they have already worked with them. They have already established their relations with the Taliban back in 1990s. So, this is not a good excuse for increasing the US presence in Afghanistan.

He stressed that "US policy has been handed over to the military section of policy makers in the United State; so, there are lack of political solutions for the instability in this region. This will increase the number of collisions between different political forces in the region. This is also a matter of concern for Iran. With regard to the increased role of India in Afghanistan, I think it will rather complicate the situation in the region more. Iran is in favor of economic facilitation of India in Afghanistan, helping to develop Afghanistan by the Indian money and experts, but if India would like to play a political role in this region, I think it will rather complicate the situation.

Mr. Malaek concluded his speech talking about the good relationship between Iran and Afghanistan and highlighting the common interest of all parties to reach peace in Afghanistan.

"As a matter of fact, Iranians have supporting a very inclusive government in Afghanistan from the beginning. We have always supported the central government of Afghanistan. We have tried to help Afghanistan and to develop its infrastructure and improve the

country's relation with Iran. The economic relation between the two countries is about \$3 billion and there are 300 companies of both sides are working very amicably together in the region.

If the new US strategy lead to any considerable change to the previous dynamics that Iran shared with the Afghan government and the US presence in Afghanistan, I think new policies will emerge inside Iran too.”

Ambassador Professor Su Ge, delivered the fifth panel speech entitled, “State Building of Afghanistan: The Way Forward”. He began by stating that Trump's new Afghanistan strategy was more of a tactical adjustment rather than a strategic change, with a current emphasis on fighting terrorists in Afghanistan and preventing them from getting hold of nuclear weapons or nuclear materials, which might threaten the United States. This, rather than rebuilding the country, was the adjusted plan. For Prof. Su Ge, the most notable change in the US strategy is the shift from time-bound implementation to conditions based evaluation, which provides for greater tactical flexibility. Prof. Su Ge then outlined some of the tireless attempts at state-building throughout Afghanistan's history. He emphasized three separate dyadic that has affected state-building attempts: (1) tribal traditions vs. nation-state modernity; (2) external influence vs. internal driving forces; and (3) development vs. stability. He then turned to China's willingness to work with the international community to facilitate peace, stability, and development in Afghanistan. He stated that China supported the revival of the Quadrilateral Coordination Group of Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and the United States, as well as the resumption of the liaison group between the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Afghanistan. He remarked that China supports the Shanghai Cooperation Organization playing an active role in helping Afghanistan combat terrorism. He ended his presentation by commenting that China has always been a firm supporter and active promoter of Afghanistan's peaceful reconstruction process and has provided Afghanistan with assistance to the best of its capability.

The final presentation was made by Prof. Brian Todd who spoke about his personal perspective regarding the new US strategy in Afghanistan. “You know when president

Trump was inaugurated in January, already there was talk that there would be a new strategy coming. So, clearly there was a lot of thoughts and debate put into it. It's also good to know that Afghanistan had a say about what they wanted this strategy to consist of.

On the US side, I think there are still some questions that we struggle to figure out the answer for. We need more information. We need to know what exactly is going to happen. President Trump has said many times that we are not going to tell the enemy about the plan, but you still need to have a certain sense of transparency within a democracy and people need to know why we fight. I don't know if we can expect more foreign aid, increased attention coming from the diplomatic community. Obviously we are still struggling with the bureaucratic aspects of how we want to engage Afghanistan beyond the military fight here. But I want to say to the Afghans that what the military strategy is, does not matter. Because as it has been reiterated many time, there is not a military solution to this conflict. And it is going to come down to the legitimacy of the Afghan government. If the Afghan government can demonstrate to its people that it is legitimate and it is worth fighting for, then it does not matter how much support it gets from the US military, because the Afghan government and the Afghan military are taking that fight to its people. So, I think essentially the US is an important partner for Afghanistan, but we are not the only partner. Afghanistan is doing a fantastic job, both building up its military and working on democratic reforms in other fields like elections, women's involvement in government and so forth. The tools are there, it's all in how we use them here. I think there is a lot of potential and the future of this nation state is very bright."

Discussion Session

- Iran has some contacts with the Taliban and also they control some military forces inside Afghanistan- namely the Fatemiun. If the relationship between the US and Iran doesn't work well, is Iran going to use those contacts to confront the Americans for the sake of its bigger strategic interest?

- Is it correct that the US is in Afghanistan to check on China? Do the US and China have conflicting interests regarding the One Belt and One Road initiative?
- What do you think of the balance between military and civilian sides of the US strategy in Afghanistan?
- Regardless of the new US strategy, how do we improve Afghanistan's relations with Iran?
- How come a foreign country makes military policy for us, if we are an independent state?

Mr. Malaek answered the questions as saying "one of the problem with Iran is that we don't know what the American leadership is. Sometimes they follow a path, then they would change course and they ask the other nations to follow the same strategy. That fact is that when the United States together with Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Pakistan were forging a coalition with the Taliban, Iran wasn't there. Taliban was a force against Iran. When Taliban was in control of Afghanistan, we were witnessing some sort of insurgency in the eastern part of Iran. So, we are not the one who favored Taliban at that time. In 2010, China with the support of United State, found out that Taliban is important for Afghanistan and there was various meetings and discussion going on to include Taliban within the current trend in Afghanistan. Iran was absent; Iran was not there. But Still Iran believes that an inclusive government in Afghanistan is favorable; whether it is named Taliban or any other names. We would like to see the stability and development in Afghanistan. I think we must not go after unimportant issues such as Iran's contacts with the Taliban. If the Unites States uses its leverages in Afghanistan against Iran, you should forecast logically and rationally that there would be a response. This is not our problem. We have not initiated this policy.

The joint high security committee between Iran and Afghanistan which was established four months ago is a good answer to all these issues- including the water problem between the two countries."

Ambassador Su Ge answered the questions as saying "regarding the notion that the US presence in Afghanistan is aimed at checking on China, it think there a little trap in it. From my point of view, the US and China have convergence of national interest in

Afghanistan. We expect more cooperation. The international community is trying to provide suitable environment for Afghanistan to prosper. We in the international community do not want to fight among ourselves.

Regarding the OBOR, our purpose is to include all parties. We are not in favor of a zero-sum game. American partnership is favorable as any other partnerships are welcomed. Stability and development are part of one objective. Lastly I would like to say that you know best, what is best for you.”

Mr. Asey answered the questions as saying “peace and reconciliation is one of the major features of the new US policy. Peace and reconciliation and political settlement is one of the cornerstones of this policy. by the way this policy is not a fully developed policy yet. These are big macro level directions right now. It is still being worked on in terms of details and all that. At the same time, we need to ask the question what the alternative is. The United States has a policy at least, but the region does not have a policy. Afghanistan is a place for cooperation not competition. We have common threats and common enemies that we need to tackle.”

Prof. Brian Todd, answered the questions as saying “the US presence in Afghanistan is based on mutual agreements. The US departed Iraq because the Iraqi government did not want us to be there anymore. So we did not sign the bilateral security agreement and left. We are here because you would like to work with us, but clearly we are not the only option.”

Mr. Sufi, answered the questions as saying “as an individual I opposed a Pakistani or American intervention in Afghanistan, in excuse of confronting the Soviet Union. At that time the Afghan government had internal legitimacy. Now the government has international legitimacy, but not internal legitimacy. The mistrust between the two countries (Pakistan and Afghanistan) started from 1947. Myself – since I have written about it, I received military training in Afghanistan in 1974, to use it against Pakistan. Before that our youth started being trained in 1973; when there was no Golbuddin, no

Ahmad Shah Masud. It was the decision of Afghan government to give military training to Baluch and Pashtun youth to use them against Pakistan. So, you can't deny the suffering of Pakistan. This blame game will be the trend among the two countries until and unless some basic issues are not solved. One of the problems is Afghan refugees living in Pakistan. They should be repatriated once and for all."

Ambassador Gautam Mukhopadhyaya answered the questions as saying "we have expanded our commitment to Afghanistan to what we call small development projects that means projects that should benefit the grassroots. We also focused on development assistance attached with trade and investment. Beside security strategy, you need an economic strategy and an economic strategy needs an investment strategy into the mineral, agriculture and human resource available in Afghanistan. That's what we like to see.

With regard to the problem of India and Pakistan, I like to clarify very certainly that India's relations with Afghanistan, predate Pakistan by at least 2000 years, if not more. And our presence here is linked to the development and stability of Afghanistan."

Note of Thanks: Director of AISS

At the end to this two-day annual conference, the AISS Director Dr. Muradian, thanked all participants and emphasized on the importance of dialogue for resolving the pertaining problems. “We all try to examine different methods and approaches to reach out peace and stability, but we paid less attention to dialogue which is the best approach.” The AISS Director pointed out the fact that Herat city has deep relationship with all panelists in the conference, in some way. For example, for Iranians, Herat is part of their heart. Herat also is the spiritual capital of Turkish people, as Ali Shir Nawaee is buried in the city. Recently we celebrated the 60th anniversary of China and Afghanistan diplomatic relationship. But if you study the history, during the 14th century, a delegate from China visited Herat and wrote about it. Regarding the relationship between Herat and America, General Mac Master who served in Afghanistan for two years, received a medal of military promotion in Herat city and he still consider himself as a Herati General. Herat and Pakistan relate to each other through Shah Jan Qalandar who is being celebrated in Pakistan. He is from Herat. The relationship between India and Herat is also historic. Gharib Nawaz Cheshti who is being celebrated in Delhi is from Chesht district of Herat province.” Dr. Muradian concluded his remarks thanking all guests and participants for coming to Afghanistan and participating in the conference. He also thanked AISS’s financial supporters – namely the Embassy of USA, French and Indian embassies and The Asia Foundation for assisting the AISS holding the conference. He emphasized that people of Herat are the real host of this conference. He thanked the Afghan security forces and government officials for their constant efforts to provided security and other logistical help. The AISS director emphasized that holding such conference would have been impossible without the cooperation of civil society and the media.

Annexes

Annex 1: Agenda

Friday October 13/2017

Opening Session

08:30-09:30		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recitation of Holy Koran • National Anthem • Recitation of Hymns of Khaja Abdullah Ansari • Sufi Musical Performance • Welcoming remarks by the Governor of Herat, Mohammed Asif Rahimi • Introductory Remarks by Dr Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Chairman of AISS Advisory Board/Formers NSA/FM of I.R. Afghanistan • Ambassador Kai Eidi , Former UN Special Envoy to Afghanistan, Norway
Panel I: Nation-States: Blessing or curse?		
09:30-11:00	Moderator	Dr. Christine Fair Associate Prof. Georgetown University, U.S.A
	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Anwar ui-Haq Ahady, Scholar, former minister of finance of I.R Afghanistan 2. Prof Paolo Cotta-Ramusino, Secretary General of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, Italy/USA 3. Professor Magnus Marsden, Director of Sussex Asia Centre, University of Sussex, UK 4. Professor Abdul Salam Mohammad Nazarov, Tajikistan National University
		Discussion
11:00-11:30	Tea Break	
Panel II: Can Nation-states Survive 21st Century?		
	Moderator	Dr. Gholam Ali Cheginizag, Professor of Political Science, Allama Tabataba, Tehran, Iran
11:30-13:00	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Nasser Andisha, scholar-diplomat, Deputy Foreign Minister, Afghanistan 2. Major Gen Rajiv Narayanan, distinguished fellow at United Service Institution of India 3. Dr. Zakia Adeli, professor of political science at Kabul University, Afghanistan 4. Dr. Jeffrey A. Stacey, scholar-diplomat, Managing Partner of Geopolicity in the U.S.A.
		Discussion
13:00-14:00	Lunch	
Panel III: The State in Islamic Thought & Practices: Idealism; Realism; Disappointment		
	Moderator	Mrs. Homaira Saqib, president of Afghan women news agency
14:00-15:30	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Ali Amery, university lecturer at Ibn-Sina University, Kabul 2. Dr. Sayed Hamza Safavy, university lecturer and director of the Institute for Islamic World Future Studies (IIWFS) in Tehran, Iran 3. Mr. Mohammad Osman, Deputy Editor in Chief of Al-Ahram Newspaper in Egypt. 4. Professor Michal Barry, Professor, Princeton University/ American University of Afghanistan
		Discussion
15:30-16:00	Tea Break	

	Panel IV: The Arduous road of state-building in Afghanistan: Legitimacy; Capacity; Hegemony	
	Moderator	Dr Shakti Sinha, president of Nehru Memorial Museum library, India
16:00-18:00	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Mujib Rahimi, scholar & Spokesperson to Afghanistan's CEO 2. Dr. Timor Sharan, scholar & Deputy Director of Afghanistan' Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), 3. Mr Kawun Kakar, Managing Partner of Kakar advocates, Afghanistan 4. Professor Thomas Johnson, Professor, Naval Postgraduate School, USA 5. Mr. James Armstrong, political adviser to NATO Senior Political Representation <p>Discussion</p>
19:00-21:00	Official Reception hosted by Herat's Mayor, Venue (ARG Hotel-by invitation only)	

Saturday October 14/2017 (ARG Hotel)

08:30-09:00	Traditional Sufi Music	
	Panel V: Democratic State; Democratic Society; Future of Democracy	
	Moderator	Ms. Shaharзад Akbar, women rights activist & founding member of Afghanistan 1400
9:00 – 10:30	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms. Naheed Fareed – Member of Parliament, Afghanistan. 2. Mr. Kabir Salei, Scholar, Islamic Studies 3. Mr. Slyamzhar Akhmetzharov - Researcher Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies, Under the President of Kazakhstan 4. Mohammad Naeem Ayoubzada, Head, Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA) <p>Discussion</p>
10:30-11:00	Tea Break	
	Panel VI: Special Session on US' New Strategy for Afghanistan/Region	
	Moderator	Mr. Mujib Mashal - the New York Times correspondent for Afghanistan
11:00-13:00	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Tamim Asey, Deputy Afghan Defense Minister for policy and strategy 2. Ambassador Gautam Mukhopadyaya, former Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan, India 3. Mr. Juma Khan Sufi, Professor, University of Peshawar 4. Ambassador Hossein Malaek, deputy director General of Iran's Center for Strategic Studies, I.R, Iran 5. Ambassador Professor Su Ge, president of China Institute for International Studies under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China 6. Professor Briann Todd, Professor, National Defense University, USA <p>Discussion</p>
13:00-13:05	Note of Thanks: Director of AISS	
13:05-14:05	Lunch	
16:00	Departure to Kabul	

Annex 2: List of Participants

Name	Designation	Organization
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Kabul)		
Adeli, Zakia	Lecturer	Kateb University
Ahady, Anwarulhaq	Chairman	The New National Front Party
Akbar, Shahrzad	Head	Open Society Afghanistan
Amin, Karim	Member	Hezb-e Islami Party
Amini, Sadiq	Lecturer	University of Afghanistan
Amiri, Ali	Lecturer	Ibn-e-Sina University
Andisha, Nasir Ahmad	Deputy Foreign Minister for Management and Resources	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Asey, Tamim	Deputy Minister for Policy and Strategy	Ministry of Defense
Ayubzada, Mohammad Naeem	Director	Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan
Azam, Farooq	Chairman	Movement for Peaceful Transformation of Afghanistan
Badghisy, Wasima	Operational Deputy	Independent Election Commission
Baheer, Ghairat	Head of the political committee	Hezb-e Islami Party
Baluch Zada, Ajmal	Member	Mehvar-Mardum Afghanistan
Daryabi, Zaki	Editor-in-Chief	Daily Etilaat Roz
Dr. Spanta, Rangin Dadfar	Chairman / Former NSA/FM of I.R. Afghanistan	AISS Advisory Board
Etemadi, Homaira Ludin	Advisor to the former President Hamid Karzai	
Faizy, Mansoor	Editor-in-Chief	Afghanistan Times
Fareed, Nahid	Member	Afghan Parliament
Hassanyar, Sharif	Head	Ariana TV
Hiwadmaj, Zalamai	Cultural Advisor to the former President Hamid Karzai	
Iftikhar, Yousef	Advisor/coordinator	Pugwash, Kabul Office
Kabir, Daryoush	Director	Joint Special Operations Center
Kakar, Kawun	Political Expert	
Khalid, Abdul Hadi	Senior Advisor to the Minister	Ministry of Interior Affairs
Mashal, Mujib	Senior Correspondent	New York Times, Kabul
Massoud, Ahmad Wali	Chairman	Massoud Foundation
Nabil, Rahmatullah	Former Head	National Directorate of Security
Naji, Davood	Activist	Civil Society
Nazari, Ghulam Farooq	Member	Afghan Parliament
Noyan, Abbas	Political Expert	
Osmani, Ali Ahmad	Minister	Ministry of Energy and Water
Rahami, Mujib Rahman	Spokesperson to the Chief Executive	Afghanistan Unity Government
Rahimi, Sardar Mohammad	Deputy Minister of Education for Literacy	Afghanistan Unity Government
Ramizpoor, Abul Ahrar	Human Rights Officer	UNAMA Human Rights
Salehi, Abdul Kabir	Researcher	
Saqib, Homaira	Director	Afghan Women News Agency
Sharan, Teimor	Deputy	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
Sharifi, Aryan	Director of National Threat Assessment	National Security Council
Sharq, Shiwa	Activist	Civil Society
Sorosh, Fardina	University Lecturer	
Wafayezada, Mohammad Qasim	Deputy Director General on Policy and Planning	Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority
Yunus, Toghra	International Relations Advisor to First Vice President	Afghanistan Unity Government
United States of America		
Barry, Michael	Visiting Professor	AUAF

Borshchevskaya, Anna	Ira Weiner Fellow	The Washington Institute for Near East Policy
Fair, C. Christine	Associate Professor	George Town University
Gerlaugh, John	President	Team Afghan Power
Johnson, Thomas	Professor	National Security Affairs Department, Naval Postgraduate
Stacey , Jeffrey A.	Managing Partner	Geopolicity
Todd , Brianne	Professor	Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies
Republic of India		
Ilhan, Sinan	Counsellor, Deputy Chief of Mission	The Embassy of the Republic of Turkey, Kabul
France		
Achard, Francois-Xavier	Deputy Police Attaché	French Embassy Kabul
Aichouba, Kouider	Security Officer	French Embassy Kabul
Merlin, Philippe	Deputy Head of Mission	French Embassy Kabul
Perni, Fabien	Security Officer	French Embassy Kabul
Republic of India		
Bansal, Alok	Executive Director	South Asian Institute for Strategic Affair
Bhasin, Sumeer	CEO and Founder	Anaar Group
Kumar, Gauruv	Consul General	Consulate General of Indian in Herat
Mukhopadhaya, Gautam	Freelance Speaker and Writer on Indian Foreign Policy and the North East of India	
Narayanan, Rajiv	Distinguished Fellow	United Service Institution of India
Ravi, Vasudev	Second Secretary	Indian Embassy, Kabul
Sharma, Saral	Researcher	Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS)
Sinha, Shakti	Director	Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, New Delhi
Islamic Republic of Pakistan		
Bakht Baidar Khan	Consul General	Consulate General of Pakistan in Herat
Ibrahim, Muhammad	Counselor	Consulate General of Pakistan in Herat
Sufi, Juma Khan	Professor	University of Peshawar
Islamic Republic of Iran		
Baba, Ali Akbar	Senior Consul	Consulate General of Iran in Herat
Bahrami, Mohammad Reza	Ambassador	Iranian Embassy to Kabul
Gholipour, Ali Reza	Director of Asia Studies Group	Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS)
Karimkhan, Fatema	Correspondent	Isna News Agency
Malaek, Seyed M. Hossein (Ambassador)	Deputy	Center for Strategic Research
Mosadeqi, Majeed	Deputy	Consulate General of Iran in Herat
Safawi, S. Hamza	Director	Institute of Islamic World Future Studies
Seddiqifar, Mohammad Mahdi	General-Director	Institute for Central Asia & Afghanistan Studies
Norway		
Eide, Kai	Former UN Special Representative to Afghanistan	UNAMA
United Kingdom		
Marsden, Magnus	Professor	University of Sussex
Kingdom of the Netherlands		
Faizy, Suboh	Senior Political Advisor	Kingdom of the Netherlands to Kabul
Leeuwen, Geoffrey-van	Ambassador	Kingdom of the Netherlands to Kabul
Linden, Janna Van der	Second Secretary	Kingdom of the Netherlands to Kabul
Arab Republic of Egypt		
Othman, Mohamad	Deputy of Editor in-Chief	Al-Ahram Daily Newspaper
Republic of Tajikistan		
Sattorove, Abdunabi	Professor	Tajikistan University
Nazarov, Abdul Salam Mohammad	Professor	Tajik National University

Loiknazar, Sobirov	Senior specialist of Department of foreign policy	The Center for Strategic Researches under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan
Republic of Uzbekistan		
Abdullayev, Akmaljon	Senior Research Fellow	University of World Economy and Diplomacy
People's Republic of China		
Ge, Su	President	China Institute for International Studies (CIIS)
Ning, Gu	Assistant Research Fellow	China Institute for International Studies (CIIS)
Zhixin, Zhang	Chinese Counselor	Chinese Embassy to Kabul
Wan, Xu	Political Officer	Chinese Embassy to Kabul
Tao, Liu	Attaché	Chinese Embassy to Kabul
Republic of Kazakhstan		
Yergaliyev, Zhunus	Counsellor	Kazakhstan Embassy to Kabul
Akhmetzharov, Slyamzhar	Researcher	Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (KazISS)
Ismailov, Anvar	Second Secretary	Kazakhstan Embassy to Kabul
Republic of Italy		
Ramusino, Paolo Cotta	Secretary General	Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs
NATO		
Boatswain, Christian	Deputy Senior Civilian Representative	NATO
Armstrong, James	Political Advisor	NATO
Babo, Joachim	Political Advisor	NATO
Medeiros, Sheila	Military Assistant	NATO
UNAMA		
Razzoq, Olamgir	Political Affairs Officer	UNAMA
Julia Kempny	Political Affairs Officer	UNAMA
UNRCCA		
Larin, Andriy	Political Affairs Officer	UNRCCA
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Herat)		
Abdulhalim Khan General	Director	Herat National Security
Adeel, Mohammad Joma	Commander	Ansar 606 Zone
Alawi, Sayed Nasir	President	Consulting Council of the city
Alizaie, Mohammad Kamran	President	Provincial Council
Amid, Jawad	Representative	Network of Civil Society Institutions
Amin, Aminullah	Director	Security Directorate
Amini, Haroon	University Student	
Ansari, Mohammad Ayoob	Commander	Herat Security Directorate
Arezo, Parwir	University Lecturer	
Ataie, Mohammad Asef	University Lecturer	
Ayobi, Shakiba	University Student	
Azadani, Aminullah	President	Foreign Relations in Herat
Azimi, Firoz Ahmad	University Lecturer	
Azimi, Abdulzaher	Political Military Activist	
Azimi, Mirwais	University Lecturer	
Azizi, Yasamin	University Student	
Bashir, Maria	Political Activist	
Behruzian, Shafiq	Civil Society Activist	
Cheshti, Sayed Yaqoob	University Lecturer	
Ehsas, Sayed Ehsan	University Student	
Elkhani, General	Commander	Public Security and Order
Erfan, Dawood	University Lecturer	
Faqiri, Mohammad Qasim Khan	Deputy	Consulting Council
Farhad, Jilani	Spokesman of Herat Governor	
Farzad Herawi, Farid Ahmad	University Student	

Fazl, Khalil Ahmad	University Lecturer	
Fazli, Mohammad Mirwais	University Lecturer	
Haidari, Mohammad Sediq	Deputy	Consulting Council
Hanif, Mosab	University Student	
Hashemi, Zohal	University Student	
Ibrahim, Muhammad	Counselor of Pakistan Consulate General	Pakistan Consulate
Jami, Alahmadi Maryam	Civil Society Activist / Qari	
Jami, Aziz	Civil Society Activist	
Jawad, Hafizullah	University Lecturer	
Kamrani	Director	Herat Electricity Power Station
Karim,i Roqia	University Student	
Karimi, Yalda	University Student	
Khairandish, Aziza	President	Network of Civil Society
Kiani, Nazifullah	University Student	
Mahmudi	University Lecturer	
Mashuof, Yaqub	Writer	
Mohammadi, Fereidoon	University Student	
Mohammadi, Khalil Ahmad	University Student	
Mohseni, Mohammad Asef	University Lecturer	
Monir, Dawood	University Lecturer	
Mosadeqi, Majeed	Deputy	Iran's Consulate in Herat
Munib, Zabihullah	University Student	
Nabi, Tariq	University Lecturer	
Naderi, Rafie	President	Lawyers Association
Nawini, Abdulwahab	University Lecturer	
Pedram, Habiburrahman	Member	Provincial Council
Qatali, Sayed Wahid	Herat Mayor	
Rahimi, Mohammad Asef	Herat Governor	
Rahimi, Abdulqader	Head	Human Rights Commission in Herat
Rasuli, Naqibullah	University Lecturer	
Sadeqi, Ali Akbar	Deputy President	Kahkashan University
Saleh, Molawi Khodadad	Presidnet	West Zone Ulama Council
Sayedi, Wasea	President	Wasa Organization
Sediqi, Ahmad Fawad	University Lecturer	
Shahir, Mohammad Rafiq	President	Expert's Council
Taheri, Jahantab	Member	Provincial Council
Taheri, Toryalai	Member	Provincial Council
Tariq, Sayed Bashir	University Student	
Tawakoli	Religious Political Activist	
Wakil Zada, Omid	University Lecturer	
Wameq	President	Political Science and law Department
Yosof, Halim	Council's Deputy	

Annex 3: Links of the National and International Media covered the conference

International Media:

- [Payam-Aftab](#)
- [DW](#)
- [Shafaqna](#)
- [Al Ahram](#)
- [Fars News Agence](#)
- [Yjc](#)

National:

- [TOLO News](#)
- [Etilaat Roz](#)
- [8am](#)
- [Afghanistan Times](#)
- [Ariana News](#)
- [BBC Persian](#)
- [Avapress](#)
- [1 TV](#)
- [TKG](#)
- [Bakhter New Agency](#)

Annex 4: HSD-VI logo and photos

HSD-VI Logo



Official Reception & Cultural Program



Cultural Program



Conference Photo



*****End*****

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