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## Peace-making in Afghanistan: Heart of Asia is in Question?

For the given of its geographical location and strategic significance in the geopolitical landscape of the Asia, Afghanistan has been popularly known as 'Heart of Asia'. It is a landlocked with an area of 652,230 km<sup>2</sup>, located at the crossroads of the North-South and East-West corridors in the Asia. It is a bridge between the South, Eastern, Western and Central Asia. Therefore, Afghanistan has been holding the pivotal position for connectivity and economic integration to these adjacent regions of the Asian continent. It has been very rich in mineral sources. The entire energy projects such as the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI), CASA-1000, Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TUTAP) electricity project (TUTAP), railway-Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan (TAT), and Chabahar-Afghanistan trade corridor, have made the Afghanistan as the 'Heart of Asia'. However, all these energy, electricity projects, railway lines, and corridor depended upon peace and stability of Afghanistan. In this backdrop, the extra-regional powers have been concerned about the security situation in Afghanistan in general and the regional countries in particular. In the present context, Afghanistan has been falling in the 'Arc of Turbulence'. For the given vested interests, peace, prosperity, stability and security of Afghanistan have been holding paramount importance for regional and extra-regional countries.

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, Pakistan, Terrorism, NATO, US, Peace-making, History of Afghanistan, Diplomacy, Peace-building.

In order to control the ongoing civil war and terrorism, several efforts have been made in the direction of peace-making. After the exit of Soviet Union, the Geneva Accord (1988) was signed to control terrorism in Afghanistan. The Bonn Conference, the UN-sponsored process was started in 2001, for the political reconstruction. The National Consultative Peace Jirga (NCPJ), was constituted soon after taking over by the President Hamid Karzai (7 December 2004 to 29 September 2014). It was intended to bring together all the stakeholders like the tribal elders, officials, and local power brokers to deliberate and discuss peace-making by ending of the insurgency. The Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG), comprising of the US, Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan, was another step soon after the withdrawal (December 2014) of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The most important peace-making process the 'Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process' (HoA-IP) has been going on since 2011. Regrettably, all the processes have been failed to achieve peace and stability in the Afghanistan, for the given of geopolitical dynamics of the region.

### **Afghanistan in The Throes of Civil War: The Curse of Geopolitical Cobweb**

The history of Afghanistan had been bruised and battered by the foreign invaders. The external powers have vested interest in Afghanistan on account of its geostrategic and geo-economic salience. In the recent years, Afghanistan problem has been exacerbated on account of the geopolitics of the region and Afghan civil war. Against this background, peace has become a distant dream for the Afghani peace loving people. Ahmadzai (2014), has argued that notwithstanding of peace-loving population of Afghanistan, it had been despondently exploited by external and regional powers. He has further argued that the external invasions and the mutual mistrusts of the external powers over Afghanistan had left it politically fragmented, unstable and economically impoverished nation.<sup>1</sup>

Afghanistan, has popularly been known as the 'Graveyard of the Empire.' It had been caught in the political conflict. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Afghanistan had become part of the Great Game power struggles. Saghafi (2011), has asserted that notwithstanding of the engagement and intervention of the United States (US) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Afghanistan for a considerable period, the peace and stability

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<sup>1</sup> Ahmadzai, Aziz Amin. (2014). The Dream of Peace in Afghanistan. The Diplomat. Accessed from, <http://thediplomat.com/2014/03/the-dream-of-peace-in-afghanistan/>, accessed on 8 May, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Saghafi-Ameri, N. (2011). Prospects for peace and stability in Afghanistan. Afghanistan Regional Dialogue Background Paper, (1).

remained a distant dream.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Stobdan (1999) claimed that geopolitical and historical background could be held responsible for complicating the security situation in Afghanistan.<sup>3</sup>

Afghanistan has been caught in the throes of the civil war partly started in 1929 when the King Habibullah Ghazi (17 January 1929–16 October 1929) had briefly toppled the Afghanistan government under the King Amanullah Khan (28 February 1919 – 14 January 1929). The second phase of the civil war very critical in which Afghanistan had been suffered from many geopolitically designed incidents. It included the key events like the Saur Revolution (1978), the Soviet–Afghan War (1979–89), Afghan Civil War - the collapse of the Communist Najibullah government (1989–92); and War in Afghanistan –ISAF’s involvement against the Taliban and al-Qaeda ((2001–14).

During the 1980s, the civil war has been started and accentuated on account of the aid and support extended to the warring groups in Afghanistan by the external powers having divergent geopolitical and geostrategic interest. Under the Geneva Accords of April 1988, the countries had decided to discontinue the aid to the conflicting parties in Afghanistan. But geopolitics has played its deleterious role and rather than being helpful in the implementation of the accord, created the Mujahedeen, who became a headache for not only for Afghanistan and creators but the entire globe.

### **Rationale of Civil War in Afghanistan**

It has been argued that the strategic location has become the geopolitical curse for Afghanistan. Historically, it has been remained as turbulent, being entrance for the external invaders and bridge between Asia and Europe. For the given rich mineral sources like gold, copper, antimony and partly regional geopolitics, entrapped Afghanistan into a series of serious events of civil war included the Saur Revolution (1978), the Soviet–Afghan War (1979–89), Afghan Civil War -collapse of the Communist Najibullah government (1989–92); and War in Afghanistan –ISAF’s involvement against the Taliban and al-Qaeda (2001– 14).

The root causes of Afghanistan civil war and terrorism, have been mooring around the dynamics such as the onset of Cold War geopolitics in general and Soviet–Afghan War (1979-89) in particular. Internally, Afghanistan is multi ethnolinguistic composition, in

<sup>2</sup> Saghafi-Ameri, N. (2011). Prospects for peace and stability in Afghanistan. Afghanistan Regional Dialogue Background Paper, (1).

<sup>3</sup> Stobdan, P. (1999). The Afghan conflict and regional security. *Strategic Analysis*, 23(5), 719-747.

which Pashtuns has the majority and monopolization. It has created discontentment among the various other groups. Apart for these, the other causes included the poverty, inequality, underdevelopment and ethnic discontents. Though, internal reasons were responsible for civil war, but the geopolitics of the region, had also played the most disparaging role in accentuating the same. The civil war has started with the military intervention of the erstwhile Soviet Union to assist the communists. In order to contain this communists, the United States had been provided financial and strategic support to those who had been fighting against the Soviets. Out of this fight, the geopolitical volcano had been exploded, and manifested regarding civil war and Mujahedeen in and around Afghanistan. Since then, the Mujahedeen has been causing headache to the ‘Heart of Asia.’

The creation of the Taliban group could be traced back to the Soviet–Afghan War (1979-89). The intervention of Soviet had been made the Pakistani leadership apprehensive regarding its security. To protect its unity, integrity, and sovereignty, the Pakistani Zia-ul-Haq (1977-88), had sent General Akhtar Abdur Rahman, Director General of ISI (1979-1988), to Saudi Arabia to urge to extend its support to Afghanistan’s struggle against Soviet forces. It has been claimed by Katzman (2013) that for its protection and support, the Taliban had been remained in contact with Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate. Price (2012) has also argued that Saudi Arabia and the US had joined Pakistan and extended their financial and strategic support to the latter to fight against the Soviet Union.<sup>4</sup> Scholars like (Bhardwaj & Sharma: 2014; Agrawal, 2014: 55) have echoed the same opinion as Katzman (2013) and Price (2012) that President Zia-ul-Haq (1978-88) associated himself with the *Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam* (a Sunni Deobandi Political Party of Pakistan- established in 1945) to get its support for the Taliban to fight against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Later on, the Pakistan President has also deployed General Akhtar Abdur Rahman (DG of ISI) to manipulate the insurgency against the Soviet Union inside Afghanistan. The head of the Taliban, Mohammed Omar along with cadres of the group about 90,000 had been trained by Pakistan's ISI during the Soviet intervention.<sup>5</sup>

*Hezb-e-Islami* is another terror group couched in Islamist Organization, was created by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in 1977, to fight the Communist Government of Afghanistan and

<sup>4</sup> Price, C. (2012). Pakistan: A Plethora of Problems. *Global Security Studies*. 3(1), 53.

<sup>5</sup> Bhardwaj, Kritika & Sharma, Ashok K. (2014). *Malala: The Crusader of Fearless Freedom*. New Delhi: Diamond Pocket Books Pvt Ltd; Agrawal, Premendra. (2014). *Accursed & Jihadi Neighbour*. New Delhi: Commercial Services.

the Soviet Union. Founded and led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, established in Afghanistan in 1976. Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT), is another small Pakistani group, based in Afghanistan, used to oppose Indian control of Kashmir. Lashkar-i-Janghvi, a small terrorist group, is often been accused of conducting attacks on Afghanistan's Hazara community (Katzman 2013).<sup>6</sup> The Haqqani Network, led by Maulvi Jalaluddin Haqqani and his son Sirajuddin Haqqani, is one more terror group operating in Afghanistan. The origin of these groups could also be traced during the mid-1970s.

### **Peacemaking in Afghanistan**

Khan (1991), has claimed in his book, *Untying the Afghan Knot: Negotiating Soviet Withdrawal*, that the peace-making attempts in Afghanistan have been started with effect from 16 June 1982 with the initiation of the UN-led Geneva negotiations.<sup>7</sup> However, the Geneva Accords of 1988 under the auspices of the UN, made a substantial contribution in the peace-making in Afghanistan during the Cold-war, but the subsequent attempts even till date, have not been able to make a creditworthy contribution in the peace process. Rather, several ups and downs of hopes and despair in the peace-making process of the Afghan had been witnessed. The peace-making processes have included high-level diplomacy by the international negotiators to locally initiated peace missions, conferences/workshops, direct and indirect peace-making attempts engaged by the several organizations. The peace-making efforts under the auspices of the UN in Afghanistan have been divided into two phases: Geneva negotiations and post-Geneva peacemaking.

### **Post- Geneva Peace-making**

After winning the election for a second term in 2009, The Afghan President Hamid Karzai had shown intention and commitment in his inaugural speech on 19 November 2009, to hold a consultative grand council known as National Consultative Peace Jirga (NCPJ) for the ending the ongoing Taliban insurgency to promote peace and stability. At the International Afghanistan Conference in London on 28 January 2010, the President declared

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<sup>6</sup> Katzman, Kenneth. (2013). Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S Policy. CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service.

<sup>7</sup> Khan, R. M. (1991). *Untying the Afghan Knot: Negotiating Soviet Withdrawal*. Durham: Duke University Press.

that the Afghan government would hold the event in April or May 2010, intended to bring together tribal elders, officials, and local power brokers across the country, to discuss peace and the end of the insurgency. On September 7, 2010, the High Peace Council was constituted, the former President Burhanuddin Rabbani (1992-96) as its Chairman, to follow peace talks with the Taliban. However, the offer made by the Karzai government met with failure as the militants out-rightly rejected the NCPJ. They called it as a phony reconciliation process, only meeting the interests of external powers. Peace talk could be held only when the foreign troops left, and the new parliamentary election would take place.

### **Quadrilateral Coordination Group Peace Talk**

The Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG), is comprised of the four countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the US, has been consistently holding talks to find the solution to the Afghanistan crisis. This group has already met four times in search of resolution of the Afghanistan crisis. But the major party of the crisis –Taliban, had yet to come to the table. To handle the peace process “more efficiently,” the Afghan High Peace Council (HPC) was also revamped. But till date, Taliban has not turned up to the table. In the month of March 2016, an ultimatum to the Taliban has been issued to come to the negotiating table with the Afghan government by early March 2016, otherwise, face the military offensive.

### **The Sixth Heart of Asia (2016): The Amritsar Declaration Pivoted Towards Prosperity and Terrorism**

In the direction of peace-making, the Heart of Asia - Istanbul Process (HoA-IP) in November, 2011 has been initiated between Afghanistan and its neighbours straddling from Central Asia, Middle East, South Asia, and to discuss the regional issues, covering political and economic cooperation in general and common threats, including counterterrorism, counter-narcotics, poverty, and extremism in particular.

The HoA has mainly three elements: first- political consultation between Afghanistan and its neighbour and extended neighbours; second- to implement the confidence building measures (CBMs); and third, to bring the greater coherence among the fourteen supporting countries and the supporting Organisations such as the UN, NATO, SAARC, SCO etc.

The Sixth 'HoA-IP', took place in Amritsar (India) on 3-4 December, 2016, launched with the main theme of the conference was "Addressing Challenges, Achieving Prosperity." The Sixth HoA Ministerial Conference, jointly launched by Indian PM Modi and Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani on 3 December 2016. During the HoA-IP several important security and economic issues including terrorism have been discussed to finalize the Amritsar Declaration. Afghanistan has drafted and chaired the Regional Counter Terrorism Framework. About forty countries in various capacities have participated in the Sixth HoA (Amritsar).

During the Sixth HOA-IP, several areas of concerns of the Heart of Asia have been identified, discussed and deliberated upon to sort out. Terrorism was perceived as the biggest threat to Afghanistan's peace, prosperity and security. All the participants had felt the need to end all forms of the terrorism. Economic support is to be stopped. The safe havens and hubs providing sanctuary to the same are to be denied. All the members of the HoA-IP had expressed the grave concerns over the violent activities happening in Afghanistan and the adjacent regions caused by Al Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Toiba, Daesh (ISIS) and Jaish-e-Mohammed, Haqqani Network etc.

Drug trafficking is also perceived as a serious concern. The urgency was realized to stop nexus between drug menace and terrorist entities in Afghanistan. A draft of comprehensive convention on international terrorism (CCIT) was finalized in the conference. The participants of the HoA, have reiterated strong support for the use of Afghanistan's location in order to heighten the regional economic cooperation. The important steps for regional connectivity included like developing the Chabahar port (Iran-India-Afghanistan); jointly building of the One Belt One Road (OBOR) and the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) between China and Afghanistan. The HoA welcomed an agreement between the international community and Afghanistan, for continuing the financial support to the Afghanistan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) until 2020.

Now the main question is, how the process of HoA would be helpful in curbing the main existential threat to the Afghanistan independent identity, its peace, prosperity and stability? It has been well established that the civil war and terrorism partly because of regional and extra-regional geopolitics. The same geopolitical players are the members and participants of the HoA-IP. By seeing their practical moves, it is very easily recognized that

their objectives and efforts to curb terrorism have not been sincere. Then, how could peace, prosperity, security and stability could be established and achieved in Afghanistan?

### **Geopolitics of Afghanistan: The Peace Talks in Question**

Afghanistan has geopolitical and geostrategic salience not only for the region, rather for the major powers of the world. Smith (2014), has argued in one of his articles that Afghanistan is geopolitically critical for the US for two regions. Its geostrategic location has provided surveillance facilities to protect the US interests as well as maintaining influence not only Afghanistan but in the region as well. Secondly, Afghanistan is a paramount geopolitical asset for the US to makes its presence felt in the very geo-strategically region

For the geopolitical interests, Afghanistan has been established as a battleground for fulfilling their interests through aid and abet to the terror groups. The external powers exploiting the internal fighting and discontentment among the local people helped in creating Mujahedeen in 1980 which later on turned to be Taliban in 1994. Coll (2004: 201-202), has argued that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) have supported this group during the Soviet War (the 1980s) in Afghanistan.<sup>8</sup> Later on, the insurgent guerilla groups had started fighting against the US-led NATO forces and the government of Afghanistan. According to some scholars like (Osinga 2005; Saikal & Maley: 1990), the US along with UK, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan started supporting financially the warlords (Mujahideen) who could reign the communism of the Afghanistan central government as well as to weaken the pro-Soviet regime.<sup>9</sup> Aligning of Afghanistan with the Soviet Union in general and the West, in particular, further enraged Pakistan. Pakistan wanted to keep Afghanistan under its control and to align of the latter's with the West further enraged Pakistan. da Silva & Simionato (2013) have argued that Pakistan's Minister of Interior, Naseer Ullah Babar, recruited, trained and armed some madrasa students to join a few former Pashtun Mujahedeen fighters.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Coll, Steve. (2004). *Ghost Wars*. New York: Penguin.

<sup>9</sup> Osinga, F. P. (2007). *Science, strategy and war: The strategic theory of John Boyd*. Routledge; Saikal, A., (2012). *Modern Afghanistan: a history of struggle and survival*. IB Tauris.

<sup>10</sup> da Silva Reis, J. A., & Simionato, G. H. (2013). *The SCO and Post-War Afghanistan: New Challenges to Regional Cooperation*. UFRGSMUN | UFRGS Model United Nations Journal, pp. 132-158.



During the last one and half decade, several conferences, summits have been organized to bring peace and stability in the country. The QCG peace talk is going on, of which three rounds have already taken place. Though this peace talk is started with good intention, the strategy is in question. Peace talk is not a one-way talk or discussions with only with the moderate groups of the terrorists. Dawod (2016), has argued that till the time, the perpetrators of violence have not been engaged, the peace cannot be built in the war-torn country.<sup>11</sup>

Dawod (2016), was of the opinion that lingering conflict could not be ended with a "win-lose" solution, rather it should be a 'win-win model.' Thus, the peace process must acknowledge the perspective of the opposition party as well. In order to reach an acceptable agreement for resolution of the conflict among the warring groups, Afghanistan and mediators, strict terms and conditions not to be imposed on the warring groups. Rather than earning the trust of the fighting groups, the stern warning is being sent by the QCG which is not going to give any result. For setting the ball rolling, some of the preconditions set forth by the warring groups be accepted to bring them to the table.

The military is not the solution of Afghanistan civil war. Notwithstanding the troop's long engagements and deployment, the peace is still a distant dream for the Afghanistan people. Rather the situation has become more volatile, and thousands of civilians have been killed. The US does not want to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan, rather the deployment of soldiers will be continued till 2024. The military solution has not proved substantive measure to restore peace in the country; rather the situation has become more turbulent and worsened. The statement of President Obama in this context, is worth mentioning here, "In key areas of the country, the security situation is still very fragile, and in some areas, there is a risk of deterioration."<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, some scholars like Rees, Hagelin, and Leffler (2009), are strongly convinced that violent extremism is a human problem which is requiring human solutions.<sup>13</sup> The same views have been expressed by John Rees (2011) in an interview

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<sup>11</sup> Dawod, Mohammad. (2016). Six Essential Factors For A Successful Afghan Peace Process. Accessed from <http://gandhara.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-factors-for-successful-peace-process/27529386.html>, accessed on 7 May, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Rosenbern, Mathew. (2016). U.S. troops to stay in Afghanistan. The Hindu, 16 October,

<sup>13</sup> Rees, Brian; Hagelin, John and Leffler, David. (2009). Military Solution to Terrorism Doomed? Military Presence Could be the Solution, If... Accessed from, <http://intentblog.com/military-solution-terrorism-doomed-military-presence-could-be-solution-if/>, accessed on 8 May, 2016.

given to RT TV network. He believes that there is no military solution to the Afghan situation. Rather the “solution lies in the hands of the Afghan people.”<sup>14</sup> According to a documentary filmmaker Robert Greenwald (n. d.) who did shoot in the war-torn country convinced that, “The problem in Afghanistan is not a military one, it is political, ideological, and people want solutions that go beyond the sending of more troops.”<sup>15</sup> The same views have been expressed by the leadership of Afghanistan and Pakistan as well.

In the recent years, China has been engaged at various level through many mechanisms. Huasheng (2015), has noted that China’s engagements in Afghanistan due to its national interests, awareness of its responsibility, as a dominant power in the region, to promote security and economic development. China shares a border with Afghan, which is a hotbed of terrorism and extremism, whereas its Xinjiang province is also vulnerable to the effects of terrorism and extremism. Thus, security is one of the main concerns of China to engage with Afghanistan.<sup>16</sup>

China is one of the QCG members. China has been engaging with some countries at the bilateral and trilateral level and is also part of various multilateral peace –making initiatives. Though China is per se victim of terrorism, its approach towards the terrorism is of a double standard. Most of the time, China has been accusing the Western world of a double standard on counter-terror, whereas on the other, per se is also doing the same. Recently, a terrorist attack took place in India, and given this; it urged the UN committee to blacklist those terrorists. However, this bid of India was gridlocked by China. Its support to the Indian move would enrage Pakistan, which China does not want at any cost. This move on the part of China corroborates the Chinese selective terror approach. Seeing the Chinese record in helping to combat terrorism, German Marshall Fund fellow Andrew Bell noted that

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<sup>14</sup> RT (2011). There is no military solution to Afghan problem – anti-war activist. Accessed from, <https://www.rt.com/news/afghanistan-karzai-us-democracy/>, Accessed on 7 May, 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Brave New Films (n.d.). A Military Solution in Afghanistan Will Fail, says “Real Time Documentary Filmmaker.” Accessed from, [http://www.bravenewfilms.org/a\\_military\\_solution\\_in\\_afghanistan\\_will\\_fail\\_says\\_real\\_time\\_documentary\\_filmmaker](http://www.bravenewfilms.org/a_military_solution_in_afghanistan_will_fail_says_real_time_documentary_filmmaker), accessed on 7 May, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Huasheng, Hua. (2015). What Is Behind China’s Growing Attention to Afghanistan?. Accessed from, <http://carnegie-mec.org/2015/03/08/what-is-behind-china-s-growing-attention-to-afghanistan>, accessed on 8 May, 2016.

it is hard to trust on China as an international anti-terror partner, but suggests it will inevitably be an essential player in the global campaign regardless. The same views have been echoed by scholar Small (2015), who claimed that Beijing has been using its position in the U.N. Security Council to protect the members of specific terrorist organizations who have been operating from Pakistani soil for a geopolitical reasons.<sup>17</sup>

After the sixth HoA, serious concerns have been aired by Afghanistan. Quoting an important Taliban leader, Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani, said that, had Pakistan not been supporting and offering a safe haven to the terrorists, Taliban movement wouldn't have been lasted a month. Ghani has directly criticized Pakistan as it still "provide sanctuary, support and tolerate these networks." The recent ongoing session of the Afghan parliament, had witnessed a heated debate regarding the heightening Russia's proximity to the Taliban as "shameful." It has also been alleged that Moscow is providing modern weapons to the Taliban. In the same session, the members of parliament have also condemned Iran for backing the Taliban. China's counter strategy has also been pursuing the double standard to curb the terrorists.

Beyond doubt, Pakistan has been suffering on part of terrorism. However, the counter terror strategy of Pakistan has raised many questions. Recently, India has suffered many terrorist attacks including the latest one of Nagrota Army Base November 2016. India has been making several efforts to ban/curb the terrorists' organization that have been operating in Pakistan, but these efforts have been scuttled in the UN by China. The same concerns have been raised in the recently concluded BRICS Summit (Goa-India), 2016. Again the terrorism could not find place in the declaration due to the joint stand of China and Russia. The terrorists' organization have not been banned!!

## Conclusion

Afghanistan is one of the best geo-strategically located countries in the South Asian region. On account of this, geopolitics has become curse for its political stability, unity, peace and prosperity which was continued consistently during the last several decade. The vested interests of the external powers had aided and abetted the terrorism. However, these terrorists

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<sup>17</sup> Small, Andrew. (2015). Is China a Credible Partner in Fighting Terror? The China File. Accessed from, <https://www.chinafile.com/conversation/china-credible-partner-fighting-terror>, accessed on 8 May, 2016.

groups have become security challenges even for themselves. In order to control these terrorists groups, several mechanisms in terms of bilateral, trilateral and multilateral engagements have been instituted to secure peace for the war torn country. The HoA-IP is one of the initiative to establish peace, prosperity and stability. Despite the sixth HoAs, an iota of peace and stability have not been achieved, which could be corroborated and substantiated by the exponential increasing of deaths and more and more area coming under the sway of resurging Taliban. It has been argued by this paper that the major root causes of the civil war and terrorism are socio-economic problems, multi ethno-linguistic groups, and partly the regional geopolitical dynamics. The peace-making initiatives have been stymied by vested interests of the geopolitical players of the regional and extra-regional. Therefore, in order to achieve the resolution of Afghanistan civil war as well as terrorism, peace-making efforts should be pursued with sincere political/socio-economic efforts minus geopolitical interests and mala fide intentions. Otherwise, it will remain other way round.

### **Biography of the author**

**Dr. Bawa Singh** has been teaching in the Centre for South and Central Asian Studies, School of Global Relations (Central University of Punjab, Bathinda-India). Several research articles/book chapters have been contributed by him in the renowned journals and books. Nine M. Phil degrees have already been awarded. Currently, he has been supervising the four M Phil students and six Ph. D students. One major research project entitled- **Role of SAARC: Geostrategic and Geo-economic Perspectives**, has already completed. He has been contributing articles in: Modern Diplomacy, Diplomat, Eurasian Review, and South Asian Monitor.

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