Tackling Structural Grievances: Towards Peace-Building in Afghanistan

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List of Acronyms

ANDS   Afghanistan National Development Strategy
APRP   Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program
BBC   British Broadcasting Corporation
CRISE   Center for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity
HIs   Horizontal Inequalities
HPC   High Peace Council
MAR   Minority At Risk
PDPA   People Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PSP   Program for Strengthening Peace
UNDP   United Nations Development Programme

Abstract

The Afghan state has historically been ethno-centric, promoting ethnic hegemony by suppressing and diminishing the ethnic-linguistic and cultural diversity inherent in the very fabric of Afghan society. This suppression has been a central component of the state-building project for over a century. Attempts have been made to merge and integrate diverse ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and social structures into an overarching Afghan identity largely reflecting the tribal characteristics of the Pashtuns. Such an approach to state-building has generated multi-dimensional grievances, horizontal inequalities and exclusions over the course of time. These complex historical grievances have underwritten and perpetuated the conflict between a mono-ethnic state and a multi-ethnic society.

The current Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program is doomed to fail as it fails to recognise key aspects of what drives the conflict. Firstly, it does not address the historical and structural causes of the conflict. Secondly, it fails to acknowledge the complexity of the current conflict by focusing on one specific actor in the conflict - the Taliban. Finally, it fails to appreciate and reconcile different factional ideologies with conflicting political projects for Afghanistan.

Peace between the state and the current insurgency will not herald the end of the conflict in Afghanistan. The resolution of the conflict requires a fundamental revisit of state's structure, institutions and identity. Until such time as the Afghan state fully reflects and represents all of its citizens in all their diversity, conflict will prevail.

Relevance to Development Studies

State is the main institution for development. Stat-building contributes to development. State-building fraught with grievances affect the pace, nature and prospects of development.

Peace and development are closely linked. In the absence of peace, institutions, structures, and conditions for capital formation, which are key components of development, do not come into being.

Keywords

State-building, peace-building, conflict, grievances, diversity, Afghanistan

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 What this Study is About

Conflict in Afghanistan has never resolved since the country became a modern state in late 19th century. It has been latent when the state had greater coercive power and resurfaced when the state writ loosened. The 1978 communist coup, which ended the life of the old repressive state and its associated social and political order in Afghanistan, let the conflict violently play out in the street. It gained particularly complex domestic and international dimensions with the former Soviet Union intervention and the resultant Afghan uprising against it; domestic conflict dynamics were intertwined with the Cold War great power rivalries. The withdrawal of the Soviet army and the subsequent collapse of the communist regime in 1992 marked the second phase of civil war (1992-2001) fought between different ethnic and factional groups. This nearly decade-long factional war was eventually ended with the military intervention of the United States of America in late 2001 but only to enter a protracted third phase (2001-present). The conflict has moved from one cycle to another, a vicious circle with no prospect of endurable settlement in the foreseeable future.

Since 1980s peace attempts have been made to end the violent conflict in Afghanistan. These peace modalities are ranging from the communist national reconciliation, to the *mujahidin* power-sharing arrangement, superficial peace talks between the Taliban and anti-Taliban factions and the current Afghanistan High Peace Council (HPC) initiative. Like the current peace initiative, which focuses on appeasing the Taliban leaders, previous peace endeavours sought to transform zones of conflict to zones of peace. All of these peace modalities fall short of addressing the broader ethnic, cultural, and structural causes of the conflict.

This research paper attempts to study the root causes of conflict, which caused the conflict to start in the first place and continue to sustain in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, a complex and long history of political, economic and cultural exclusions have crated deep-seated horizontal inequalities. When significant Horizontal Inequalities (HIs) among ethnically and culturally defined groups exist, the risk of civil conflict significantly increases (Stewart, 2011). Inequalities promoted by discriminatory policies and practices of the past and present Afghan states have created multi-layered historical grievances. These historical grievances resulting from ethnic, ideational, political and cultural exclusions have triggered, fuelled and prolonged the conflict in Afghanistan.

1.2 Key Concepts and Problems: State-Building and Identity-based Grievances

Afghanistan is a deeply divided society. Micro-ethnic societies constitute the foundation of this country. Many ethnic groups, with distinct historical memories, separate languages, cultures, values, norms and economic habitat characterize this country. Historically, these diverse ethnic groups have enjoyed inde-

pendence and have often interacted with external actors and their neighbours with autonomy.

The construction of modern state in Afghanistan in late 19th century has not been premised on the recognition, development and institutionalization of these pluralities. Afghan states have viewed these diversities as threats to the Afghan state and Afghanistan as a distinct country. Consistent efforts ever since have been made to contain the illusionary threats, which has involved the containment, suppression, displacement and destruction of the ethno-linguistic groups and structure, both physically and structurally. The Afghan state, which was founded on the supremacy of one of the ethnic groups, the Pashtun, has promoted the Pashtun identity, history, culture and institutions as national identity, national history, national culture and national institutions. *Jirga*, which is a Pashtun tribal primitive institution created to settle dispute in favour of the chief, has been nationalized. Afghanistan is designated as the country of the *jirgas*. Afghanistan is neither the country of *jirgas*, nor those of the tribes and tribal institutions. It is much more than such distorting and upsetting manipulation.

The ideological state-building in Afghanistan had several socio-political and cultural features. Given the structure of Afghan society, these features that have been constitutive elements of the modern state-building, have proven to be counter-productive weakening the very efforts of making state in the country and causing significant historical grievances. The following constitutes the key features of the ideological state-building in Afghanistan.

First, Afghanistan should have a distinct social and ethnic identity. Since the Pashtuns constitute the majority, the state should have appeared as a Pashtun state. The Pashtuns have no state at all and therefore Afghanistan should be the state for the Pashtuns in this world. Second, the Pashtuns traditions, cultures and institutions must be nationalized. The *Pashtunwali*, a traditional Pashtun code of behaviour, which involves many violent elements such as repression against women, deep xenophobia, tribal rancour and strong love for the past and old and suspicions toward future and new developments, have been nationalized (Sultani 2013, personal interview). Third, the construction of a national language is required. Pashtu, a relatively underdeveloped language has been promoted and imposed as the national language despite the fact that historically Persian has been the language of the court, literature and business in Afghanistan (Hyman, 2002). Fourth, attempts made to weaken the cultural and ideational features of other ethnic groups. Other ethnic groups were deprived of education and of investment on the development of their cultural and social institutions (Shahrani, 2002). These involved changing the names of the places, sites, roads and monuments. Fifth, Afghanistan needs a Pashtun population belt. Pashtuns were moved from south and east to the central and northern Afghanistan to create a security belt for the Pashtun state (Shahrani, 2002 and Simonsen, 2004). These features of the state-building stand in contrast to very existential features of Afghanistan. The Pashtuns are one of the several ethnic groups of Afghanistan and Pashtu is one of the languages spoken in this country.

The attempts to impose this narrative of state on diverse ethno-linguistic groups have created historical grievances. Even the state-builder ethnic group, the Pashtuns feel grievances that the non-Pashtuns refuse to accept their rights, the right to have a Pashtun state in a largely Pashtun country. The non-

Pashtuns feel grievances that all their identity, cultures, values and social characteristics are not reflected in the Afghan state, let alone the distribution of economic, political and military power. These grievances that are structural and historical in nature have triggered and sustained the Afghan conflict.

This research paper argues that peace modalities have failed in Afghanistan because historical grievances are not addressed. To address the historical grievances, the ethnic and cultural diversity must be valued and developed. Ethnic diversity constitutes the foundation of Afghanistan. Once ethnic and cultural diversity is recognized, historical grievances stemmed from ethnic and cultural exclusion will be resolved. Unless the very existence of the population unit in a country is recognized, historical grievances will fester and conflict will continue unabated.

Measures such as signing peace agreement with the Afghan insurgent groups or focusing on cessation of violence at the elite level only hibernate violence that could easily resurface again. The cessation of violence does not impact upon the economic, social, cultural and political status of the conflicting parties. The parties that have suffered historical grievances will remain marginalized groups even in the face of successful peace agreements. To establish permanent peace, the status of the conflict and conflicting parties must change. Without such a structural change, peace will at best remain highly precarious, allowing the violence to erupt again at an opportune moment.

1.3 Research Objectives and Questions

This research paper attempts to look at the root causes of conflict by problematizing the historical and current projects of state-building in Afghanistan. It looks at how historical grievances caused by political, economic and cultural exclusions played role in the old and present conflicts in Afghanistan.

This research paper aims at identifying gaps between the proposed peace-building modality and the broader structural features of the Afghan conflict. It finally considers how it might be possible to start bringing meaningful forms of peace to the country.

What key factors can explain why the recent peace model in Afghanistan has failed to deliver peace?

To answer this, the following sub-questions will be addressed:

What constitutes the historical and structural causes of the Afghan conflict?

What is the dominant Afghan peace-building model?

Is there any correspondence between the structural causes of the conflict and the peace model used today in Afghanistan?

Tentatively, the study also explores what alternative models might work as means to end the stalemate in the country?

1.4 How the Research was Conducted: A Historical and Empirical Approach

The bulk of the data that has been used for this research is secondary qualitative data. Some quantitative data are also used to reinforce the arguments and

statements made in this research. In addition to academic books and papers used for theoretical discussions, the secondary data include books, book chapters, research papers and journal articles that are specifically written on Afghanistan and Afghan conflict. These data are used to analyse the history of state-building project, the relationship of Afghan states with micro-ethnic groups and old conflicts in Afghanistan.

Primary qualitative and quantitative data have also been generated for this research. The bulk of primary qualitative data originated from 15 semi-structured interviews that I conducted in Afghanistan during my field research in July 2013. These interviews were conducted with members of the Afghan political parties, civil society, members of the Afghan parliament, former Taliban officials and key Afghan analysts and informants. 11 out of 15 interviewees are quoted for this research as the other 4 was found repetitive and overlapping.

I have also been inspired by conversation with experts and authors on Afghanistan. My previous engagement with the Afghan state institutions and conflict and peace actors over the last decade was equally a source of inspiration for me. These data, however, have been mainly used on background.

Quantitative data have been taken from secondary sources and have been reproduced in the form of graphs about ethnic and factional composition of the Afghanistan peace initiative. This primary qualitative and secondary quantitative data are used to analyse the Afghan peace modality, the dynamics of the current conflict in Afghanistan and the interplays of conflict actors.

1.5 Outline of Chapters.

This research paper is organized into five chapters. Chapter One sets out the overall purpose and objectives of this research and enlists the key concepts and problems. Chapter Two lays down the theoretical framework drawing on theories of civil conflict and peace-building. Chapter Three analyses the historical and current conflicts around state-building in Afghanistan. Chapter Four is a case study of Afghan peace-building modality. Chapter Five analyses three key incompatibilities between the realities of the Afghan conflict and the peace model used today. This study concludes with modestly proposals for ways to move forwards towards more durable peace in Afghanistan.

Chapter 2

The Underlying Causes of Conflict and Approaches to Peace-building

2.1 Introduction

The end of the Cold War unleashed new tide of war, civil conflict. The immediate post-cold war environment was replete with secessionist, independent and rebel movements along ethnic, religious and regional fault-lines. These kinds of conflicts have continued unabated, weakening states and thereby challenging peace and stability across state frontiers. The continuation and intensification of civil conflicts has triggered tremendous scholarly activities.

Since the consequences of civil conflicts have in many cases, including Afghanistan, been state disintegration, it has attracted huge scholarly investment. Academic scholars and policy-makers alike have attempted to explain the causes and consequences of the new war as Kaldor (1999) has described it. The focus of academia and policy circles has been to explain more systematically the causes of civil conflict.

This continued scholarly exploration has produced some general explanations and theories on the causal factors of civil conflicts. Two broad theories have found greater theoretical ground and empirical credibility. These theories are greed and grievance. The greed theory emphasizes economic factors as the main cause of perpetuation of conflict while grievance theory highlights the importance of grievances that result from political, economic and cultural exclusions. These categorical explanations are not exclusive as often the dividing line between greed and grievance is blurred. Many contemporary civil conflicts are caused and maintained by a combination of greed *and* grievance rather than greed *or* grievance (MacGinty, 2006:69).

Afghanistan has fallen prey to a civil conflict that has moved from one cycle to another cycle, a vicious circle. Afghanistan is a highly diverse country in its ethno-linguistic fabric. Afghan states had suppressed these diverse ethno-linguistic groups and discriminated them politically, economically and culturally, which have created multi-layered grievances. Economic factors are important but in the context of Afghanistan it is accumulated historical grievances – ethnic, political, cultural and economic- that caused and sustain the conflict.

This chapter is divided into two separate but complementary sections. Section one outlines theories of civil conflict with prime focus on grievance theory. Section two discusses different approaches to conceptualization of peace and peace-building.

2.2 Grievance Theory

Grievance is defined as a "widely shared dissatisfaction among group members about their cultural, political and/or economic standing vis-à-vis dominant groups" (Gurr and Moore 1997). Scholars have heavily debated about the antecedents of grievances and that how this broadly shared grievances- if they do at all- would generate conflict. Gurr and Moore (1997) contended that grievances originate and increase because of economic and political discrimination, lost political independence, demographic distress and past state repression.

Economic and political discrimination are defined as "the systematic and selective limitation of people's access to economic opportunities and political position based on their ascriptive characteristics". Active discrimination might either be commissioned through deliberate policies of state or widespread social practices of a dominant group (Gurr and Moore, 1997 and Gurr, 1993). When ethnic groups are politically, economically and culturally discriminated, they accumulate grievances, which subsequently lead to mobilization. These mobilized ethnic groups consequently either engage in sustained protest or take part in violent actions (Gurr and Moore, 1997).

The World Bank's studies on causes of conflict informed by rational choice explanations reveal a different outcome. The outcome of the research suggests that individuals and groups rebel for private gain rather than for justice. In his analysis of the economic causes of civil war, Collier (2000) and Collier and Hoeffler (2004) argue that rebellion is related to three economic factors: a) dependence on primary commodity exports- as these commodities are highly *lootable* and heavily taxed, b) slow economic growth and c) low average income of the country. For instance, the practices of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) are an illustration of this logic. It is estimated that annually the FARC earns around $700 million from drugs and kidnappings (MacGinty, 2006:70) However, the greed theory-based explanations have been heavily criticized not because their results show that states become victims of "opportunistic rebels" but because they potentially underestimated the importance of group grievances based on ideational, political, economic and cultural factors (Jakobsen and DeSoysa, 2009).

2.3 Key Elements of Grievance Theory

MacGinty (2006) has identified four themes as key elements of grievance theory. These themes include ideology, ethnicity, human needs and inter-group competition (MacGinty, 2006:71). Grievances resulting from one or a combination of these themes have the power to trigger violent civil conflicts. The elements of this theory that is relevant for this study are explained in details as follows.

2.3.1 The Politics of Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity is a notoriously difficult concept to define. It is difficult because: a) ethnicity is linked to birth and blood but how true it is, is contested, b) ethnic identity is difficult to change but changes do sometimes happen and c) ethnicity is ascribed to a myth of collective descent but some notion of ascription and affinity are diluted (Horowitz, 1985). However, most of the definitions of ethnicity have included these elements. Shack and Skinner (cited in Horowitz, 1985) defined ethnic unit as "the idea of common provenance, recruitment through kinship, and a notion of distinctiveness whether or not this consists of a unique inventory of cultural trait". Building on this and Max Weber's "conception of a subjective belief in common decent… whether or not an objective blood relationship exists", Horowitz (1985) added another requirement, which is "that ethnic membership transcends the range of face-to-face interactions… [and therefore] ethnicity embraces groups differentiated by color, language and religion; and covers tribes, nationalities and castes".

Despite the fact that members of each ethnic group have multiple identities including profession, gender and place of birth (Smith and Hutchinson, 1996), they feel a sense of "sameness" with people from their own respective group and a sense of "otherness" with people outside their group (Ferise and Assmann, 2002). Ethnicity or sense of "otherness" does not itself explain ethno-political conflict. Depending on the type of regimes and severity of states, there are numerous examples where different ethnic groups peacefully co-existed without their "subjective or objective" differences translating into violent actions against one another. But there are also countries such as Kosovo (Duijzings, 2000), Rwanda (Hintjens, 2008), and Sudan (Idris and Idris, 2005) where group identities clashed and their ethnic grievances have not only caused and sustained conflict but marked the most vicious form of political violence, for example, genocide in Rwanda. Hence, "the importance of ethnic conflict, as a force shaping human affairs, as a phenomenon to be understood, and as a threat to be controlled, can no longer be denied" (Horowitz, 1995).

Afghanistan is a multi-ethnic county. These diverse ethnic groups have their own distinct languages and tales of their origins, although some of these legends of origins and ancestry overlap (Hyman, 2002). Ethnic identities in Afghanistan are relational and contextual. The subjective claim of self-hood by all ethnic groups in Afghanistan is an unending debate because every ethnic group claims "indigenousness" and don't agree with and within each other on their origins (Yunespour, 2011). As a sense of national identity has never existed in Afghanistan (Andeney, 2008), these ethnic groups have always identified themselves with their respective labels of race or language, for example, Uzbek, Hazara, Tajik, Farsiwan or of region such as Herati, Panshiri, or Badakhshani (Hyman, 2002).

Ethnic identities clashed in Afghanistan with the establishment of modern state as the project of state-building was founded on the supremacy of one of the ethnic groups, the Pashtuns. The term "Afghan" has always been identified with the Pashtuns and Pashtun dominance (Hyman, 2002). The Pashtun identity, culture and institution have been promoted and the Pashtun states made deliberate efforts to demonize the recognition and growth of the non-Pashtuns' ethnic identities. Ethnic identities, however did not result into major violent actions before 1978 but came to the fore following the outbreak of the conflict and subsequent breakdown of the state order and state control (see chapter three).

2.3.2 Political, Economic and Cultural Discrimination

Ethnic diversity by itself does not have the explanatory power for ethnic conflict nor are multi-ethnic states necessarily doomed to fall into the conflict trap. The question then is what are the factors that cause ethnic grievances, which in some places, including Afghanistan, have caused ethno-political conflict?

Ethno-political conflict is defined as a "conflict that involves groups that define themselves by reference to some combination of common decent, shared historical experiences and valued cultural traits that make claims on behalf of their collective interest against either a state or another groups" (Gurr and Moore, 1997). Ethno-political conflict is not necessarily one-sided or it does not only happen between a state and an ethnic group. The state makes claims

on behalf of a dominant group and, on the other side, ethnic or religious identity groups counter the state or other contenders (Ibid).

In Afghanistan the historical and current ethno-political conflict has not been dichotomous between the Pashtuns and the rest. Nor does the ethnic competition for power today follow a binary division. The structure of the conflict is complex, changing over the course of time, resulting in the demise of one ethnic alliance and the emergence of another. The conflict structure and configuration has always been flux and volatile, adapting itself to changing internal and external intervening dynamics. At a certain point in history, the conflict was between the state -which was controlled by elites of Pashtun decent - and other ethnic groups. However, the historical relationships among the non-Pashtun ethnic groups, the Tajiks, Hazaras and Uzbeks, have been as unfriendly as it was with the Pashtuns (Ahady, 1995). Several of them fought each other during the civil war of 1992 to 1994. In post-Taliban Afghanistan, however, three common denominators enabled the non-Pashtuns to form a shaky political alliance. These commonalities include their shared history of discrimination and repression by the Pashtun state, the fear of Taliban's return to power and their struggle for a decentralized state as opposed to the current centralized political order, which has been favoured and supported by the Pashtuns (Sultani 2013, personal interview).

Studying the causes of ethno-political conflict, the Minority At Risk (MAR) project developed the following simple model:

Figure 2.3.2

Minority At Risk Model
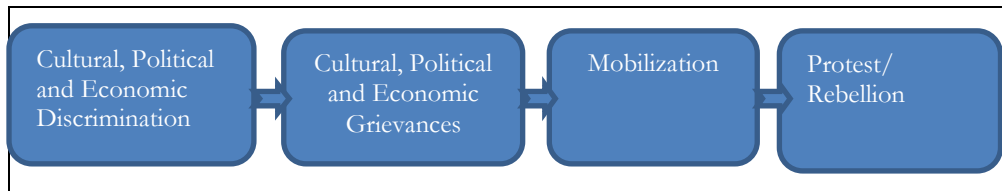
Source: Fox, J. (2001) 'Patterns of Discrimination, Grievances and Political Activity among Europe's Roma: A Cross-   Sectional Analysis', *JEMIE* : 1

The basic assumption of this model is that continued discrimination against an ethnic minority turns into accumulated grievances, which resultantly stimulates an ethnic mobilization. Ethnic mobilization undergirded by deep-seated grievances, turns into protest and rebellion. There are variations in what constitutes grievances. Gurr and Moore (1997) measured economic, political and cultural discrimination as the main factors that contribute to ethnic grievances. They equally underlined the importance of historical loss of political autonomy and state repression and the relevance of their appeal for greater political recognition, rights and inclusion (Gurr and Moore, 1997). Admitting that cultural and economic discriminations significantly matter, Theuerkauf (2010) argued that political representation, be it in the formal or informal institutions, is pivotal in diffusing ethnic grievances. It is important because political representation allows ethnic groups to have a "voice" in the political decision-making, influence the distribution of power and resources and finally that political representation has an impact on the perception of ethnic groups' security. For example, accumulated grievances among the Hutu about political representation played a

key role in the outbreak of ethnic violence in Burundi in 1972 as well as from 1988 to 2005 (Theuerkauf, 2010).

The dynamics of the MAR model are influenced by a number of other factors such as repression, group cohesion and group size, the international support for the minority group, economic development, state power and the types of regime in place, democratization and the spread of conflict across borders (Fox, 2003). Gurr and Moore (1997) specifically linked their theoretical model of ethno-political conflict to four central concepts: rebellion, repression, mobilization and grievances. Each of these four interdependent concepts are defined and their causal linkages are identified, as illustrated in figure 2.3.2. To begin with definitions:

> "Rebellion is a concerted campaign of violent actions used by organizations claiming to represent an ethnic group to make claims against the state. Repression is actions that a state takes to enforce claims against an ethnic group. Mobilization is the capacity of an organization that represents an ethnic group to get its members to support collective actions. Grievance refers to widely shared dissatisfaction among group members about their cultural, political and/or economic standing vis-à-vis dominant groups" (Gurr and Moore, 1997).

The causal linkages of these four interdependent variables are examined in terms of how other factors influence each of these variables independently and that how these variables, as a whole, establish causal relations. Rebellion is directly caused by mobilization and grievances but it is anticipated that mobilization is influenced by group cohesion, the level of accumulated grievances among group members and the severity of state repression (Gurr and Moore, 1997). The mobilization approach developed by Tilly (cited in Gurr and Moore, 1997) suggests that collective actions are organized by political entrepreneurs through developing institutions and commitments, which increase the possibility of individual group members' contribution or participation in collective actions. The problem of collective actions is directly linked to group cohesion, which has a positive casual impact on mobilization (Gurr and Moore, 1997). Ethic groups, who are not coherent enough, to overcome the problem of collective actions, their grievances will remain latent. Even, if they resolve the problem of collective actions, they might not resort to violence but might pursue their goals through engaging in non-violent means such electoral politics or debates in the parliament (Theuerkauf, 2010) Hence, the translation of grievances into violent actions depends on a number of additional factors including state repression.

The concept of mobilization is also linked to the impact of repression. Tilly (cited in Gurr and Moore, 1997) argued- and his argument is empirically supported by Gurr (1998)- that repression increases the cost of collective actions and has a negative impact on mobilization. Why do states resort to repression? The theoretical explanations of states' use of repression is three-fold: a) to respond to internal challenges (in this case, ethno-rebellion), b) successful past uses of repression and c) coercive capacities of the state (Gurr and Moore, 1997 and Gurr, 1988). Given that the logic behind state repression is self-explanatory, two causal relationships or issues related to the successful uses of repression are important to note. The use of repression in the former periods of ethno-political conflict does not only lead to the creation and institutionalization of internal security organizations and the presence of such organizations

increasing their deployment, but it also reinforces elites' preference to use repression in the subsequent episodes of the conflict (Gurr and Moore, 1997). It is argued that when repression is meted out, all ethnic groups will respond by decreasing their non-violent behaviors such as protest or boycotts and adopt violent collective action behavior. Therefore, mobilization is directly linked to repression and the latter is argued to have a positive impact on the former especially for groups who already committed to rebellion rather than protest (Ibid).

The Center for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE) at Oxford University has carried out extensive research on why some multi-ethnic societies are peaceful while others experience violent conflict. To answer this broad question, The CRISE developed its own theoretical model, the Horizontal Inequalities (HIs). There are clear similarities between the concept of HIs and Gurr's theory of "relative deprivation" and Tilly's concept of "categorical inequalities". What, however, distinguishes the concept of HIs from other approaches, explaining the causes of inequalities and dynamics of mobilization, is its hypothesis of the "relatively rich versus the relatively poor" (Stewart, 2011). The attack of relative rich Tutsis on the relative poor Hutus in Burundi and the Nigerian Civil War in the 1960s initiated by the relatively rich area of Biafra are the cases used to support this argument (Ibid).

Through this study, four types of HIs are identified including economic, social, political and cultural inequalities. Economic HIs refer to inequalities in access to and ownership of financial, human and natural assets as well as inequalities in income levels and employment opportunity. Social HIs include inequalities in access to different services including education, healthcare, housing etc. Political HIs include the distribution of political power among groups and finally cultural HIs include differences in the recognition and standing of groups' languages, religion, norms and practices (Stewart, 2011).

The result of the CRISE's study suggests that "when major Horizontal Inequalities (HIs) or inequalities among culturally defined groups" exists; the risk of conflict significantly increases (Stewart, 2011). The assumption is that "when cultural differences coincide with economic and political differences between groups" this subsequently leads to resentment that might then translate into violent actions (Ibid). Inequalities, be it political, social, economic or cultural, can provide incentive for political mobilizations. The result of the CRISE study shows that whereas economic, social and cultural inequalities are more likely to motivate mass protest, political inequalities are most likely to provoke political entrepreneurs to instigate rebellion (Ibid).

Throughout its history, the Pashtun states in Afghanistan including the current one have culturally, politically and economically discriminated against the non-Pashtuns. This widely practiced discrimination has created a recognizable pattern of social and ethnic hierarchy in Afghanistan. The Pashtuns are privileged in all areas whereas the Shia-Hazaras were and are left at the bottom of social hierarchy (Rubin, 1992). In between was the rest of ethnic groups with definite degrees of political, economic and cultural discriminations (see chapter three). These widespread discriminations accompanied with frenzied state repression and assaults on social, political and cultural structures of micro-ethnic groups in Afghanistan have created historical grievances, which triggered civil conflict and continue to sustain it in Afghanistan.

In conclusion to this first section of the chapter, it can be seen that the causes of the conflict cannot be reduced to a single factor. Relentless competition over economic resources is one factor, however, it is inadequate to explain the outbreak, sustenance and escalation of the conflict. Inequitable access to resources, significant deprivation of basic services, inattention or conscious destruction of an ethnic group's symbols of self-identification such as language, religion and social codes and institutions and most importantly exclusion from political power and institutions, constitute the fundamental causes of conflict.

The transition from conflict underpinned by multi-faceted grievances requires tackling the underlying causes of the conflict. These causes are often structural and institutional in nature. Addressing these problems needs structural reconfiguration in a society. The process of this restructuring is often evolutionary in nature and it does not take place overnight. To achieve an enduring peace, these factors that are grouped as the grievances of one ethnic group against the other must be taken into account.

2.4 Peace

The concept of peace is as contested as conflict. Despite its wider appeal and its increased momentum within academia and beyond, there is no agreed definition of peace. Peace lacks an agreeable definition for numerous reasons. First, the term "peace" means different things to different people and its meaning changes over time and across context (MacGinty, 2006:13). Second, the word peace has been often abused (Grewal, 2003) or became a weapon in the hands of antagonists to browbeat each other as each side attributes higher moral value to his/her notion of peace and appeal the other side to (re) engage in his/her definition of peace (MacGinty, 2006:13). Third, there is a difference between peace on the ground and the theoretical notions of peace. Traditionally, peace scholars saturated peace with semi-spiritual aura, which has little relevance to the "make-do" nature of peace in post-war societies (MacGinty, 2006:14).

These essentially contested natures of peace as well as the differences between the moral and ideological aspirations of peace and the reality of peace on the ground raise profound questions as to the conceptualization of peace.

2.4.1 Conceptualizing Peace

The history of peace theory has undergone enormous changes particularly after 1964 when Galtung broadened the concept of peace. Before reflecting on Galtung's contribution to the theory of peace, it is important to echo on some of questions that are often asked in relation to the conceptualization of peace.

One of the central questions often asked is whether or not peace has inherent values regardless of context or application. MacGinty (2006) argued that some associated values of peace such as social harmony and sustainability have greater regularity than others and, thereby, can be regarded as core values of peace. Peace as social harmony is not only limited to the regulation of armed combatants and/or safeguarding ceasefires, how war is caused, maintained and ended but it is "also concerned with a more holistic context of human development" (MacGinty, 2006:21). In another word, it is the transcendence from "negative

peace" to "positive peace" which addresses a wide range of economic, political and social issues beyond the direct violence.

Another equally important question is whether or not peace can be regarded as a universal value. Different religions and societies commonly identify with the concept of peace but the ways they conceptualize peace differ markedly. (MacGinty, 2006:17). Hence, peace can be universal in the sense that all societies embrace the notion of peace but these notions of peace do not include a coherent set of ideas with claim of common adherence. However, there are hegemonic states and organizations that view peace as a universal value. Therefore, they have engaged in promoting their own version of peace such as the liberal democratic peace irrespective of how locally relevant or irrelevant it may be (MacGinty, 2006:17).

Another important issue concerned with the conceptualization of peace is that peace has to be contemplated as a "process" rather than "event" because peace has no endpoint. (MacGinty, 2006:18). This argument has great implications on how attempts are made to deal with violent conflicts. To fundamentally resolve conflicts, attempts should not misunderstand the complex nature of peace and conflict. These attempts should equally recognize the need that the management or transformation of conflict should be part of a long-term process with a focus on the relationship between antagonists (Ibid). However, in contemporary peace-building efforts, peace has become event/project-oriented. Elements of liberal peace have been commodified and delivered through internationally supported peace programs or projects whose implementation differ little whether employed in Bosnia or Rwanda (Ibid). Afghanistan is not exempted from this model of peace-building too. Over the last one-decade, this project-oriented peace-building has been the dominant approach in Afghanistan (see chapter four).

Despite the associated difficulties with the conceptualization of peace, peace theory has not been less sophisticated than earlier efforts. The concept has significantly evolved and now includes ideas of social progress and the development potential of individuals and societies (MacGinty, 2006:18). Under this new formulation, peace is not only restricted to "negative peace" or the absence of violence but it also comprises "positive peace" which puts humanity at its center and it is committed to address political, economic, social and cultural structures that discriminately target humanity.

2.4.2 The Expanded Concepts of Peace and Violence

John Galtung revolutionized the concept of peace by broadening the focus of peace studies and research. In his earlier efforts in the 1960s, Galtung expanded the concepts of peace and violence, as he included indirect or structural violence. This expanded definition of violence has led to an expanded definition of peace (Galtung, 1969), where peace is not only regarded as an absence of direct violence (negative peace) but also an absence of structural violence (Grewal, 2003). Galtung's concepts of negative and positive peace can be summarized as follows:

> "Negative Peace: Absence of violence, pessimistic, curative, peace always not by peaceful means.

Positive Peace: Structural integration, optimistic, preventive, peace by peaceful means" (Grewal, 2003).

This definition of peace by Galtung has been generally accepted but not without some critics. Critical social theorists such as Boulding (1977) critiqued Galtung for being careless in the definitions of negative and positive terms because these terms are not very explanatory. Galtung has also been criticized for his very normative thoughts and approach. According to Boulding (1997), Galtung's thought is "structural-static" as opposed to be evolutionary or dialectal. For example, Galtung's structuralist view attributes poverty and wealth to the structures of property and power. This might be because the rich and poor have participated in different dynamic processes rather than structural problem (Boulding, 1977).

Since 1964, Galtung has written many theoretical papers seeking to better define his structural theory. One of the major themes that were underlined in all these academic papers was that a sufficient understanding of violence is required for both understanding and properly defining peace (Grewal, 2003). In his later efforts, Galtung has made a shift from "actor-oriented" explanations to "structure-oriented" explanations of violence and peace, in which he contends that violence occurs because of the structures (Ibid).

Based on this need, Galtung contemplates violence as a point of departure. Violence is defined as being "present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (Galtung, 1969). In his approach to violence, Galtung (1969) draws a number of distinctions between different types of violence including physical and psychological, negative and positive, intended and unintended, manifest and latent. Galtung (1969) also refers to the types of violence, such as where an actor carries out the violence and where there is no actor. This distinction is important because in the first case the violence can be traced back to the persons as actors whereas in the second case there might not be any person who enacted the violence. The violence is embedded in the structure which "shows up as unequal power and consequently as an unequal life chances" (Galtung, 1969). Through establishing relations between violence and the structure of society, Galtung (1969) argues that as violence is embedded in the social structure, a focus on the structure is required because it would help to understand the causes of violence and the conditions for peace.

Since the 1980s, Galtung has further expanded the concept of peace by including the notions of social cosmology (1981) and cultural violence (1990). By introducing the concept of cultural violence, Galtung (1990) argued that there are aspects of culture that justify and legitimate acts of direct or cultural violence. Hence, cultural violence is added to the list of direct and structural violence and thus violence is redefined as "avoidable insults to basic human needs and more generally to life" (Galtung, 1990). Throughout his work, Galtung has tried to emphasize the importance of positive peace as a higher model than negative peace. Negative peace is helpful for the short-term management of conflict but enduring peace is possible only through the implementation of positive peace (Grewal, 2003). It is the later approach, which addresses the causes of conflict that are structural in nature.

2.5 How To Achieve Peace

Scholars of peace-building have identified three theoretical and practical approaches. These models include Just War, pacifism and the restructuring of social, economic and political systems to address the underlying causes of the conflict. The last two models will briefly be described whereas the first requires little attention- because of its irrelevance to this study- except to say the idea behind the Just War was to establish moral standards to inform the conduct and causation of war.

The underlying philosophy of pacifism is non-violent resistance, which sees violence as immoral and unjustifiable. In another words, it is the antithesis of pursuing political objectives by violence or coercion (MacGinty, 2006:28). Galtung has stressed the importance of peace by peaceful means. In fact, he stated that his idea of structural violence was inspired by Gandhi's approach of dealing with violence where he (Gandhi) targeted the structure of violence in a non-violent way rather than the actor (Galtung, 1996). A central trend in pacifist approaches was to establish and maintain a space between themselves and the other actors when making an attempt to manage social and political conflict. Such a position is often manifested by the physical withdrawal of pacifists from the conflict or tension areas (MacGinty, 2006:29).

The more ambitious model of peace-making is restructuring the social and political systems that caused the conflict in the first place. This model advocates for a holistic strategy to transcend the acute manifestations of conflict and address the underlying structural factors that cause, sustain and impede human development (MacGinty, 2006:29). The model is based on an idea that a fundamental change, including the alternation or regulation of political and social institutions, is required for enduring peace. The restructuring of social and political systems is thus not without serious challenges despite the understanding that such change would bring significant effect. Some of the key challenges include the problem of state sovereignty, inertia in favor of the power-holders and the western cultural bias shown in the restructuring initiatives undertaken by western states and international NGOs (MacGinty, 2006:29). Restructuring might help to claim human rights or boost legal equality but there is no guarantee that it changes attitudes and behaviors in general and between groups in particular, as evidenced by Afghanistan. What is important is the behavioral change not just system change.

2.6 Conclusion

The concept of peace has undergone enormous change since 1964. Today, peace does not simply mean the cessation of violence, negative peace. The expanded concept of peace includes positive peace, which highlights the importance of revisiting the structures, institutions, systems and established practices that breed conflict

Negative peace just hibernate violence that could resurface again because it is centered on the issue of cessation of violence and does not address the structural causes of the conflict. As a result, the negative peace has never had the chance to stand long and resolve the conflicts that are structural in nature.

To establish enduring peace, structural and behavioral change should take place. It is the structural change that impact upon the political, social, cultural

and economic status of conflict. Without such change, peace will remain precarious, allowing the violence to erupt again.

Chapter 3
Conflict and Grievances around State-building in Afghanistan

3.1 Introduction

The modern conflict in Afghanistan broke out with the communist coup of 1978 and has then transformed into civil war, which is still going on in the country. The historical, political and social context, which initially triggered the conflict and continues to sustain it, has remained under-researched. Neither the communist coup of 1978 nor the subsequent conflict unfolded by accident. A number of important political, economic, social and cultural factors have tended to trigger, justify and sustain the violent conflict in Afghanistan.

Conflict in different forms has existed since the formation of a modern state under the name of "Afghanistan" more than a century ago (Shahrani, 2002). But it remained latent for much of the first half of the 20th century and did not translate into violent action for various reasons, including the low mobilization and low level of identity consciousness among ethnic groups subjected to various forms of discrimination. State suppression and the threat of coercion played a significant role in containing the outbreak of the modern conflict. This does not mean that identity awareness did not exist among different ethnic groups of Afghanistan before 1978. Rather, it was suppressed and contained, coming to the fore with the coup, the outbreak of the conflict and the subsequent breakdown of state order and control.

This chapter looks at the underlying causes of conflict in Afghanistan by problematizing the project of state-building in Afghanistan, the relationship of Afghan states with micro-ethnic groups and the role of historical grievances in the previous and current conflicts in Afghanistan.

This chapter is divided into three sections. Section one looks at the main features of state-building in Afghanistan, with a focus on the politics of the state and its relations with the micro-ethnic societies within it. Section two analyses the role of historical grievances in the Afghan conflict from 1978 to 2001. Section three looks at the role of historical grievances in the latest phase of the conflict (2001-present). The chapter concludes with arguing that historically rooted grievances have kept fuelling the conflict indefinitely in Afghanistan.

3.2 The Sate-building Project and the Oppression of Ethnic Identities

The modern Afghan state was created at the end of the 19th century by rival colonial powers to serve as a buffer state between British India and the tsarist Russia. These colonial powers, during the "Great Game" in Central Asia, drew the borders of Afghanistan to split members of different ethnic groups such as Turkmen, Uzbek, Kazak, Kirghiz, Tajik, Pashtun and Baluch between states in the region. The Mongol-looking Hazaras were the only community that remained wholly within the boundaries of Afghanistan due to their location in central Afghanistan (Shahrani, 2002). Such demarcation has led to the establishment of what Schetter (2005b) called "ethnoscapes" in Afghanistan, contradicting the existence of single unified state. This diversity naturally defied any efforts that aim at deep ethno-social integration. Therefore, the establishment of a viable and centralized state based on the supremacy of one of the

ethnic groups, the Pashtuns- the perceived majority as there has never been census- was regarded as the solution for divided Afghanistan.

Amir Abdur Rahman (1880-1901) was the first Pashtun ruler who established a bureaucratic and centralized state in Afghanistan in late 19th century (Shahrani, 2002, Giustozzi, 2008 and Schetter, 2005a). He was also the first ruler who introduced the policy of subjugation and deportation of communities who rebelled against him and might have threatened his newly established state (Giustozzi, 2008).

Backed and drilled by Britain, the approach Amir Abdur Rahman adopted to build state in Afghanistan was founded on religious, tribal and ethno-centric grounds. For example, he incited the Sunnis of Afghanistan, mobilising over one hundred thousand tribal levies and religious zealots to brutally crush the Shia-Hazaras that remained as an autonomous community in central Afghanistan (Hazarajat). Thousands of Hazaras were massacred, enslaved and their lands were occupied (Desaultels-Stein, 2005, Shahrani, 2002 and Shahrani, 2009). The Kafiristan region in eastern Afghanistan that constituted the only non-Muslim community in the country and had remained independent of the feuding Pashtun rulers was brutally crushed and forcibly converted into Islam (Shahrani, 2009). The region is known today as Nuristan ("land of light"-i.e. Islam). The Shinwari rebellion in eastern Afghanistan and the way it was brutally crushed provides an example of this tribal approach to state-building. In the north, the Uzbeks, Turkman and the Tajiks were brutally subjugated and their lands were distributed to the Pashtun settlers (Hyman, 2002). Hence, the character of the modern state-building exercise was founded on the supremacy of one ethnic group, the Pashtuns. This established an ethnic and social hierarchy in Afghanistan as the Pashtuns were privileged in all areas and the Hazaras and the Uzbeks were disenfranchised. In between, the Tajiks were left with the economic and educational sectors (Schetter, 2005a).

Ever since, the Pashtunization of language, history, identity, geography and culture is a key feature of the past and present Afghan state. The Pashtu language has been promoted as an official language of the country. Much of Afghan history has been written in Pashtu and was manipulated to link it with currents and fashions of the dominant ethno-nationalist politics. Historical writings selfishly followed the official policy of the state (Rubin, 1992). In this narrative of the history, the non-Pashtuns became invisible. Their invisibility is even evident in the official history of Afghanistan taught in schools (Hyman, 2002). Alternative histories written in Persian such as the "Lamp of Histories" by Mullah Faiz Mohammad Kateb Hazara and "Afghanistan in the Course of History" by Mir Ghulam Mohammad Ghobar were banned by the nationalist Pashtun states to be included in school curriculum (Sultani, 2013, personal interview).

The term "Afghan" which is the Persian synonym for Pashtun was imposed on all different ethnic groups in Afghanistan (Hyman, 2002). The ideological state-building in Afghanistan has even Pashtunized geography. For example, in the north, Turkistan, the homeland of Turkic-speaking people was changed and removed from the official map (Shahrani, 2002).

Since their subjugation a century ago, these ethnic groups have neither identified themselves with the "Afghan" national identity nor have they been on friendly terms with the imposed Pashtun state. The state was regarded as a hos-

tile actor, interfering in their lives by coercion (Schetter, 2005a). The relative weaknesses of national identity and a poor sense of citizenship have clearly been noticeable throughout the whole of this period. A sense of belonging to the Islamic community on one hand and the appeal of ethnicity, tribe and region on the other, have remained salient, bifurcating the national identity in Afghanistan (Centelivres and Centelivres-Demont, 2000).

Canfield (1988) identified three local and traditional categories of identity in Afghanistan, which include the *watan* (homeland), *qawm* (kinship group) and *muzhab* (sect group). The term *watan* refers to the relation among people who reside in a particular place or region with a sense of obligation to help each other. The word *qawm* describes the relationship among the patrilineal dece-dents of common ancestor. Members of a *qawm* speak the same language, fol-low the same rituals and belong to the same Islamic sect. The term *mazhab* re-fers to the relations among one sect of Islam in Afghanistan. There are three sects of Islam in Afghanistan, the Sunnis, the Twelver Shi'ites and the Ismaili Shi'ites (Canfield, 1988).

These categories constitute the most important bases for identities and loyalties in Afghanistan. They also form the bases for the organization of social for-mation, social mobilization and the regulation and interaction within and be-tween individuals and groups (Shahrani, 2002). The state in Afghanistan has equally had access to these social organizational principles. Successive Pashtun rulers under the guise and discourses of Islam, tribe, kinship and, most im-portantly, Pashtun nationalism, have tried, in virtual subjugation, to hold to-gether different linguistic, sectarian and tribal groups (Shahrani, 2009). In many respects what happened to other ethnic minorities in Afghanistan was a form of internal colonialism that employed by the Pashtun colonial rulers (Hyman, 2002 and Shahrani, 2009). It is, therefore, clear that the other ethnic groups have neither recognized the nation-state nor have they commonly identified with Pashtun identity.

Considering the state a hostile force, these groups have sought to claim equal status and to foster their distinct identities parallel with the Pashtun identity portrayed as national identity. Several attempts, including the rebellion by the Tajik rebel Habibullah Kalakani in 1929 and the ensuing ethnic struggles, have been made (Dubow, 2009). These unsuccessful attempts have further consoli-dated the repressive policies of Pashtun states. For example, King Nadir Shah (1929-1933) who rose to power after Kalakani's revolt had pursued Pash-tunization of the country far beyond his predecessors. He killed and exiled Ta-jik, Uzbek and Hazara intellectuals. Many members of the Tajik and Uzbek communities fled to neighbouring Tajikistan and Uzbekistan parts of the then Soviet Union. This forced migration resulted into pan-Tajik and pan-Uzbek movements (Dubow, 2009). In 1993, King Nadir was assassinated by a Hazara student, as he was attending a high school ceremony. The petty and unsuccess-ful revolts and assassination of a Pashtun ruler did not result into the disinte-gration of the state largely because these ethno-linguistic groups fell short of a single and coherent social or political body capable of challenging the state.

The non-Pashtuns have not only been physically, culturally and geographically attacked but they have also been politically and economically discriminated against. Some of the ethnic groups like the Hazaras and Uzbeks had minimum or no political representation in the Afghan states. For example, the Hazaras, who by some estimates make up about 15-19% of population, were accounted

only for 1.2 % and 2.2% of Afghanistan political elites under the old regime and constitutional decade (1964-73) respectively (Ahady, 1995).

The non-Pashtuns regions like Badakhshan and Hazarajat, have highly remained underdeveloped. Until two years ago, there was not even one kilometre of asphalted road in the entire Hazarajat region. There are virtually no asphalted roads in much of the province of Badakhshan too. These regions despite having rich mineral resources such as iron ore, rubies, sulphur, salt and lapis lazuli, have to date seen no investment by the central government to commercially exploit these resources (Jawadi, 2013, personal interview). Badakhshan and Hazarajat are just two examples of many economically discriminated against regions in Afghanistan.

Despite the numerous justifiable grievances that the non-Pashtuns have had, these grievances did not turn into major violent actions against the Pashtun state between 1929 and 1978. Numerous reasons are cited for this. Shahrani (1988) argues that the rule of central government was welcomed by the non-Pashtuns only for one reason, that being that it has ended local and regional conflicts. However, Shahrani (1988) equally contends that despite the ambivalent attitudes of the non-Pashtuns toward the central government, the government has followed a policy of internal colonialism, which further increased grievances. Under this policy, discrimination and injustices against the non-Pashtuns have become rampant in different areas including education, social services, political participation and a flagrant economic oppression (Shahrani, 1988).

Other analysts argue that historical grievances remained latent because the state had greater coercive power and ethnic groups lacked political and social cohesion. The historical grievances resurfaced when the state writ loosened. This system of governance and domination had remained in place until 1978.

3.3 Conflicts 1978-2001

The 1978 communist coup ended the life of the old political and social order in Afghanistan. With the breakdown of the old system and the subsequent breakout of the rebellion, historical grievances became the most important source of political and military mobilization and alignment. For example, historical grievances played an important role in the armed rebellion that began in Nuristan in 1978, which has then spread to the rest of the country. A combination of factors including Nuristanis' recent historical defeat, loss of political autonomy and conversion to Islam contributed to this armed rebellion. The Nuristanis have asserted that they took arms against the state for cultural reasons if not for political reasons (Shahrani, 1988). However, Katz (1988) argued that the Nuristanis' armed rebellion was largely because of their antipathy to a particular *kind* of government, the communist regime.

Although the war in this period was being fought between two competing ideologies, communism and Islamism, the rival ethno- political factions have increasingly tapped into ethnic momentum and historical exclusions to assert their positions and claims (Schetter, 2005a and Saikal 1998). Several broader factors have apparently contributed to the greater appeal of ethnicity in the Afghan conflict. Saikal (1998) refers to two specific factors. The first factor was the Soviet and the Soviet-backed communist regime's policy of "brutal

pacification" which terminated the life of the old political and social order without putting in place a viable substitute. The policy of the Soviets and their Afghan communist proxies resulted in the radical transformation of the political, economic and social structures of the country, altering fundamentally the established patterns of power, authority and loyalty within and between each micro-society (Saikal, 1998). The second factor was the financial support of international and regional powers such as the USA, Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to these ethno-political factions that were fighting against the communist regime in Afghanistan (Ibid). Each of these powers had their own proxies and used their ethnic potential to win the Cold War within the context of the Afghan conflict.

Pstrusinska (cited in Schetter, 2005a) contends that the Afghan communist's policy of promoting certain ethnic groups to the status of nationalities and maintaining close ties with these ethnic groups further facilitated conflict along the lines of identity and ethnic mosaic. As the *Parcham* (flag) faction of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PPDA) and its non-Pashtun leader Babrak Karmal, realized that his regime would collapse after the Soviet withdrawal, he crafted new ethnic alliances to sustain the lifeline of his regime through investment on ethnic realignment and reconfiguration (Ahady, 1995). The *Parcham* faction of the PDPA, which was mostly comprised of non-Pashtuns, maintained close ties with the non-Pashtuns, as opposed to the *Khalq* (masses) faction of the PDPA, which was dominated by the Pashtuns. Both factions of the PDPA attempted to ethnicize the Afghan conflict, advancing their own political objectives and promoting their factional interests.

More important factor that played a central role in the ethnicization of the Afghan conflict was the formation of militias along ethnic lines. A well-known example of this is the Uzbek militia of General Rashid Dostum. Although the Uzbek militia had originally been created by the communist regime to counter the *mujahidin* (Islamists) groups fighting the regime, General Dostum had begun to ally with the *mujahidin* groups as early as 1990 when his relationship with the new Pashtun communist president Dr. Najibullah became increasingly difficult (Guistozzi, 2008). In 1990 in Moscow, he reportedly said that the Uzbek and Turkmen would not accept Pashtun supremacy, as it had been the case in the past (Guistozzi, 2005).

The creation of politico-military groups was not limited only to the Uzbek militia, which later became a politico-military faction, Junbish Melli (National Movement). The Jamiat-e- Islami (Islamic Society), one of the oldest Islamic parties in Afghanistan, developed into a Tajik party. With the support of Iran, the Shiíte Hazaras established their own ethno-political and military party, the Hizb-e- Wahdat (Unity Party) and Pakistan supported the Pashtun-dominated Hizb-e-Islami (Islamic Party) and later the Taliban (Schetter, 2005a). All of the four major factions that actively took part in the civil wars from 1992-2001 and have continued to dominate the political and military sphere in the decade since the fall of the Taliban regime were supported by one of the four major ethnic groups in Afghanistan (Ibid).

The ethnic and identity dimension of the Afghan conflict heightened when the communist regime collapsed in 1992 and the four major factions (see above) took control of the capital Kabul. After they failed to form a coalition government the problem of factionalism soon led to these groups fighting each other. The Jamiat-e- Islami, took control of the government. In many respects the

Jamiat regime (1992-1996) shared the characteristics of its predecessors such as ethnic inclination and tribal "retrenchment"(Guistozzi, 2008). The Hizb-e-Islami faction launched fighting against the government a few months after the mujahidin groups seized Kabul, unhappy with presence of former Najibulla's militias in the new regime (Guistozzi, 2008) and the rise of a non-Pashtun group to power (Shahrani, 2002). The Hizb-e-Wahdat has joined the Hizb-e-Islami on the grounds claiming that the power-sharing proposal coming from the Jamiat regime was unacceptable (Guistozzi, 2008). In 1993-4, the Junbish Milli led by General Dostum demanded recognition as an equal partner from the central government but his demand was refused because of his past affiliation with the communist regime. Hence, his party joined the armed opposition coalition, which marked the beginning of the second phase of civil war from 1994 to 1996 without either side being able to defeat the other (Ibid).

All of these warring factions actively used ethnicity to boost their political presence and legitimacy. These factions systematically engaged in promoting ethnic consciousness by highlighting their past and present political, social, cultural and economic exclusions and attributing the root causes of their ethnic underdevelopment to the ethnic origin of the Afghan state, which promoted one ethnic group at the expense of others. These ethnic factions made unanimous claims that the survival of their own ethnic groups was threatened by the violent behaviours and action of other ethnic groups (Schetter, 2005a). Moreover, they demanded political and economic resources in the name of their own ethnic group and justified these demands by invoking the size of their own ethnic groups (Ibid). All the factions used ethnicity in their military actions. The ethnicization of the war ended up in indiscriminate killing along ethnic lines. As a consequence, ethnic cleansing frequently occurred in several parts of the country between 1992 and 2001 (Ibid).

Despite an increase in shifting inter-ethnic alliances and the changing inter-ethnic factional fighting all over the country, no single faction could gain outright supremacy. The warring factions remained roughly equal in size and military might, each controlling a distinct regional fiefdom. It is worth noting that none of the factions could secure nationwide presence despite the fact that each group had a foreign patron for economic and military aid. Surprisingly, the amount of assistance the patrons committed to their proxy groups in the conflict remained largely equal (Guistozzi, 2008).

This balance broke with the emergence of the Taliban movement, which first appeared in Kandahar in 1994 and then rapidly took control of 90% of the country. The Taliban's greater appeal among the Pashtuns in 1994 was partially driven by promises of restoring the Pashtuns' declining power and defeating their adversaries, the Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras in the civil conflict (Hyman, 2002). To a large extent, the Taliban then did change the power balance in favour of the Pashtuns by defeating their ethnic rivals and establishing a Pashtun government in Kabul in 1996. The anti-Taliban fronts that had yet to be defeated in 2001 were the Jamiat fronts in Badakhshan and Panjsher provinces and the Wahdat front in Dar-e Souf district of Samangan province in northern Afghanistan. If the US intervention did not happen in 2001, these fronts might have collapsed soon (Darwish 2013, personal interview). Under the Taliban regime (1996-2001), massive atrocities took place including persecution and massacre of ethnic and religious minorities.

This decade-old factional war not only destroyed much of the country but also left behind a strong legacy of hatred, antipathy and resentment that continue to influence the Afghan politics and society in post-Taliban Afghanistan.

3.4 The Role of Historical Grievances in the Current Conflict (2001-present)

The longstanding inter-ethnic factional war eventually ended with the intervention of the United States of America in late 2001. As a result, the Taliban regime was ousted from power. Under the auspice of the UN, four Afghan opposition groups except the Taliban have signed the Bonn Agreement on 5 December 2001 (Cottey, 2003). This agreement laid the foundation for a new political arrangement in the country.

As the main ally of the United States on the ground, the United Front (also known as Northern Alliance) a predominantly non-Pashtun coalition has occupied the post-Taliban government in 2001. Within this coalition, the Tajik Jamiat faction received the lion share of the political cake. Smaller ethnic groups were given marginal positions and the Taliban was entirely excluded (Simonsen, 2004). The omnipotence of the Tajik has not lasted long as the balance has soon shifted towards the Pashtuns. After being elected with 55% vote in the election in 2004, President Karzai successfully marginalized the Jamiat and Wahdat factions and consolidated his network power, which was largely composed of Pashtun technocrats (Guistozzi, 2008 and Sharan, 2011).

The non-Pashtuns have attempted to limit the perceived danger of Pashtun hegemony through their proposal of parliamentary federation during the adoption process of a new constitution for Afghanistan in 2004 (Adeney, 2008). The Pashtun technocrats now in power resisted against the non-Pashtuns' proposal, labelling those who demanded decentralized political system as tools of the warlords or of ethnic federations (Barfield, 2011). Having the power and leverage of the international community behind it, the Pashtun technocrats succeeded in their demand for a centralized presidential system in Afghanistan (Adeney, 2008). The international community feared that a decentralized system would increase ethnic destabilization and, therefore, supported the Pashtun technocrats. The West's fear of ethnic destabilization was driven by their recent experiences in Balkans, even though they markedly differed from the Afghan reality (Barfield, 2011). Hence, Afghanistan became a unitary state, accommodating the interest of few Pashtun "techno-lords" at the expense of the rest.

To further marginalize the non-Pashtuns, the Pashtun technocrats resisted against the formation of formal political parties. The Afghan president Hamid Karzai used the same political rhetoric that King Zahir Shah has used in the 1960s that political parties would lead to national discord (Barfield, 2011). Beyond this political rhetoric there was a practical concern commonly shared by the Pashtun technocrats. The Pashtun technocrats despised the political institutions and rejected a proposed electoral framework, proportional representation, in the electoral law, presuming that party-based politics would disadvantage the Pashtuns, who remain fragmented after the Taliban, which had marginalized the Pashtun political factions. The technocrats believed that political electoral framework favourable to the institutionalization of democratic politics would consolidate the non-Pashtuns at the expense of the technocrats

and the Pashtuns, which lacked and still lack political organizations (Darwish 2013, personal interview). President Karzai has neither let the candidates with party affiliation to run for election nor has he allowed the Afghan parliament to organize itself along the lines of political parties. In the absence of any alternative form of affiliation, the Afghan parliament developed into Pashtun and non-Pashtun blocs, which further reinforced relationship based on ethnic affiliations (Barfield, 2011).

Having its root in the historical grievances and inter-ethnic conflict, ethnic discrimination and ethnic violence have repeatedly occurred all over the country since 2001. For example, the violence against the Pashtuns in the northern Afghanistan, where the non-Pashtuns are the majority, was justified in ethnic terms (Simonsen, 2004). The historically marginalized Hazaras, who have made some political, economic and cultural gains in post-Taliban Afghanistan, have continue to face discrimination by the Afghan Government and are persecuted on ethnic and religious grounds by the Taliban (Semple, 2011).

As early as 1880, the Pashtunization of the Hazarajat and the north by Pashtun rulers had begun (Simonsen, 2004). A large Pashtun population was settled in the north, which is the historical homeland of Uzbeks and Tajiks. Likewise, the Hazara land was given to Pashtun nomads for pasture. Since 1990, a new trend has begun as the Tajik and Uzbeks in the north and the Hazaras in the central highland began to regain their lands from the Pashtun settlers or nomads (Simonsen, 2004). These unresolved historical land disputes continue to cause ethnic tension and conflict in the country today.

The 2009 presidential election has further divided Afghanistan along the lines of Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns. This election revealed the centrality of ethnicity in the current Afghan conflict. In their electoral campaigns, the two main candidates President Karzai (Pashtun) and Dr. Abdullah (Tajik) brought up specific issues such as historical political and economic exclusions for particular ethno-regional groups to mobilize support and vote (Sharan and Heathershaw, 2011). After his election for the second time in the 2009 election, President Karzai found a unique opportunity to firmly consolidate his own ethnic group power. In his new cabinet, Karzai successfully purged members of the non-Pashtun parties and appointed members of his own ethnic group, mainly southern Pashtuns, in key ministries including ministries of defence, interior, foreign affairs, economy, commerce, and education (Sharan, 2011).

The political exclusion of non-Pashtuns after 2009 has further added to their historical grievances. Different ethnic groups in Afghanistan are seeing political representation as access to economic and military resources and as a guarantee to their security in an unstable Afghanistan. Until ethnic groups are not politically represented and their human and economic security is not guaranteed, the conflict would continue to persist in Afghanistan.

3.5 Conclusion

Afghanistan is a multi-ethnic country. This diversity is not recognized by the past and present states in Afghanistan but rather perceived it as a threat to Afghanistan as a distinct country. Based on this illusion, the Pashtun rulers made deliberate attempts to weaken and change the country into a Pashtun setting, in some instances destroying this diversity. The bone of contention in Afghani-

stan has been and still continues to be historical grievances caused by ethnic, political and cultural discrimination.

Peace will not be achieved until historical grievances are addressed in Afghanistan. To address the historical grievance, the country's ethnic and cultural diversity must be valued and developed. Once ethnic and cultural diversity are recognized, grievances stemming from ethnic exclusion will be resolved. Unless the very existence of the diverse populations in the country is recognized, grievances will fester and conflict will continue unabated.

Chapter 4

Afghanistan Peace Model: A Case Study

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter analysed the underlying causes of the Afghan conflict. The outcome of the analysis revealed that conflict has been sustained by a perceived and actual historical grievances, marginalization and exclusion.

This chapter looks at the peace modality Afghanistan has experimented in the last one-decade. The objective of this chapter is to figure out if there is any congruity between the character of the conflict and the peace modality that has been used today in Afghanistan.

This chapter is divided into three sections. Section one looks at Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) with focus on Afghanistan High Peace Council (HPC) as the overarching institution tasked to spearhead the peace process between the Afghan Government and the disparate Afghan insurgent groups. Section two examines the key features of the program. Section three analyses the Afghan peace and reintegration program.

4.1. Concepts of the Afghan Peace and Reintegration

The current peace initiatives subsume several peace and reintegration programs. These attempts ranged from "Program for Strengthening Peace (PSP)", to the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP)", and the formation of Afghanistan High Peace Council (HPC). The first program, PSP (known as PTS in Dari), which began in May 2005, was nothing less than a bribery scheme. It attempted to woo and lure the insurgent combatants from the mainstream insurgency through short-term financial incentives and superficial immunity against prosecution, the provision of each reconciled combatants with an amnesty certificate (Ruttig, 2013). The program was more a public relations gesture than an institutionalized peace program as it lacked program conceptualization, structuration and organization (Zahuri 2013, personal interview). As such the program melted away as its funding ceased due to heavy corruption allegations, giving its way to its successor, a formal peace attempt along tribal fault-lines. The PTS initiative was quite ironic as one expert describes it "financially and morally corrupt" (Ruttig, 2013).

Subsequent evaluation and assessment of the program revealed that all 4,636 alleged insurgents, which presumably abandoned insurgency and joined the peace program within the PTS framework, were insurgent imposters with no recognized previous connection with the actual insurgent groups battling the Afghan Government and its allies on the ground (Semple, 2009). The program had turned into private business for the chairman of the program Sebghatullah Mojaddadi, the religious mentor of the Afghan president, for crafting, expanding and consolidating his family and religious cliental support bases and network across the Pashtun belt, the insurgency-affected geography of the country (Zahuri 2013, personal interview).

The second initiative, the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP), which began in June 2010, was an ambitious multi-dimensional peace strategy, with strong international financial commitment. The program had two

wings, the reintegration and peace facets. The reintegration component focuses on rank and file soldiers of the insurgents through economic incentives, de-mobilization, grievance resolution and amnesty, community recovery and good governance programs (Sajjad, 2010). This program addresses grievances within a distinct section of the Afghan population, falling short of tacking deep-seated grievances at the broader ethnic divisions in the country. This was based on the assumption that the Afghan insurgency is driven more by material aspects of conflict, exclusion than ideological conflict. This was a partial diagnosis of the problem with a partial solution (Muballegh 2013, personal interview).

The peace component, which aimed to reach out to the insurgent leaders, complemented the reintegration component. The peace program manifested itself in the form of the Afghanistan High Peace Council (HPC), established by a presidential decree in September 2010. With 70 members, HPC was tasked to operate as a "peace embassy" of the government of Afghanistan, entrusted with building national and international support for its peace efforts, leading and overseeing the APRP program. It had to ultimately pursue the "peace talks" with the insurgents as the only authorized body (International Crisis Group, 2012). It was established amid glaring inconsistencies between rhetoric and reality of the peace-building as well as countless criticism on the peace process in the country.

4.2. Features of the Peace Program

4.2.1. Mechanism of the Establishment

The Afghanistan High Peace Council (HPC) is the main mechanism that spearheads the peace program. The principle motive behind the establishment of HPC was that the Afghan Government wanted to create an institution plia-ble to the government, to regain its lost support in the Pashtun belt, the insur-gency-stricken areas, snatch the peace initiatives from regional and internation-al actors and to approach a complex issue through a narrow politico-tribal lens (Baluchzada 2013, personal interview).

Peace has been the most controversial issue in Afghanistan, reflecting deep-seated disagreements on its concept and mechanism all over the Afghan politi-cal spectrum. In an attempt to overlook these contentions and fabricate false legitimacy to what it was doing, the Afghan Government sponsored a tribal gathering (*Loya Jirga*), composed of mainly government-handpicked men from across the country, to establish HPC in Kabul in June 2010 (Darwish 2013, personal interview). Like many other *Loya Jirgas* held in Afghanistan including the Constitutional *Loya Jirga* in 2004, the Afghan Government has filtered the composition of the peace *Jirga* and controlled the discussions groups and the selection of chairpersons and rapporteurs for its different committees in order to make sure that the government's pre-arranged peace agenda encounter no opposition (Ruttig, 2013). At the concluding session, the chairperson of the *Jirga* announced that the government's peace plan was unanimously approved without the issue being properly discussed in the working groups or the gov-ernment document on peace being distributed among the participants (Ibid).

The recommendations by this gathering include the constitution of Afghani-stan High Peace Council and underpin the legitimacy of the body. The people chosen to become members in this body not because they had good mediation

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skills or contacts with the insurgent groups (Ruttig, 2013) but President Karzai's established approach of capitalization over patronage network and the continuation of his political co-optation of his real or imagined rivals was the dominant logic behind the selection of these people (Darwish 2013, personal interview). Majority of these people were formerly either members of President Karzai's kitchen cabinet or members of his informal advisory body, called Council of Jihadi (Ruttig, 2013). This problematic start laid the foundation of Afghanistan peace program and the establishment of its mechanism, the Afghanistan High Peace Council (HPC).

4.2.2. HPC Ethnic and Factional Composition

The composition of HPC reflects different ethnic groups and factions with varying degrees of representation.

Figure 4.2.2

HPC Ethnic Composition
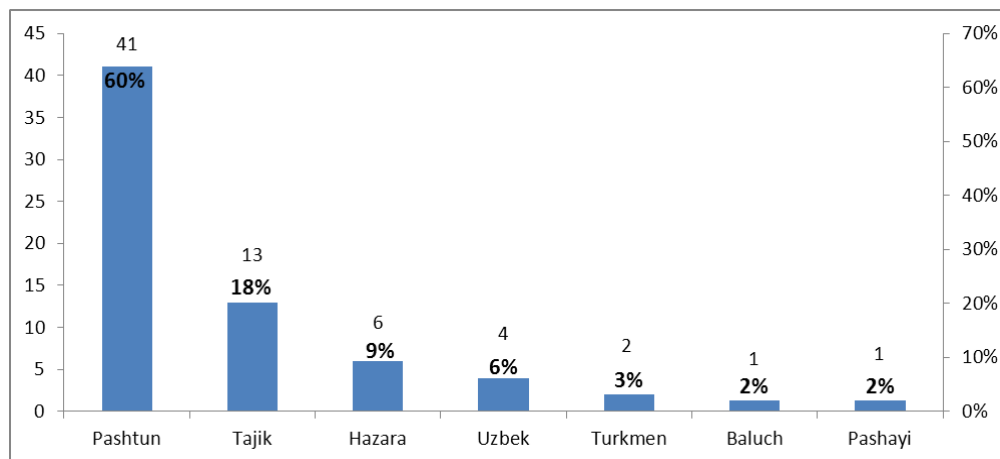
There has never been a census in the country to gauge the exact number of ethnic groups in Afghanistan. The CIA World Fact Book (2007) estimated the Pashtuns to form a bout 42% of the total 31 million population in Afghanistan, followed by the 27% Tajik, 9% Hazara, 9% Uzbeks, 4% Aimak, 3% Turkmen and 2% Baluch. The other 4% is estimated to be the other ethnic groups (CIA World Fact Book, 2007). The Pashtuns have a dominant presence in the HPC with 41 members constituting 60% of the whole body followed by the Tajiks with 13 members, which correspond to 18%. The Hazaras and the Uzbeks each with 6 and 4 members form 9% and 6% of the HPC respectively. Other smaller ethnic groups such as Turkmen with 2 members and Baluch and Pashayi, each with one member, constitute 7% of this body (International Crisis Group, 2012).

Apart from civil society and few politically non-associated but traditionally pro-government elements, 15 political factions possess varying degrees of representation in the HPC.

Figure 4.2.2

HPC Factional Composition
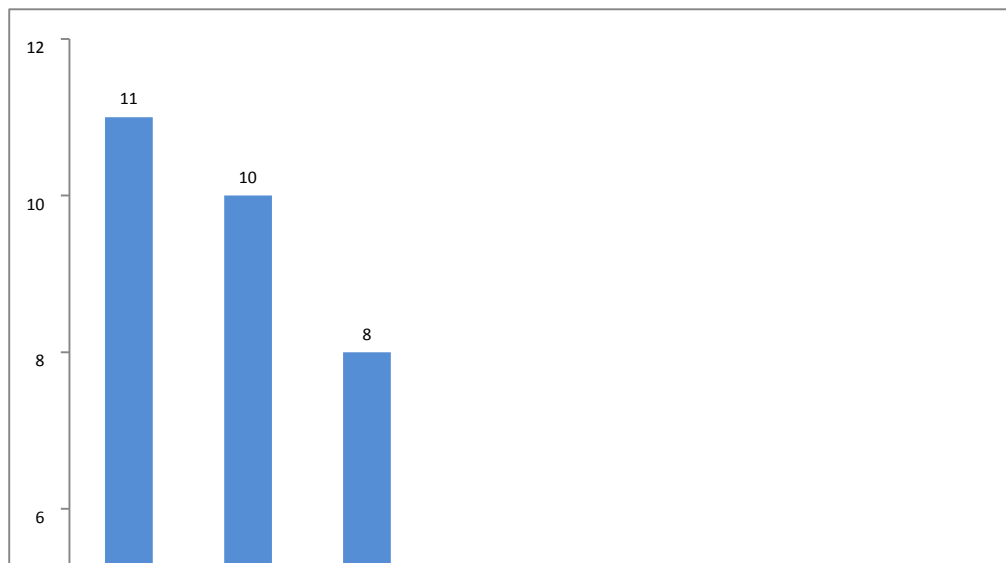
The Afghan *mujahidin* factions predominate the council. Hizb-e Islami Afghanistan with 11 members in the council ranks first with 16% representation followed by former Taliban officials and Jamiat-e Islami each with 10 and 8 members that constitute 14% and 11% of the HPC respectively. Other factions have smaller presences with the Organization of Invitation to Islam having 5 members (7%), Afghan Millat 4 (6%), Harakat-e Inqelab-e Islami Afghanistan 4 (6%), Junbish Milli Islami Afghanistan 3 (4%), Jabhay-i Nejat-i Milli-yi Afghanistan 3 (4%), Harakat-e Islami Afghanistan 2 (3%), and Mahaz-e Milli-yi Islami-yi Afghanistan 2 (3%). Factions such as Hizb-e Wahdat-e Islami Afghanistan, Hizb-e Wahdat-e Islami Mardum Afghanistan, Hizb-e Wahdat-e Islami Milli-yi Afghanistan, Hizb-e Paiwand-e Maihani Afghanistan and Hizb-e Islami Khalis, each with one member, totally reflect 5% of the council membership. The Afghan civil society including the women groups with 4 representatives constitutes 6% of the council (International Crisis Group, 2012).

The distribution of executive power within the framework of the HPC reflects the weight of factions as well the factions/individuals who operate in an unstable alliance with the government and their level of murky ties to the insurgent groups. The Pashtuns previously affiliated to Taliban, Hizb-e Islami, Hizb-e Islami Khalis, Harakat-e Inqelab, and Organization of Invitation to Islam predominate the major positions of the Executive Board of the High Peace Council (International Crisis Group, 2012).

Former President Burhanuddin Rabbani, leader of Jamiat-e Islami party who traded the leadership of the political opposition, the National United Front, with President Hamid Karzai for seven ministerial positions in late 2009 presided over the High Peace Council until his assassination in the autumn of 2011 (Zahuri 2013, personal interview). His son, Salahuddin Rabbani, immediately was appointed as the new chairman of the HPC

Two former Taliban officials such as Abdul Hakim Mujahid, Taliban's informal envoy to the United Nations and Mawlawi Arsalan Rahmani, former Taliban deputy minister of higher education, functioned as first deputy president,

and head of the Detainees Review Committee respectively (International Crisis Group, 2012). Rahmani was assassinated later in May 2013.

Three former Hizb-e Islami affiliates such as Mawlawi Attaullah Ludin, Ghulam Farooq Wardak and Qazi Mohammad Amin Waqqad serve as second deputy president, and heads of the International Relations and Public Awareness and Propagation Committees. Asadullah Wafa with previous links to Harakat-e Inqelab serves as third deputy president and Qeyamuddin Kashaf, deputy to the Organization of Invitation to Islam party and chief of Afghanistan's Ulemma Council serves as spokesman to the HPC (International Crisis Group, 2012).

4.3. Analysis of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program

4.3.1 Peace

Since its establishment, HPC has been making efforts to reach the leadership of the insurgent groups including the Taliban to end the violence. The HPC's central figures who are meant to symbolize partial representation of different factions and ethnic groups in the country hold contradictory perspectives on peace settlement with the insurgent factions. These power brokers in general and their constituents in particular have never seriously debated about a genuine peace settlement, and most importantly about its implications on the future of Afghanistan. The concept of peace settlement with the insurgent is still a source of confusion not only to a broad spectrum of the people but also to the council members (Rahmani 2013, personal interview).

The focus of the peace has primarily been individual leaders of the insurgent groups. It built on the informal negotiation between individuals associated with the government and the Taliban leaders. The first attempt was made in 2007 between Qayyum Karzai, brother of President Karzai and Mullah Baradar, a key figure within the Taliban. It was subsequently taken to Saudi Arabia with Abdullah Anas, an Algerian scholar with former connection to Taliban, as a mediator between the Kabul delegation and the insurgent representatives (Wikileaks, 2010). The Pakistanis suspected this move, turning against the drivers of the process, arresting Baradar in early 2010 and dozens of the other senior Taliban leaders across Pakistan in an attempt to disrupt the process. Pakistan disrupted this initiative by arresting some nine Taliban's key figures (Ruttig, 2013).

HPC attempted to resume the Kabul's failed attempts in reaching out to the key insurgent leaders. To frustrate these investments, the Pakistanis dispatched imposters such as Mullah Mansour, deputy of the Taliban movement in order to insult the intelligence of the Afghans as well as their international patrons. The revelation of the identity of the Mansour as a shopkeeper from Quetta shocked and belittled all the actors involved in the reconciliation enterprises (Zahuri 2013, personal interview). Yet, the Afghan Government did not learn lesson. It invested on another individual purportedly with connection to senior leaders of the Taliban in Quetta Pakistan. This game resulted in the death of the president of the HPC, leading the peace business (Clark, 2011). This revealed that the Afghan Government would not be able to lure individuals away from Pakistan to either create crack in the insurgency or liberate them from the control of the Pakistan. This indeed revealed the complex relationship between

the Afghan insurgency and the Pakistani formal and informal networks and institutions.

Reviewing its approach, the Afghan Government and its peace body HPC produced the road to peace, handing over the Pakistanis huge role in the peace program at the expenses of its own allies, the US and other troop contributing countries (Chayes, 2012). The Pakistanis accepted the road map but doubted the commitment and the abilities of the Afghan Government to deliver on its written promises. They had earlier submitted their strategic demands in 2011 to Afghan Government, which were rejected as they impinged upon the sovereignty of Afghanistan as a state (Saleh, 2013). They furthermore preferred to wait and see how the balance of power would change in Afghanistan and in the region after the foreign troops withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014. This is assumed to weaken the position of Afghan Government, improve the bargaining and fire power of the insurgents and increase the US reliance on Pakistan than Afghanistan after the troop's departure in 2014 (Darwish 2013, personal interview).

Fixated on withdrawal and its future relationships with Afghan Government, the US demonstrated frenzies in facilitating the brokerage of a deal between Afghan Government and insurgents before its withdrawal. The assumption has been that Afghan Government may not withstand the insurgency long without substantive military and otherwise support of the external actors. Based on these assumptions, the US initiated the opening of an office for Taliban in Doha, Qatar through shaggy negotiation with individuals with real and alleged links to the leadership of the Afghan insurgency (Zahuri 2013, personal interview). This move was interpreted as a strategic victory for insurgency, a parallel administration to the Kabul's and big juridical and moral blow to the statebuilding and peace efforts in Afghanistan. It was turned away by the Afghan Government this time, as it felt that the external actors have overtaken the momentum of peace talks with the insurgency.

The official peace efforts, marking its third year, appear to be in full shambles. It focused narrowly on individuals presuming that it is the individuals not the dynamics and structures that ensure peace and stability in Afghanistan. The process has obviously failed to an extent that it has been unable even to reach out insurgent leaders and reduce the level of violence let alone the cessation of violence or the prevalence and consolidation of peace in the country.

4.3.2. Reintegration

The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) was presented to the international donors in the London Conference in 2010 within the structure of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). The program secured a total budget of US$783,951,711 in this conference (Sajjad, 2010).

The reintegration program is huge in scope with its cells operating all over the 34 provinces of the country. An exaggerated numbers of the insurgents have already joined the programs. As of 2013, around 6,662 insurgents had been reintegrated (UNDP, 2013). The reintegrated individuals originate from west, east and northeast than the insurgent heartlands, the southern Pashtun lands of Afghanistan (Ahmad 2013, personal interview). The target group of the component of the peace program has been the foot soldiers of the insurgency. The

mechanisms include providing an alternative to the economically motivated fighters that collaborate with the insurgency on permanent or provisional basis for making living for their families. The provision of alternative has comprises a wide array of tools ranging from cash payment to training, housing, protection and amnesty against their alleged and actual past crimes and destructive activities (Ahmad 2013, personal interview).

There is no agreement on the concept and function of the reintegration. The Afghan Government views it as a public relations tool, thereby luring the people, extending the writ of the state and assisting economically and technically the impoverished people driven to the arms of the insurgency non-ideological incentives. More broadly, it views the reintegration program as a mechanism to weaken the fighting moral of the insurgence by driving as many foot soldiers as possible (Muballegh 2013, personal interview). The international backers and donors of the program consider it as an intelligence gathering tool to investigate the reintegrated groups and individuals to understand more about the insurgency and strategically target them and deprive them of recruitment grounds (Zahuri 2013, personal interview).

The counter-reintegration attempt has been the infiltration of the state through reintegration either for next attacks or economic purposes. The worst case was the conduct of an organized attack on the UN building in northern Afghanistan in April 2011 under the rubric of a demonstration against the desecration of the Muslim Holy Book Quran, by a US citizen (BBC, 2011). In many cases ordinary Afghans have committed forgery to disguise themselves as insurgent foot soldiers to abuse the reintegration packages. In certain other cases, the provincial managers of the reintegration program have exploited the program to build and consolidate their clientele tribal, regional, economic and business networks (Ahmad, 2013, personal interview). The program has been very much distorted and degenerated, falling short of addressing grievances and exclusion even in the local level.

The impact of the program both on the cohesion and fighting capability of the insurgency has not been felt. Many local analysts believe that the program has left previse impact, encouraging more population to take up arms in order to later join and avail from the reintegration benefits subsequently. It in a way manufactures insurgents with economic incentives, constituting a vicious circle with no light at the end of the tunnel. The greater the reintegration package, the more the number of the fabricated insurgents queuing in the row to join.

4.5 Conclusion

Both peace and reintegration programs are designed to target distinct insurgent groups independent of the broader structure and dynamics of the conflict in Afghanistan. The Afghan conflict is rooted in the ethnic relations and its consequences, ethnic and ideational grievances and exclusions. The political and economic structures of the power perpetuate and escalate the conflict. Isolating the insurgency from the broader conflict structure does not produce the optimal outcome. It just squanders time, resources and frustrates the resolve for peace-building.

The peace program, despite its several attempts, has failed to even establish contact with the leadership of the insurgency, let alone to end violence in the

country. The former insurgent leaders under the protection of the government have carved out political space through government and external support, fighting a soft war against the government from Kabul. Some reconciled insurgent leaders are busier, meeting diplomats, military leaders, journalists and the people than many of the key ministers in the country. And more surprisingly, they never shy away from what they have done or their fellow insurgents do now including the suicide attacks and the destructions of the infrastructures and institutions across the country.

The reintegration program will have more reintegrated insurgents than the actual insurgents very soon. Nobody can gauge how much false intelligence they feed into the Afghan Government and its allies, the impact of the reintegration has been least and the local power brokers and other business and political economic networks have made most out of this program. The program has proven counter-productive, contributing to the manufacture of the insurgency.

Chapter 5
Why Afghanistan's Peace Model is Doomed to Fail

5.1 Introduction

The second and third chapters analyzed Afghanistan's conflict through the lens of historical grievances. Complex sets of grievances - economic, political and ideational bred a virulent and deadly conflict. The peace modality that Afghanistan has experimented with in the last one-decade was analyzed in the preceding chapter. The outcome of the analysis of the peace modality revealed that peace initiatives in Afghanistan failed to reduce violence, let alone ending violence or bringing about sustainable peace in the country.

This chapter analyses three key incompatibilities between the nature of the Afghan conflict and Afghanistan' peace modality. This chapter argues that Afghanistan's peace modality does not correspond to the nature of the Afghan conflict. Conflict will persist and peace will remain elusive unless the peace modality is constructed in ways that focus on tackling the root causes of the conflict.

This chapter is divided into three sections, reflecting three key insights from this study so far, which include the importance of history and structure (section one), the failure to acknowledge the complexity of the Afghan conflict (section two) and ideological factionalism (section three).

In the concluding chapter, ways of moving towards ending the political and military deadlock in Afghanistan are explored.

5.2 Three Key Incompatibilities Between the Afghan Conflict and the Peace Modality

5.2.1 The Importance of History and Structure

Afghanistan's current conflict is in part the outcome of a flawed state-building project. The imposition of such a discriminatory state model has created huge inequalities in Afghan society. Under successive Pashtun states, the non-Pashtuns ethnic groups have been politically, economically and culturally discriminated against. As a result, a recognizable pattern of inequalities and ethnic stratification is evident in Afghan society.

In my theoretical discussion on causes of civil conflict in chapter two, I referred to four types of inequalities- economic, social, political and cultural-identified as major causes of civil conflict. It was argued that when major political, economic and cultural inequalities exist among cultural and ethnic groups and when, in particular, these inequalities coincide, civil conflict is likely to take place (Stewart, 2011). Throughout its modern history and continuing today the Afghan state has promoted inequalities in Afghan society. Historically some of the ethnic groups like the Hazaras and Uzbeks have had no or at best a bare minimum presence politically. The post-Taliban state equally disenfranchised these ethnic groups. The Hazaras and Uzbeks have each comprised 4% of government bureaucracy in Afghanistan from 2001 until 2006 (Sharan, 2011). The political representation of non-Pashtuns including the Tajik who consti-

tuted 53% of the Afghan Government from 2001 to 2006 has significantly reduced after the 2009 presidential election (Sharan and Heathershaw, 2011).

The post-Taliban state, which was supposed to be a democratic state, recognizing equal economic and cultural development for all, has further widened economic and cultural inequalities in Afghanistan. In the last decade, the Afghan state has given major economic development attention to Pashtun provinces in the south, the insurgency-affected area, partially driven by the need to win the "hearts and minds" of the people there in order to improve security. The poorest areas such as central highlands of Afghanistan as well as northern parts of the country, which are the homelands of the non-Pashtuns and are less or not at all affected by insurgency have been given less development attention (Goodhand and Sedra, 2010). The new Afghan Constitution has endorsed unitary state favored by the Pashtuns and institutionalized the superiority of Pashtu language and the Pashtun tribal institution, the Jirga. For example, Article 110 of the Afghan Constitution states: "the Loya Jirga is the higher manifestation of the will of the people of Afghanistan" (The Afghanistan Constitution, 2004).

This long history of marginalization and exclusions has crated ingrained historical grievances among the non-Pashtuns in Afghanistan. Such grievances significantly affected the relationship of the non-Pashtuns with the state and the Pashtuns for which the state makes claims. To conceptualize how major grievances lead to civil conflict, I have employed the theoretical model devised by the Minority At Risk (MAR) project. It was argued that accumulated grievances driven by political, economic and cultural discriminations ultimately lead to civil conflict. Ethnic groups, who were persecuted or excluded by state or by the dominant group for which the state makes claims, direct their grievances towards the agents of repression and exclusion (Gurr and Moore, 1997).

The current Afghan peace modality does not address these historical and structural problems at all. To address these problems, peace-building must be an essential part of state-building. The tackling of these historical factors is not reflected in the current state-building project in Afghanistan. In many respects, the current state-building project resembles its predecessors. The new Afghan constitution, which purported to lay the foundation of new social and political order in Afghanistan, is conflictual. It recognizes juridical equality and inequality simultaneously. It recognizes ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity but in the meantime it institutionalizes the superiority of Pashtun language, the Pashtu, and Pashtun tribal institution, the Jirga (The Afghanistan Constitution, 2004). The constitution equally endorses a unitary state, which the minorities have always found problematic and exclusionary. The minorities' proposal of parliamentary federation, which could guarantee political participation of all ethnic groups in Afghanistan, has been rejected by the Pashtuns technocrats (Adeney, 2008). The problem lies in the design of the post-Taliban political structure. The peace initiative has obviously failed to do anything about these underlying structural problems.

5.2.2 Failing to Acknowledge Complexity

The Afghan conflict is highly complex with multiple actors and features. The proposed peace modality is narrowly focusing on one of the actors of the conflict, the insurgent groups. In many respects, the Afghan peace modality re-

sembles that of negative peace. By definition, negative peace falls short of addressing complex conflict since its prime focus is on a cession of violence and it is reductionist and pessimistic in nature (Grewal, 2003). Much of the Afghanistan peace effort, as discussed in Chapter Four, was focused on insurgents, presuming that political cooptation and provision of economic incentives to them would end violence in the country, particularly in the Pashtun belts.

Approaching a complex conflict through a small parochial and tribal lens did not help with the resolution of conflict at all. The peace program even failed to meet its narrow objective, ending the violence in the Pashtun belt, because it did not address the political and ideological grievances of the Taliban. Taliban have grievances because they were pushed out from power. They, in many ways, view themselves as the righteous claimants of power on religious, military and political grounds. They believe they are the only legitimate political force that can represent the Pashtuns, secure their interests and supremacy and are capable of challenging the non-Pashtuns. They believe they had and have military might as they made severe blows to the non-Pashtuns during the civil war in 1990s and to the national and international forces now (Akbar Agha 2013, personal interview).

Grievances are not only limited to the Taliban as they equally affect the non-Pashtuns, which the peace program failed to acknowledge. Ignoring the non-Pashtuns, who faced extraordinary brutalities under the Taliban, has stimulated them to oppose the government peace settlement with the Taliban.

As the Afghan President Hamid Karzai through HPC and other channels has increased efforts to broker chaotic, quick deals with splintered groups of the insurgents to end violence in the Pashtun belts, it has stimulated suspicions among the non-Pashtuns and provoked them to oppose his peace plan. The cessation of violence in the Pashtun belt threatens others while the continuation of the war in Pashtun belt means the bleeding of the Pashtun but the postponement of the arrival of the storm of mass murder and destruction to the non-Pashtuns (Rahmani 2013, personal interview). Hence, the non-Pashtun views the peace settlement and possible power-sharing arrangement with the Taliban as a Pashtun solution to the conflict (Ruttig, 2013).

Several of the politico-military factions, that were part of the former United Front and played a key role in defeating the Taliban in 2001, have opposed the peace-settlement with the Taliban and in some cases they even tried to sabotage it. For example, Sayyaf one of the prominent members of the HPC and the leader of the Organization of Invitation to Islam party has begun to openly oppose the peace process with the Taliban by saying that there is no record in the Afghan history where the "freemen" reconciled with those whom, he called, "slaves", the Taliban (Killid Group, 2013). Ever since, he continues calling for a tougher military actions against the Taliban. Faizullah Zaki, deputy to Junbish-e Milli Islami, a party that represents the Uzbeks said that Karzai has identified the peace process as an opportunity to share power with the Taliban to secure the dominance of his own ethnic group, the Pashtuns. He added that what President Karzai has not realized however is that the time for monopoly of power by one ethnic group or one family is gone in Afghanistan (Zaki 2013, personal interview).

In addition to historical animosity between the Jamiat party and the Taliban including the murder of Tajiks' legendary political and military leader, Ahmad

Shah Massoud by the Taliban in 2001, the recent assassination of Burhaniddin Rabbani, the leader of the Jamiat party and former chairperson of HPC by the Taliban in autumn 2011, further impelled the Tajiks to confront the peace settlement with the Taliban. Mohammad Mohaqiq, the leader of the Hazara Wahdat party did not wary to publically say that his party and his people has no willingness to negotiate peace with the Taliban who massacred his people and shed the blood of his people's father (he was referring to the former leader of the party, Ali Mazari, who was killed by the Taliban in 1995) (Rahmani 2013, personal interview). These parties are still partially armed, lack internal democratic procedures (Ruttig, 2013), maintain close ties with a foreign patron for military aid and had accumulated significant amount of wealth in the last one-decade through their linkages with illicit sectors of the economy. These parties might engage in another factional war, if the Taliban return back to power and might threaten their security.

Apart from the political opposition, Afghan civil society and women's rights groups have equally opposed peace settlement with the Taliban on human rights ground. Civil society tries to safeguard individual human rights and freedom enshrined in the current Afghan constitution and the achievements made in terms of democratic rights and freedom over the last decade (Ruttig, 2013). Given the Taliban's maltreatment of women, persecution and mass murder of ethno-religious minorities in 1990s, the Taliban's possible return to power is seen as a threat to human rights and democratic freedoms. Civil society is equally concerned with the question of justice for gross human rights violations committed by different warring factions, including the Taliban, and mainstreaming transitional justice in the current peace process. Afghan civil society would have supported the Afghan Government peace settlement with the Taliban if HPC had shown some level of commitment to respect human rights, provided guarantees that they would not negotiate human rights for superficial peace, had not included individuals with questionable human rights background in the HPC and had introduced a clear mechanism of accountability for reintegrated members of the armed groups (Bisharat 2013, personal interview).

Given this complexity, the Afghan peace modality should have taken into account all the associated features and actors of the conflict. Peace can only be established in Afghanistan once the complex nature of the Afghan conflict is acknowledged and efforts are made to approach and resolve it in its entirety.

5.2.3 Ideological Factionalism

The Taliban is an ideological faction with a political project that is hard to reconcile with those of other factional ideologies with different political projects for Afghanistan. Ideologically, the Taliban are organized around the *Deobandi ulema* and *madrassah*, an Islamic seminary known for its strict interpretation of Islamic Law, its revivalists and anti- imperialist ideology (Maley, 1998). This ideological outlook makes the Taliban different from the earlier versions of Islamists political groups in Afghanistan. The former models of the Islamists groups in Afghanistan were and still are strongly influenced by the ideas of the Egyptian *Muslim Brotherhood* and its founders, Sayyid Qutb and Hassan al Banna. What makes the Taliban unique is that they are ideologically determined to seize full political power in order to establish an Islamic Emirate based on *Sha-*

ria law, as opposed to other Islamic groups who only claim their share of the political cake in Afghanistan (Sultani 2013, personal interview).

Despite claims that the Taliban leadership has shifted its ideological position (Ruttig, 2013), there is no substantive evidence to confirm such a statement. The new recruits replaced former Taliban commanders, who were either killed or arrested, are far more radical and violent (Kaldor, 2012). Some inactive elements of the Taliban, whom are often labeled as "moderate Taliban" by Western media, did not condemn any of the terrorist attacks of the Taliban. These so-called moderate Taliban are equally committed to the establishment of an Islamic Emirate and the implementation of *sharia* law (Akbar Agha 2013, personal interview).

The Taliban struggle to establish the Islamic Emirate not only to practice but also impose, nationalize and universalize their ideology. This threatens everybody in the country, in particular the non-Pashtun ethnic and religious minorities. The non-Pashtuns aspires to the construction of a pluralistic political structure that recognizes ethnic, cultural and religious diversity and institutionalizes the practice of political pluralism.

The Taliban ideology equally contrasts with those of more progressive elements of the Afghan society who organized around the young Afghan civil society and foster a political system based on constitutionalism. The Taliban seek to re-establish the Islamic emirate, which is inherently inimical to the established modality of the Afghan state, a state based on a constitutional order. The Taliban believe in *sharia* law and considers the current Afghanistan constitution anti-Islamic.

Finally, the Taliban ideology contrast with the ideology of Pashtun "techno-lords" who dream the consolidation of a Pashtun state in Afghanistan. Even though, the Taliban are predominantly Pashtuns, the Pashtunization of the state does not address the Taliban grievances as it meant more power and presence of Pashtun techno-lords, who are as alien to the Taliban as the non-Pashtuns. The Pashtunizing state has neither included the Taliban nor has it recognized them. The structure of state is as such- centralized- that it does not allow space for Taliban to breathe as much as it does not allow the non-Pashtuns.

These factional ideologies contrast one another. The peace program does not address these critical ideological and conceptual disagreements at all. Without reconciling these contradictory ideologies, peace will remain illusive in Afghanistan.

5.3 Conclusion

The Afghan peace modality is incompatible with the Afghan conflict. The peace modality, HPC and APRP-spearheaded peace-building, does not reflect the historical aspects, the deep-seated economic, political and cultural and ideational marginalization and exclusion along ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural fault-lines. These historical features upon which the Afghan state-building project is premised, which perpetuate and fuel the conflict, are addressed neither by the current peace initiatives nor by its predecessors. The success of any peace deals depends on how far it can reflect the underlying causes of the conflict itself. At present, the peace initiative is disconnected from the historical

contexts of the conflict and it is therefore heading towards failures. To get it back on the right track, it needs a wholesale revisit.

The reduction of peace to deals with and co-optation of the individual insurgent leaders and members, which the current HPC and APRP-led program focuses on, is doomed to fail. It is too reductionist and does not capture any significant feature of the bloody conflict. Even if this investment creates split in the insurgency, the conflict will not come to an end and it may only temporarily affect the insanity of the conflict.

The Taliban hold and foster a complex constellation of religious concepts with which they hope to re-establish the Islamic Emirate. This contradicts the other factional ideologies as well as the established modality of the Afghan state based on constitutionalism. This ideological and conceptual contradiction must be resolved. The Taliban have stayed committed to their ideology while the Afghan Government has hinted at tactical retreats but ignored the fact that the underlying conceptual difference denies peace program of any chances for success.

Building peace in Afghanistan requires overhaul of the current peace program. It requires an incorporation of the historical, ideological and the multi-dimensional nature of the current conflict. The current peace program will only lead to peace if it begins to address the historically rooted inequalities, the current ideational clashes and the fundamental line of differences between the government and the mainstream insurgency groups.

Chapter 6: Concluding Thoughts and Alternative Pathways

6.1 Since the current conflict in Afghanistan is the outcome of historical and structural factors, peace-building must be an essential part of the state-building in Afghanistan. Peace-building should not only recognize but also protect ethnic, cultural, and political diversity. It should give priority to addressing the historical inequalities, thereby cultivating a deep sense of equality and coexistence structurally, historically and institutionally.

6.2 The basic concept of peace is disputed in Afghanistan meaning different things to different people. There must be a middle ground where the peace program addresses the Taliban grievances to end violence in Pashtun belt but in the meantime guarantee the continuation of the current peace and stability in the non-Pashtun areas. National and international guarantees should be provided that the Afghan Government peace settlement with the Taliban does not mean the unification of the Pashtuns against the non-Pashtuns and that minority rights and women rights should not be negotiated by the government and violated by the Taliban.

6.3 Peace-building should address factional ideological differences. The reconciliation between these different sets of ideologies and their resultant political system will be a step forward towards peace-building in Afghanistan. The Taliban must moderate and adapt their ideology and respect the Afghanistan constitution. The Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns must equally agree on a democratic and pluralistic Afghanistan.

6.4 The current political system is highly centralized and exclusionary. The political system should be flat enough to let everybody in the country to release and tackle their grievances by speaking in their terms, feeling themselves represented and having a stake in the cake of power.

6.5 Personal co-optation of the insurgent leaders does not bring peace. It wastes energies, squanders resources and frustrates the current administration. The resources and energies must be used in strategic ways to marginalize the insurgency militarily, financially and diplomatically.

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Appendix 1: The List of Interviewees

No	Interviewees (Pseudonym)	Date and Place of Interview	Position/Occupation of Interviewees
1	Abdul Bashir Zahuri	30 July 2013, Kabul, Afghanistan	Political Officer at UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)
2	Ajmal Baluchzada	14 July 2013, Kabul, Afghanistan	Civil Society Activist
3	Arif Rahmani	18 July 2013, Kabul, Afghanistan	Member of the Afghan Parliament
4	Aslam Jawadi	12 July 2013, Kabul, Afghanistan	Editor-in-Chief of Open Society Daily
5	Faizullah Zaki	23 July 2013, Kabul Afghanistan	Deputy to Junbish Melli Islami Party
6	Jawad Sultani	28 July 2013, Kabul, Afghanistan	Professor at Kateb University
7	Khudadad Bisharat	9 July 2013, Kabul, Afghanistan	Human Rights Advocate/ Member of Transitional Justice Coordination Committee
8	Mawlawi Sayed Akbar Agha	26 July 2013, Kabul, Afghanistan	Former Taliban Commander/Current Leader of Jaishul Muslim Taliban
9	Nader Ahmad (Pseudonym)	10 July 2013, Kabul, Afghanistan	Advisor to Afghanistan High Peace Council
10	Sakhi Darwish	5 July 2013, Kabul, Afghanistan	Former International Crisis Group's Senior Analyst in Afghanistan
11	Zia Muballegh	21 July 2013, Kabul, Afghanistan	Civil Society Activist