Introduction

Consequences of the Cold War between the Western Bloc, namely the United States of America (US) and the Eastern Bloc, namely the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) can be seen today, with the fallout having radically altered many parts of the world. Such changes can be seen easily today, whether it be on the Korean Peninsula, where a massive war divided the Koreas and a sense of peace only exists due to a weak armistice agreement, or in Vietnam, where a proxy war tore thousands of families apart.

However, perhaps the country most affected is Afghanistan, whose people feel the effects of decades of strife in their everyday lives. The country of Afghanistan has been a region ravaged by wars of all sorts through the years, but the level of social and political conflict caused by insurgency in the country has rarely been matched before. Much of the violence started in 1978 with a military coup that was by no means peaceful in nature. After becoming dissatisfied with the communist leadership in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union invaded in 1979 and put in place their own government. For the next 9-10 years, there was a bloody war between various Afghan mujahideen militant groups. After the Soviet Union left the country in 1989, the various factions in the country fought amongst themselves and this civil war ravaged the country. This dragged on until the Taliban come to power in 1996, after which an extreme form of Sharia Law was imposed upon the people and countless number of people were massacred. After the events of 9/11, the Taliban were removed from power by NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), but various mujaideen groups still threaten the peace of Afghanistan on a daily basis through insurgency. It becomes increasingly evident from this abridged version of Afghanistan’s modern history that the people have not known peace, security, and freedom for an unacceptably long period of time. Possibly, without global assistance to guide the country into a safe future, Afghanistan will become a nation where the citizens are not the masters of their own destiny, but instead where oppression reigns, in complete violation of all of the principles the United Nations cherishes.
Definition of Key Terms

Mujahideen

Mujahideen are people who strive or struggle on behalf of Islam. The term is most frequently used in reference to the self named Afghan mujahideen, the guerrilla fighters who battled the Soviet army from 1979 – 1989, after which the Soviets withdrew in defeat.

Sharia Law

Sharia law is Islam's legal system. It is derived from the Koran, Islam's central text, and fatwas - the rulings of Islamic scholars. Sharia law acts as a code for living that all Muslims should adhere to, including prayers, fasting and donations to the poor. The key areas that the laws deal with are family law, finance, and business, however, Sharia law deals with all aspects of life itself and prescribes a certain type of lifestyle.

Guerilla Warfare

A type of warfare fought by irregulars in fast-moving, small-scale actions against orthodox military and police forces and, on occasion, against rival insurgent forces, either independently or in conjunction with a larger political-military strategy.

Background Information

Medieval Afghanistan to Soviet Invasion

Afghanistan has not had stable governance for several decades now with various conflicts in the region ranging from Persian invasions in the 1700s to British invasions in the 1800s, Soviet invasions in the 1970s, and more recently a series of civil wars in the country. In the 1970s, the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) came to power and introduced a variety of social reformations some of which included abolishing arranged marriages and promoting mass literacy. Many local tribal leaders opposed these changes and many began to form their own militias. The Soviet Union sensed the PDPA’s weakening control and entered Afghanistan, while replacing the PDPA leadership in an effort to keep the PDPA in power. In an effort to counteract this Soviet influence, countries such as the United States of America and China, began funding of certain mujahideen groups. The unrest and lawlessness

---

in Afghanistan during their civil wars, especially in the southern areas of Afghanistan, allowed several such militant groups to form and gain power in the country, as there was no other central authority which could oppose them.

**Afghan Civil War**

In 1989, the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan due to the heavy costs incurred by its armies in the country. After this withdrawal, there were several factions in Afghanistan, such as the Taliban, and those led by Ahmad Shah Massoud and Abdul Rashid Dostum, all vying for power from 1992. By 1994, the Taliban had formed and had swiftly taken over a large majority of the southern areas of the country. At this point, the Taliban, who were at this time also aligned with al-Qaeda, had also rejected an offer by the government in power to form a coalition government, and proceeded to wage war against them. Eventually a coalition called the Northern Alliance formed, comprised of Massoud’s and Dostum’s militias among others, and held only the northern and some western regions of the country, while the Taliban controlled 90% of the country by 2001.

![Map of Areas Controlled by Factions in Afghanistan in 1996](image)

**Foreign Intervention**

After the United States had found compelling evidence linking Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda to the September 11, 2001 attacks, the United States demanded the Taliban regime to hand over Osama bin Laden and to expel the al-Qaeda from Afghanistan, which they refused to do. As a result, the United States, following up on declarations, made in an ultimatum to the Taliban regime and began to bomb Afghanistan on October 7, 2001. By December 2001, a coalition of western countries (such as the US and the UK) along with the Northern Alliance had defeated the Taliban and al-Qaeda alliance and had expelled them from the country. Many members of these two groups, including Osama bin Laden took refuge inside Pakistan. After several years of fighting, which saw the Al-Qaeda diminish in size, as
well as the rise of Taliban insurgency throughout the country especially in the southern region, in 2010, the United States announced plans to withdraw from the country by 2014. Many of the other nations part of the ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) soon followed suit. In 2012, the United States and Afghanistan signed an agreement which provided a long-term framework for cooperation between the two nations even after the United States' withdrawal from the country. By 2013, primary combat duties had been transferred from the ISAF and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) to the Afghan Military.

**Current Situation**

Most countries have began to withdraw large percentages of their troops from Afghanistan, while the Afghan Police as well as the Afghan Military forces are receiving training and advise from the ISAF and NATO troops still present. However, many fear that by the end of 2014, when there will be nearly no non-Afghan troops left, there will be a spike in insurgency and Afghanistan will return to a situation similar to the civil war in the 1990s due to the perceived lack of training, experience, and numbers of the Afghani Police and Military forces to combat the Taliban and any other anarchist militant groups. Therefore, it is up to the UNSC to draft a plan for any further assistance, in primarily military forms, but as well as economic and social forms, that the international community wishes to provide in order to ensure the presence of a stable government in Afghanistan. This would prevent the 13 years of work of the ISAF and the international community from being undone. This would be in the best interests of not only Afghanistan, but also the entire Middle East region and by extension, the rest of the world.

**Major Countries and Organizations Involved**

**Afghanistan**

Afghanistan has been in a continuous state of turmoil since the Soviet takeover in the country. After the Soviet withdrawal, a power vacuum was created and many factions fought to retain control of the country, with not too many able to do so. During the Afghan Civil War, the Taliban eventually seized power and controlled a majority of the country. After the NATO intervention in the country, many areas were liberated from outright Taliban control and elections can now be held to elect a democratic government in the country. However, the country still faces massive security issues with the Taliban threat not completely neutralized. The country’s future hangs in a limbo due to its current overreliance on the ISAF and with the ISAF winding its mission in Afghanistan; there is no large concrete plan to solve the many problems that continue to plague the country. It is expected that Afghanistan would welcome solutions that allow for greater training of Afghani security forces so that the country is able to provide for its own security in a safe and sustainable manner. However, letting a large number of foreign troops remain in Afghanistan for extended periods of time may prove to be unpopular with the populace due to previous incidents in which the Afghani sentiments have been hurt as well as incidents in which ISAF
soldiers have killed many civilians. In addition, Afghanistan is likely to be open to aid for social projects, in addition to infrastructure development schemes.

United States

The United States initially became involved in Afghanistan when it began funding various mujahideen groups in Afghanistan, mainly through clandestine operations, in an effort to counteract the Soviet influence in the country, during the invasion, in the 1970s. After the Soviet intervention ended, the United States scaled down their influence in the country until after the September 11, 2011 attacks. The United States’ military forces entered the country shortly after with the objective of dealing with the threat of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. The United States has maintained a strong military presence in the country since then and has been the primary coordinator of efforts in Afghanistan against the Taliban. The United States currently has about 30,000 military personnel stationed in Afghanistan. The United States has been perceived to be vital for any future projects in Afghanistan and are likely to be open to helping Afghanistan in a more passive and advisory role for a longer period of time, which would entail training of security forces. However, it is unclear if the United States would agree to maintain a large troop presence in Afghanistan in an active fighting role. The United States, currently one of the largest donors to Afghanistan, would probably maintain this level of aid for the years to come.

NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) intervened in Afghanistan through the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). ISAF is the NATO led, United Nations sanctioned, joint security mission in Afghanistan whose primary purposes are to deal with the insurgency in the country as well as assisting in the rebuilding of Afghanistan. ISAF currently has about 50,000 military personnel from various countries stationed in Afghanistan. A large majority of these forces are contributed by NATO countries, with the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy forming the largest contingent. There are also forces from non-NATO countries that are a part of the ISAF, but are not large in number. The NATO has been instrumental in the reduction of the Taliban insurgency. The role of the NATO as a whole has reduced over the years and it appears that the organization as a whole will not be participating actively in the coming years. However, individual countries are still expected to at least contribute in some form to the rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan whether it be through financial aid or security training programs.

Pakistan

Pakistan began operations in Afghanistan at about the same time as the United States during the Soviet intervention. Through Pakistan’s intelligence agency, namely the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the country funneled money into Afghanistan to aid the mujahideen fighters. The ISI’s assistance had
also reportedly extended to arms and training as well in an effort to counter Soviet influence in the region. However, unlike the United States, Pakistan continued their activities in Afghanistan well after the Soviet Union left the country. The Pakistani military as well as the ISI have admitted to supporting the Taliban regime in Afghanistan until the 9/11 attacks, and many sources allege that the Pakistani government continues to do so as well. Many of the NATO countries have complained that Pakistan has also opened its borders to Taliban fighters as a safe haven from the ISAF forces, as well as tipping them off before major raids. A large smuggling network between Pakistan and Afghanistan was also discovered with some experts claiming that the network could have provided the Taliban with hundreds of millions in funding. The Afghan government has stated on record that if the Pakistani government stopped aiding extremist groups in the region, the problems in Afghanistan would have been solved a long time ago with the help of the ISAF. The Pakistani government insists that it is trying to help in Afghanistan, but many experts and countries around the world are not convinced of this. For any plan regarding Afghanistan to succeed, Pakistani cooperation to the highest level must be guaranteed to ensure that Taliban fighters operating out of safe havens do not continually threaten Afghanistan.

**Taliban**

The Taliban is an Islamic fundamentalist group based out of Afghanistan. Although it is not clear exactly when the group became independent from other fundamentalist groups, it is believed that they were a part of the various mujahideen groups starting from the 1970s and became a completely separate group in the early 1990s. They were a major party in the Afghan Civil War and were highly active in the 1990s as loose fighting force. When they came to power in 1996 in Afghanistan, they formed their government and named the country as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and ruled until 2001. They lost control of the country shortly after the NATO intervention in the nation. Since then, the group has resorted to insurgency in an attempt to regain power and to put in place their ideals. The Taliban are known to impose an extreme form of the Sharia law wherever they have control and are able to do so. The United Nations believes the Taliban to be guilty of various war crimes including, but not limited to massacres and ethnic cleansing. They have also engaged in illicit activities such as human trafficking, repression of women, and extremism against citizens of their own country in an effort to control the country. There has been much documented evidence of the Taliban’s brutality in an effort to uphold Sharia law. Under Taliban rule, much of Afghanistan was and still continues to be denied access to basic services such as running water, electricity, telephone etc. and there is a paucity of food supplies in many areas as well due to the Taliban’s “scorched earth” tactics, which was often employed when they fought. The Taliban is on the United Nations’ terrorism watch lists.

**India**

India has traditionally been a regional ally of Afghanistan and has backed the country at various points in time. The two countries also have various trading partnerships and strategic agreements which underscore the alliance. India has not contributed troops to the ISAF effort in Afghanistan, but has
however helped extensively in various other efforts in Afghanistan. India is the largest provider of aid in Afghanistan and helped in several humanitarian efforts as well as infrastructural projects. India has also stated that they have future plans to expand trade relations with Afghanistan. As the NATO forces plan to conclude their mission soon, it may be beneficial for Afghanistan if a strong regional partner is able to provide the country assistance in various sectors related to general development of the country in the interim until Afghanistan feels it can become fully independent. India is expected to work closely with the Afghan government in efforts to rebuild the country.

**Timeline of Events**

- April 27, 1978-Communist coup and People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan comes to power
- December 24, 1979-Soviet Union intervenes and enters the country after being dissatisfied by the country’s communist party
- February 1989 -Soviet withdrawal complete
- 1992-Various political parties that exist agree on a power sharing agreement. Conflict between the various parties then escalates into a full scale war. Marks the beginning of the Afghan Civil War
- 1994 -Taliban rises to become a very prominent national group
- September 27, 1996-The Taliban, having seized large parts of the country, especially in the south, including Kabul, proclaims itself as the government of Afghanistan, now renamed as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.
- October 15, 1999 - The United Nations Security Council imposes an arms embargo against the Taliban and condemns the Pakistani military support for the group
- September 11, 2001-The 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York occur and are attributed to the al-Qaeda
- October 7, 2001 -The United States begins bombing Taliban positions in Afghanistan
- December 2001 -The Taliban holds almost no power in the country’s government. Hamid Karzai becomes the interim administration head. The ISAF is established by the United Nations
- January 2004-Afghanistan sets up an official government through a constitution.
- 2004 – 2010 -No major developments other than regular skirmishes between ISAF forces and the Taliban. Redevelopment projects continue through the efforts of the ISAF.
- November 2010 - NATO signs a declaration stating that responsibility for security will be handed over to Afghan forces at the end of 2014.
- May 1, 2011 -Osama bin Laden is killed in Pakistan by US forces.
- December 5, 2011-A conference is held in Bonn to determine how to proceed in Afghanistan in an effort to make it self-sustaining. Pakistan refused to attend and the conference fails to yield much.
- June 2013 -The responsibility for security is shifted from international to Afghan forces. ISAF’s focus shifts to military training.
Relevant UN Treaties and Events


The aforementioned are just a few of the countless number of resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council on the question of Afghanistan. Delegates are encouraged to look at a larger number of resolutions and agreements in an effort to gain deeper understanding about action that has been already taken.

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

The United Nations has been very proactive in an effort to solve the problems in Afghanistan. Since the Taliban regime came to power in the country in 1996, the UNSC has often been unequivocal about its stance regarding the objectionable activities that have occurred in Afghanistan. Some resolutions are simply condemnations of acts that have taken place in the nation. However, other resolutions, such as UNSC Resolutions 1267 and 1333, have taken serious action such as reducing trade with Afghanistan, placing economic sanctions on the country, and putting in place arms embargoes. The effect of these actions during the time that the Taliban regime was in power is questionable, especially because the Taliban was still easily able to procure the necessary equipment it needed to arm its members as well as raise ample amounts of funds for the various illicit activities they wished to engage in.

The first International Conference on Afghanistan in Bonn, Germany held in 2001, post the 9/11 attacks, was deemed to be a success as it not only called for the ISAF but was also responsible in helping to quickly create a governing administration in Afghanistan which was a building block for the
current Afghanistan government. Afghanistan arguably has the most stable government in power today in the country since before the Soviet invasion of the country. The NATO’s ISAF force has largely been a success in expelling Taliban power from the country. Afghanistan. Within a few months of the start of the mission, the Taliban government had been toppled and been relegated to the mountains in the east of the country or had left the country for Pakistan. On the other hand, the ISAF’s efforts at combattting the insurgency has not been as successful. Even through insurgency levels associated with Islamic fundamentalist groups in the country has dropped considerable, the number of skirmishes that the ISAF forces have with small Talibani groups and the number of bombings and other terror related activities must drastically reduce before Afghanistan can be considered to be truly safe.

The second International Conference on Afghanistan in Bonn, Germany held in 2011 was aimed at forming a blueprint for future action in Afghanistan. Although there was some progress was made, there were many details that could not be agreed on. Furthermore, the fact that Pakistan was absent further worsened the matter. This is because much of the international community felt that only when Pakistan made a better effort to seal its borders with regards to movement of goods for the Taliban trade network, as well as not stopping Taliban fighters from using the country as an exit path whe the ISAF forces cornered them, would the Taliban threat be fully neutralized. On a whole, much has been done to eradicate the militant threat that the Taliban poses, but there has not been an adequate international effort for the rebuilding of Afghanistan

**Possible Solutions**

The problem in Afghanistan is multi-faceted and definitely cannot be solved without sustained international support to ensure that the Taliban does not rise again and the situation in Afghanistan to deteriorate.

The training of the Afghani military has not been completed fully and is unlikely to be completed by the end of 2014. Although much progress has been made, most experts do not believe the Afghani military will be able to handle the Taliban if left alone. One suggestion could be for the ISAF to remain in the country in smaller numbers to continue the army training over a larger period of time. Perhaps military advisiors could be put in place on the Afghan army command structure to ensure tactical knowledge and experience is passed down to the military.

Currently, the ISAF provides all air support for missions in Afghanistan. The nation currently does not possess an air force of any kinds. It must be remembered that the ISAF has used bombing campaigns extensively while combatting the Taliban threat especially as much of the country’s terrain is rugged and it is not always possible to send ground forces to a designated area or is useful when battles are likely to be attritional in nature. Consideration must be given to having the ISAF maintain an air force in Afghanistan while chaulking out a concrete plan as to when the Afghani Air Force will be ready and where the funds for the endeavour will come from.
Taliban insurgency is still not below acceptable levels and is severely damaging to any progress that the nation makes. Afghani intelligence and counterterrorism units are not at levels high enough to be able to constantly thwart these threats. Assistance in this area is still required and it is up to the Afghani government to decide how to go about this. Possibilities include training from other nations as well as funding for counterinsurgency programs from other countries, which may be willing to donate if they are convinced of the threat the Taliban still pose if left unchecked. In addition, the number of people joining the Taliban is alarming. Experts cite the outrage against the number of civilians the ISAF has mistakenly killed, as well as various incidents where Islam has been insulted by ISAF forces, as factors contributing to people joining the Taliban. Such incidents must be curbed by the command of any non-Afghan forces present in the country to make progress with the people. Development of the country in general through infrastructural, social (including militant rehabilitation), and economic projects will likely uplift Afghani society as a whole and could bring an end to such incidents.

What often occurs when Taliban forces are fighting ISAF forces in the extreme east of the country is that when cornered, they simply cross the border and move into Pakistan until they are able to regroup and then reenter Afghanistan. This is a problem because ISAF does not have the authority to move into Pakistan. In addition, the Taliban runs a trade network across the border which it uses to fund its activities. The Afghanistan-Pakistan border issue must be addressed in any discussion talking about ways in which to combat the Taliban since even if there is a certain level of security brought to Afghanistan, it will never be secured permanently if the Taliban cannot be rooted out from any safehavens they may have. This is because they would still have the capability to organize offensives into the country.

The Afghan government although stable, may not be completely experienced enough to handle the current situation in the eyes of some parts of the international community. A suggestion is to provide policy advisors to the Afghan government. These advisors could be envoys from other contributing countries or from international think tanks. However, this would be subject to the Afghan government’s consent.

Delegates are advised to remember that in this issue, specifics about any plan are of the utmost importance, especially after being aware that in the past several plans have failed due to their lack of specificity.

Delegates should make note that the aforementioned are only a few of the problems and solutions that plague Afghanistan, and therefore should consider a broader variety of problems and creative solutions that will allow the mission to in Afghanistan to be best completed.
Bibliography


http://terrorism.about.com/od/m/g/Mujahideen.htm


http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7234870.stm

http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/248353/guerrilla-warfare#toc53101

http://www.cfr.org/afghanistan/taliban-afghanistan/p10551


http://www.cfr.org/afghanistan/us-war-afghanistan/p20018

http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/un_resolutions_and_reports.php?id_state=1
Appendix

Useful Links


http://csis.org/publication/six-conditions-effective-transfer-power-afghanistan

http://www.infoplease.com/country/afghanistan.html

http://www.afghangovernment.com/briefhistory.htm