

## **PARKMUN 2023**

### **The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)**

#### **The Question of The Conflict in Afghanistan Briefing Papers**

The Conflict in Afghanistan is of the utmost importance and relevance. The goal of this debate is to find an achievable way in which power can be restored to the democratically elected government of Afghanistan over the Taliban who currently hold power in the country. This should be achieved through diplomatic means.

The Chair would like to begin by reminding Delegates that DISEC does not hold the power to directly appoint UN Peacekeeping Forces and that it may only be suggested to the Security Council to do so.

#### **History**

From 1996 to 2001 most of Afghanistan was under the control of the Taliban, a Sunni Islamic fundamentalist and predominantly Pashtun movement.

Following the 9/11 attacks, which were carried out by the Sunni pan-Islamist militant group al-Qaeda, the USA and allied forces invaded the country and ousted the Taliban following their refusal to hand over terrorist leader Osama bin Laden. Following the invasion Taliban leadership relocated to Southern Afghanistan and neighbouring Pakistan. From there they waged an insurgency against the Western-backed government in Kabul, Afghan national security forces and international coalition troops.

#### **Recent occurrences**

When the US Coalition formally ended its combat mission in 2014, the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) was put in charge of Afghanistan's security. They struggled however in defending territory and population centres, with the Taliban attacking rural districts and carrying out suicide bombings in major cities. The war would remain largely a stalemate for 6 years.

In February of 2020 a peace agreement was signed by the Taliban and the USA. The negotiations of this, the Doha Agreement, took more than a year. Within this agreement the USA stated they would withdraw troops down to 8,500 in 135 days and withdraw entirely within 14 months. The Taliban pledged to not allow land under its control to be used by terrorists and to enter negotiations with the Afghan government.

No official ceasefire was put in place however and after a brief reduction in conflict, the Taliban resumed attacks on Afghan civilians and defense forces. Talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government would begin a few months later to little success. Violence would continue in Afghanistan in 2020 and 2021 as the USA increased raids against the Taliban and air strikes. The Taliban would continue to make significant territorial gains however.

In April of 2021 President Joe Biden announced that USA military forces would leave Afghanistan by September of that year. This led the Taliban to rapidly increase attacks on the ANDSF and seize more territory around the country. After accelerating the removal of troops in May, nearly 95% of the USA's withdrawal was complete by the end of July. At the start of August the Taliban began to threaten government-controlled areas and took multiple border crossings.

On August 15<sup>th</sup> of 2021 Taliban fighters entered the capital Kabul and took control. This led to the President fleeing the country and the collapse of the government and the ANDSF. The USA would then send in 5,000 troops to assist with the evacuation of US and allied personnel, and Afghan citizens who had worked with the USA. On August 31<sup>st</sup> the complete USA troop removal was announced.

### **Current situation**

Following the US removal 120,000 citizens were airlifted from Afghanistan. Those who remained watched the regression of any gains in liberal and democratic rights and freedoms they had gained over the previous 20 years. Women are now required to cover their faces in public and to be accompanied by a male relative when travelling. While girls are once again barred from secondary schooling. Music has been banned, while flogging, public execution and amputations have been reintroduced. According to the UN Afghanistan is currently facing the greatest humanitarian crisis in the world.

### **Conclusion**

The Delegate must remember that this recap of events only scratches the surface of what is a terrible conflict, one which has been going on for far longer than 20 years. It is simply a broad overview of recent events, that one may need to reference.

Ultimately the UN must encourage, not only, the restoration of a democratically elected government, but the restoration of human rights in Afghanistan also. This could be achieved through the suggestion of sanctions, of talks and of the restating of previous resolutions.

Oscar Schmidt

DISEC Head Chair, PARKMUN 2023