



**SRMUN Charlotte 2025**  
**March 20-22, 2025**  
[sc\\_charlotte@srmun.org](mailto:sc_charlotte@srmun.org)

## **Security Council Update II: International Security Implications of the Taliban's Control in Afghanistan**

### ***Introduction***

The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 marked a pivotal shift in the country's political landscape, leading to the collapse of the internationally recognized Afghan government and escalating an international crisis.<sup>1</sup> The situation and subsequent Taliban rule has raised concerns regarding human rights violations, humanitarian crises, and regional stability.<sup>2</sup> With over 29 million Afghans in need of humanitarian assistance, the challenges facing Afghanistan are compounded by ongoing conflict, economic collapse, and natural disasters.<sup>3</sup> The international community remains divided on how to address the Taliban's rule and the associated security threats.

### ***Background Information***

Afghanistan is located in Central Asia, where it borders Pakistan, Iran, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.<sup>4</sup> It's home to just over 40 million people, and the population tends to cluster around the foothills of the Hindu Kush mountain range, where it is most densely populated in the East.<sup>5</sup> Afghanistan's population is made up of several ethnic groups, but the majority fall into the tribes of the Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, and Uzbek.<sup>6</sup>

Following its independence from Great Britain in 1919, Afghanistan declared itself as a monarchy.<sup>7</sup> In 1973, Muhammad Zahir Shah, then ruler, was overthrown by his cousin, Daoud Khan, who allied with the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).<sup>8</sup> The PDPA was a Marxist-Leninist party formed in 1965, and was composed of two main factions- the Parcham and the Khalq.<sup>9</sup> Once in power, Daoud undertook measures to marginalize the Parchamis and distance the government from the Soviet Union, causing outrage among the PDPA.<sup>10</sup> The two PDPA factions banded together in 1977 and launched an official coup on April 27, 1978.<sup>11</sup>

Under Khalq leadership, the PDPA government undertook radical reform, including abolishing feudalism, the cancellation of debt, and coeducation of men and women.<sup>12</sup> This mass reform was deemed "Anti-Islamic" by the conservative majority of the population, and was met with general unrest and civil disobedience. On December 24, 1979, the Soviet Union airlifted 115,000 troops into Kabul to aid the communist leadership and quash this opposition, tens of thousands were arrested, tortured, and executed including oppositional political figures, religious

---

<sup>1</sup> "Instability in Afghanistan | Global Conflict Tracker." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed September 24, 2024.  
<https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/war-afghanistan>

<sup>2</sup> "Instability in Afghanistan | Global Conflict Tracker." Council on Foreign Relations

<sup>3</sup> "Afghanistan: World Food Programme." UN World Food Programme. Accessed August 29, 2024.  
<https://www.wfp.org/countries/afghanistan>

<sup>4</sup> World Factbook: Afghanistan, Central Intelligence Agency. Accessed October 23, 2024.  
<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/afghanistan/>

<sup>5</sup> World Factbook: Afghanistan, Central Intelligence Agency.

<sup>6</sup> World Factbook: Afghanistan, Central Intelligence Agency.

<sup>7</sup> "Background on Afghanistan: History of the War," Human Rights Watch. Accessed November 15, 2024.  
<https://www.hrw.org/legacy/backgrounder/asia/afghan-bck1023.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> "Background on Afghanistan: History of the War," Human Rights Watch.

<sup>9</sup> Bjelica, Jelena. "Between Reform and Repression: The 60th Anniversary of the PDPA." Afghanistan Analysts Network - English, January 2, 2025.

<https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/reports/context-culture/between-reform-and-repression-the-60th-anniversary-of-the-pdpa/>

<sup>10</sup> Bjelica, Jelena. "Between Reform and Repression: The 60th Anniversary of the PDPA."

<sup>11</sup> Bjelica, Jelena. "Between Reform and Repression: The 60th Anniversary of the PDPA."

<sup>12</sup> Bjelica, Jelena. "Between Reform and Repression: The 60th Anniversary of the PDPA."

leaders, and ethnic minorities. One million Afghans died in Kabul, mostly due to aerial bombardment, and five million Afghans fled the country as refugees.

Islamic organizations became the heart of the resistance in the fight against a communist government in Kabul. Jihad fighters, or mujahidin, based themselves mainly in Pakistan and Iran, where the United States of America and Saudi Arabia provided massive support that was funneled through Pakistan. The rest of the country outside of Kabul was carved into different factions, and former resistance fighters declared themselves as local warlords. The people of Afghanistan were faced with unprecedented instability and subjected to violence, locally, regionally, and nationally.

### ***History of The Taliban***

The Taliban emerged from this background of the civil unrest in southern Afghanistan in the early 1990s in opposition to a Soviet Union backed government. The Taliban is a Sunni Islamist and nationalist group that was founded by a man named Mullah Mohammad Omar, a former mujahid from the province of Qandahar. The group mainly composed of rural farmers and men studying Islam in Afghan and Pakistani madrasas, or religious schools.<sup>13</sup> The word ‘Taliban’ is the Pashto word for ‘students.’<sup>14</sup> The Taliban aimed to restore stability in Afghanistan and enforce their interpretation of Islamic law. They successfully attacked the local warlords who were competing for power, and swept through the south, gaining notoriety for their military prowess.<sup>15</sup> They continued to gain more power and notoriety, as well as financial backing from foreign interests who saw an opportunity to further their own interests. By September 1996, the Taliban had captured Kabul, instated their own government, and renamed Afghanistan to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.<sup>16</sup> They quickly instituted a strict interpretation of Islamic law, instruction, and jurisprudence. In practice, this meant merciless policies aimed towards women, political opponents, and religious minorities.<sup>17</sup>

The Taliban created a safe space for several terrorist groups, including Al-Qaeda, where it provided a base for groups to recruit, train, and deploy their troops to other nations.<sup>18</sup> Following Al-Qaeda’s attacks on the United States World Trade Center and Pentagon, the Taliban was eventually routed from power by the United States’ campaign against Al-Qaeda. The organization regrouped over the border in Pakistan, and began to wage consistent campaigns to regain territory and power in Afghanistan. Following the United States’ promise to withdraw troops, the Taliban quickly regained control of Kabul in 2021, after almost 20 years of war.<sup>19</sup> The Taliban reinstated policies reminiscent of their original rule in the 90s, including numerous human rights violations. They reestablished their Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, which punishes behaviors deemed un-Islamic.<sup>20</sup> Judges were ordered to adhere to their interpretation of sharia law, with public floggings and executions resuming.<sup>21</sup> An estimated 700,000 jobs have been lost, the nation’s economy has shrunk by 30 percent, and more than 90 percent of the population suffers from food insecurity.<sup>22</sup>

### ***Afghanistan's Foreign Relations with Regional Powers***

Afghanistan's geopolitical position places it at the intersection of several influential regional powers, including Pakistan, Iran, China, and other Central Asian states.<sup>23</sup> Historically, Pakistan has maintained a complex relationship with Afghanistan as both countries have exerted significant influence on each other. Before the Taliban's resurgence,

<sup>13</sup> “National Counterterrorism Center: Groups.” National Counterterrorism Center. Accessed October 14, 2024.  
[https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/afghan\\_taliban.html](https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/afghan_taliban.html)

<sup>14</sup> “National Counterterrorism Center: Groups.” National Counterterrorism Center

<sup>15</sup> “National Counterterrorism Center: Groups.” National Counterterrorism Center

<sup>16</sup> “National Counterterrorism Center: Groups.” National Counterterrorism Center

<sup>17</sup> “National Counterterrorism Center: Groups.” National Counterterrorism Center

<sup>18</sup> “National Counterterrorism Center: Groups.” National Counterterrorism Center

<sup>19</sup> Maizland, Lindsay. “What Is the Taliban?” Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed December 23, 2024.  
<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/taliban-afghanistan>

<sup>20</sup> Maizland, Lindsay. “What Is the Taliban?”

<sup>21</sup> Maizland, Lindsay. “What Is the Taliban?”

<sup>22</sup> Maizland, Lindsay. “What Is the Taliban?”

<sup>23</sup> “China’s activities and influence in South and Central Asia” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Accessed September 5, 2024.  
<https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2022/05/chinas-activities-and-influence-in-south-and-central-asia?lang=en>

Afghanistan had engaged in various diplomatic initiatives with Pakistan aimed at fostering cooperation, especially concerning trade and security.<sup>24</sup> Following the resurgence of the Taliban, Pakistan has been cautious and careful to balance its support of the Member State while addressing concerns about cross-border militancy and the influx of Afghan refugees leading to a subsequent humanitarian crisis.<sup>25</sup> Pakistan has expressed grave concern surrounding the terrorist group Tehrik-e-Taliban, or TTP, and the actions of Afghanistan. TTP is the largest terrorist group fighting the state of Pakistan.<sup>26</sup> TTP violence has become exacerbated since the Taliban takeover in 2021, and sources report that the several thousand members of TTP residing in Afghanistan look to the Taliban leadership as an example, while enjoying a safe haven under Taliban rule in Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup>

Iran has expressed opposition to the extreme policies of the Taliban but has demonstrated a desire for stability in Afghanistan to prevent further humanitarian crisis spillover. They continue to secure their borders in preparation for cross-border militancy. Neighboring Member States, such as Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, are extremely wary of the Taliban's influence and the potential for increased instability and the rise of militant groups within their own borders.<sup>28</sup> China has a vested interest in maintaining security within the borders of Afghanistan, as currently there are factions of extremist groups that have gathered on the Northern borders of Afghanistan with the intent to liberate the Xianjiang Province in China and its' Muslim Uyghur community to impose Islamic rule.<sup>29</sup> Understanding these current complex regional dynamics is crucial for understanding the challenges ahead.

### ***Effects of Afghanistan on the International Community***

The situation in Afghanistan has significant implications for the international community, manifesting in various ways. The severe humanitarian crisis of famine and unprecedented economic instability necessitates a coordinated global response, but the international community faces the dilemma of providing aid while navigating the legitimacy of the Taliban as the governing authority. Neighboring regions are already grappling with the consequences of the Taliban's takeover, including an influx of refugees and heightened security threats. These intense spillover effects could destabilize the already fragile regional dynamics.<sup>30</sup>

Moreover, the resurgence of extremist groups, particularly the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria- Khorasan group, also known as ISIS-K, poses a threat not only to Afghanistan but also to international peace and security. The potential for these extremist groups to gain strength under the protection of the Taliban and plan coordinated terrorist attacks against foreign interests exacerbates the urgency of addressing the situation. The global community must grapple with these complex challenges, as the ramifications of Afghanistan's instability are felt far beyond its borders.

### ***Recent Developments***

Despite ongoing efforts from humanitarian organizations and the UN, the situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate.<sup>31</sup> The Taliban's governance has been marked by repression and restrictions on civil liberties, prompting international condemnation.<sup>32</sup> In particular, the restrictive laws governing women have caused much concern. The

---

<sup>24</sup> The Taliban's Crisis of Diplomacy. United States Institute for Peace. Accessed September 4, 2024.

[https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/Afghanistan-Peace-Process\\_The-Talibans-Crisis-of-Diplomacy.pdf](https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/Afghanistan-Peace-Process_The-Talibans-Crisis-of-Diplomacy.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> The Taliban's Crisis of Diplomacy. United States Institute for Peace.

<sup>26</sup> Sayed, Abdul. "The Evolution and Future of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Accessed December 11, 2024.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2021/12/the-evolution-and-future-of-tehrik-e-taliban-pakistan?lang=en>

<sup>27</sup> Sayed, Abdul. "The Evolution and Future of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan."

<sup>28</sup> "China's activities and influence in South and Central Asia" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Accessed September 5, 2024.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2022/05/chinas-activities-and-influence-in-south-and-central-asia?lang=en>

<sup>29</sup> "China's activities and influence in South and Central Asia" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

<sup>30</sup> "China's activities and influence in South and Central Asia" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

<sup>31</sup> "Afghanistan: Humanitarian Update, May 2024." United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), July 28, 2024.

<https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-humanitarian-update-may-2024>

<sup>32</sup> Afghanistan: Comprehensive efforts needed to stop destructive cycle of impunity, says UN expert | OHCHR. Accessed October 12, 2024.

Taliban has instated over 40 directives that limit the rights and freedoms of Afghan women.<sup>33</sup> Women and girls are extremely limited in involvement in life outside of their home, with their access to education and employment under restricted. Only 3% of girls in Afghanistan are permitted to pursue a secondary school education.<sup>34</sup> According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), gender based violence increased by 30% in 2023 to 13.1 million women affected.<sup>35</sup> The United Nations has launched several humanitarian response plans aimed at addressing the urgent needs of the Afghan population. Agencies like the World Food Program and the UN Refugee Agency are working to provide food, medical care, and shelter but face significant challenges due to the Taliban's restrictive policies and security threats. Further, the international aid effort has suffered from aid donor fatigue and the need to respond to other humanitarian crises.

Diplomatic efforts among various Member States remain divided, with some seeking engagement with the Taliban to facilitate humanitarian aid while others maintain strict sanctions and a hard stance against the regime.<sup>36</sup> The international community must balance the need for immediate humanitarian assistance with the complexities of recognizing or legitimizing the Taliban government.<sup>37</sup> Addressing these multifaceted issues is essential for fostering long-term stability in the region.

---

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/09/afghanistan-comprehensive-efforts-needed-stop-destructive-cycle-impunity>

<sup>33</sup> “The Crisis in Afghanistan, Explained.” Concern Worldwide US. Accessed December 14, 2024.

<https://concernusa.org/news/afghanistan-crisis-explained/>

<sup>34</sup> “The Crisis in Afghanistan, Explained.” Concern Worldwide US.

<sup>35</sup> “The Crisis in Afghanistan, Explained.” Concern Worldwide US.

<sup>36</sup> “Security Council Emphasizes That Punitive Restrictions on Women’s Rights, Escalating Hunger, Insecurity Taking Devastating Toll in Afghanistan | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” United Nations. Accessed October 4, 2024. <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15222.doc.htm>

<sup>37</sup> “Security Council Emphasizes That Punitive Restrictions on Women’s Rights, Escalating Hunger, Insecurity Taking Devastating Toll in Afghanistan | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases.” United Nations.