

**T.C.**  
**ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITESI**  
**INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**AFGHANISTAN CIVIL WAR AND ETHNIC CONFLICTS: 1992-2018**

**M.A THESIS**  
**Sayed Mirwais FAZILAT**

**Department of Political Science and International Relations**  
**Political Science and International Relations Program**

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**Theses Advisor: Prof. Dr. Hatice Deniz YUKSEKER**

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İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ



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<b>ASIL ÜYELER</b>				
<b>Danışman</b>	Prof. Dr.	Hatice Deniz YÜKSEKER TEKİN	İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi	
<b>1. Üye</b>	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi	Filiz KATMAN	İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi	
<b>2. Üye</b>	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi	Deniz ÖZÇETİN	Kadir Has Üniversitesi	
<b>YEDEK ÜYELER</b>				
<b>1. Üye</b>	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi	Hazar VURAL JANE	İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi	
<b>2. Üye</b>	Doç. Dr.	Ateş USLU	İstanbul Üniversitesi	

ONAY

Prof. Dr. Ragıp Kutay KARACA  
Enstitü Müdürü

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that all information in this thesis document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results, which are not original of this thesis. (27/01/2020)

**Sayed Mirwais FAZILAT**

## **FOREWORD**

One of the difficult challenges of my life was writing my Master thesis. For me, it was not only a thesis project in which I was just hoping to get my Master degree, but meanwhile, it was an important task, through I wanted to present something helpful to my country and for the coming generations that may suffer from civil war and ethnic conflicts such as the present and many previous generations.

My goal was to target and find out the main causes and factors of Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts, which, I believe, I have been done it. While it was not an easy start, nor easy ending, but writing such an important research enabled me to be able to face complicated challenges and made me ready for further steps in this particular and valuable journey.

It was not possible to be able to accomplish such an important and wonderful project without supporting and helping of particular individual and institutions. First of all, I would like to express my special thanks of gratitude to my professor and advisor, Dr. Hatice Deniz YUKSEKER who assist and guided me to write an academic peace of work that allow me to be grateful and being able of further researches.

I wish to acknowledge the Aydin University, professors, and administration for providing the great Academic atmosphere and facilities for international students, particularly the department of Political Science and International Relations which is playing the major role in providing the above mentioned services and facilities.

The assistance provided by my family was greatly appreciated, I wish to extend my special thanks to my wife who always been provided the best possible condition for me to study during my courses and writing my thesis. I would like to thanks my classmates and friends, those who provided me with their professional advises.

**January 2020**

**Sayed Mirwais FAZILAT**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AFRC</b>	: Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
<b>AI</b>	: Amnesty International
<b>AIHRC</b>	: Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
<b>ANSF</b>	: Afghanistan National Security Forces
<b>CIA</b>	: Central Intelligence Agency
<b>GDP</b>	: Gross Domestic Product
<b>HPC</b>	: High Peace Council
<b>HRW</b>	: Human Rights Watch
<b>IALA</b>	: Islamic Alliance for The Liberation of Afghanistan
<b>ISAF</b>	: International Security Assistance Forces
<b>ISIS</b>	: Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
<b>KHAD</b>	: Government Services Agency
<b>NA</b>	: Northern Alliance
<b>NATO</b>	: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NUG</b>	: National Unity Government
<b>PRIO</b>	: Peace Research Institute in Oslo
<b>UAE</b>	: United Arab Emirates
<b>UN</b>	: United Nations
<b>USAID</b>	: United States Agency for International Development



## AFGHANISTAN CIVIL WAR AND ETHNIC CONFLICTS 1992-2018

### ABSTRACT

This study aims, to investigate and explore the key factors and causes of civil war and ethnic conflicts in general and the relevancy of these factors to Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts within the period of 1992-2018. Despite, civil war in Afghanistan has longer history than the mentioned period of 1992 to present, but prior to Mujahidin's victory against the communist Soviet backed regime, during the kingdom of Mohammad Zahir Shah, Afghanistan have experienced at least half of a century of peace, security, stability and some progresses in state building and good governance. Following to the victory of Mujahidin against communist regime on 1992, Afghanistan faced the worst civil war and ethnic conflicts ever that still is going on.

While studying the research, external causes of civil war such as; foreign intervention, migration and remittances, external financial support to the war factions and different ethnic groups, and Internal factors such as; ethno-linguistic diversity, youth bulges, Poverty, illiteracy, urbanization and its impact on young generation motivation of joining rebellions, political system, geography, and history will be analyzed. The thesis also discusses the role of neighboring countries such as Iran, Pakistan and Russia in fueling the civil conflicts in Afghanistan, and their intervention in Afghanistan's internal affairs to facilitate the ethnic conflicts and civil war.

The study also seeks to uncover the research questions of; what are the main causes and factors of Afghanistan's civil war and ethnic conflicts, and why there is no resolution for it so far. What are the challenges for solving the conflict situations?

As already mentioned, Afghanistan's neighboring countries intervention is one of the major causes of civil war in Afghanistan. The neighbors of Afghanistan including the former Soviet Union, the present Russia have their own specific interests, and have always intervening in Afghanistan since centuries. Each one of these countries, particularly the neighboring countries such as Pakistan and Iran has their own interests, and support particular war factions to guarantee their interests and influence in the region. The abovementioned countries's intervention caused Afghanistan civil war to be continuing for decades, which, will be discussed in chapter three and four of this thesis in details.

**Keywords:** *Civil War, Ethnic Conflicts, Foreign Intervention, Ethno-Linguistic Diversity, Afghanistan.*

## AFGANİSTAN İÇ SAVAŞI VE ETNİK ÇATIŞMALAR 1992-2018

### ÖZET

Bu çalışma; iç savaşın nedenlerini ve etnik çatışmaların genel olarak ana faktörlerini inceleme ve araştırmayı, 1992-2018 döneminde Afganistan iç savaşı ve etnik çatışmaların ardındaki faktörünün ortaya çıkarılmasını amaçlar. Afganistan iç savaşının bilinen 1992'den günümüze kadarki döneminden daha uzun bir tarihi olmasına rağmen, kral Mohammad Zahir Shah döneminden komünist Sovyet destekli rejime karşı Mücahitlerin galibiyetine kadar Afganistan en az yarım asırlık bir barışa, güvenliğe, istikrara, ayrıca ülkenin ilerlemesinde gelişme ve iyi bir yönetime sahip olmuştur. Mücahitlerin'in 1992 yılında komünist rejime karşı galibiyetini müteakip, Afganistan hala süregelen tarihinin en kötü iç savaşı ve etnik çatışmalarıyla yüzleşmiştir.

Araştırma yapılırken, iç savaşın dış nedenleri olarak; dış müdahale, göç ve nakit çıkışı, savaşan gruplara dış finansal destek, etnik gruplar ve iç unsurlar; etnik ve dil farklılığı, genç nüfus patlaması, yoksulluk, cehalet, kentleşme ve bunların genç jenerasyonun isyancılara katılımındaki etkisi, siyasal sistem, coğrafya ve tarih gibi faktörler analiz edilir. Tez ayrıca İran, Pakistan, Rusya gibi komşu ülkelerin Afganistan'da iç çatışmaları körüklemelerinin ve onların Afganistan içişlerine müdahalesinin etnik çatışmalara ve iç savaşa yol açmasının rolünü tartışır.

Çalışma ayrıca; Afganistan İç savaş unsurları ve etnik çatışmalarının asıl sebeplerini ve neden şu ana kadar bir çözüm olmadığını açıklamaya çalışır. Çatışma ortamlarında çözüm zorlukları nelerdir?

Daha önce bahsedildiği gibi, Afganistan'a komşu ülkelerin müdahalesi, Afganistan iç savaşının başlıca sebeplerinden biridir. Eski Sovyetler Birliği, günümüz Rusya'sı dahil, özel çıkarları olmuş ve yüzyıllardır Afganistan'da müdahaleleri olmuştur. Bu ülkelerin her biri, özellikle Afganistan'a komşu olan Pakistan ve İran gibi ülkeler kendi çıkarlarını garantiye almak için özel savaş unsurlarını desteklemiş ve bölgede etkili olmuşlardır. Üstte bahsi geçen ülkelerin, daha sonra bu tezin üçüncü ve dördüncü bölümlerinde detaylı tartışılacak olan müdahalesi Afganistan'da iç savaşın on yıllarca sürmesine neden olmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *İç Savaş, Etnik Çatışmalar, Dış Müdahale, Etnik Dil Farklılıkları, Afganistan*

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Background to the Study**

Afghanistan remained a shared home of several ethnicities, languages, religions, and different beliefs for thousands of years. Along the history, citizens of Afghanistan have chosen peaceful living despite, what ethnicity, language or religion they practice, although this country suffered a lot from civil war and ethnic conflicts either. One of the most famous criteria of the people of Afghanistan is collective action while they feel their country is attacked or invaded by foreigners. Rough terrain, mountainous geography, collective action, and hardship of its people made this country unconquerable.

World's strongest empires and emperors such as Great Britain, Soviet Union, Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan and recently the United States of America have invaded this small but highly tough country, while the outcome for all was the same, which is defeat and defection. U.S. President Donald Trump during his cabinet meeting argued; Russia used to be the Soviet Union; Afghanistan made it Russia because they went bankrupt fighting in Afghanistan. Therefore, I have decided to withdraw my troops from Afghanistan (Cohen, 2019).

Contemporary invasions and continuity of wars added Afghanistan to the bottom of the list of poorest countries in the world. Ethno-linguistic diversity, religious sensitivity, widespread poverty, foreign intervention, untouched rich resources, illiterate young generation, geographical rough terrain and strategic location caused this country to highly vulnerable to civil war and ethnic conflicts. Since decades, this country is suffering from civil wars and ethnic conflicts, several studies have been done about Afghan civil war, and the factors, which are on the play. Mertz (2011) believes, "Afghanistan civil war which is going on for decades, have several dimensions and many factors are playing role in fueling the current civil war, and if we think about ending this war, we should take care about all of these factors and causes to be solved".

For the case of Afghanistan, most of the studies so far have been done are focused on civil wars and ethnic conflicts, but regarding to peace building and its process, key factors, and motivation there are less or no studies have been made. This thesis aims to discover key factors and causes of civil war, and challenges against peace building and resolving the conflict situation. Most of the times, Afghanistan peace plans remained in the hands of foreign countries or, the countries, which they have been involved in the conflicts. For instance, Russia which is one of the biggest players of Afghanistan civil conflict and the invader of Afghanistan, only in 2019 hosted two peace conferences and negotiations between Taliban, Afghanistan High Committee for Peace and some Afghan former jihadi figures and politicians.

Likely, the United States of America is attempting similar activities regarding Afghanistan peace process. ‘Zelmaï Khalilzad<sup>1</sup>’ the special representative of the US president Donald Trump for Afghanistan peace process, has regularly met with the Taliban representatives in Qatar, which provided a political office<sup>2</sup> for Taliban since last few years. Khalilzad have been trying to bring the Taliban to the table of negotiations, since the U.S. President Donald Trump announced that he would withdraw his forces from Afghanistan.

One of the causes of present challenges against conflict solving situation in Afghanistan is the absence of the peace building as the key cause and factor. Ethno-linguistic diversity of Afghanistan caused this country to be prone to civil-ethno conflicts. Afghanistan is the home for several different ethno-linguistic tribes and ethnicities such as the Pashtuns and the minorities of Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, Baloches, Aimaqs, and Pashayes, which are living in different parts of the country, and are practicing their own particular religion and cultures.

Foreign and neighboring countries have strong ties with particular ethnic and political groups in Afghanistan. While these countries intervening, they use their linked ethno-political groups against the central government and motivate them to engage in civil

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<sup>1</sup> Zelmaï Khalilzad is an Afghan American politician, who remained as U.S. ambassador in Iraq and Afghanistan and the special representative of U.S. president George W Bosh to Iraq and Donald Trump special representative for Afghanistan during the U.S. invasion on Iraq and Afghanistan.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. have facilitated the condition for the political office of Taliban in Qatar, that the Taliban called it the political office and political representative of Islamic Emirate of Taliban and raised the Taliban flag on it, that the government of Afghanistan was against it and believing that, the recognition of the Taliban office as political representative of the Islamic Emirate of Taliban, is meaning as parallel governments with the government of Afghanistan which, later the government of Qatar has told the Taliban to lower their flag. (Mojda, 2018).

and ethnic conflicts. For instance, Human Rights Watch (2001) report argues that, Pakistani private and semi-private agencies provided huge support to Taliban, while the government official of Pakistan was fully aware of the situation, even though this action was violating the law of Pakistan. The report confirms that, tens of trucks of heavy army artilleries were carrying to Afghanistan in daily basis. Likewise, some other countries such as Iran, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Russia were providing support to opposite side of the combat. Human Rights Watch, (2001) report continues; “Supporting the United Front are Iran and Russia, with secondary roles played by Tajikistan and, at least until 1998, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan.” These countries are providing several kinds of military and training support and aids to war factions to prolong the civil conflicts.

Foreign intervention is a key factor of civil war in Afghanistan. Several scholars argue about the importance of linkages between foreign intervention and civil conflicts. According to Albornoz and Hauk (2010), foreign intervention plays key role in prolonging and fueling the civil conflicts, which will support one side of the battle. Afghanistan civil war is the causal effect of foreign intervention particularly the countries such as, Iran, Pakistan and Russia, with addition of few other above-mentioned factors, which will be discussed in detail in this thesis.

Since several decades, Afghanistan has been interfered and invaded by different countries. The intervention and invasion of Afghanistan definitely transferred tragic messages and results to both sides. Liakhovsky (2000, p.189) argues<sup>3</sup> that, deployment of Soviet troops to Afghanistan created tragedy to both sides. With losing of tens of thousands of its troop’s lives and trillions of dollars, Soviet has paid the highest price by invading Afghanistan. The Afghan side either lost millions of its citizens’ lives and destruction of the entire country, with addition of the longest civil war of the history, which is still suffering the worst condition in contemporary world. Two decades later of the Soviet invasion, the U.S. have invaded Afghanistan that, the outcome for Afghanistan is the same, which is civil war, and destruction of the country.

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<sup>3</sup> Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan took place between December 1979 to February 1989. The Soviet Union sent tens of thousands of troops to Afghanistan, but faced the resistance of Anti-communist Muslim guerrillas, within the period of 1979-1992. Finally, the soviet troop had to leave Afghanistan in February. 1979. Soon after leaving the Soviets troops, the civil war in Afghanistan began and until present 2018, it is going on.

As every other invader, U.S. troops are about to leave Afghanistan and accepted their defection. Americans almost two decades ago on late 2001 invaded Afghanistan, under the name of “war against Terrorism” and “bringing democracy” to Afghanistan. They have promised, they will never leave Afghanistan until the U.S. Government establishes a democratic government and peace in this country. But now, two decades later, U.S. President Donald Trump, twitted on 2<sup>nd</sup> of January 2019 that; “I inherited a total mess in Syria and Afghanistan, the “endless Wars” of unlimited spending and death”. He continued; he was promised that he would end this war. He added, “We spend \$50 billion a year in Afghanistan”. To concenter the previous experiences, as soon as Americans leave, the possibility of continuation of a new civil war is likely closer than ever.

By focusing the above-mentioned factors, and causes that prone Afghanistan to civil conflicts, the goal of this research is to uncover the causes and factors that are involved in the fueling and prolonging the civil war and ethnic conflicts, and targeting the challenges against preventing factors of peace and stability in Afghanistan.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

What are the causes of Afghanistan’s civil and ethnic conflicts between 1992 and 2018? How can these conflicts to be ended and what are the challenges against the conflict-solving situation? Ordinary people of Afghanistan may have some simple answers for these highly complicated research questions, but as a MA student of Political Science and International Relations, it is noticed that more detailed analysis is required.

While this study aims to discover the key factors and causes of civil war and ethnic conflicts, and correlation of these factors to Afghanistan civil war, by answering its main research question, few more sub-questions are supposed to discuss in different chapters of this thesis. The sub-questions, which will be investigated, are as the follows;

- Is there any correlation between religious factors and foreign intervention in Afghanistan?
- Is there any correlation among ethno-linguistic factors and foreign intervention in Afghanistan?

- What are the impacts of socio-economic factors on civil and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan?
- How do the natural resources, especially water issue, of Afghanistan influence the civil war?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

Afghanistan is one of the richest countries in the means of natural resources, but one of the poorest ones in the means of economic development. According to Loewenstein (2015), Gen. David Petraeus, the head of U.S. Central Command in Afghanistan, in an interview with *The New York Times* on 2010 said that, Afghanistan mining's are valued between \$1 trillion to \$3 trillion. Still more than 80 percent of its people are living below the poverty line. One of the reasons of such poor living standards is civil war and ethnic conflicts. These causes should be known, the challenges against peace process need to be specified and the installment of a peaceful situation among its citizens need to be guaranteed. To achieve such as complicated goals, more analysis that is detailed is needed, and further studies are the requirement of the Afghanistan civil war.

Despite the above-mentioned background thrown some light on the purpose and motivation to the current study, still some more details will be provided for the further and better understanding of how it looks like the civil war of Afghanistan. As already mentioned, Afghanistan is a country, which, has suffered from civil war, and ethnic conflicts since several decades. Therefore, civil war related researches, literatures, books, governmental and non-governmental reports, theories, documents in English, Dari, Pashto and Urdu languages are analyzed in order to understand the causes of civil war in Afghanistan.

### **1.4 Research Methodology**

While studying the causes and factors of civil war in general and Afghanistan's civil conflicts in particular, this thesis uses qualitative research method and secondary sources in order to understand the factors and motivations for civil war. Hence, the present study approach would be interpretative and descriptive in words.

## **1.5 Outline of Thesis**

After the Introduction Chapter, Chapter 2 will critically review the literature on civil wars, taking into consideration the external and internal factors behind the conflicts. Chapter Three will focus on the historical background of Afghan politics during different periods of time such as the collapse of communist government and Mujahidin's regime between the years of 1992-1996, Taliban regime between 1996-2001, the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, and the establishment of the new U.S. Backed 'Islamic government of Afghanistan' since 2001.

The reason why the current study concedes the civil war after the period of 1992 is, that prior to the mentioned time period (Mujahidin government) and collapse of Soviet backed communist regime, Afghanistan during Kingdom of Mohamad Zahir Shah, have experienced half of a century peaceful, secure and progressive country. Moreover, external and internal causes of civil war in Afghanistan will also be analyzed in Chapter 4 with addition of the settlement, resolution and the prospects for peace negotiations will be discussed. The chapter five will provide summary and conclusion.



## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This review of literature aims to discuss and analyze the causes of civil war in the means of international, regional and domestic factors, in Afghanistan. Civil war and ethnic conflicts have a long history in the human life. Roser & Nagdy (2018), define the civil war as; “In the broadest sense possible, a civil war is a war between citizens of the same country.” Hobbesian war all against all could be considered as civil war? According to Roser and Nagdy’s (2018), definition, almost all of the nations in the world somehow have experienced the civil war.

The world has been witnessed thousands of civil wars, these wars occurred in almost all of the countries between the citizens and nations. Civil wars kill millions of people worldwide. Why these wars happen? What causes these wars? Why people do not willing to settle their disputes peacefully to prevent further conflicts? Roser & Nagdy (2018). These and several other questions kept the minds of political and economic scholars busy for centuries and trying to find the causes and possible solution for it.

Roser and Nagdy (2018) argue; understanding the causes of civil conflicts is considered as an important point of research given the destructive and frequent nature of civil conflicts. As far as civil wars are considered as one of the most important and common phenomena of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, which caused the death of millions of people all over the world, it’s so important to know about the causes and factors of civil conflicts to be able to prevent further civil conflicts and reduce the number of casualties and human life lost.

Civil wars occur in different regions and reasons but proxy war is one of the most common types of civil conflicts since World War II, which is very relevant to Afghanistan civil war that almost all of the war factions of Afghanistan, are fighting on behalf of a foreign country or organization. Some scholars such as Roser and Nagdy (2018), define the proxy war as, it’s a war instigated by a major power that does not itself become involved. The major powers always prefer to fight in a third ground,

instead of fighting in their homeland to reduce their casualties, arm forces lost and to minimize war expenses.

The reasons of proxy wars vary according to areas, geographies and periods. It can be about the natural sources, lands, cultural, religious, political invasion or bigger and strategic plans such as domination. Roser and Nagdy (2018) argue; “The struggle for global superiority between the United States and the Soviet Union led both to engage in proxy wars with one another. Both the Korean war and Vietnam war began as civil wars but ended up drawing in resources from the US and Soviet Union.”

Afghanistan civil war is one of the longest, deadliest, destructionist and complicated wars in the contemporary history of the world. Dimensions of Afghan civil war and ethnic conflict is varying, such as wide external intervention, strategic geographical location, wide untouched natural sources, diverse vulnerable ethnic and linguistic structure, poverty, illiterate young population, huge sources of clean and drinkable water which flows to neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan for free and few other factors which will be discussed later on this paper.

This study is essential to pointing out the main causes and factors of civil war and the civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan with a possible resolution for it. Civil conflicts caused the death for millions of Afghan innocent citizens and war faction. This paper will explore key external factors such as foreign intervention, Diasporas and the effect of internal factors like ethnic diversity, natural resources, illiterate young generation and poverty as economic factors, which turn most of the Afghan fighters as killing machines of their own citizens. Focusing on abovementioned factors will help us to assess a better understanding of the causes of civil conflict, and we may be able to prevent future civil conflicts by finding resolution for it.

## **2.2 Civil War Definition**

Since World War II, civil war defined by several scholars of Political science. “Civil war, a violent conflict between a state and one or more organized non-state actors in the state’s territory” (Gleditsch, 2011). According to Reagan (2000:21), civil war is, “armed combat between groups within state boundaries in which there are at least 200 fatalities”. While Roser & Nagdy (2018) present a simpler definition for civil war and say; “In the broadest sense possible, a civil war is a war between citizens of the same

country.” Among all of the definitions, the main focusing point is the ‘war between the citizens of the same country within the boundaries of a single state’, which allow us to consider a war as a civil conflict.

### **2.3 Civil War in Brief**

The following questions, kept the International relations scholar’s minds busy since long time. “Since World War II about 16 million people have been killed in civil wars. What causes these civil wars? Why is there costly violent conflict when most people would be better off by settling their disputes peacefully? What makes individuals take up arms and risk their lives in an insurgency?” (Hoefler, 2012). Civil war is a phenomenon that almost all of the world’s nations are familiar with.

Since the end of the World War II, civil wars are the most common type of conflict among the nations of the world. Civil wars are greater in number than the international conflicts, among 225 general conflicts in the world from 1946 to 2001, 163 conflicts can be identified as internal conflicts (Gleditsch et al, 2002 cited in Woo, 2017). Woo continues, Gleditsch et al (2002) argue that internal conflict has been the dominant form of conflict since World War II. While civil wars have become as a common type of war instead of interstate wars, and definitely the outcome and effects of these wars are not as a single aspect of a single state but to interstates it caused to draw the attention of Political science and international relations scholars.

External intervention is one of the main causes of civil wars. Most of today’s world civil conflicts are caused by external interventions of foreign states, rather than internal factors. Strong states intervene for their interest, most of the aggressor states do not follow the international rules and regulations, and their intervention is often illegitimate. “The United Nations Charter specifically indicates that domestic issues are not the jurisdiction of the organization’s reach” (Woo, 2017). The author continues, “Historically, when foreign states intervened in other states, they sought to provide extraordinary justification on the basis of security or to embed intervention in an organized system of competition, as during the Cold War.”

Inventor states always trying to justify the act of their intervention in to the intervened states internal affairs (Woo, 2017). Woo raises the case of Vietnam intervention in Cambodia in 1979, that how Vietnam did not try to gain legitimacy by claiming that

in intervening they were exercising some right to humanitarian intervention. The author continues; The Soviet Union, which backed Vietnam, argued that Pol Pot had been overthrown by the Cambodian people and, thus, not by Vietnam.

## **2.4 External Factors of Civil War**

External factors play significant role in prolonging and fueling the civil war and ethnic conflicts. This section will discuss about the external causes of civil war which, ethnic conflict is an absolute consequence of these factors. The study will focus on the causes such as, foreign intervention, financial support, diasporas and remittances and few other related factors.

Afghanistan civil war like many other conflicts has deep roots in out of its borders, particularly in the neighboring countries of Iran, Pakistan, Russia and few other countries. At least in the past half of a century two of the superpowers, Soviet Union and United States of America have attempted direct military intervention in Afghanistan, but soon after these forces defeated by Afghans; civil war has begun shortly after withdrawal of their armed forces.

Brown (2011) argues, “The possibility of yet another civil war after the majority of U.S. troops leave Afghanistan looms large”. During the civil wars, each of invaders with addition of some other countries started to support the war factions of the civil conflicts. Financial support of the war factions including ethnic, religious, and political groups was part of their mission to fuel the Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflict that will be discussed in the current review of literature in details.

### **2.4.1 Foreign Intervention**

Without a strong financial support, it is almost impossible to keep on civil war for a long period. Albornoz and Hauk (2010), conducted a study and their finding show that foreign intervention is playing a key role in fueling the civil conflicts, and says; “Yet, a key feature of civil war is the involvement of foreign governments supporting one of the sides in conflict. The examples are many, even after the end of the cold war”. Mostly the intervener states try to hide or legitimate their intervention under the different titles such as human rights, humanitarian aids, cultural cooperation etc. “Such interventions are often secretive and indirect and therefore unlikely to be fully reflected in available data” (Albornoz and Hauk, 2010).

The significance of foreign intervention is clear, although it is not the only factor in civil conflicts. Woo (2017) conducted a study about the foreign intervention and civil war, he believes, third-party intervention can affect the outcome and the duration of civil wars. The author continues, “Thus, we can assume that the intervention of third parties in civil wars has meaningful consequences for the manner in which those wars evolve.” Meanwhile, Woo’s studies show that, not all civil wars are in the result of foreign intervention, and if so, it would not be much interesting academically for them. “This issue became very interesting, however, because we have found that the propensity toward intervention by third-party states varies. That means, that we also have observed many cases in which no third-party intervention was made” (Woo, 2017).

The outcome of foreign intervention is definitely differing for each side of the war factions (Carment and Rowlands, 1998:572 cited in Woo, 2017). Pointed out the outcome of intervention as, “civil war represents opportunities for some and challenges for others.” (Heraclides, 2001 cited in Woo 2017) argues; “It is also agreed that even if external actors do not instigate internal wars, they can play a significant role in the process of civil wars”. Woo (2017) treats the third party involvement as a factor, which will cause to prolong, and even intensifying the civil conflicts, but not resolving internal disputes. Woo's theoretical approach, previous studies and several worldwide cases show that, third-party intervention can affect the outcome and the duration of civil wars and has meaningful consequences for the manner in which those wars evolved.

Several other studies regarding the civil war and ethnic conflicts show that, domestic conflicts are linked to an international factor and foreign intervention. In a similar study, Albornoz and Jauk (2010), developed an identification strategy to estimate the effect of foreign intervention on civil war and shows that the international dimension of domestic conflicts and civil wars are very relevant to understand civil wars. “Our results show how domestic conflicts are affected by the political situation in the U.S. and emphasize that the international dimension of domestic conflicts is very relevant to understand civil wars” (Albornoz and Jauk, 2010). Furthermore, the authors continue, one of the fundamental assumptions for the emergence or continuation of civil war is the existence of a third party – closer to one of the domestic groups. In such a case, the authors identify even the probability of winning the conflict, via monetary transfers or fighting operation in the benefit of one of the domestic parties.

Achievement to a Peace agreement may not be possible, if a third party intervention is involved in a civil conflict, particularly if foreign country interventions are for a specific reason, such as political, economic or geographic. Woo (2017), believes that third party intervention will cause to prolong the civil conflict, and will not resolve internal disputes. Likewise, Albornoz and Hauk (2010) studies show that, how a foreign intervention will destroy a possible peace agreement. The authors continue, “If the foreign country is interested in investing in the country but is only willing to invest if his ally is sufficiently strong. The domestic party that makes the coalition with the foreign government will not want peace”.

#### **2.4.2 Diasporas and Remittances**

The phenomena of diaspora and remittances have strong ties with civil war and ethnic conflicts. One of the obvious consequences of civil conflict is mass migration, and remittances are the outcomes of migration. Among the political sciences and international relations scholars, there are two main views; “pessimistic and optimistic” exists. Some of the authors such as Orozco and Lowell (2005) believe that, remittances can play a positive role in conflict and post - conflict countries in reducing the civil conflicts and support peace building efforts. While the pessimists such as Fagen and Bump (2006) believe that, remittances play negative role in the countries where there is an ongoing conflict or even in the post– conflict situation.

In a large number of countries, in several parts of the world, warlords and criminal political leaders exploits migrants and use them to advance their power and illegal wealth to prolong civil war. One of the earliest studies by (Fagen and Bump, 2006) addressing the same matter, which are remittances in conflict and crises areas. While the authors believe remittances reduce poverty in important ways in developing countries, help to avoid further forced displacement and plays positive role in peace building and security. Meanwhile, Fagen and Bump (2006) believe that a big sum of remittances is used to fund the war and civil conflicts in the countries of the origin of diasporas. In a similar vein, Orozco and Lowell (2005) argue: “Recipients may then use this income for health, education, improvement in nutrition and housing, or sometimes to sustain productive enterprises”.

Remittances can play significant role in fueling the civil war and ethnic conflicts and prolonging the war. According to Ballentine and Sherman (2003) in several countries,

warlords get benefit from remittances and enhance their power through the financial sources of diasporas and their remittances. “In a large number of countries in West Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, warlords and criminal political leaders make use of global connections and exploit or use migrants to advance power and illegal wealth and to prolong war” (Ballentine and Sherman, 2003). The report adds: research shows that the groups most negatively affected by the stricter regulatory regime are those attempting to transfer funds to countries where governments are weak, institutions do not function or are not reliable, and criminality is high.

Remittances is considered as factors for peace building, security enhancement, reducing the poverty, but also an important factor for fueling and prolonging the civil conflicts, funding the warlords and political criminal leaders and diaspora networks and remittances believed to either directly assisting or indirectly reinforcing parties involved in conflict, terror networks, or crime.

## **2.5 Internal Factors of Civil War**

Addressing the Internal factors and causes of civil war and ethnic conflict and our knowledge of the correlates of war onset may be very useful of conflict prevention. In the current section, our discussion will be focused on the internal factors and causes of civil war and ethnic conflicts, the main arguments will be concentrated on the factors such as, ethnicity, religious, greed and grievance, geography, history, economic, financing and level of income, inequality, poverty, and political system. The purpose of this study in current section is to achieve our goal through analyzing the abovementioned factors to increase our knowledge about the civil conflict internal causes and factors to be able to prevent or settle further civil wars and ethnic conflicts.

### **2.5.1 Ethnicity**

Bassaug (2006) believes that countries with diverse ethnicities or religious groups are more prone to civil war and ethnic conflicts; it would be easier for political leaders to get their supporters from the particular ethnicities. “After all, in a country with numerous ethnic or religious groups, politicians are easily tempted to organize factions along group lines — which can lead to rising tensions and even civil war or the collapse of the state” (Bassaug, 2006).

Although, ethnicity is one of the important factors of civil war, but ethnicity itself is not a conflict-starting factor. Ethnic or religious diversity or even any other particular culture cannot be a single cause or factor of ethnic conflicts. Unlike Bassaug (2006), in a wide (2003) study, the Stanford civil war experts Fearon and Laitin came to a surprising finding and claims that, ethnic or religious diversity is not the cause for civil war.

By arguing in this way, Fearon and Laitin (2003) turn the attention to a different approach and continue; “it appears not to be true that a greater degree of ethnic or religious diversity — or indeed any particular cultural demography — by itself makes a country more prone to civil war.” Fearon and Laitin studied 127 civil wars from 1945 to 1999, most of the sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Their findings show, the richer countries experience less or no civil wars, regardless of how ethnically diverse the country is. Fearon and Laitin draw our attention for instance to Belgium, and continue: “think for instance of Belgium, where Flemings and Walloons show almost no inclination to fight it out”.

Fearon and Laitin (2003) explained their findings by noting that civil wars only begin under particular circumstances that favor armed groups and insurgencies. The authors believe that, there are some very important factors rather than ethnic diversity, which can favor the situation for starting the civil war, such as weak corrupt or brutal government, that faces the small armed groups of rebels, with specific type of protections such as, mountainous geography, sympathetic rural population, foreign aids or revenues from natural resources such as diamonds or coca. “These insurgents may be ethnic chauvinists, but they could equally well be anti-colonialists, Islamists, drug lords, greedy opportunists, communists of various stripes and so on” (Fearon and Laitin 2003).

In a (2004) paper, the Oxford economists Collier and Hoeffler challenge the claim of Fearon and Laitin (2003), and note that, if an ethnic group makes up the majority more than 45 percent up to less than 90 percent the population of a country, the chance of civil war and ethnic conflicts will definitely increase. “When an ethnic group makes up more than 45 percent but less than 90 percent of a population, strife becomes more likely. Such a group, they reasoned, will be especially tempted to exploit smaller groups” (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004).



In a similar vein, Paul and Anke (2002), have conducted an investigation about the causes of Civil War, during 1960-99, and tested the 'greed' theory against the 'grievance'. The authors focused on ethnic and religious divisions, political repression and inequality. "We find that greed considerably outperforms grievance. Consistent with the greed theory, both dependence upon primary commodity exports and a large diaspora substantially increase the risk of conflict. Inconsistent with the grievance theory, greater ethnic and religious diversity reduce the risk of conflict" (Paul and Anker, 2002). The authors believe that, the bigger the number of diasporas, the greater the risk of the ethnic conflicts. Paul and Anke (2002) continue, "The 'grievance' model examine inequality, political oppression, ethnic and religious divisions as causes of conflict, while the 'greed' model focuses on the sources of finance of civil war."

Some other scholars of Political Sciences and International Relations have backed up Fearon and Laitin's (2003) general argument. For instance, Young (2002), an African politics expert at Wisconsin and former dean at the National University of Zaire, believes that the new pattern of conflict in Africa, the place many of post-1989 civil wars happened, has nothing to do with religion, ethnicity and race conflicts have seen. Young continues: "In contrast to the conventional view that violence in Africa is a product of the legacy of arbitrary colonial borders that bundled rival tribes together", Young blames recent African civil wars largely on novel financial and military factors. The author points to the illegal sale of arms and artilleries from former Soviet Union and the rising professionalism of foreign-trained guerrillas (including Jihadists<sup>4</sup> who fought the Soviets in Afghanistan) as well as the use of child soldiers in Uganda and Congo.

Young (2002) believes, "Ethnic wars do not just happen; they are made." He continues: "Indeed, most of the time, in most places, everyday interactions among identity groups are peaceful, and most individuals learn to manage their relationships with ethnic others in harmonious fashion". Young emphasizes that rebels do not need much popular support if they can manage to finance themselves. He believes that, there was nothing inevitable about the terrible sectarian strife in Iraq.

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<sup>4</sup> Mujahidin and Jihadists are the Afghan freedom fighters who were fighting against the Soviet invasion in 1970s- 1990s in Afghanistan that thousands of foreign nationals from all over the world were joining the Afghan Mujahidin to fight against Soviet troops.

Furthermore, as already pointed out, Fearon and Laitin (2010) believe that, the most cited causes of large-scale violent conflict are probably differences due to ethnicity, religion and class. Hoeffler (2012) has studied different literatures, that each of the research have different findings regarding ethnicity and civil war, he argues: “At first researchers used data from the Atlas Narodov Mira (1964) but the use of the fractionalization data by Alesina et al (2003) is more common in recent studies. Fearon and Laitin (2003a) and Collier, Hoeffler and Rohner (2009) find a positive relationship, Collier and Hoeffler a negative one, Hegre et al (2001) find no significant correlation between ethnic fractionalization and civil war”. The author believes, Countries with relatively large excluded ethno political groups are more likely to experience civil war.

The relationship of ethnic diversity and civil conflict is not strong enough. Unlike Hoeffler and Rohner (2009), Hegre and Sambanis (2006) conclude that the relationship between ethnic diversity and civil war onset is not robust. However, they find that ethnic diversity is robustly correlated with the onset of lower level violent conflicts. Regan (2009) also believe that the relationship among ethnicity and civil war does not exist. “The circumstances that lead to a civil war outbreak are often complex and ethnicity is a tool for mobilization. However, it is not a cause of the war. There is very little systematic evidence that religious diversity and class are linked to civil war onset” (Regan, 2009).

### **2.5.2 Polarization**

The size of the ethnic groups and the cultural diversity and distance is considerably important. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) and Heger and Sambanis (2006) believe that, some evidence shows, societies with the ethnic groups as large as between 45 to 90 percent of the society are associated with a higher risk of conflict. Ethnicity itself will not cause civil war or ethnic conflicts, but it can be use by foreign countries and through intervention as a tool to start and continue the civil conflicts (Fearon and Laitin 2003 and Young, 2002).

Today most of the nation’s attempt to keep deep attention to literacy and education, meanwhile the fast growing of technology and mass media, including the rapid growth of telecommunication replaced the world as a single village that people of this global village can easily communicate to each other, and understand the value of literacy and

education. In return, people are able to better understand the value of peaceful living, with not paying attention to the differences of race, religion, ethnicity, language or any other diversity. Still ethnicity has been used as a strong tool for ethnic conflicts and civil war in poor and illiterate countries and nations (Young, 2002).

Countries with diverse ethnicities or religious groups are more prone to civil war and ethnic conflicts, some of the above-mentioned scholars believe. There are two main views among the scholars of political sciences and international relations about ethnicity and its role of fueling civil conflicts within the studied literature. Some scholars such as, Paul, Collier and Hoeffler (2004), Bassaug (2006), Paul and Anke (2002), Fearon and Latin (2010), Fearon and Laitin (2003a) and Collier, Hoeffler and Rohner (2009), Heger and Sambanis (2006), Esteban and Ray (1994), (Montalvo and Reynal (2005), believe that ethnic diversity will cause countries prone more to civil wars and ethnic conflicts, these scholars believe, the more a country is ethnically and religiously diverse the risk of civil war and ethnic conflicts are higher.

While the second group of political sciences and International relations scholars such as Fearon and Laitin (2003), Young (2002), and Regan (2009), disagree, and in contrast with the point of view of the abovementioned scholars, believe that Ethnic or religious diversity will not cause civil wars but civil conflicts will happen under particular circumstances, and ethnic diversity does not play any negative role to prone civil war and ethnic conflicts.

### **2.5.3 Economic Factors**

Regardless of the main causes of the civil conflicts, a number of other issues will have arisen during the conflict. By arguing in this way, Hoeffler (2012) turned attention toward some issues which, can increase the complexity of the conflict, and sometimes becomes more important than the original causes of the civil war. Hoeffler (2012) argues: "For example, an increase in poverty and grievances are likely to have added to the complexity of conflict resolution or may have even become more important than the original dispute". The author points out that; worldwide there are about 60 fragile states that are home to 1.2 billion people. Their lives are plagued by insecurity and poverty.

Economic motivations for conflict are stronger than psychological or sociological factors. "For example, charismatic leadership may be crucial to the formation of a rebel

army” (Hoeffler, 2012). The author believes that the level of per capita income is an important factor in civil conflicts. “It was found significant in the studies of attitudes to rebellion, in the analysis of participation (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008) and in the behavior of groups (Walter, 2004) for an analysis of recurrent conflict” (MacCulloch and Pezzini, 2007 cited in Hoeffler, 2012). Cross-country results also show a strong link between income and civil war (Fearon and Laitin, 2003a; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Hegre and Sambanis, 2006).

As argued elsewhere, poverty and low income is a consequence of the civil war. Hoeffler (2012) believes that low average income makes civil war more likely. “As the historical evidence shows, many countries are caught in a conflict trap (Collier et al 2003; Collier, 2008), so low income could be the consequence of previous conflict and a cause new conflict”. The article argues that, Income Growth- Structure of Income is the variables that are correlated with civil war onset. According to (Paul and Anke, 2002), there is not enough evidence for grievances to confirm that inequality or political oppression is the reason for increasing the risk of civil war. They continue: “Neither inequality nor political oppression increases the risk of conflict”.

Income distribution can have strong effect on civil war and ethnic conflict. In a similar vein Hoeffler (2012) believe that, one of the most commonly cited causes of war is inequality. He argues, “Another one is the assertion that ‘the relation between inequality and rebellion is indeed a close one (Sen, 1973, chapter 1)”. The author believes that, inequality may contribute in some cases to the risk of civil war.

#### **2.5.4 Political System**

In democratic systems, the leadership achievement is peaceful through elections and legal channels. Democratic methods and voting system prevents the risk of conflict and civil war to pursue political goals. Some evidence shows that Political instability is correlated with civil war, (Hegre and Sambanis, 2006). State capacity is often considered as causes of civil war. The authors believe that, large countries have more conflicts.

In a similar finding, Collier and Hoeffler (2004), who use a measure of population concentration in their cross-country study, find that countries with a more dispersed population are more at risk of civil war. “Jenne, Saideman and Lowe (2007) believe that, foreign military aids and poverty will cause to increase the chance of civil war.

They don't find any linkage between rebels violent and political discrimination and economic differences" (Hoeffler, 2012).

### **2.5.5 Geography**

Specific geographic characteristics will facilitate civil conflicts. Mountainous, rough and forested terrain is more difficult to control. As already pointed out, the linkage between ethnicity, demography and geography seem to be crucial as to whether or not certain characteristics make countries more conflict prone (Hoeffler, 2012). "There is some evidence that mountainous terrain makes countries more conflict prone. Fearon and Laitin, 2003a; Hegre and Sambanis, 2006; Collier, Hoeffler and Rohner, 2008. The evidence for forested areas is not robust." (Hoeffler, 2012).

Hoeffler continues: Another geographic characteristic that can make government control difficult is 'no contiguity'. By arguing in this way, Fearon and Laitin (2003) say, countries with territory holdings that are separated from the capital city by either land or water 'noncontiguous'. These countries are more conflict prone, indicating that non-contiguity makes rebellion more feasible.

Civil wars itself creates some issues which will increase the complexity of civil conflicts. Hoeffler (2012) argues, sometimes the new arisen issues become more important than the original causes of the conflict. Hoeffler believe, for instance, increase in poverty and grievance will add to the complexity of conflict resolution or may even become more important than the original cause.

### **2.5.6 Youth Bulges**

Young, poor, and illiterate generation is always ready to join rebellion and participate in conflicts. Henrik (2006) examines youth bulges as a cause of war in cross-country studies. Youth bulges, defined as the proportion of 14-25 years old in the population, could provide either the opportunity or the motivation for rebellion. Urdal (2006) finds no evidence that youth bulges are significant in civil war onset regressions. By arguing this way Urdal backup the findings of Collier and Hoeffler (2004) and Fearon and Laitin (2003a), which believe, the common thread across the latest research is that youth bulges alone do not cause conflict.

Rather, when unstable politics and social deterioration are combined with large numbers of disadvantaged young men, then new problems arise. Their early papers

failed to support the hypothesis that youth bulges lead to conflict (although they flagged secondary education of male youth as influential in 2004), but an updated methodology in the 2007 paper led to a new finding that a doubling of the population of young males aged 15-29 would increase the risk of conflict from 4.7 percent to 31.9 per cent.

Other important studies, however, have not produced this result. For example, Fearon and Laitin (2003) found the significant drivers to be poverty, political instability, rough terrain and large populations; although they did, point out that low GDP per capita would increase the feasibility of rebellion by lowering the cost of recruiting young men to militias. Urdal at the Peace Research Institute in Oslo, Norway, (PRIO) has published several papers on youth bulges and conflict, consistently showing that other factors, such as low economic growth, economic hardship and levels of political participation pose greater conflict risks than youth bulges (USAID, 2007, Urdal & Hoelscher, 2009). Urdal has found no correlation between youth bulges, urbanization and violence, although the caveat here is that other factors, such as absence of democratic institutions, low economic growth and low levels of secondary educational schools are associated with disturbance (Urdal & Hoelscher, 2009).

### **2.5.7 History**

The evidence shows, countries that have experienced civil war in the past are much more likely to experience another one (Hegre et al, 2001, Collier and Hoeffler, 2004). In a large proportion of countries, the civil war recurs within a decade; Collier, Hoeffler and Söderbom (2008) find that, this is the case for about 40 percent of the post-conflict societies that they study. “However, they do not distinguish whether it is the same civil war, i.e. fought over the same issues and by the same belligerent groups” (Collier, Hoeffler and Söderbom, 2008). The longer the peace lasts, the less likely it is for countries to experience a further civil war. Hegre and Sambanis (2006), Hoeffler (2012) believe, as the peace holds, economic recovery sets in and the opportunity cost of participation rises, making it more difficult to recruit a rebel army.

### **2.6 Conclusion**

What factors and causes facilitate to lead to internal conflicts? Is there a link between civil conflict and foreign intervention, ethnicity, states capacity, political instability,

poverty, geography or History? These and a number of other explanatory factors and causes of civil war and ethnic conflicts have examined in the current review of literature. By focusing on the review of literature of several scholars of Political science and international relations since World War II, and findings of researchers show that each one of the above-mentioned variables in a degree of less or more can affect and cause the civil war and ethnic conflict.

Some of the causes are strong enough to turn a country more prone to civil war and ethnic conflict, while some others may not reach the degree of the first one. Foreign interventions, low state capacity, low opportunity costs to join rebellion, rural youth bulges (with combination of poverty and illiteracy), geography and ethno-linguistic fractionalization for instance, are significant factors in conflict risks. Lack of political and humanitarian rights, inequality, population and polarization may not concenter as key factors to increase the risk of civil war and ethnic conflict. Some variables allow to multiple interpretation, such as diasporas, which can play a positive or either negative role in civil conflict.

The effect to some variables seems to depend on their condition of functionality, geographic location, economic situation, the level of literacy of the citizens and/or some other factors. For instance, if diasporas finance the rebellions, the risk of conflicts will increase, unlike, if diasporas finance and invest on development projects or finance government, it can decrease the risk of civil and ethnic conflicts. Some causes will appear during or after the civil conflict which, will be added to the existing factors and make the conflicts situation worse, such as poverty that will arise during conflicts and it may become more important than the original or main cause of the civil war.

The above-mentioned causes and factors left huge effect on several conflict areas and countries. During the civil wars in conflict areas, most portion of diaspora's financing has been sent to war factions within the country to support the conflict situation. Likewise, civil conflicts caused several countries to be poor, which caused to prolonged the civil war and added to the complexity of the conflicts.

Review of several literatures and studies shows that the effect of some variables are more important than the others. For instance, foreign intervention is an important cause of civil conflicts. It has been emphasized "Ethnic wars do not just happen, they are made". Foreign intervention is one of the most common, and key factors of civil conflicts. During studying the literatures, the outcome reached to conclusion that, one

of the main and key factors of domestic conflicts is the foreign intervention, and likewise, the most important cause of several countries civil war is the involvement of foreign countries, particularly proxy wars for regional and international influences and other reasons.

In presence of third-party intervention, it is almost impossible to achieve peace. Review of the existing literature shows that; the involvement of a third country can destroy a possible peace process and agreement. The examples are varying, particularly after the WW2 in several African countries and conflict areas the peace planes were destroyed by foreign countries which were involved in peace talks between the war factions or political parties.

Some key internal factors may affect the civil conflicts more negatively. The findings of current review of literature shows that, factors such as; ethnicity, poverty, geography and youth bulges can affect and prone the countries to conflicts situation. In several poor countries, youth bulges (plus illiteracy and poverty), and geography, are the causes of domestic conflicts, while ethno-linguistic and religious diversity have been used by foreign countries as a significant tool to create tensions among the ethnic groups to create civil and ethnic conflicts.

The outcome of the current review of literature shows that, different causes and factors can prone a country to civil conflicts. The aim of this paper is to discover the key factors and causes of civil war and to point out the existing challenges against it. The key factors for civil war and ethnic conflicts have been pointed out, which will help us to target and prevent the effects which is the civil war and ethnic conflicts, that allow us to prevent further domestic conflicts. The easiest way to destroy the challenges against solving the conflict situation is, to solve the causes first.



### **3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The current chapter will focus on historical insight to the context of the study. Within the chapter, I will introduce and develop historical events relevant to civil conflict, which would help a better understanding of the conflict situation to the reader. The effect of these events on shaping and producing of conflict situation in Afghanistan will provide better and further insight for further studies. By focusing on historical background of the research, the chapter will provide some historical knowledge of the study, which is definitely, Afghanistan, its geographical location, natural sources, population, ethno-linguistic demography, religion, political parties, political system, and neighbors which all are linked to civil conflict of Afghanistan one way or another.

While analyzing the historical context of the study, the chapter aims to shed light on the events and regimes between the years 1978-2018, which played critical role in creating the conflict situation, and the impact of these regimes on their post political systems and governments. The above-mentioned phases are including; a) The communist coup and the Soviet backed government. b) Establishment of Mujahidin's government. c) Establishment of Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, by Taliban. D) Overthrowing of Taliban by U.S. invasion, and establishment of, U.S. backed, government of Afghanistan.

The main purpose of this chapter is to, also provide details about Afghanistan civil war escalating factors and causes, as well as the study aims to provide a foundation for further studies about the dynamic of civil wars, which is happening in different parts of the world. As already mentioned in previous chapters and review of literature, Afghanistan civil strife is affected by many factors, including external, and internal causes, that will be explore and analyze in current study.

The chapter will focus on causes such as; foreign intervention and its impact on civil war and how the civil war affects the diverse ethnicities of Afghanistan and create ethnic conflicts. Meanwhile, internal causes such as ethnicity, languages, poverty,

illiteracy, youth bulges, geography, and the linkages between abovementioned factors and civil conflicts would be discussed in this chapter.

### **3.2 Locating Afghanistan**

It is believed that Afghanistan was the crossroads of ancient civilizations. “Silk Road was crossed on these (Afghanistan) territories, it was the trade roads of India to Middle East, and ancient Arianna which Afghanistan was part of it, that suffered lots of invasions of the world invaders” (Khalidy, 2018:4). “Afghanistan is the meeting place and center of four ecological, cultural and strategic areas; the Middle East, Central Asia, the Indian Sub-Continent and the Far East, for the Pamir Mountains intrude into Chinese Sinkiang” (Marwat, 1997; cited in Mazhar et al., 2012).

This landlocked, mountainous, small, ethno-linguistically and religiously diverse, with more than thirty million populations (over three million are migrants in Pakistan, Iran and other countries), and wide untouched natural resources (but so poor) country is locating at geographically the most strategic location of south-central Asia or so called the heart of Asia. Afghanistan is surrounding by six neighboring countries of; Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan from north, Pakistan from south and southeast, Iran from west and China from northeast. Afghanistan is one of the countries, which experienced the longest deadly civil wars in the world.

Afghanistan is lying along the most important and fabled, Silk Road, which is linking India with the Far East and Europe, which is passing through valleys and mountains gaps, making Afghanistan significant for transport of trade goods and international business (Mertz, 2011). The country has thirty-four provinces, each one of these provinces is identified with particular ethnic groups and each group practices its specific culture, and language. Kabul province is the capital of Afghanistan, and locating in the center of the country with its diverse population. Pashto and Dari are the official languages of Afghanistan, but there are over 40 different minor languages with 200 different dialects that the people of Afghanistan speak (Pariona, 2015). Islam is a common faith and religion that more than 99 percent people of Afghanistan are practicing.

### 3.3 Ethnic Demography of Afghanistan

Ethno-linguistic diversity is a significant feature of Afghanistan. Rais (1999), argues; Afghanistan is ethnically truly a diverse country, and Pashtun majority controlled this country at the top level, which all the kings come from this particular group. There are five major and dozens of minor ethnic groups in Afghanistan with addition of many other that have not been studied so far (Barfield, 2012:23).

Pashtuns are the largest tribal groups in Afghanistan. Ruttig (2010) pointing Pashtuns as one of the largest societies in the world, he continues; even though “Kinship is a key factor within the tribal social organization, Pashtuns are quick to acknowledge that this age-old bond is not as cherished as it was in the past”. Residing in the north and eastern part of the country, Pashtuns are the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan, comprising of “50% to 54%” of the whole population<sup>5</sup>. Pashtuns dominate the ethnic factor in Afghanistan since eighteenth century (Hanley, 2011; cited in Mazhar et al, 2012).

Tajiks are the second largest ethnic group of Afghanistan, making up to 25 percent of the country’s population (Mertz, 2011). The Soviet invasion and civil war with Pashtuns brought this group (Tajiks) into scene in Afghanistan, and the September 11 attacks, made them influential in the country (Mazhar et al, 2012). They speak Dari language.

Uzbeks are one of the minority ethnic groups in Afghanistan, which mostly reside in an important geopolitical landscape among the mountains of Hindu Kush and Central Asian region beyond the Amu River (Amo Darya)<sup>6</sup>. The population of Uzbeks is about eight percent of the total population of Afghanistan. They are one of the smallest ethnic groups in the country (Mazhar et al, 2012). During the Turkish invasion, Uzbeks settled in Afghanistan at the time, and later Uzbeks escaped from Russian armies and from the Soviet forces in Central Asia as fighters and refugees (Rais, 2008 cited in Mazhar et al, 2012:32).

Hazaras are small ethnic groups such as Uzbeks. They comprise about seven percent of the total population of the country, but not natives. Rais (2008:32), believes, that,

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<sup>5</sup> Russians 1970s population survey estimated Pashtuns as 71.9%.

<sup>6</sup> Amo Darya is a river in North of Afghanistan, which separates the two countries of Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Moreover, recognized as border between two countries.

they are the remaining of Genghis Khan, which invade Afghanistan in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. They settled in Hazarajat (central Afghanistan), and Dari is their adopted language. Rais (2008) believes they are the poorest ethnic community in Afghanistan.

As already mentioned, Afghanistan is the home for several ethnic groups and languages. In addition of four abovementioned ethnic groups, Turkmen, Aimaq, Baloches, Nuristani, Arab, Qizilbash, Sikh, Gojer, Moghol, Kirgiz, Kazak, and 55 other minor ethnic groups exists in this country, that each ethnic group practice its own particular culture and language. “Afghanistan location as the crossroad of different civilization affected the ethnic population composition of the country. In Afghanistan more than sixteen ethnicities including Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Pashayee, Arab, Hindu, Sik and others are living” (Khalidi, 2018).

### **3.4 Brief History of Civil War in Afghanistan**

Afghanistan is known and famous for invasions, civil war, and ethnic conflicts. Mertz (2011) argues, Afghans hate the invaders and are not easy to be ruled. For instance, the entire army of Alexander the Great was destroyed in Afghanistan Mountains in 329 B.C. in 1219 A.D., Genghis Khan could conquer the region but was not able to hold onto it. In 1839, the British captured Kabul and set up a puppet ruler for it, but only two years later their 16,000 soldiers have been slaughtered, and only one wounded survived.

Only in a century three superpowers, the Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States of America have invaded Afghanistan that the outcome for all was the same, ‘defeat and defection’. Despite the Afghans always defeated their enemies and invaders, but soon after their victory the civil wars begun.

First British invasion took place in late 1830s, thousands of British and Indian troops crossed the Afghan borders to enter capital Kabul. “The disastrous incursion of British in Afghanistan ended in 1842, when the entire army of British on the way back to India was slaughtered. Only a single survivor could make it to get back to British-held territory. The reason why the Afghans let him live was to tell the story of what had happened” (McNamara, 2019). The second invasion of British was in 1878 with the support of 40,000 troops that could not occupy Afghanistan.

### **3.4.1 King Amanullah Khan 1919-1928**

British invaded Afghanistan for the third time on 6 May 1919, but were not able to conquer this country. Finally, on August 1919 King Amanullah Khan reclaimed the independence of Afghanistan and the British army could not resist and left Afghanistan to their military basis in British-held territory of India. All three invasions ended with heavy casualties and human lives lost with addition of huge destruction.

Afghans are famous of defending their homeland against invaders, but along the history, as soon as they end the war against foreigners, their internal conflicts begin. "After, the government of Amanullah Khan faced the reactionary opposition forces inside the country and, the opposition policy of the British government abroad, through the worst economic situation of the people and mismanagement, lost the support of masses of the people, a large conspiracy was plotted against him in Afghanistan. And the scattered sorts of dissent were concentrated and destructive operations began". (Ghobar, 1973:815).

Soon after the new king of Afghanistan declared the independence of Afghanistan and established the new government with some reforms and changes including the Afghan culture and society such as; introducing the western type of clothes for men and women, new schools for girls, the right of vote for women for the first time in Afghanistan history<sup>7</sup> and several other reforms, which, definitely was not acceptable for religious fundamentalists and conservative Molas, that they have started negative propaganda against the new King. On the other side, the British government that already was defeated by Afghans in their all three invasions continued their interventions and created some local rebel groups against the Amanullah Khan government.

Furthermore, the King had good relations with Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, President of Turkey, and was taking the idea of new Turkey at the time. King Amanullah paid special attention to human rights particularly the women rights and their education. He established new and updated schools for Afghan girls at the time, which caused the anger of religious fundamentalists and conservatives.

Ordinary people of Afghanistan did not know the value of these new reforms, meanwhile the British government was good aware of these weaknesses of Afghan

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<sup>7</sup> Afghanistan gives the right of vote to women before the United State of America.

people, therefor they used the above-mentioned factors against King and made some of the people and rebels to stand against the King Amanullah Khan. In result, rebels could seize the government and Habibullah Bache Saqao leader of the rebels proclaimed himself as Amir of Afghanistan and the King has left the country to Italy.

### **3.4.2 Habibullah Bachi Saqau 1928-1929**

On 1928, the civil war began and King Amanullah Khan had to fight in several directions against rebels. “Shinwari tribesmen led by Bacha-i-Saqao<sup>8</sup> (“Son of a Water Carrier”) rebelled against the government of King Amanullah Khan in the Eastern Province beginning on November 12, 1928” (Poullada, 1973). From the direction of Kabul, rebels attacked and were able to capture the area of Baghi-Bala December 14, 1928. “The troops of rebels captured capital Kabul, and Habibulah Bacha Saqau proclaimed himself as Amir Habibullah Ghazi (Habibullah the Victor) on 17-January-1929” (Poullada, 1973). Finally, the rebels won this civil war and the King had to leave the country forever.

The former King’s generals and forces with the support of tribes and troops which, fought against British invasion, have gathered to overthrow the rebels’ leader (Bache Saqao) from power. “General Sardar Nadir Khan with the support of Waziri tribesmen captured Gardez from Bache Saqau forces on August 29, 1929. General Nadir Khan, leading 12000 Waziri tribesmen started military operation against Habibullah Bache Saqaw troops on September 18, 1929 and defeated Habibullah’s troops. Finally, on October 12, 1929 General Nadir Khan captured (*capital-my italics*) Kabul and about 8,000 individuals have been killed during this civil conflicts” (Poullada, 1973).

### **3.4.3 Nader Khan 1929-1933**

After defeating Habibullah Bache Saqaw, “on October 15, 1929 General Nadir Khan proclaimed himself as King Mohammad Nadir Shah. Bache Saqau and ten of his supporters were captured and executed on November 3, 1929. Nadir Shah established his government and pointed his cabinet. King Nadir Shah have assassinated by Abdul Khaliq Hazara on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November of 1933. About 100 individuals have been killed in political violence from 1929 to 1933” (Poullada, 1973). Civil war of Afghanistan

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<sup>8</sup> Bache Saqau was the leader of rebels who fought against King Amanullah Khan, he was from a poor stratum of Afghan society, who was famous to be thief and murderer.

has continued for several decades, and has taken the lives of hundreds of thousands of people of Afghanistan.

#### **3.4.4 King Mohammad Zahir 1933-1973**

After the assassination of Nadir Shah, Mohammad Zahir became the king of Afghanistan on November 9, 1933. Kingdom of Zahir Shah was the only period which, Afghanistan experienced peace and stability, and the country has moved towards development and progress. People were tired of civil war and ethnic conflicts. Almost all of the people were living in a good and peaceful condition. It has called the golden age of Afghanistan, but did not last long, only few decades later on 17 of July 1973, has ended. “Lt. General Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan attempted the coup and overthrown King Mohammad Zahir Shah from power, some individuals were killed in military rebellion. Two days later, on July 19, 1973 General Daud Khan proclaimed the Republic of Afghanistan for the first time, while elected as president of the country” (Poullada, 1973).

As already pointed out in chapter two about the economic factors and illiteracy as the causes of civil conflicts, one of the causes of Afghanistan civil war is poverty and illiteracy with addition of foreign intervention. During the Kingdom of Amanullah Khan, and Mohammad Daud Khan’s regime, most of the people of Afghanistan were poor and illiterate. Mohammad Daud, likewise, Amanullah Khan was working hard to achieve his goals, which was to make the country rich, educated, and advanced. Illiteracy, poverty, and unawareness of an updated society of most of the people of Afghanistan caused them to fail and cannot fulfill their goals.

#### **3.5 Communist Coup of 1978 and Its Impact on Afghanistan Civil War**

Communist coup in Afghanistan is the starting of a dark age for the country, that facilitate wide civil and ethnic conflict which caused the death of millions of innocent people of Afghanistan, with addition of suffering both, the government and rebels of heavy death and destruction of the country.

On the early morning of 7 April 1978 the military uprising against the government of Mohammad Daud have begun. The sound of the heavy weapons and roar of the tanks was the only thing that people was hearing. The caravan of tanks moved 20 kilometers east of the city towards center of Kabul. Ministry of defense including all other security

forces was not able to control and stop this movement, while the uprising was under direct support of Soviet Union.

The first missile targeted the Ministry of defense that ended the contact of the president with minister of defense, and then the air strikes continuously targeted the presidential palace and finished the resistance of president that was personally fighting. “The government suppressed a military rebellion against President Daud Khan on September 20, 1973. President Daud Khan was killed during a rebellion on April 27-28, 1978, which resulted in the deaths of some 3,000 individuals. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) headed by Colonel Abdul Qadir took control of the government on April 27, 1978. Some 100 individuals were killed in political violence on April 27-28, 1978” (Bhasin, 1984).

### **3.6 Foreign Intervention and Communist Government of Afghanistan 1978-1992**

Communist coup was succeeded by direct support of Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Noor Mohammad Taraki<sup>9</sup>, the leader of communist (Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan) have elected as president of Revolutionary Council and prime minister of Afghanistan. The new regime announced several reforms that most of the people were not familiar with and it was against the interest of lots of people of Afghanistan. “the communist regime announced new programs, that included eliminating of usury, equal rights for women, land reforms and making administrative decrees in classic Marxist-Leninist rhetoric” (Bhasin, 1984:4).

Most of the people of Afghanistan did not seem happy with the new Soviet backed communist regime and the reforms. The reforms caused people to get angry and on the other hand, government behavior was suppressed. “The reform programs—which threatened to undermine basic Afghan cultural patterns—and political repression antagonized large segments of the population, but major violent responses did not occur until the uprising in Nuristan late in the summer of 1978” (Christophe, 1985).

### **3.7 Mujahidin Rebels and Civil Conflicts**

People of Afghanistan reacted against the communist regime collectively. The uprising against communist regime spread throughout all of Afghanistan provinces. Rockets

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<sup>9</sup> Taraki was the leader of communist movement and first communist President of Afghanistan.



and explosions periodically targeted capital Kabul and several other major cities. At the same time, on 14 of February 1979 the ambassador of U.S. Adolph Dubs has got killed in Kabul, and government of the United State eliminated all of its assistance to Afghanistan.

Nobody, even the high rank officials of the government were able to keep themselves safe. The political and security situation in Afghanistan was so fragile and critical in the beginning of communist regime. Hundreds of people were assassinating in daily basis, the leaders and high rank authorities did not trust each other and the Mujahidin's activities were getting stronger day by day. "Unity between the People's and Banner factions rapidly faded as the People's Party emerged dominant, particularly because its major base of power was in the military" (Bhasin, 1984:3).

Civil war rapidly spread all over of Afghanistan. "The *Mujahidin*<sup>10</sup> (Islamic Holy Warriors) led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Maulavi Mohammad Yunus Khales rebelled against the government of Prime Minister Taraki beginning on July 30, 1978. Government troops suppressed a rebellion in Herat in March and April 1979, resulting in the deaths of some 5,000 individuals" (Bhasin, 1984:4).

### **3.8 Assassination of President Hafizullah Amin's by Soviets 1979**

Hafizullah Amin, minister of foreign affairs assassinated Prime Minister Noor Mohammad Taraki on September 16, 1979. After the assassination of Taraki, Hafizullah Amin became the president of Afghanistan, but he also was not able to maintain his power and just three months later on December of 1979 by a group of Special Forces of Soviet Union were killed.

Since the beginning of communist coup, including Muhammad Daud Khan, Hafizullah Amin was the third Afghan president that was killed only in one and a half year. As already, mentioned, civil war was beginning in every corner of the country, people of Afghanistan were divided in; communist parties, Islamic parities, Shia, Sunni, and politically neutral ordinary people. Almost all of the followers of these parties were engaged in civil war.

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<sup>10</sup> Mujahidin (Islamic Holy Warriors) of Afghanistan under support of U.S. government and secondary role of Pakistan, have started fighting against the U.S. backed communist regime, that later the resistance forces have spread all over Afghanistan.

### **3.9 President Karmal and Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan**

Babrak Karmal, from the Parcham faction of Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan became the president, prime minister and chairman of the AFRC on 28 December 1979. At the same day, some 50,000 Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan and directly was supporting the government of President Karmal. Behavior of Karmal's government against the people of Afghanistan was brutal and suppressed. Likewise, Amin and Taraki's governments Intelligence agency (KHAD) or 'Afghanistan government services' hundreds of people were tortured.

The suppressed behavior of communist regimes have caused Afghanistan to prone to civil war quickly. Tens of thousands of people joined Mujahidin's groups to fight against communist government and Soviet troops. "Six Afghan main parties established under the name of Islamic Alliance for the Liberations of Afghanistan (IALA) in Pakistan. (CIA) U.S. Central Intelligence Agency have started military support to Mujahedin rebels on January 1980" (Christophe, 1985). Both sides, (government of Afghanistan and Mujahidin's parties) did not respect the human rights or any other international laws, rules or regulation. "Amnesty International (AI) appealed to both, the government of Afghanistan and rebels to stop killing of the prisoners" (Christophe, 1985).

### **3.10 President Najibullah and Collapse of Soviet Backed Regime 1986- 1992**

On 4<sup>th</sup> of May 1986, Soviets ended Babrak Karmal's presidential period and overthrew him from power. Instead, Doctor Najibullah was installed as president of Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Suppression policy of previous governments was going on, civil war and war against Soviet troops continued and still thousands of people were losing their lives in war. Both sides of the combat were receiving military aids, and foreign intervention of several countries was guaranteed. "In November of 1985 U.S. congress voted in addition of previous \$280 million for \$200 million more to Mujahidin rebels" (Christophe, 1985). The author continues; over 700,000<sup>11</sup> people were killed, some 6 million individuals fled to Iran and Pakistan during these conflicts.

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<sup>11</sup> The actual number of casualties are much higher than 700,000. According to Mujahidin's leaders, Two and a half million individuals were killed during the conflicts in Afghanistan till 1992 only.

Despite the wide destruction of Afghanistan and losses of millions of lives, Afghans defeated the Soviet Union and finally on May 15, 1988 the Soviet Union began their troops withdrawal from Afghanistan and till February 15, 1989 the last soldier of Soviet Union crossed the northern border of Afghanistan to where they were coming from. “Some 13,300 Soviet soldiers were killed during the intervention” (Bhasin, 1984, p.3). For Afghanistan, it was end of Soviet invasion, but the starting of a new phase of civil war and ethnic conflicts. Soviet army has left millions of different kind of weapons, including tanks, rocket grenades, and several other heavy and light military artilleries which, later these artilleries have used in civil war and ethnic conflicts for decades by the war faction in Afghanistan.

Despite Soviet withdrawal, the war never has ended in Afghanistan. “The government of Doctor Najibullah continued the war against Mujahedin rebels after the withdrawal of Soviet troops” (Christophe, 1985:5). War between Najibullah’s government and Mujahidin have continued for several years, and after heavy battles, Najibullah was removed from power on April 15, 1992. After overthrowing of President Najibullah, a new phase of civil war and ethnic conflicts has begun in Afghanistan.

As already pointed out, communist coup has left the worst effects on every aspect of Afghanistan and its people. It caused the people to be divided in several factions and parties such as ideological, linguistic, ethnic, geographically, and economically. Soviet divided communist party in two, Khalq (people) and Parcham (Flag). Americans, Pakistanis and Iranians divided Mujahidin in Sunni and Shia, then every one of these religious sections were divided in seven and eight more sub parties.

Soviets, left hundreds of thousands of different kind of heavy and light weapons after withdrawal of its troops, which still have been using in civil conflicts by all parties and factions of war. The communist coup facilitates foreign intervention and physical presence for foreign fighters of different countries of the world in Afghanistan. “A big number of Muslim volunteers, which called “Afghan Arabs” with different ethnicities, traveled from all over the world to join the Mujahidin rebels.” (Bhasin, 1984:6). The abovementioned and several other effects of the coup will be discussed in coming sections and chapters.

### **3.11 Islamic Government of Afghanistan (Victory of Mujahidin 1992-1996)**

In this section the Islamic government which, was established by some parties of Mujahidin in Afghanistan on April 1992-1996 will be analyzed, Mujahidin's parties and how the Mujahidin's faction's ideologies shifted to ethno-linguistic and has divided geographically, will be discussed. Meanwhile, the effect of these fundamental changes and its impact on Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts will be focused.

Mujahidin, or Afghanistan freedom fighters, 'collectively' achieved a great victory against the Soviet and communist regime during the invasion and established the Islamic Government of Afghanistan. "Based on the Peshawar signed agreement On April 24, 1992, Mojaddidi (leader of Harakat-i enqilab) have appointed as revolving President for two months and following him, Rabanni (leader of Jamiat-i Islami) for only four months was selected as the president, that by ending the agreed period he and his commander and minister of defense (Ahmad shah Masoud) refused to leave the power" (Dorrnsoro, 2007).

Except Professor Sayaf from Etehad-i Islami, almost all of Mujahidin's parties did not participate the government and opposed the prolonging of Rabanni government. "This paradoxical situation reflects well the incoherence of a government unable to establish any recognized institution at a national level" (Dorrnsoro, 2007). As already pointed out, all of these parties were armed enough to be able to threaten the new established and weak government of Rabanni, particularly 'Hizb-i Islami' which was one of the most popular and well-known parties of Mujahidin. Hazara Shia parties were also serious threat to the government with addition of other parties, which did not gain any share in the government of Mujahidin that all the mentioned parties and armed groups have engaged in ethnic and civil conflicts.

#### **3.11.1 Mujahidin and Dissolution of the Communist Government Institutions**

The year '1992' is a nightmare for Afghans and beginning of longest civil wars in Afghanistan's history. After overthrowing of President Najibullah, the last communist president of Afghanistan from power, Mujahidin's arm groups have occupied all provinces including big cities and counties. As mentioned elsewhere, Mujahidin were already divided by foreign countries, on ethno-linguistic, religious and Islamic-armed parties in several groups and ideologies such as seven Sunni and eight Shia parties.

The division of Mujahidin was definitely neither accidental nor unplanned. The neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan, in addition of U.S. and some Arab countries which, were involved in establishment of these parties were well aware that, one day these powerful arm parties will achieve the power in Afghanistan and have access to one of the strongest armies in the region, which was created by Soviet Union with advanced technologies of that time. Therefore, they have divided them into several parties and ideologies to keep them ready to start civil conflicts that facilitated the condition for their intervention and regional influences.

The very first thing that Mujahidin attempted after the victory was dissolution of the Afghanistan strong army and security forces. Iran and Pakistan was directly involved in dissolution of the Afghan army. Foreign intervention in Afghanistan is one of the main causes of civil war and ethnic conflicts. Nawaz Sharif, Prime minister of Pakistan repeatedly stated in media that, one of his biggest achievement and victories was the destruction and dissolution of Afghanistan army by Afghan Mujahidin.

Weapon and military artilleries are one of the most important and necessary requirements of civil conflicts. After the victory and capturing the main cities, different parties and groups of Mujahidin occupied the government buildings and former communist government military basis including key ministries such as ministry of defense, interior, government security (KHAD), and presidential palace. Each one of these ministries was heavily armed which, during the invasion of Afghanistan, Soviets have strongly supplied military assets to the communist government and its security sectors.

Different parties and groups of Mujahidin's have started distribution of these weapons to their particular ethno-linguistic and religious groups of people in capital Kabul and all other provinces, cities and suburbs. Afghanistan army was dissolute and their weapons and military artilleries distribution was continued for several month and even years without any registration system to ordinary people of Afghanistan. All parties of Mujahidin's rebels particularly (Jamiat-i Islami and Shoraye Nezar)<sup>12</sup> which captured capital Kabul were competing with each other in weapon distribution to have more supporters and soldiers among ordinary citizens of Afghanistan. Access to a weapon

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<sup>12</sup> Jamiyate Islami is one of the seven Mujahidin's Sunni parties that Borhanuddin Rabbani was its leader and (Shoraye Nezar) is a branch of Jamiyat that Ahmadsha Masoud was its commander, which entered capital Kabul prior to other parties and groups and Rabbani selected himself as president of Afghanistan (Dorronsoro, 2007).

for people was as easy as, to get a local item from a market. Weapons were spread quickly to every corner of the country, and condition for the civil conflict was ready.

Afghanistan's centuries old and strong army have dissolved and destroyed within days, all its artilleries, weapons, tanks, armored vehicles, fighting jets, transportation planes and trucks, military bases, uniforms, and communication system have looted by Mujahidin groups and parties. Military personal including high rank generals and officers of the previous regime have fled the country or have start working as labors or other low-income jobs. Some of the communist regime officers and militias have joined Mujahidin's parties such as (Jamiat and Shoraye Nezar). Afghanistan was out of national army, police and security forces. The only armed men were Mujahidin's rebels or unknown irresponsible armed groups.

After dissolution of Afghanistan army, police and security forces by Mujahidin, capital Kabul and all major cities fall into an anarchy, lack of rule of law and civil and ethnic conflicts. Mujahidin parties, communist militias, thousands of young illiterate men from different ethno-linguistic groups of citizens, criminals, drug dealers, and several other armed groups were ready to fight in capital Kabul and "war of all against all" has begun.

### **3.11.2 Dissolving the National Army and Police of Afghanistan**

Following the victory of Mujahidin against Soviet Union and the Communist Soviet, backed regime, the government, which Mujahidin established, was the weakest government ever in Afghanistan's history. Mujahidin rushed in dissolving the Afghan army and police, but never been able to create their own national army, police forces or intelligence services. They have installed uneducated and unprofessional, Jihadi figures with no or less knowledge in security, sectors and all other key sectors such as ministry of defense, home, foreign affairs, intelligence etc.

Security is one of the most important parts of political goods, which the states have to provide to its citizens. "Political goods have a hierarchy, that providing security is the most critical, particularly human security" (Rotberg, 2003). Mujahidin groups and remaining militias<sup>13</sup> of the communist government, instead of providing security to the

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<sup>13</sup> General Dostom was one of the main leaders of militias, who joined Mujahidin against communist government of Najubullah, and caused to overthrow Najibullah from power. His armed groups were involved in looting the government and private properties and mass destruction of Afghanistan particularly capital Kabul during civil conflicts from 1992-2001.

residence of Afghanistan, started looting the government and private properties. All major cities including capital Kabul were divided between different parties and armed groups of Mujahidin. Parties of Mujahidin ideologically were divided by ethno-linguistic and religious factions. Jamiat-i Islami's members under Rabbani leadership were mostly from Tajik ethnicity, while Hizbi Islami under Hekmatyar and the remaining parties of Sunni's were mostly from Pashtun ethnicity. Moreover, Shia parties were ethnically belonged to Hazara's.

### **3.11.3 Clashes of Mujahidin and Looting the Government and Private Properties**

Prior to the victory against communist government, Mujahidin had never experienced to manage a government themselves. Their reaction was strange, for instance, when Prime minister of Pakistan on his trip to Kabul, announced ten-million-dollar assistance to the government of Afghanistan and handed the papers to President Mujahidin, later he claimed that the money belongs to himself, rather to the government of Afghanistan. Different groups of Mujahidin, which despair any of government properties, such as government furniture, vehicles, or logistic items, claimed their own property, as (Ghanimat).

Capital Kabul have experienced the worst condition during Mujahidin's government on 1992. As already pointed out, Kabul was 'ethnically' divided between Mujahidin hostile groups with addition of communist militias and irresponsible unknown armed groups that was fighting each other. Government had no control of more than a few kilometers from presidential palace. Every single part of Kabul was under control of a particular group of Mujahidin or communist militias that other groups including government armed groups were not allowed and able to have access there. Rabbani's government has never been able to reestablish government institutions, which they have destroyed. "The government was not able to establish any institution which recognized at a national level (...)" (Dorransoro, 2007).

### **3.12 Political Legitimacy and National Sovereignty of Mujahidin's Regime**

Mujahidin's government neither had political legitimacy nor national sovereignty. Nobody was accepting the orders of government and its authorities. Courts, prosecutors, police, army, customs and all other government institutions had just symbolic existence. Warlords and communist militias ruled entire country, particularly

in Kabul. “Outside of Kabul, law and order broke down across much of the country, and Afghanistan became, in effect, a country ruled by militia leaders and warlords who exacted road taxes and transit fees from trucks engaged in cross-border trading and promoted extortion in most other areas of normal life. Kidnappings, whether for sadism or profit, were not uncommon, and the people generally fell into a state of despair” (Allchin et al, 2019).

Mujahidin’s government, political relation with the world was disconnected. Except few countries, almost all of the counties of the world have postponed their embassies and political relations with Mujahidin regime. Some countries even did not recognize Islamic government and stopped relation with Mujahidin, and closed their embassies in Kabul. The embassy of United States was postponed prior to Mujahidin during communist government. Neighbors of Afghanistan one after another have postponed their embassies due to tough and unstable security situation or humanitarian crisis, which Mujahidin were responsible for. Pakistan embassy was the only active one, that in an attempt of Jamiat-i Islami party, (Rabbani-Masoud) followers on 9 July 2003 have attacked and burned it, that Pakistan closed its embassy in capital Kabul either.

The government was not able to have control on borders of Afghanistan that national sovereignty of Afghanistan was questioned. “Unlike the strong states, failed states are not able to control their borders. They do not have the authority over parts of territory. Their power limits to capital city. States failure can be measured based on the control of geography by the government. (...)” (Rotberg, 2003). Pakistan army have entered several kilometers inside of Afghanistan territory and installed checkpoints in the of the Afghan territory. People did not elect mujahidin government, just a single party out of 15 parties selected one of the leader (Borhanuddin Rabbani) as the president of Afghanistan and the remaining was fighting against it.

### **3.13 Failed State Criteria**

Which criteria make a state failed or weak? There are some criteria that distinguish a successful state from weak or failed state. Rotberg (2003) believes that, when a state cannot deliver political goods, in an effective level to the citizens, it concedes as weak, failed or even collapse state. The political goods such as; providing security for citizens, or cannot guaranty the participations for the citizens in politics and the process to achieve the positions they compete for, and/or not be able to guarantee the national



sovereignty or humanitarian rights of the citizens are the criteria of failed, weak or collapse state. Furthermore, “in failed states, the governments turn against their citizens under ethnic or other internal communal causes” (Rotberg, 2003).

### **3.14 Islamic Government of Afghanistan or Failed State**

What criteria has made the Islamic Government of Afghanistan to be failed? Did Mujahidin Islamic government delivered the above-mentioned political goods to the citizens of Afghanistan? Does failed states cause civil war and ethnic conflicts? Mujahidin that defeated the Soviet Union, and communist regime under a single slogan of ‘motherland’ and ‘Islam’, was now divided in several factions of ethno-linguistic, religion (Sunni and Shia), geography (north and south...), and religious-armed parities. “The civil wars that characterize failed states usually stem from or have roots in ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other inter communal enmity” (Rotberg, 2003).

Mujahidin started the longest and devastating civil war under the ethno-linguistic and religious slogans and caused to destroy almost all of essential infrastructures of Afghanistan and the death of tens of thousands of innocent Afghan citizens particularly in capital Kabul. “In failed states, mostly the governments prey and victimize their own citizens. Causing by ethnic or any other inter communal hostility, as Taliban in Afghanistan. (...)” (Rotberg, 2003).

Capital Kabul was the center of Mujahidin’s civil conflicts and every single home and street have experienced the worst civil war of the history. “Most of Kabul was destroyed by bombing and its infrastructure, such as electrical installations and water system, was damaged. International Committee of Red Cross confirms 25,000 deaths only in Capital Kabul. Moreover, 500,000 people have left the country, because of rocket fires in 1992” (Dorransoro, 2007). Except Jamiat-i Islami and Etihad, all other parties did not participate in Mujahidin government and were fighting against it, which caused mass destruction of the country.

Citizens of Afghanistan, particularly capital Kabul were living under a critical and dangerous security condition, that government was not providing any kind of security to the citizens. Violence against citizen was an ordinary and routine of gangs. “Other criteria of a failed state are the increase of criminal violence” (Rotberg, 2003). As the author predicts, lawlessness was apparent in Mujahidin government and the gangs took

over to the streets of Kabul. “Drug trafficking and arm becomes common. Police forces work paralyzed, citizens refer to warlords and powerful figures for protection, particularly those who express ethnic or sympathy” (Rotberg, 2003).

Several foreign countries were intervening and supporting the civil war factions. All essential infrastructure of the country was destroyed, and the government was not able to maintain any of them. Almost all of the members of these hostile groups were young and illiterate men, which were enjoying the destruction of the country and civil war without any reason. The government relation with other countries was broken.

Islamic government of Mujahidin did not meet any of the requirements of a legitimate government and was not delivering any of “political goods” to the citizens of Afghanistan. The responsibility and credit of failing the government of Afghanistan turns to Mujahidin that have facilitated all of criteria of a failed state. “State failure is largely man made, not accidental.” It was a failed state rather than a successful one that finally collapsed. “Bosnia, Lebanon, and Afghanistan collapsed more than a decade ago” (Rotberg, 2003).

### **3.15 Taliban, Collapse of Islamic Government and a New Phase of Civil War**

Citizens of Afghanistan experienced the worst government ever in history of Afghanistan during Mujahidin regime. People of Afghanistan were tired of civil war, criminals, corruption, warlords, ethnic conflicts, lack of rule of law and several other issues that created during Mujahidin government. The civil war that occurred between Mujahidin parties that caused the destruction of entire country, death of tens of thousands of people, migration and displacement of millions of citizens of Afghanistan paved the road for Taliban to have rapid successes and support of majority of citizens.

People had lost their trust and hope on Mujahidin government and were waiting for a new regime, which can settle at least a peaceful condition to live under a lawful regime and government. As already pointed out, Mujahidin regime from the day one, was not able to maintain its power in the country and deliver any of “political goods” to the citizens of Afghanistan. The regime was about to collapse and did not gain any public support.

During this critical period of time, on late 1994, a small group of religious school ‘Madrasa’ students under the name of *Taliban Islamic Movement of Afghanistan* have

raised their voice, and started their movement under a former Mujahidin commander, who called 'Mullah Mohammad Omer' from Kandahar historic province in north of the country. "Taliban is an Arabic word, for students. Taliban movement of students grew quickly, because they have promised to return peace and order to Afghanistan, that was ravaged following the Soviet forces withdrawal in 1989 by civil war" (Azzi, 1999).

The movement of Taliban has started their operations from Southern province of Kandahar on late 1994. Taliban was a small movement of religious school "Madrasa" students, which wanted to stop civil war, finish the warlords and collect the weapons from people. They have promised to end corruption, return the rule of law and security to Afghanistan and leave the government and power to King Mohammad Zahir Shah and his Afghan western technocrat team, which were living in western countries at the time.

The slogans that Taliban came with were exactly the aims of millions of the citizens of Afghanistan. People were exhausted from the regime of Mujahidin and were ready to change the government with a new regime. Taliban gained the support of majority of the citizens of Afghanistan. Support of the people caused Taliban to have quick and rapid success in conquering cities one after another, which is not an easy task in such a tough country like Afghanistan.

Civil war likewise Mujahidin's government did not stop during the Taliban regime. In the beginning of Taliban movement, some parties of Mujahidin supported the Taliban movement against some others. For instance, Jamiat-i Islami of Borhanuddin Rabbani, that was the president of Mujahidin government, have supported the Taliban movement against Hizb-i Islami of Hikmatyar, General Rahid Dostom and Hazara Parties. The government of Rabanni, have provided the Taliban with military artilleries, weapons, and money, when the Taliban have started their movement from Kandahar. The support of Rabbani's government to Taliban continued until Taliban has arrived to capital Kabul's gates and defeated their enemies one after another.

The major cities of Afghanistan including Herat, Mazar, Jalal Abad, and several other cities fall one after another in Taliban hands. Taliban combat machine like Mujahidin was comprised of young, poor and illiterate men between 18-35-year-old that were fighting against other groups. Taliban have surrounded capital and Rabanni/Masud

have withdrawn their forces to the north of the country and by collapse of the Mujahidin's government on late 1996, a new phase of civil conflicts has begun.

### **3.16 Continuation of Foreign Intervention during Taliban Regime**

Taliban were receiving support from foreign countries such as Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. "Pakistan as a Sunni Muslim country was the first state that support the Taliban movement, believing that the Taliban movement would secure and stable Pakistan's northern borders. Saudi Arabia, also as a Sunni country, followed the Pakistan view and shortly began to support the Taliban" (Azzi, 1999).

Foreign intervention as one of the main causes of civil war has continued for decades in Afghanistan. All sides of war factions were receiving foreign aids from different states. As already mentioned, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates (UAE), were providing Taliban with military aids and money. India, Iran, Russia, Tajikistan, and some other countries were supporting Rabbani/Masood's party with money and military artilleries, Russia and Uzbekistan were supporting General Dostum, Rabanni, and Uzbek militias. Iran was providing military support and money to Shia/Hazara parties including Rabbani and Masoud. Each one of the abovementioned countries have their particular plans and purposes in Afghanistan and following their specific policies according to their interests, that from time to time their support to different factions were changing the sides.

Neighbors of Afghanistan have been playing the major role in fueling civil war and ethnic conflicts. Afghanistan war is a proxy war, and most of these countries such as; Pakistan-India, Iran-Saudi Arabia, Russia and United States of America are fighting their wars in Afghanistan since decades. As argued elsewhere, during the Taliban the abovementioned countries continually supported their interested war factions. "Several semi-private and private Pakistani agencies have provided enormous aids to Taliban, that government officials of Pakistan were full ware of it, although this action of them violated the law of Pakistan" (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

All of these agencies were part of the government of Pakistan. Private Pakistani agencies are not able to lead a complicated war such as Afghanistan civil war. The report continues; "some sources in Afghanistan and Pakistan confirms that, in April and May of 2001 several trucks full of artillery shells, rocket grenades and tank rounds

were crossing the Torkham border daily”. Pakistan government was directly involved in Afghanistan civil war. “Human Rights Watch interviewed observers confirms that Pakistan intelligence and army were providing military planning operations (...)” (Human Rights Watch, 2001). Saudi Arabia and Emirates were providing the money, transportation, pickup trucks and logistics to Taliban.

Foreign intervention and military aids to war factions as one of the main factors of fueling civil war in Afghanistan was not provided only to Taliban, the Northern Alliance<sup>14</sup> and Mujahidin parties were also receiving military aids from foreign countries. As already pointed out, Iran, India, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan were supporting the United Front or Northern Alliance. “Iran and Russia are supporting the United Front at least till 1998, while Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan were playing secondary role” (Human Rights Watch 2001). Iran was playing a leading role among the supporting countries of Northern Alliance, and Russia was a key supporter of them that provides a good number of military aids to Rabbani/Masud and their alliances.

### **3.17 Taliban, Mujahidin and Ethnic Conflicts 1995-2001**

During the Taliban regime, the economic situation of people, which was already in a critical condition during Mujahidin government, became worse than before. Citizens of Afghanistan were jobless with no or less income that were ready to accept any opportunity to have an income. People’s worst economic condition facilitates the situation to the war factions to recruit cheap and easy fighters. Young, poor, rural and illiterate men preferred to join the war factions and armed groups that had sympathy with, and were fighting each other.

Mujahidin which, were overthrown from power by Taliban, withdraw their troops to north of capital Kabul and tried to establish their military bases in northern provinces such as Parwan, Takhar, Kunduz, Mazar and Badakhshan to fight back the Taliban. Majority of Jamiate-i Islami party members were ethnically belonged to Tajik minority of Northern provinces. While most of the Taliban were ethnically belongs to the majority of Pashtun ethnicity from Southern provinces. Mujahidin, Taliban and Uzbek

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<sup>14</sup> Northern Alliance are the Mujahidin parties those who gathered against Taliban when, Mujahidin government was overthrown by Taliban and all parties gathered in North of the country mostly in Takhar province.

militias were ethnically divided to Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras. Each one of these parties had their foreign supporters from out of the country.

Foreign intervention was continually prolonging the civil war in Afghanistan since decades. Iran and Russia were playing the leading role in supporting the northern alliance or so called United Front that was the Tajik minority. “In late 2000, Iran continued in providing huge amount of funding, weapons, and training. Russia have played an important role in resupplying the Northern Alliance forces through providing the transport for Iranian aids, and providing direct military assistance by itself, such as transport helicopters.” (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

Each one of the above-mentioned states was supporting a particular ethnic group of war factions in Afghanistan. For instance, Tajikistan as a Tajik ethnic country had sympathy with Afghanistan’s arm groups and parties, which were belonged to Tajik ethnicity such as Jamiat-i Islami of Rabanni and Shora-i Nezar of Ahmad Shah Masoud. Jumbishe-i Islami party as an Uzbek ethnic group was backed up by Uzbekistan, because of their Uzbek ethnicity. Iran as a Shia country was supporting Hazaras because of their shared religion of Shia. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia as a Sunni country were backing up the Sunni Taliban based on their religion.

Intervention of the above-mentioned and several other countries caused the civil war to be prolonging for several years and shed the blood of hundreds of thousands of people in Afghanistan on the name of ethnicity, religion, and so on. The foreign countries were following their own interests and policies, while the people of Afghanistan were fighting a proxy war on behalf of the mentioned counties and were killing their own citizens with showing no mercy to them. Illiteracy of majority of young generation of Afghanistan and their poor economic condition caused them joining the rebels, without knowing the purpose of the supporting counties.

### **3.18 Afghan Diaspora, Civil War and Ethnic Conflicts**

Another factor of prolonging the civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan in almost all of the latest periods of time, at least in four decades is the Afghan migrants and refugees that live in neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan. Following the communist coup and Soviet invasion in 1979, millions of people of Afghanistan escaped and emigrated to Iran and Pakistan. Diasporas as an economic and fighter’s

recruitment sources for war factions affected the Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts. Pakistan and Iran hosted millions of Afghan refugees and migrants<sup>15</sup> during the Soviet invasion that most of them are still living there.

Diaspora has supported the ethnic groups in Afghanistan, which they belong to. Pashtun diaspora were providing with money and military artilleries to the Pashtun ethnic groups, while the Tajik and Uzbeks were supplying their own particular ethnic groups. Hazara diaspora that were living in Iran, were economically backing up the Shia and Hazar ethnic groups in Afghanistan. Afghan diaspora have affected the ethnic conflicts and civil war in Afghanistan negatively. “Consistent with the greed theory, both dependence upon primary commodity exports and a large diaspora substantially increase the risk of conflict” (Paul and Anker, 2002).

Furthermore, with the economic support of Afghan diaspora in neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan, Afghan migrants and refugees were used as a main source of fighter’s recruitment for war factions. Soon after the starting migration from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran have established refugee camps for Afghan migrants and Mujahidin parties in their countries. Almost every party of Mujahidin had their own refugee camps that was divided on the ethnic basis, Such as Pashtuns, Tajiks and Hazara Shia camps.

Despite, Taliban has conquered and ruled on more than 95 percent of Afghanistan, but civil war never has ended. Even though, in most of the territories that were under control of Taliban were peace, but still Afghanistan has never experienced stability and security all over the country. The civil war has continued among Taliban and Northern Alliance or Mujahidin former parties including communist Uzbek militias of General Rashid Dostom and Shia groups of Hazara parties.

### **3.19 Collapse of the Taliban Regime**

As already pointed out, the Taliban regime was the only government that been able to conquer and had control on almost all of Afghanistan. Only a small part, (less than five percent) of the northern Afghanistan was out of control of Taliban. Northern alliance

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<sup>15</sup> Although, many Afghans in Iran and Pakistan can still be considered to be refugees, following the international literature on the causes of civil wars, I use the term “diaspora” for both migrants and refugees.

arm groups were resisting just in few places in north of Afghanistan and Tajikistan borders such as Takhar and Badakhshan<sup>16</sup> provinces.

Taliban wanted to conquer the small and tiny remaining parts of the country by the coming winter of 2001, that the same year, Al-Qaida has attacked the World Trade Center in New York and Pentagon on 9/11/2001. Shortly after Al-Qaida have carried out the 9/11 attacks and hit the couples, U.S. invaded Afghanistan and sent tens of thousands of its troops to this country and overthrown Taliban from power. "U.S. officials stated Pakistani foreign secretary that US will attack Afghanistan... before the winter started in Afghanistan, in October. Indeed, the attacks on Pentagon and World Trade Center happened when they did, U.S. mobilized its troops and attacked Afghanistan on 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2001" (Griffin, 2010). In the coming chapter U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and overthrowing the Taliban will be discussed in details.

### **3.20 Conclusion**

The last decade of twentieth century was a significant and important period of Afghanistan history. Within the period of 1992-2001 Afghanistan have experienced its deadliest and devastating condition. From 1978 to 2001, two super powers, (Soviet Union, and United State of America) have invaded Afghanistan. Each one of these invasions, have left Afghanistan with mass distraction and millions of death of peoples of Afghanistan with addition of mass migration of its citizens. In only two decades, nine regimes and governments have changed because of the civil wars and ethnic conflicts, that each one of these replacement has left hundreds of thousands of casualties and deaths with mass migration and destruction. Most of the presidents have been killed or had to leave the country within this period.

The factors and causes of civil war in Afghanistan that have been argued within the chapter such as ethno-linguistic diversity, geography, history, political parties, foreign intervention, Afghanistan neighbors, and political systems and governments during the period of 1992-2001, are recognized as fueling factors of civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan.

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<sup>16</sup> Badakhshan and Takhar are two provinces in northwest of Afghanistan, that the Northern Alliances had control on some part of these province by the year that the Taliban government collapsed by the U.S invasion of Afghanistan.



For instant, history is recognized as a factor of civil conflicts. Despite the period of Islamic government of Mujahidin 1992-1996 and 1996-2001, Islamic Emirates of Taliban which are concerned as the worst era of Afghanistan history in the mean of civil war and ethnic conflicts, meanwhile, civil war has a background that has affected the contemporary civil conflicts of Afghanistan. Even though, within the chapter, long period of Afghanistan history and the civil wars that had happened is pointed out, but the main focus of last four decades were the main point of the research. Aside the other factors, history of civil wars and ethnic conflicts may have caused Afghanistan to fall into civil conflicts so quickly during the decades of ninety and end of twenty centuries, particularly after collapse of Soviet backed Communist regime in 1992.

Afghanistan strategic geographic location mad this country more vulnerable and prone to civil conflicts. As pointed out elsewhere, Afghanistan is the meeting point and center for several cultural and strategic areas that have been invaded by world invaders. Afghanistan is still under attack of different super powers of contemporary world, such as U.S., Russia and others. The latest country is United State of America, which have invaded Afghanistan in 2001 and still struggling to conquer this country, but not been able to do so far. U.S. invasion likewise, other previous ones, caused Afghanistan to prone to civil and ethnic conflicts.

One of the complicated issues of Afghanistan is the ethno-linguistic diversity of this country that is a factor of civil conflicts. Ethno-linguistic diversity of Afghanistan is recognized as a significant factor of civil and ethnic conflict that has been used as a tool by foreign countries to fuel civil wars in Afghanistan, while ethno-linguistic diversity it self is not known as a cause for Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts.

Islamic armed parties of Mujahidin and Taliban which, have fought against Soviet Union during the invasion of Afghanistan, are responsible for ethnic conflicts and civil war during the years of 1992-2001. Mujahidin parties, after their victory against the communist regime and shortly after the establishment of the Islamic Government of Afghanistan, fall into an ethnic and civil war, that caused the casualties of hundreds of thousands of people, and migration with addition of economic problems, which added to the complexity of conflict situation.

Foreign intervention as a main cause of civil war was common more than any other time during the Mujahidin regime, 1992-1996. Iran and Pakistan, Russia and India with addition of Saudi Arabia were competing each other in supporting the war

factions in Afghanistan. All of the mentioned countries were fighting their wars on the ground of Afghanistan. Ethnic groups were receiving military and financial support from different countries that prolonged the civil and ethnic conflicts for decades.

The intervention of foreign countries, particularly Iran and Pakistan, continued during the Taliban regime. Northern Alliance, (former Mujahidin parties, with leadership of Masoud and Rabanni, Jamiat-i Islami party) were receiving military and financial aids from Iran, India, Russia and Tajikistan, while Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Emirates were supporting the Taliban regime during the civil war of 1996-2001.

Afghanistan as one of the poorest countries of the world has the lowest GDP. With addition of abovementioned factors, Poverty is one of the main causes of civil conflicts in Afghanistan. Poor, young and illiterate population facilitates the condition of recruiting of fighters for arm groups. Young men had no other option than joining the ethnic arm groups to fight their compatriots.

Thus, Mujahidin, Taliban and even prior to them, the communist regime were recruiting their solders from the poorest stratum of society. Lack of employment, poor economy, low GDP, and illiteracy, facilitated the procedure of recruitment for arm groups and parties of Afghanistan. These factors with addition of mass migration and diaspora, failed states, ethno-linguistic diversity and foreign intervention and invasions caused the civil war to be prolonging for decades.

## **4. U.S. INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN 2001-2019**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter will discuss the events, which occurred post 2001, particularly September 11, 2001 attacks of Al-Qaida that hit the World Trade Center, which caused Afghanistan to be invaded by the United States of America. The chapter will focus on a new phase of political system and governments that have been established after the invasion of Americans in Afghanistan, and how these governments and political systems affected the civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan negatively.

The Northern Alliance as one side of the civil war during the last four decades has played a critical role in creating the civil conflicts which was ended after the collapse of the Taliban regime. The chapter will also analyze the causes and factors, which recreated the ethnic conflicts among the former Mujahidin groups, and Taliban after the invasion of Americans in Afghanistan. Civil war between the Taliban and Northern Alliance, “massacre” of Taliban by Northern Alliance and its role on creating the critical situation and further civil wars in Afghanistan will be discussed.

Within the chapter, the economic factors and how the U.S. invasion has changed the economic conditions of a particular stratum of Afghan society, and poverty of another stratum of society in fueling the civil war during the years of 2001-2018 will be focused. By focusing on the abovementioned factors, withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan and its effect on civil war contingency between Taliban, former Mujahidin groups, and U.S. backed Afghan government will be analyzed.

While analyzing the causes and factors of civil war and ethnic conflicts of Afghanistan between the years of 2001-2019, the chapter aims to shed light on internal and external causes of civil war in Afghanistan, particularly the foreign intervention and the role of Iran and Pakistan in fueling civil war. Furthermore, internal factors such as ethno-linguistic diversity, geography, youth bulges and economic factors will be discussed.

By focusing on the above-mentioned causes of civil war and ethnic conflict in Afghanistan, the chapter will provide some knowledge about the peace process

between the Americans, Taliban and the Afghan government, the structure of the institutions and delegations, which were working on the peace process with Taliban, and how these institutions have sabotaged the process. The challenges that have been created against the peace process with Taliban by the mentioned institutions and the Northern Alliances authorities of Afghan government during Hamid Karzai's regime, will be analyzed and discuss.

The chapter will end up with focusing and analyzing the peace process, challenges against peace process, and providing a possible resolution to end the civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan. The study aims that, by analyzing the causes and factors of civil war in Afghanistan, focusing on peace process, the challenges against it, and possible resolution will provide some knowledge to the reader, to be able to provide better insight for further studies.

#### **4.2 U.S. Invasion of Afghanistan and Collapse of Taliban**

Taliban have ruled the country within the years of 1996-2001 for more than five years, following a particular interpretation of Islam. Taliban, were young Madrasa (religious schools) students in Pakistan, who have seized the capital Kabul in the fall of 1996 and executed Communist Former President Najibullah<sup>17</sup> who had taken shelter in a U.N. compound when the Mujahidin took over the capital.

They fought tough wars against all Mujahidin parties, as well as communist and Hazara militias. Taliban have defeated all armed groups and parties, and withdraw them from almost all of Afghanistan. By late 1998, the Taliban have controlled *more than 90* percent of Afghanistan. Some 3.7 million citizens of Afghanistan have fled the civil war (Mertz, 2001).

Al-Qaida, the organization that the U.S. government has recognized as a terrorist movement, was already active in Afghanistan during Mujahidin's government and built the training camps in Southern Afghanistan. "The Taliban have given safe harbor to a wealthy Saudi exile, Osama Bin Laden, who has coordinated the flow of funds and volunteers coming from other Arabic nations" (Mertz, 2001). On 11 September 2001 Al-Qaida launched attacks on Pentagon, World Trade Center in New York and

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<sup>17</sup> Dr. Najibullah was the president of Afghanistan during the Communist, Soviet backed regime that take shelter in a UN compound in Kabul when Mujahidin took over control of the Government of Afghanistan on 1992.

few other targets inside of America which caused the death of thousands of U.S. citizens.

The attacks on 9/11 have changed the sense of security of United States forever. The Al-Qaida 9/11 attacks facilitate the condition to the George W. Bush administration to invade Afghanistan, and sent tens of thousands of U.S. troops with the support of more than fifty other countries to attack Al-Qaida and Taliban inside Afghanistan. “On October 2001, the U.S. started bombing the Taliban in Afghanistan, claiming, war against terrorism, lots of Afghan citizens, tens of thousands decided to leave the country. Many of these people were faced hunger with no shelter” (Mertz, 2001).

U.S. have launched air strikes on main targets of Taliban and Al-Qaida leaders, the Taliban military facilities and Al-Qaida training bases. Some 8,000-12000 foreigners were forming the fourth or fifth of the Taliban forces which were about 40,000-45,000 fighters. U.S. air forces have launched attacks on Taliban and had significant and rapid succeeds against the them in Afghanistan (Davis, 2001).

Afghanistan’s tough terrain and mountainous geography, did not allow U.S. to send ground troops, and only air strikes were not the solution for overthrowing the Taliban government. The Northern Alliance, which was fighting since years against Taliban, was a good option for Americans. Ahmidov (2004:37), argues; “As OEF operations began, CIA, Central Intelligence Agency operatives contacted the Northern Alliance leaders and supported them with air forces and training.”

Northern Alliance that were aware of the area and supply system of war in Afghanistan gave assistance to the U.S. troops as the ground forces, and Americans in return, provide them with huge amount of money and logistics. The coalition forces with combination of NA militias could destroy the Taliban troops and strong holds rapidly. Ahmidov (2004:38) adds, “Main Taliban strongholds rapidly fell and major cities such as, Kabul, Kunduz, Mazar and Jalalabad fell into the coalition hands.”

Woo (2017), argues; third party intervention is one of the causes of prolonging the civil war and ethnic conflicts. After five years of ruling the country and civil wars with Northern Alliance, the 9/11 events and U.S. invasion caused Taliban to lose control of Afghanistan, and the Emirate. Northern Alliance with the support of U.S. air force on 2001, have fought the Taliban, and have been killed thousands of Taliban forces, while Taliban were withdrawing the cities and villages of northern provinces.

### **4.3 U.S. Intervention and Supporting the War Factions**

Soon after the invasion of Americans on Afghanistan, CIA communicated the leaders of Northern Alliance. The very first teams of CIA, military personnel and troops have landed in Khwaja Bahawodin<sup>18</sup> of Takhar province; Pansher valley of Parwan and Jabul Saraj, where the main groups of Northern Alliance and their leaders were staying during the battle against Taliban. “the operations in Afghanistan begun by CIA team famous as Jawbreaker on September 26, working with Northern Alliance, the anti-Taliban allies, providing the strategy of overthrowing the Taliban regime” (Witte, 2019:7).

Foreign intervention can change the outcome of civil conflicts significantly. “Civil war represents opportunities for some and challenges for others” (Woo, 2017). Since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan on late 2001, the structure, mechanism and balance of power between war factions have been changed. U.S. military forces and (CIA) have decided to support Northern Alliance that caused the Taliban to lose the battle and withdraw from provinces one after another. “The CIA, U.S. and British Special Forces cooperated the Afghans with equipment, arms, and advice.” (Witte, 2019:8).

Despite, Northern Alliance was receiving military aids, including personal training and intelligence assistance from Russia, Iran and India, by joining the U.S. to the existing coalition, their fighting capability has increased quickly. According to Dobbins, (2007) in a research from RAND, “lots of Americans believe that in the post 9/11 attacks, the U.S. government formed a coalition from different nationalities which overthrow the Taliban from power”.

### **4.4 Ethnic Diversity and Massacre of Taliban in North of Afghanistan 2001**

The U.S tested their most powerful weapons in Afghanistan against one side of the war faction, which was the Taliban during the invasion of 2001. The U.S. forces air strikes, pushed the Taliban to withdraw their troops from mostly Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara populated provinces in North of the country prior to the other provinces in South, East and central Afghanistan. American air strikes caused the Taliban to lose thousands of their military personnel, vehicles, artilleries and heavy weapons. Taliban

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<sup>18</sup> Khwaja bahawodin is located in North East of Afghanistan of Takhar province, where Northern Alliance withdraw their forces. Panjsher and Jabulseraj is located in Parwan province in north of Kabul.

have lost the ability of defending their positions and military bases against the Northern Alliance ground operations.

Ethno-linguistic and religious diversity of Afghanistan, particularly the Northern provinces, which is a factor of civil war, caused the Taliban to suffer the worst life loss of their troops, after the 2001 U.S. invasion. Most of the Taliban belonged to Pashtun ethnic group, while majority of the Northern Alliance were ethnically, Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara minorities. Witte, (2019) stated; the Americans relied on the Northern Alliances, under the Tajik and Uzbek commanders.

Thousands of surrendered Taliban fighters and ordinary citizens have been locked for several days in truck containers by Northern Alliance leaders and troops that have suffocated because of the lack of oxygen, water, food and opening fire on those containers. Witte, (2019) argues; more than 2,000 surrendered Taliban forces and other people have been suffocated to death or opened fire on them in containers that were on trucks by U.S. allied Afghan fighters of Northern Alliance, then buried in mass graves in Dashte Laile, close to the city of Shebirghan in North of Afghanistan.

The ethno-linguistic diversity of Northern provinces was the cause of massacre of Taliban in 2001. Bassaug (2006) argues that; countries that have diverse ethnic or religious groups are more prone to civil war and ethnic conflicts. Majority of Taliban were ethnically Pashtuns, while the NA parties and groups were Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara. Northern provinces are witnessed such conflicts in the past as well.

#### **4.5 Northern Alliance and Division of Afghanistan's Government Institutions**

Kabul is one of the few capitals in the world that, only in four decades, more than ten times have been exchanged between different regimes with diverse ideologies. Following the U.S. invasion on 2001, and the collapse of Taliban, the U.S. has warned the Northern Alliance, to not enter to Capital Kabul. Despite the U.S. warnings, Northern Alliance have taken over the Kabul administration and divided the government institutions and ministries among different parties and groups. Likewise, during the previous regime changes, many people were killed, tortured, or jailed because of their ethnicity, language or religion.

The division of the government administrations and high ranking authorities between the parties, groups and personnel of Northern Alliance, that most of them were not

qualified or educated, facilitated the situation for a corrupt, incapable, and weak government that two decades later citizens of Afghanistan are suffering the issues which, is created by the Bonn agreed government.

#### **4.6 Bonn Agreement and U.S. Backed Afghanistan Government**

After the U.S. invasion and overthrowing the Taliban from power in Afghanistan, the Bonn conference was held in late 2001, in the former capital of West Germany. The conference hosted the former Mujahidin leaders or representatives, Northern Alliance leaders, some Afghan migrant representatives, the representative of former King Mohammad Zahir, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Afghanistan, and some other political groups and parties. The conference was held under the strong pressure of the international community, led by the United States of America and other International powers to achieve an agreement. Finally, the Bonn agreement was signed on 5<sup>th</sup> of December, 2001.

Although, the delegates to the Bonn conference were so heterogeneous, and most of them have remained the enemies of each other during the last few decades of civil war and ethnic conflicts, but somehow under the pressure of international community and external powers such as U.S. and others, have had some progress and agreed on an Interim Administration, providing of a new constitution, and the presidential election in 2004. Throughout the Bonn conference, they decided to reestablish some institutions, reconstruction of Afghanistan, protection of human rights and providing the road map for peace and security in the country.

Although the Bonn conference facilitated the situation of establishment of a new government, some key institutions, parliament, social services, educational, health and judicial system, which were destroyed or disabled during the four decades of civil war and ethnic conflicts, but did not provide a real and comprehensive agreement to guarantee a concrete peace and security, a strong government from all factions and ethnicities of Afghanistan, preventing foreign interventions and supporting the war factions, protection of human rights, transnational justice for the war victims, fair distribution of foreign aids and wealth, and so many other necessary and important things that were the urgent need of Afghanistan.



#### **4.7 Corruption, Poverty and Prolonging the Civil War of Afghanistan**

The 2001 conference of Bonn missed a big opportunity of creating a much better situation in Afghanistan. Human Rights Watch (2002) report shows that; with all the financial aids and political support that the international community has provided to Afghanistan, many people of Afghanistan believe that, the Bonn conference was the biggest chance for the country to achieve all the goals that were necessary for Afghanistan, such as the establishment of peace, security, and human rights protection in Afghanistan.

The government that the conference of Bonn has produced for Afghanistan, was, a weak, inefficient, and the second most corrupt government in the world. Witte (2019:9) argues; “Karzai’s government was beset by corruption”. Witte continues; the government was not capable to build a police force and a national army from beginning, and the insufficient support of international community and ethnic differences was added to the problems. “Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index, has shown Afghanistan as the most corrupt government of the world after North Korea and the government of Somalia” (Iqbal, 2014:7).

The new U.S. backed government of Afghanistan, which was agreed in the conference of Bonn in 2001, was the most corrupt government in the world. During Karzai’s government, corruption have become as a custom among the government employees and high-ranking authorities. “During the Bonn agreement of forming the Afghan government, scaled and proficient Afghans were not selected and unskilled, inefficient and corrupt individuals were placed in key positions during Karzai’s government.” (Alikozai, 2014, cited in Iqbal 2014:3).

Many citizens of Afghanistan believe that, corruption has affected the civil war and ethnic conflicts negatively, and concerned as a factor of prolonging the civil war. Corruption in the government of Karzai has caused the international aids not to be using in development projects, health, education and/or did not distributed fairly and equally among the citizens of Afghanistan. One of the mains causes of the last two decades of economic crisis and poverty is linked to corruption of Afghan government.

Corruption has created a big gap between the poor and wealth in Afghanistan. A tiny stratum of the society, particularly the Northern Alliance leaders and commanders, warlords, and their relatives become the wealthiest people in Afghanistan. On the other

side, majority of Afghan citizens were suffering from severe poverty. Borger's (2001) argues; "Many believe that, the agreement of Bonn 2001 is the root cause of Afghanistan's current conflict." The author continues; that was the Afghan allies of Washington, those who divided the post-war positions among them. The Pashtun tribes and Taliban were not invited and since then are excluded from power.

The citizens of Afghanistan have lost their trust on the U.S. backed government of Afghanistan, particularly under President Karzai's administration. Corruption, unemployment, the gape between poor and wealth, poverty, and some other factors that will be discussed later, have caused the people, particularly the young generation, to join the Taliban and rebels to fight against the government of Afghanistan, that have been prolonging the civil war for decades.

#### **4.8 U.S. Troops Withdrawal and Civil War Contingency**

Afghanistan has remained as one of the world's most dangerous country for invaders in the era of history. Several empires of the world have been decided to invade Afghanistan in different periods of history. Lots of superpowers such as Genghis Khan, Alexander the Great, British Empire, Soviet Union, and recently on 2001 the United States of America have invaded Afghanistan. However, the outcome for all was the same, and none of them including the U.S. could not conquer this small and poor country.

In 2001, the Bosh Administration has invaded Afghanistan, and named it, "the war against terrorism". The U.S. government have invaded Afghanistan and overthrow the Taliban from power, promising to install a new democratic, stable and progressive government with advanced institutions based on 21<sup>st</sup> century requirements. The commitment of U.S. government to the people of Afghanistan was, to protect human rights, peace and security and support the people and government of Afghanistan until achieving a self-sufficient government.

Despite, the all above-mentioned commitments, President Obama has announced the end of war in Afghanistan, while Afghanistan was not secure, and war was still going on in every corner of the country. Moorthy (2016) argues; after the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. have started the war in Afghanistan. Official mission of combat finished in 2014. U.S. government have started withdrawal of their troops from Afghanistan and left all

the war on Afghan army, which, was not well trained, equipped and capable of fighting with Taliban insurgents. The author continues; Obama has decided to decrease his soldiers from 100,000 to 30,000 significantly, despite, experts have warned that it will cause to worsened the conflict in Afghanistan. However, until the end of 2014, the number of U.S. troops have dropped to only 8500 soldiers.

The U.S. government contrary to their obligations did not support the Afghan government that can establish a strong and capable national army and police to be able to fight the Taliban insurgents. After the security transition from (ISAF) to (ANSF), the Afghan national army is the only forces to take the responsibility of securing the country against the Taliban, ISIS and intergovernmental warlords, which, were threatening the government and the citizen of Afghanistan.

After the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces from Afghanistan, the civil war has caused the Afghan National Army to suffer the biggest life loss since the security transition from International and U.S. forces. Ashraf Ghani, the President of Afghanistan in an interview with CNN, has stated that, only in 2018, some 45,000 national army forces have been killed in battle against Taliban and ISIS insurgents.

Since the security transition from ISAF to ANSF, the civil war has become more intense in Afghanistan and killing more people and civilians in the country, particularly in Capital Kabul, that has been witnessed many civilian life losses than any other conflict areas in the world. Unlike the statements of the American authorities including President Obama, which, were emphasizing on “end of war” in Afghanistan, the civil war has never been ended.

#### **4.9 Afghanistan Civil War Escalating Factors**

The civil war in Afghanistan is one of the most complicated and multi dimensions conflict in the world, which, several factors and causes are involved. Foreign intervention, diaspora, financial support and remittances, are known as external factors of Afghanistan civil conflicts, while internal factors such as ethno-linguistic diversity, religious, inequality, poverty, youth bulges, geography, history, economic, financing and level of income are the internal causes of civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan.

The above-mentioned factors have caused the Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts to be prolonging for several decades. Some of these factors are strong and has roots in Afghan society, geography, and the behavior of the citizens of Afghanistan, such as, ethno-linguistic diversity, and inequality. While some of them are the effect of another cause, such as, poverty and economic factors, and illiteracy, which, are created by continuity of civil war and ethnic conflicts.

#### **4.9.1 External Factors of Civil War**

As already pointed out in previous chapters and review of literature, external factors play significant role in fueling and prolonging the civil war and ethnic conflicts. Factors, such as; foreign intervention, migrants, remittances, and financial support of war factions are known as external causes of civil war. Since World War II many researches has been done and several theories emphasize on the importance of external factors of civil war and ethnic conflicts.

Woo (2017) findings shows that; external factors can play key role in fueling the civil war. Woo believes that, third party intervention can affect the outcome and duration of civil wars. Albornoz and Hauk (2010) argues; yet a key feature of civil war is the involvement of foreign governments supporting one of the sides in conflict. Likewise, Fagen and Bump (2006) believe that; a big portion of remittances is used to fund the war and civil conflicts in the countries that diasporas belong to. Ballantine and Sherman (2003) say, remittance is a factor of prolonging the civil war in conflict and crises areas.

#### **4.9.2 Foreign Intervention and Supporting the Ethnic Groups**

The main causes of civil war in Afghanistan have deep roots out of the country, particularly in the neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan. The foreign intervention has a long history in Afghanistan, and the outcome of foreign intervention is bold in contemporary civil wars and ethnic conflicts. Each one of the interfering countries, have their particular interest in Afghanistan and has deep linkages with war factions and armed groups. Albornoz and Hauk (2010) believe that, one of the main causes of civil war is the involvement of a third party or a foreign state that is providing aids to one of the war factions and creating ethnic conflicts.

Almost all of the war factions in Afghanistan, including former Mujahidin parties, communist parties, armed militias, irresponsible armed groups, Taliban, Shia Hazara armed groups, Uzbek armed parties, ISIS and other war factions that fighting against each other or the government are linked to a foreign country, organization or external political party. The above-mentioned war factions, groups and parties are all receiving foreign aids from out of the country.

The major part of Afghanistan Civil wars and ethnic conflicts are not the consequences of Afghanistan's internal problems, but because of foreign interventions. The argument of Young (2002) can be so accurate about the civil war and ethnic conflicts of Afghanistan that argues; "ethnic wars do not just happen, they are made". Human Rights Watch (2001) report confirms that, ISI, the Pakistan Intelligence Service and army have been providing military aids and operations planning to Taliban. The report said, the Emirates and Saudi Arabia have been providing transportation, logistics and money to Taliban. Afghanistan ethnic conflicts and civil wars are the product of foreign states intervention. Almost all of the civil wars in Afghanistan, particularly the past four decades are mad by foreign countries, such as Iran, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and recently the United States of America.

#### **4.9.3 Afghanistan Neighbors and Supporting the War Factions**

All sides of the war factions are receiving the military, financial or political support from foreign countries in Afghanistan. Human Rights Watch (2001) report adds; United Front or Northern Alliance are receiving funds and military aids from Russia and Iran. According to this report, countries such as Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan were also involved in civil wars and ethnic conflicts of Afghanistan. The Human Rights Watch (2001) report emphasizes on the leading role of Iran in fueling the ethnic conflicts and civil war, with addition of Russia that were supporting the United Front.

Foreign intervention has never been stopped in Afghanistan since decades, particularly after the collapse of the Soviet backed Communist regime in 1992. Even though, prior to the victory of Mujahidin, in 1980s, United State and Soviet Union have chosen Afghanistan as a battleground to compete each other for the global superiority, but the collapse of communist regime and victory of Mujahidin in April 1992 facilitated the situation for the intervention of several other countries in Afghanistan, particularly

Russia, India, Iran and Pakistan. Research of, The RAND Corporation by Dobbins (2007:4) says; “During the decades of 1990, Russia, India, Iran and Pakistan have supported the war factions of Afghanistan to guarantee and extend their regional influences.”

The intervention of the above-mentioned countries has been continued for decades to prolong the civil war and ethnic conflicts of Afghanistan. As already, pointed out, each one of the intervenient countries were trying to prolong the Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts to protect their influence in Afghanistan and region. The invasion of United State in late 2001 has opened a new phase of intervention in Afghanistan.

#### **4.9.4 U.S. Invasion and a New Phase of Foreign Intervention in Afghanistan 2001**

After the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001, a new phase of foreign intervention in Afghanistan has begun. Pakistan, which was supporting the Taliban against Northern Alliance, and providing military and financial aids to Taliban, has changed the way and strategy of intervention in Afghanistan. Following the 9/11, attacks and U.S invasion of Afghanistan, CIA and U.S. forces have provided the Northern Alliance with huge amount of financial aids, military support, particularly air strikes against Taliban. Dobbins (2007:4) continues; “by the support of American airpower and postponing the Pakistan support of Taliban, the Northern Alliance have prevailed.”

U.S. government has appointed the warlords in high-ranking positions. “in the government which, was agreed in Bonn, from 30 members of cabinet, Americans gave the most important roles and positions to 17 Northern Alliance warlords for the service they have been done” (Iqbal, 2014:2). Iran, that was supporting the Northern Alliance against Taliban, have started supporting the Taliban against the new government of Afghanistan and U.S. troops, and providing them the military artilleries, training camps, weapons, and financial support. Russia have started political and military support for the Taliban, which was supporting the Northern Alliance prior to U.S invasion.

Under the pressure of U.S. forces and a short break in 2001, Pakistan restarted supporting the Taliban, against the government of Afghanistan and has established new training camps in Pakistan. Despite, the presence of U.S. and establishment of

new government, Afghanistan never been able to stop the intervention of the governments of Pakistan, Iran and Russia.

#### **4.10 Theoretical Approach of Foreign Intervention and Afghanistan Civil Conflicts**

This section highlights some critical arguments with the literature on the external causes of civil war. Afghanistan civil war has several dimensions and variables. In studied literature and researches, the authors have argued the external causes and factors of civil war that most of them are correlated to my hypotheses, Afghanistan civil war, and ethnic conflicts, while some are not. For instance, Albornoz and Hauk (2010), pointed out the foreign intervention as a key feature of civil war, that a foreign government supporting one of the sides in conflict. Such interventions are very common in Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts. The Human Rights Watch (2001) has repeatedly reported the third party states intervention, particularly the intervention of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Russia supporting the war factions in Afghanistan.

Foreign intervention is the most important factor of Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts. Afghanistan neighbors with addition of international powers have been intervening in Afghanistan since decades and caused the civil war and ethnic conflicts to be prolonging. Albornoz and Hauk (2010) and Woo (2017) conducted the above mentioned studies about the causes of civil war and achieved some theoretical approaches, which some of these theoretical approaches are relevant to my research, 'Afghanistan civil war' and my hypotheses.

For instance, Woo (2017) studies show that third party intervention will prolong and even intensify the civil conflict, but not resolving internal disputes, Albornoz and Jauk (2010) findings show that third party intervention will destroy a possible peace agreement, which are strongly relevant to Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflict. For instance, Afghanistan, neighboring countries, Pakistan and Iran have been preventing the ongoing peace negotiations since decades. Woo (2017) theoretical approaches pointed out the variety of foreign intervention in general, but the specification and description of the variety of intervention in his studies is missing, which will not help us in resolving or preventing the conflicts.

## **4.11 Internal Factors of Civil War**

As mentioned elsewhere, several theories show that, internal factors play key role in fueling and prolonging the civil war and ethnic conflicts. Having knowledge of internal factors of civil war allow us to be able to prevent further conflicts and civil wars. Ethno-linguistic diversity, geography, economic, financing and history are known as causes of civil war and ethnic conflicts.

Countries with diverse ethnic and religious groups are more prone to civil war and ethnic conflicts (Bassaug, 2006). Fearon and Laitin (2003) argues; the rich countries experience no or less civil war or ethnic conflicts, even if these countries are ethnically diverse. Likewise, Collier and Hoeffler (2004) noted that, if an ethnic group makes up the majority of 45 percent up to less than 90 percent of the population of a country, the chance of civil war would increase. “Countries with mountainous terrain are more prone to civil conflicts” (Hoeffler, 2012).

### **4.11.1 Ethno-Linguistic Diversity**

Afghanistan is a diverse country in the means of ethnicity, religions and languages, which, several ethnicities, tribes, languages and cultures are living for thousands of years. Bassaug (2006) believes that, the countries that have diverse ethnicities and different religious groups, has greater risk of civil war and ethnic conflicts. Ethnic and linguistic diversity will facilitate the situation for political leaders and warlords to absorb and recruit their supporters from particular groups that they belong to, and can lead to increase tensions and conflicts among these groups or can collapse the state.

Even though, Afghanistan is a diverse country, and contains several ethnicities, languages and religions, but generally, the citizens of Afghanistan have always been chosen to live in peace and respect of each other's for thousands of years. The major cause of civil wars and ethnic conflicts of Afghanistan is not because of the ethno-linguistic or religious diversity itself, but the foreign intervention and the countries that have been using the ethno- linguistic diversity as a tool to create tensions among the different ethnic groups of Afghanistan. “Relations between different religious, ethnic and linguistic groups and communities of Afghanistan is not well, but the existing tensions are primarily the consequences of civil war rather than the cause” (Dobbins, 2007:4).



Since several years, different countries are supporting the particular ethnic, linguistic and religious groups in Afghanistan. Iran is supporting the Shia Hazara religious groups that is sharing the same (Shia) religion with Iran. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia is supporting the Pashtun, Sunni, religious, linguistic and ethnic groups. Tajikistan, Russia and India is supporting the Tajik and Uzbek, ethnic groups. The reasons behind supporting of intervenient countries is not always the sympathy they share with the groups they have support, but the strategic interests and influences these countries needs to access to in the region. Surprisingly, after the invasion of U.S. in 2001, the Shia Iran is supporting the Sunni, Pashtun, religious fundamentalist group of Taliban. Pakistan, in addition of Taliban, have started to support the Northern Alliance and Tajik ethnic groups in Afghanistan, which were the enemy of Pakistan for several years.

As already mentioned, ethno-linguistic diversity of Afghanistan is known as a cause of civil war and ethnic conflicts, but diverse ethnicity and languages have been always used by foreign countries as a tool for creating tensions and prolonging of civil wars and ethnic conflicts in the country, rather than itself as a cause of civil war or ethnic conflicts. The ethno-linguistic and religious diversity of Afghanistan is more an effect of civil war, rather than the cause of civil war and ethnic conflicts.

#### **4.11.2 Theoretical Approach of Ethnicity and Afghanistan Civil War**

As mentioned elsewhere, Afghanistan as a multi ethnic country has experienced several civil wars and ethnic conflicts, particularly in last four decades. Ethnic diversity has been always playing a significant role in fueling and in some cases preventing the civil war and ethnic conflicts. In general, the ethnic diversity of Afghanistan caused this country prone to civil wars and ethnic conflicts. Diversity of ethnicity in Afghanistan itself is not as a single cause of civil conflicts, but foreign countries used this diversity as a tool to fuel the civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan. Foreign intervention is one of the main causes of civil war in Afghanistan. In the case of Afghanistan, I strongly support the idea of Bassaug (2006), who believes; political leaders in ethnic diverse countries will get their supporters easier from particular ethnic groups for rising tensions and join civil conflicts.

Young (2002) believes; “Ethnic wars do not just happen; they are made”. According to accuracy of my hypothesis, I backup this point of view of Young (2002). Almost all

of Afghanistan civil wars particularly the last four decade conflicts have strong roots out of the borders, especially in the neighboring countries of Iran, Pakistan and Russia. I believe these conflicts are “made” not just happening itself. From my point of view, the second group of scholars such as, Fearon and Laitin (2003), Crawford Young (2002), and Regan (2009), studies are more realistic than the first one, in the case of Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts. For instance, Fearon and Laitin argues that, there are more important factors rather than ethnic diversity, which can favor the situation for starting the civil war, such as weak corrupt or brutal government, that faces the small armed groups of rebels, with specific type of protections such as, mountainous geography, sympathetic rural population, foreign aids or revenues from natural resources such as diamonds or coca. The above-mentioned study is much closer to Afghanistan civil war and ethnic conflicts condition and my hypotheses.

In the case of Afghanistan, I do not support the point of view of first group of scholars, which believe that, ethnic diversity itself prone countries to civil and ethnic conflicts. As already mentioned, the first group of scholars are missing several important factors rather than ethnic diversity, such as; weak and corrupt or brutal government, rough mountainous geography, sympathetic rural population, foreign aids and intervention, revenues from natural resources, and economic factors, which are more familiar with Afghanistan civil and ethnic conflicts and my hypotheses.

#### **4.11.3 Economic Factors**

Although, Afghanistan is one of the richest countries of the world in terms of natural resources and mines, but still remained as one of the poorest nations in the world. The recent surveys that have been done by Americans in Afghanistan, show that this country have trillions of dollars untouched natural resources and mines. Loewenstein (2015) says; in an interview with *The New York Times* on 2010, Gen. David Petraeus, U.S. Central Command Head in Afghanistan stated that; the value of mining’s in Afghanistan is between \$1 trillion to \$3 trillion. However, more than 80 percent of the people of Afghanistan are living below the poverty line.

Decades of civil wars and ethnic conflicts have caused Afghanistan to remain as one of the poorest countries in the world. Hoeffler (2012) believes that, aside from the main causes of civil war, some other issues will be creating during and by the civil war itself. Hoeffler continues; sometimes the issues that have been created by civil war,

becomes much more important than the main causes of civil conflicts and increases the complexity of civil wars. For instance, increasing the level of poverty will add to the complexity of conflicts resolution, or it can become more difficult than the main conflict itself (Hoeffler, 2012).

Last four decades of civil wars and ethnic conflicts have created widespread poverty in Afghanistan (Hoeffler, 2012). Argument is so accurate about Afghanistan that the poverty which, has been created by civil conflicts, has become as one of the important causes of civil war in Afghanistan. Poverty of citizens of Afghanistan have caused, that war faction can recruit cheap and easy fighters and prolong the civil conflicts for decades. Likewise, the intervenient countries can create the war factions easy and cheap, to fight on behalf of them.

#### **4.11.4 Theoretical Approach of Economic Factors, Geography, Political System and Afghanistan Civil Conflicts**

Continuity of civil conflicts caused Afghanistan to drop into the level of poorest countries in the world that the poverty has added to the complexity of conflict resolution. We can see the correlation of poverty and conflict by joining the poor stratum of society to the rebels and armed groups. The relevancy of the studies of; Hoeffler (2012), MacCulloch and Pezzini (2007), Walter (2004), Fearon and Laitin (2003), Collier and Hoeffler, (2004) Hegre and Sambanis, (2006) which sees positive relation between economic factors and civil conflicts, with my hypotheses and Afghanistan civil war is the reason why I support their point of view.

Political instability is correlated with civil war, Hegre and Sambanis (2006). The authors believe that state capacity can cause civil conflicts, and large countries have more conflicts. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) in cross-country study find; large countries with dispersed population are at risk of civil war. In the case of Afghanistan, I backup Hegre and Sambanis (2006), for the reason of instable political systems and weak governments that was ruling the country during the civil wars.

According to Collier and Hoeffler findings, in case of Afghanistan civil conflicts, I would not support that population and the size of the country will cause civil conflicts, nor Afghanistan population is dispersed, not Afghanistan is a wide and large country, but has been always experienced the civil war and ethnic conflicts such as several African small countries which have experienced civil wars as well. For instance, China

and India are big countries with large population; we may not find evidence that these countries are prone to civil war or ethnic conflicts. Instead I would rather support the argument of Jenne Saideman and Lowe (2007), which says; external military support can likely cause civil conflicts, that several external military supports to different war factions in Afghanistan that caused to prolong the civil war.

Specific geographic characteristics will facilitate civil conflict; there is some evidence that mountainous terrain makes countries more conflict prone. By arguing in this way, Hoeffler (2012), Fearon and Laitin (2003a) Hegre and Sambanis (2006) Collier, Hoeffler and Rohner (2008), that mountainous and rough geographic situation of Afghanistan, which enabled the rebellions to keep fighting for decades, is relevant with my hypotheses and Afghanistan civil war.

#### **4.11.5 Geography**

Particular geographic characteristics can facilitate the situation for civil war and ethnic conflicts. The countries with rough, mountainous and forested geography will not be easy to control. Mountainous geography of countries can cause the civil war. It will be easier for rebels to hid and launch attacks easier (Hoeffler, 2012).

Afghanistan is a mountainous country that a big part of its lands is surrounded by high and rough terrain. It is believed that, one of the reasons of defeating the most powerful enemies by the people of Afghanistan is the rough and mountainous geography. Likewise, these particular characteristics of Afghanistan has made it more prone to civil war and ethnic conflicts.

#### **4.11.6 Youth Bulges**

More than half of the population of Afghanistan is under 15 years old and majority of the population of this country is young generation. Children, who since the U.S. invasion became 18 years old, have spent all their life in war. According to the Central Administrations of Population of Afghanistan, 48 percent of 32 million population of Afghanistan is under 15 years old. That shows, majority of Afghan population is young. According to Save the Children of Afghanistan, 84 percent of the victims of war in Afghanistan are the children under 18 years old (2019).

The recent studies show that youth bulges can cause the civil war and ethnic conflicts. Henrik (2006) examination in cross-country studies show that the populations of age

between 14-25 years old can facilitate either the opportunity or the motivation for rebels. Although, some scholar such as Fearon (2003) does not believe that youth bulge as a cause of civil conflicts, but in the case of Afghanistan the argument of Henrik (2006) is accurate.

The main portion of young and illiterate population have facilitated the situation for war factions to recruit their fighters from young proportion of the society in Afghanistan. Contingency of civil wars and ethnic conflicts for several decades have caused Afghanistan not to be able to provide the educational condition and facilities to the citizens, particularly in the rural areas, where the rebellions are more active and powerful. Hence, the illiterate, poor, and unemployed young citizens of Afghanistan is one of the main causes of civil war and ethnic conflicts.

#### **4.11.7 Theoretical Approach of Youth Bulges, History and Afghanistan Civil Conflicts**

In addition of above-mentioned causes, Fearon and Laitin (2003) point out some further factors such as, poverty, political instability, rough terrain and large populations, which can cause the young men to be recruit by rebels with low cost. The above-mentioned causes enabled the Afghanistan war factions by recruiting the young, illiterate, poor, and rural men to keep and prolong the civil war and ethnic conflict for several years.

According Henrik (2006) proportion of 14-25 years old in the population could provide opportunity or the motivation for rebellion, meanwhile, Urdal find no evidence between youth bulges and civil war. While Collier and Hoeffler (2004) and Laitin (2003a) believe, youth bulges alone do not cause conflict. Rather the combination of unstable politics and social deterioration with large number of disadvantaged young men can cause civil conflict.

I support the Fearon and Laitin findings, which believe that youth bulges alone will not cause the civil conflicts. According to NPR News Morning Edition, Renee Montage (2013), 75 percent of Afghanistan population is under 35 years old. The main portion of Afghanistan war faction is the young “illiterate” and “poor”. In the case of Afghanistan, the correlation of Urdal and Heolcher is relevant with Afghanistan civil war, which argues; no correlation between youth bulges, urbanization and violence, although the caveat here is that other factors, such as absence of democratic

institutions, low economic growth and low levels of secondary educational school are associated with disturbance. The youth bulges with combination of illiteracy and poverty is one of the causes of civil and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan.

The longer the peace lasts, the less likely it is for countries to experience a further civil war (Hegre and Sambanis, 2006 and Anke Hoeffler, (2012). Countries, which have the history of civil war, they may experience it again (Hegre et al, 2001 and Hoeffler, 2004). Afghanistan have experienced civil wars in the past, it may have caused this country to prone to more civil wars. I backup the argument of Hegre and Sambanis (2006) and Hoeffler (2012), who believe, “As the peace holds, economic recovery sets in and the opportunity cost of participation rises, making it more difficult to recruit a rebel army”.

#### **4.11.8 Diaspora and Remittances**

Civil war and foreign military intervention caused Afghanistan to face mass migration and millions of casualties. Afghanistan is one of the biggest migrant sender countries that, Pakistan and Iran have hosted millions of Afghan migrants, refugees and diasporas and a main portion of the resistance forces and some of the financial support of fighters against Soviet invasion were provided by these migrants, refugees and remittances. As already argued, there are two main views about remittances: the pessimists and optimists. Some scholars such as Bump (2006), Orozco and Lowell (2005) believe that, remittances, particularly in the conflict and crises areas are playing a positive role in peace building and security, reducing the poverty, preventing further forced migrants and helping development projects.

The funds that are used negatively, mostly in the countries that the governments are weak and corrupt and the level of criminality are high. Some authors such as Ballentine and Sherman (2003) argue that, diasporas and remittances can play a negative role in conflict and crisis areas. The authors believe that remittances will cause to prolong and fuel the civil war and ethnic conflicts, warlords and corrupt political leaders get benefit to enhance their power.

In the case of Afghanistan and several other conflict countries, diasporas and remittances have played negative role. Afghanistan as a conflict and crisis area is negatively affected by diaspora and remittances, and caused to prolong the civil war and ethnic conflict. I backup Ballentine and Sherman (2003) arguments, which believe

that remittance is a factor for prolonging the civil war in conflict and crisis areas. Because diasporas have strong ties and sympathies to particular ethnic groups of their countries of origin that during the conflict, diasporas would definitely support the war factions.

In the case of Afghanistan's civil war and ethnic conflicts, and for the following reasons, I do not backup the arguments of Bump (2006), Orozco, and Lowell (2005); a) As far as diasporas have strong ties and sympathies to particular groups and ethnicities of their country of origin in conflict and crisis areas, therefor diasporas will definitely support the war factions to which they belong to. They will not support development projects. b) Generally during the conflicts, the governments are weak and corrupt, such a condition will not allow the diasporas to support the positive projects such as security, peace building and reducing poverty and other development projects. c) In conflict situation, Warlords, and political criminal leaders will exploit diasporas to enhance their power and reinforce the involved parties which has ties with them.

These Afghan migrants and refugees created the communities of diasporas, and have been always supporting the war factions in Afghanistan. Diasporas from Iran were mostly the Shia minorities and 'Hazaras'<sup>19</sup>, which was providing financial support to Shias and Hazaras war factions in Afghanistan. Moreover, diasporas of Pakistan were reinforcing and providing the mainly Sunny Mujahidin and conflict groups of Afghanistan. Rarely we can find an example of positive support from diasporas, therefor I strongly support the view of pessimists, such as Bump (2006), Manuel Orozco, and Lowell (2005) and others.

#### **4.12 Domestic Challenges Against Intra Afghan Peace Talks**

Since the beginning of Bonn agreement government, the peace process is ongoing between Taliban and Afghan Government without any significant result or progress. Kaura (2018:5) argues; "The government of Afghanistan since 2001, attempted some initiatives regarding peace with Taliban, to motivate them to stop their military actions". President Hamid Karzai on 2010 has established the High Peace Council<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Hazara is one of the Afghanistan ethnic Shia minorities, which was supporting by Iran during the Afghan - Soviet war and Afghanistan civil wars.

<sup>20</sup> The High Peace Council of Afghanistan has been established by President Hamid Karzai, and most of the member of the (HPC) were warlord and former Mujahidin, that were receiving millions of dollars

(HPC), and appointed the Mujahidin Former Afghan President and the leader of Jamiate Islami party, which have had heavy battles with the Taliban for several years. Almost all of the members of (HPC) had the experience of fighting with the Taliban in the past. In addition, did not play any positive role about the peace process and Taliban has never trust them either?

Despite, the Peace Council were spending millions of dollars under the name of peace process with Taliban, but since the establishment of the Council, even could not make one direct contact with the leaders of Taliban. After several years of useless entity, wasting of time and money, President Ashraf Ghani has ordered to dissolve the Peace Council. Karzai several times has offered the Taliban peace deals, promising the removal of Taliban's leaders names from blacklist of U.S. if they accept the constitutions of Afghanistan and stop violence. "Karzai also invited the Peace Loya Jerga (National Consultative of Peace) to make a peace deal with Taliban, but Taliban have repeatedly reject the peace deal with Karzai and responded new campaign against the government, and assassinated the Chief of the High Peace Council, Burhanudin Rabbani on 2011" (Kaura, 2018:7).

Likewise, Karzai's government, the president of National Unity Government (NUG) Ashraf Ghani offered a peace deal to Taliban, including removal of all sanctions of Taliban, recognition of Taliban as a political party, releasing of some prisoners, and review of Afghanistan's constitution. "On Jun 7<sup>th</sup> 2018, President Ashraf Ghani has announced one-week unilateral nationwide ceasefire with Taliban and a couple of days later, the Taliban have extended the ceasefire for three more days" (Thomas, 2018). Thomas continues; the Afghan government, on 16 June 2018 has extended the ceasefire for ten more days, but Taliban did not accept it.

The government of Afghanistan have been always trying to motivate the Taliban in direct peace talks with the Afghan government, but Taliban demand direct negotiations with Americans, believing that the government of Afghanistan is not the final decision maker about the issues of peace in Afghanistan (Kaura, 2018). Recently on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018, Moscow has held a conference for peace in Afghanistan, that representatives of Taliban and ten more countries including Pakistan, Iran, and India

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in the name of Peace with Taliban, but they had no interest to peace with Taliban. Finally, Afghan President, Ashraf Ghani has dissolve the peace council.



have attended in, while the Afghan government did not send any representative, but a delegation of High Peace Council have attended the conference with no result.

Yet, none of the peace talks between Afghans, including the Moscow, Islamabad and latest Qatar, Doha, conference which, with addition of Taliban leaders, several none-government delegations, including former Mujahidin leaders, Civil Society representative, and some Afghan elders have attended from Kabul, have ended without any significant outcome. One of the main challenges against peace process is the strong presence of Northern Alliance and Mujahidin parties that have experienced heavy civil wars with the Taliban.

#### **4.13 Settlement and Resolution**

Peace, such as for any other society in the world, is the urgent need of citizens of Afghanistan that the necessity of achievement to a real and permanent peace, in any cost is required. Afghanistan and its citizens have suffered the worst conditions because of civil wars and ethnic conflicts in last four decades that a secure, stable, and developed country with a long lasting peaceful condition is the urgent need of citizens of Afghanistan.

The latest developments in peace talks between U.S. and Taliban and an international consensus regarding peace in Afghanistan have created a hopeful condition among the citizens of Afghanistan and the involved impartial countries that support the peace and stability in Afghanistan. Regarding the peace, process and recent peace talks between Taliban and U.S. four main “still agreed” points are very important, and could be a better platform towards a permanent and long lasting peace in the country.

The four main issues that each one of these agreed points were the prerequisite of different sides of war factions. According to Tolo News (2019), the agreed points are; a). Withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, something that Taliban from the beginning of U.S. invasion have been asking for. b). Not using the Afghanistan territory by any of foreign militants against foreign countries, particularly U.S. that the Americans want to be guarantee. c). A permanent ceasefire, something that the Afghan government and all citizens of Afghanistan is asking for. d). Intra-Afghan peace talks, something that, citizens and the government of Afghanistan, and U.S is asking for.

Likewise, recently Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has provided a seven stages plan about peace talks and post peace agreement, that provides the road map for post civil war Afghanistan which, includes; withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan, cooperation of the U.S. forces in fighting against terrorism after the withdrawal, starting an intra-Afghan peace talks, ceasefire between all war factions, providing plans to find a nationwide solutions for the issues and role of the Afghan citizens in future political structures (Tolo News, 2019). By considering of all the above-mentioned highly important and agreed, and required conditions, it seems that the “resolution and settlement” of a permanent peace is closer than any time in the last four decades. The only considerable challenges against peace process now is; the Taliban fragmentation, and the existent of warlords in the government of Afghanistan which, created the lack of consensus in the government and sabotage the intra-Afghan peace process.

#### **4.14 Conclusion**

Despite, some progresses in some aspects of the life of Afghan citizens such as, the reestablishment of government and nongovernment institutions, reestablishment of educational institutions, some economic progresses in few particular sections and the life of a specific stratum of society, freedom of speech, communication and media in a different way than before, the rights of women, (only those who live in urban areas), and few other things that the Afghan citizens have felt less or more in their social life, but in general the U.S. Invasion of Afghanistan and the Post 2001, events have left significant uncomfortable feelings such as, not having a clear future which, has affected the economical, political, and social life of the citizens of Afghanistan.

Even though, civil war and ethnic conflicts were not a new and unrecognized phenomenon among the citizens of Afghanistan, but following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, and collapse of Taliban in late 2001, many people of Afghanistan have believed that, Americans may help Afghanistan to achieve a peaceful and secure condition to the country. Most of the Afghan citizens believed that, U.S. would cooperate Afghanistan to establish a strong, progressed, stable, and advanced government to be able to solve the existing issues such as poverty, illiteracy, unstable security condition, civil war, ethnic conflicts and several other unsolved issues by themselves.

Not only the post 2001, presence of U.S. and Coalitions in Afghanistan, did not reduce the above-mentioned issues, but caused to be increased. Despite, the U.S. and International Community aids were so less in comparison with Iraq and some other countries, but almost all of the money distributed among a small stratum of society, particularly between the warlords and their family members, the relatives of high ranking government officials and the U.S. contractors themselves, which caused to increase the economic and security issues and poverty among the ordinary citizens of Afghanistan.

The U.S. forces and CIA supporting of warlords during the invasion on 2001, has created the worst condition on the quality of all post 2001 U.S. backed governments of Afghanistan. The consequences of wide and unqualified presence of Northern Alliance warlords under the coverage and backing up of CIA and U.S. government, is one of the causes of failing the Bonn agreed government on 2001 and later. Several other issues such as; lack of good governance, economic development, widespread corruption, not implementation of Transitional Justice, bad security, increasing of ethnic conflicts and even the failing of peace talks between Taliban and government of Afghanistan, are the consequences of falling the Afghanistan government in the hands of Mujahidin and warlords and contingency of civil conflicts.

Contingency of civil war and ethnic conflicts, following the dramatic and without a proper mechanism for withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces, kept the mind of every citizen of Afghanistan busy. Obama administration, has decided to withdraw the U.S. and NATO forces from Afghanistan, and later President Trump has followed the same strategy keeps telling that he is about to withdraw U.S. troops from Afghanistan, without providing an affective plan or strategy for the future of Afghanistan. one of the consequences of such dramatic withdrawal may enter Afghanistan to a new phase of civil war and ethnic conflicts.

In addition, of the above-mentioned factors of civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan, the dimension of civil war causes is varying. As already argued within the chapter, external factors such as foreign intervention, remittances and financial support of war factions, intervention of neighboring countries of Afghanistan, particularly Iran and Pakistan, and internal factors such as ethno-linguistic and religious diversity, poverty, young and illiterate population, and geography have been playing significant role in prolonging the civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan.

One of the main and important characteristic of the current peace talks between the U.S. government, Taliban and the government of Afghanistan is the existence of a global and national consensus regarding the Afghanistan peace process. U.S. government, the government of Afghanistan, European Union, Islamic conference, NATO, Russia and almost all of the war factions are agree to solve the current conflict of Afghanistan peacefully. Despite, all the above-mentioned progresses towards the peace process, the lack of a long term strategy and a sufficient plan for better management of the peace talks, and more importantly, following the peace agreement and instalment of a permanent peace, will not guarantee a long term peace and security.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Although, civil war is not an unusual phenomenon in the literature of contemporary world, but today the words of “civil war and ethnic conflicts” are more common than any other time among the humans and social societies in the world, particularly between the citizens of Afghanistan that have been spending more than four decades of civil wars and ethnic conflicts. All civil wars are the effect of some causes, which, varying according to their particular geographies, religions, ethnicities, languages, economic levels, societies and some other aspects that facilitate the conditions for these conflicts to be happen.

Afghanistan civil conflicts of 1992-2019, likewise, all other civil wars in the world are the effect of some causes, which create the civil wars and ethnic conflicts. Despite, the complexity of Afghanistan civil wars and ethnic conflicts, understanding the war factors playing a significant role in preventing the further civil conflicts. Achieving to a better result of understanding in deep points that, what have caused such complicated civil conflicts for so long periods of time, in a country like Afghanistan which, is the home for diverse ethnic groups, languages, and religious, that have been living for centuries in the same territory, needed better and further studies that has attempted in the current research.

Studying the literature about civil wars and ethnic conflicts, are allowing the researchers to understand the nature of civil wars and provides basic knowledge about civil wars and ethnic conflicts itself, furthermore, facilitates the process of studying the causes and factors that have been involved in creating and prolonging the civil war and conflict situations. Civil wars and ethnic conflicts occur under specific circumstances, such as, foreign intervention, external financial support, migrants and remittances, as external factors, ethno-linguistic and religious diversity, economic, geography, youth bulges, history and illiteracy, are concerned as internal factors of civil war and ethnic conflicts which, review of literature let the researcher to have a clear and better picture of the conflicts and the causes have been involved.

By focusing on review of the literature about different civil war zones, and targeting the main involved factors of those conflicts, and similarities of causes and factors between the civil wars and ethnic conflicts of Afghanistan, have facilitated the chance of better understanding of factors of civil conflicts in Afghanistan. The consequences of the research have been linked to a multidimensional, and a series of factors and causes, which have been facilitating the civil conflicts in Afghanistan.

By arguing this way, the linkage of the consequences of the studied literature and research, addressing the two main portions of the causes, which are; internal and external factors of civil wars in Afghanistan. External factors led the research to causes such as, foreign intervention, external financial support of war factions, migrants and remittances, and foreign invasions. The role of Afghanistan neighbors, such as Iran and Pakistan particularly following to Mujahidin victory on 1992 and U.S. invasion on 2001, is higher than any other country, while Russia, India, and U.S. are playing the secondary role in the current conflicts of Afghanistan.

Ethno-linguistic diversity, religious, economic, youth bulges, geography, history, and widespread poverty are known as internal factors of the conflicts in Afghanistan. Despite, all the above-mentioned factors have been playing significant role in a degree of more or less in prolonging and fueling the civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan, but some of the factors are critical. Foreign intervention and supporting the war faction as external factors are more important. Even though, ethno-linguistic diversity is being used by foreign intervenient countries as a tool, and most of the ethnic tensions being raised after the starting or during the conflicts, but still has known as one of the most critical factors of civil war in Afghanistan. Illiteracy, poverty, and youth bulges are each one after another are playing important roles in fueling and prolonging the civil war and ethnic conflicts in the country.

Even though, studying the above-mentioned sources about civil war and ethnic conflicts have facilitated the condition to be able to achieve progress in understanding the nature of civil conflicts, and knowing the causes and factors of civil war, but having access to more and better sources such as government archives and documents, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission documents and archives, and Afghanistan Peace Council archives may have enabled the current study in providing much better knowledge about civil war and ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan, which

would allow this research to present better suggestions and theories regarding preventing the further conflicts.

One of the consequences of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on late 1979 was an unpreventable civil war and ethnic conflicts. Widespread poverty, illiteracy and mass migrations that are known as causes of civil war, are the consequences of Soviet invasion, which after the withdrawal of Soviet troops have caused Afghanistan to be prone to the longest civil conflict of the history of Afghanistan. Following to the collapse of Soviet backed communist regime and victory of Mujahidin on 1992, with addition of several other causes, two factors; (illiteracy and poverty) that both were created during the civil war, which added to the complexity of conflict situation and have caused the civil war and ethnic conflicts to be prolonging in Afghanistan.

Both, Poverty and illiteracy have facilitated the condition to the war factions that easily could recruit their fighters among the poorest and illiterate young rural men. Civil war and ethnic conflicts during Mujahidin regime on 1992-1995 enabled the war factions to be able to destroy the government institutions including security and public services. Mujahidin's government was not able to provide security, health or other services to the to citizens of Afghanistan, but instead, government itself was involved in criminal activities and creating problems for the citizens.

The governments unable to deliver political goods to the citizens in an appropriate level are known as weak, failed, or collapse states. Not being able of delivering political goods, such as; providing security for the citizens, preventing citizens of participating in political process to get the position they compete for, lack of humanitarian rights for citizens, and not providing any of the public services for the citizens, dropped the government of Mujahidin to the bottom of the failed states list in the world, and finally facilitated the condition to collapse.

The slogan that enabled the Taliban to overthrow Mujahidin from power and collapse their government was; the promising of delivering "political goods" to the citizens, which (Rotberg, 2003) argued. Taliban have promised that, they will return peace, security, and order to the Afghan citizens. Taliban have been promising to finish corruption, obtain the rule of law, return security to the country and prevent the civil war and ethnic conflicts. Foreign intervention, likewise Mujahidin government, during the Taliban regime has never ended, and civil war have been continued until the U.S. invasion and collapse of the Taliban on late 2002.

U.S. administrations have been claiming that, post 2001 events, particularly U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, will solve the existing issues of Afghanistan, including civil war and ethnic conflicts. Two decades later the military and political presence of U.S. in Afghanistan, not only the existing issues not been solved, but several other problems have been added to the previous ones. No sign of good governance, democracy, or human rights. Warlords are occupying the highest positions in the government, and civil war and ethnic conflicts have spread to wider areas in the country than prior of U.S. invasion on 2001.

Peace negotiation did not start yet between Afghans. Taliban are rejecting peace talks with the government of Afghanistan, claiming that, Afghan government is not in the position of decision-making regarding to peace issues and preferring peace negotiation with U.S. government. After at least 9 rounds of peace talks with Americans, except the four above mentioned, oral agreed points, still there is not any written, signed and guaranteed document has been accepted by Taliban, that the appeal of a ceasefire is repeatedly rejected by Taliban.

Americans like any other invader in the past, have underestimated Afghanistan, when they have invaded this small, poor, mountainous and highly rough terrain country in late 2001. In the very first days of the invasion, U.S. government and their armed forces have thought that they may have conquer Afghanistan only in few days, and accomplish their operations within months. Despite, the U.S. forces have overthrown the Taliban government very quickly, in couple of months; however, not it was only the end of the story, but the beginning of longest war of the U.S. history.

Following the U.S. strikes on Afghanistan and the Taliban main targets, Taliban have moved and withdraw their forces from Capital Kabul and other Northern cities, mostly to Southern Pashtuns provinces, where they have basically been established the movement of Taliban in 2004. Taliban have seized their operations for a short period, but shortly after a quick break, they began their operations and strikes against the U.S. Coalition, (ISAF) forces and the U.S. backed government of Afghanistan.

In an interview with the radio BBC on 2002, Mola Mohammad Omar the leader of Taliban, said; “The Americans have money and power, we have time. And at the end of the day, we will win this war”. While the Taliban are much more powerful than the time they have been thrown from power in 2001, and are capable of any kind of attacks in any location of Afghanistan they want, the U.S. President, Barak Obama have



announced the official end of war in Afghanistan on 2014. Several U.S. military generals, experts and politicians have accepted and stated that they cannot win the war in Afghanistan. Admiral Mike Mullen Chief of Staff of U.S. has stated in 2008, “I am not sure if we are winning in Afghanistan”. U.S. forces and the coalition have left all the war on the shoulders of Afghan National Army and Police, which is weak, less trained, and fragile.

Despite, the peace talks have been started since the beginning of the Bonn agreement government of Hamid Karzai, (with no clear result), finally, after almost two decades, the U.S. government have realized and accepted that they are not the winner of the battle in Afghanistan, and decided to end the current war with reaching a peaceful agreement and begun direct peace talks with Taliban. Recently, on July 2018, U.S. President, Donald Trump, has said to his top diplomats, Alice Wells, the Deputy Assistance of Secretary of State and Zalmay Khalilzad Special Representative of the U.S president for Afghanistan Reconciliation to start direct talks with Taliban to achieve a peace deal.

Since the beginning of peace negotiations between Taliban leaders and the representative of U.S. President for Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, at least nine meetings have been held in Doha, Qatar. “it looks like, after months of direct talks and 18 years of war with Taliban, the U.S. government is close to a deal which, will allow the withdrawal of foreign troops and a ceasefire between the warring sides. In the 9<sup>th</sup> round of peace talks on 22 August 2019, four key issues were discussed and agreed between the Taliban leaders and Khalilzad; Taliban guarantee that the foreign militants will not be allowed to launch attacks from Afghanistan on outside of the country, the U.S. and NATO troops complete withdrawal, a permanent ceasefire and an intra-Afghan peace talks” (Qadir and Jain, August, 22, 2019, Reuters).

It looks like United State is about to withdraw all the U.S.-led NATO troops from Afghanistan. U.S. President Donald Trump recently said; “the role of U.S. military in Afghanistan has basically turned into a “ridiculous” police force, and he is going to drawdown U.S. troops from there after 18 years of war” (Qadir and Jain, 2019). However, the main question is that; what will be the consequences of such a dramatic and quick withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces from Afghanistan? A satisfying consequence of peace talks with Taliban may guarantee a long lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, the challenges against peace process, such as, the strong presence of Northern Alliance, warlords, and former Mujahidin in the government, fragment structure of the Taliban leadership, particularly after the death of the Taliban former leader Mola Omer, and lack of a good strategy for managing the peace talks in Afghan government is still existing. Despite, the exiting all these challenges, citizens and government of Afghanistan, U.S. and Taliban themselves are willing to achieve a peace agreement.

Almost all civil wars in the world end with a peace agreement, and civil war and ethnic conflicts of Afghanistan can be ended up with similar consequences between the war factions and government of Afghanistan. To achieve peace building through an agreement, peace keeping will require to keep in mind the statement of (Metz, 2011) that argues; Afghanistan civil war have several dimensions, if we want to end this war, we should take care of all the causes and factors which are involved.

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