

Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS)

Herat Security Dialogue-V

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Conference Report



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About AISS

The Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) was established in October 2012. It aims to create an intellectual space for addressing strategic issues pertaining to Afghanistan in the wider regional and international context. Promoting dialogue between and among different stakeholders will be an end as well as an integral means in attaining AISS objectives.

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A short introduction to the Herat Security Dialogue Series

Herat security Dialogue (HSD) is an annual international conference, held by the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies in the historical city of Herat. The essential aim of this conference is to provide an opportunity for representatives of the countries to discuss on issues concerning cooperation and collaboration on areas of security, politics, culture and development.

Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) organized the fifth round of “Herat Security Dialogue” in Herat, Afghanistan. The two-day conference, held on October 14-15, 2016, was attended by high-ranking government officials, legislators, academicians, representatives of international organizations, media outlets and civil society. The fifth round of Herat Security Dialogue was held under the umbrella theme of “**Violence & Political Order.**”

A brief conceptual note to the conference

The early decades of the third millennium continue to be haunted by the images of the medieval era and the dark pages of European history. The promise of “the end of history” has been replaced by the horror of “the return of history”. Violence in all its manifestations is becoming the “order” of a growing number of nations and regions, including Muslim-majorities and the West’s duel with its challengers. Concepts and institutions, which are traditionally responsible for taming violence and ensuring political order are being challenged by competing forces, both from within and outside.

Are we witnessing a fundamentally different type(s) of violence or they are just the recurrent ones? Is violence that has devastated Muslim communities in the Middle East has religious and sectarian foundation or they are rooted in “modern politics”? To what extent the growing intolerant discourse in “post-modern” West resemble its pre-WW-II era? What are the implication of growing competitive tension between the US and China and US/NATO and Russia for global security and order? What role(s), if any, are there for regional and international organizations and political-security architectures in an increasingly fragmented but interdependent world? Who are the less-recognized actors, networks and tools in generating violence and/or political order? Are there any “counter-violence” norms that can shape legitimate and effective political order? What is the state of “violence” and “political order”, in the regions where Afghanistan is located? What are the prospects of Afghanistan’s ability to

contain its multiple violent challenges and secure a legitimate, effective and sustainable political order?

The above questions were the main topics of the fifth Herat-Security Dialogue (HSD-V) in order to find solutions to the existing major challenges. Participants of the conference have attempted to discuss the topic by bringing together diverse perspectives from Afghanistan, the region and the wider world. The conference, in addition to the opening and concluding sessions, divided into six working panels.

Objective of the Conference

Herat Security Dialogue serves as a forum between scholars, politicians, experts, analysts, and statesmen to engage in a dialogue aimed at developing practical and broad cooperation and collaboration. Herat Security Dialogue as an international forum aims to promote mutual understanding and find common grounds in the areas of political dialogue, security coordination, combating ISIS and religious extremism in the region.

One of the significant objectives of this conference is connecting and bridging between countries. The conference aims at strengthening dialogue between countries and civilizations. The umbrella theme of this conference was the Islamic Civilization: Stagnation and Renaissance.

Herat Security Dialogue is an international conference conveyed annually in Herat that represents the delegations of states, nongovernmental organizations, and intergovernmental organizations to discuss on issues of critical importance for the purpose of peace and security in the region. This conference provides a platform to discuss security in the region and world, and recommend effective measures and approaches. Herat Security Dialogue is one of the most important dialogues in the region, that even such an importance series of inter-states dialogues have not been conveyed in South Asia, Central Asia or the Middle East.

The national, regional and international participants raised their opinions and provided comments and recommendations on a range of five themes, issues and areas, including:

- **Violence: Sources, Reasons and Manifestations**
- **New Global Disorder; Return of History**
- **Crisis of Islamic Civilization: Sacred violence**
- **Afghanistan: Stability, Legitimacy and Future of Democracy**

- **Counter-violence Narratives**
- **New Regional Security Architecture: Principles; Roadmap**

The conference set out to address the need for a permanent forum where both national and regional stakeholders can engage in dialogue aimed at developing practical and broad security cooperation, as well as overall enhancing cooperation and collaboration between Afghanistan, and the countries in the region. Herat Security Dialogue aims to identify the reasons for distrust between states, endure of conflicts, insurgency and terrorism in the region and beyond.

Inauguration Session

The conference was inaugurated on October 14, 2016. The opening session began with the recitation of the Holy Quran, National Anthem, recitation of hymns of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, and Sufi musical performance. Thereafter, it continued with welcoming remarks of the governor of Herat, Mr. Rahimi, and followed by speech of former Foreign Minister of Afghanistan and Chairman of AISS Advisory Board, Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta.

Mr. Rahimi paid tribute to the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies for holding the conference. He emphasized the importance of providing opportunities for promoting peace and stability in the region. Mentioning Herat as a city of great opportunity and fortune, he said that promoting security and stability is vital for further regional collaboration. Mr. Rahimi shed light on the recent past developmental achievements of Herat province. He touched on successful construction of the Salam Dam (also known as Afghanistan-India Friendship Dam) and a number of other important projects which are in progress. He further exemplified the developmental projects in Herat by mentioning the Bypass Road and Khaf- Herat Railway projects which are on the track of completion. He also mentioned the installation of renewable energy devices, launching of 13 new factories in Herat Industrial City, revising the province's master plan, progress in capacity of the educational institutions, surge in construction of hotels and other tourism related facilities. The governor also vowed to launch other major projects. He said that by improvement of security situation in the province, Herat will enjoy further progress. Pointing to some regional issues, he urged regional countries for respecting each other's national interests within the regional interactions, which according to him is the best way to build trust as well as pave the way for further cooperation.

Speaking of consequences of the present-day challenges in Afghanistan, Mr. Rahimi warned that efforts to destabilize Afghanistan by any party will have bad consequences not only for these parties, but the entire region. “We believe in peace as we are committed to defend our national interests and sovereignty. We also believe that institutionalization of freedom, peace and sense of good neighborhood—respecting each other’s sovereignty—will benefit the entire region.” In his final message, Mr. Rahimi urged all the participants and representatives of neighboring and regional countries to promote the idea of working together in their respective countries in order to restore peace and stability in the region.

Welcoming all the guests and participants, Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta talked about the main theme of the conference portraying the challenge of political disorder and spreading of violence across the world. After giving a brief history about the establishment of a bipolar system at the beginning of the Cold War by the United States and the Soviet Union and then the collapse of Soviet Union, Dr. Spanta explained how the United States temporarily dominated the world, i.e. unipolar system.

“In the next decade after the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States emerged as a country with unprecedented military power, rate of production, innovative techniques, and also economic productivity of all-time and still has a leading stand in all these areas. This country has never considered the necessary precautions in employing these powers. There are recent examples in Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria that confirm such claims.”

But he suggested that US is not the single regulatory power anymore as it is gradually losing parts of its stand as such in the world. Dr. Spanta spoke of China as a new rival of the United States. “By creating the ‘Maritime Silk Road’ and the ‘One Belt, One Road’ initiative, the People’s Republic of China wants to achieve two goals: first, by accomplishing these projects, Beijing hopes to reduce the vulnerability and on the other hand, increase the cost of competition so high that the United States would not be willing to pay in the Pacific Ocean. For its part the United States pushes for a counter balance in this region.”

Mentioning recent crises in Balkans, Caucasus and Ukraine, he called the NATO partially responsible for creation of these crises. He also referred to the so-called Arab Spring and the consequent conflicts and collapse of governments throughout the Middle-East and Africa as the indicator of a worldwide political disorder.

“The collapse of governments, whether as a result of foreign invasions or structural failure of governments, is associated with the collapse of the global system and lack of any alternative.”

Describing the dangers and some of the characteristics of the contemporary terrorism he warned about the scale of destructiveness of the modern warfare. “These wars are completely or partly under the control of stateless warriors. Tourist terrorists, moving all over the world, carry out combat operations on daily basis in every corner of the world. While the government forces are limited to the country’s geography, it is easy for the terrorists to go from one country to another and continue fighting. Creating territories out of the reach of government through military intervention of the West in recent years has provided broader space to the international terrorists.”

Dr. Spanta denounced the notion of “creative chaos” and indicated his sympathy for an approach of non-intervention in international politics.

“I obviously prefer the preservation of the nation-states, even if they are not democratic, over the rule of extremist groups as the lesser evil. I prefer the maintenance of authoritarian governments over creation of geographic regions with no governments. In fact overthrowing the governments through external intervention would cause more destruction. The measures towards maintaining the world order through a creative chaos, has reached to an impasse. In today’s world, violence has become a common phenomenon, as a daily manifestation of balance of power and downfall of the government monopoly on coercion. No doubt that such situation would encourage regional powers that are trying to fulfill their regional neo-imperial dreams. In Afghanistan, this situation tempted Pakistan to intervene. Competition between powerful countries in the region, including Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey, also can be explicable in this context.”

Dr. Spanta hoped for building a different global system which could be based on the “desires and interests of free human beings, without considering the ancestry, ethnicity, religion, language, gender and color.”

Panels:

Panel 1: Violence: Sources, Reasons and Manifestations

Moderator:

Ms. Jyoti Malhotra, Senior journalist from India

Speaker:

- Dr. Rohullah Amin, Director of American Institute of Afghanistan Studies
- Ms. Wasima Badgisy, Professor, Herat University
- Mr. Christopher Kolenda, Former Pentagon/US Army
- H.E. Ambassador François Richier, Ambassador of France to Afghanistan

Ms. Malhotra reminded the audience that India and Afghanistan are connected to each other in a variety of ways. She thanked AISS director Mr. Moradian for bringing together people from different political and cultural backgrounds in search of solutions to common problems.

The first speaker of the panel Dr. Rohullah Amin talked about the psychology of the war. He said besides the big picture of war as parities fighting each other we must look at the impact of war on our day to day life. According to him the question is how war affects our perception about ourselves and about each other. He said that insecurity begins with the start of a war. The state of being secure could be manipulated and disrupted by anything especially terrorism. Through media it is very easy to spread a bad news and traumatize a larger group of people. On the other hand security is a feeling of attachment and love. "Before feeling insecure we feel worried predicting that we would lose something. We feel sad and angry and ready to carry violent acts that would perpetuate the violence over and over again." Violence changes our mentality and our set of values. When you have no control over the situation and feel helpless. With "us" versus "them" life becomes difficult. We become very biased about the outside world as we are already in approval of our insecure perception toward the outside world. We dehumanize the humanity of the others. He concluded that unless we humanize the others, there is no way for reconciliation.

The second panelist Mr. Christopher Kolenda talked about "the role of civilian harm in the conflict and its implications on the future" based on a report that he wrote with the Open

Society Foundations, formerly the Open Society Institute, called “the Strategic costs of civilian harm; applying lessons from Afghanistan to Current and Future Conflicts”.

“By civilian harm I don’t mean civilian casualties only, but the broader disruption of the ecology of human life including economical, physical, social and emotional aspects.” He said as ethical and moral aspects of civilian harm are very clear, we must look at “the strategic consequences of civilian harm”. The question is how civilian harm affects a country to achieve its interests. “Our findings show that first of all civilian harm played a significant role in growth and sustainability of the insurgency. It undermined the legitimacy of the Afghan government as well as the international mission and also damaged Afghan and US relationship.” He suggested that civilian harm must be addressed appropriately. He acknowledged that according to data obtained from UNAMA in 2008, the ISAF alone caused 828 Afghan civilian deaths accounting for 38% of all civilian deaths. A survey in 2008 noted that 25% of Afghan populations supported attacks on international forces and less than 50% of Afghan population had confidence in international forces. He emphasized that for international forces that come to Afghanistan to help Afghans, these figures is devastating. According to Mr. Kolenda the main cause of civilian deaths first of all has been the predatory behavior by local militias and in some cases officials, then manipulation of information by people when they gave false information to international forces to target their own personal rivals and finally inadequate understanding of international forces. He said that after 2008, ISAF managed to reduce the civilian deaths by 60% and at the same time reducing ISAF fatalities. He pointed out that this was a result of serious leadership of leaders like General Stanley McChrystal, David Petraeus and others and there was much better understanding and analyses. He suggested that Afghans could learn from mistakes of the international forces. According to him, Afghan forces have also caused huge number of civilian casualties since 2014— increased by 28% in 2015. According to UNAMA, in 2015 over 12,000 Afghan civilians are wounded or killed by Afghan forces mainly during ground engagements. Mr. Kolenda finally warned that if civilian harm is not addressed in contested areas it will permanently turn people against the government and lead to prolong suffering. He spoke of leader emphases, good training, listening and talking to people as three major factors for ISAF success to reduce civilian casualties.

The next speaker of the panel Ms. Wasima Badgisy gave her speech on the subject of “Political violence against women.” At the beginning of her speech, she thanked Dr. Moradian for bringing together friends from all over the world. She said the conference reminds us of old days of Herat city as a peaceful intersection for all sects, cultures, religions and people. Ms. Badgisy said that

violence against women is a worldwide phenomenon existing in different forms. “Violence against women could be linguistic, they could suffer within the family for sexual and biological matters or legal statues and etc. Generally speaking, in Afghanistan there are two categories: one is violence against women within family which is considered to be private and the other is violence against women in public domain that most Afghan women experience.” She said that all these forms of violence against women could prevent peace and stability within societies because peace is happening where you are comfortable. Then she focused on the political violence against women in Afghanistan. She pointed out that political violence against women has been intensified after the fall of the Taliban under the influence of pressure groups and those in power especially irresponsible armed groups. According to her, killing, abduction and threatening of women who are involved in public affairs (like local council representatives, human rights activists, doctors, lawyers) manifest this kind of violence against women. She described it as a war technic against women to prevent them from being involved in public life. She concluded that cultural customs against women, a phenomenon which is the same in regional countries including Afghanistan, India and Pakistan, functions as the main factor behind the political violence against women. She suggested that to get rid of this phenomenon we need to build a society with less militarization.

Adding to her remarks Ms. Jyoti Malhotra said we must not forget that we enjoy egalitarian constitutions which provide protection to women. Replying to this comment, Ms. Badgisy said although in Afghanistan efforts have been made for legal protection of women but there is a major contradiction in the Afghan constitution. “There is an article in our constitution providing equal rights to women but then we have also Article Three which is about the believes and provisions of Islam (that must be respected) . You know that Islamic provisions in Afghanistan intertwined with local customs.” She said that this contradiction makes it difficult to protect women’s rights when there is a legal problem because we will have to challenge different sources of perceptions. Ms. Jyoti Malhotra suggested that Ms. Badgisy should use media to highlight this issue.

The last speaker of the panel H.E. Ambassador François Richier, appreciated the French embassy taking part in holding the conference and promised a continued cooperation. He gave his speech about the threat of Daesh, also known as ISIS in the global north, by explaining some elementary concepts beforehand. He said that primarily violence comes from the state of nature. Therefore, it is a question of human struggle to preserve civilization. To identify and list factors behind the violence he named greed, domination, revenge, punishment, insecurity and

psychiatric reasons as some key elements for conducting violence. “Disorder takes away the sense of responsibility” and some people are inspired by religion or other ideologies arguing that you are right to be violent. He talked about the legitimization of use of violence through monopoly of use of violence by the governments. He suggested that democracy provides a chance to control violence and give legitimacy to counter violence. Mr. Richier called Daesh “threat number one”. He described Daesh as “a terrorist group that controls a territorial base, enjoy international network of supporters, active in cyber space (which is a new element in comparison with other terrorist organizations before) and having a good PR policy. According to him the sources of violence for Daesh are domination, revenge, what they call as the will of God and certainly among many elements psychiatric problems.” He said that France is at war with Daesh as it recently called upon its sympathizers inside France to attack French people in France and not go to Syria or Iraq. He concluded that France would confront Daesh wherever necessary.

Question and answer session:

The panel continued with a Q&A session. Here are some of the important comments, questions and answers:

How we are going to address grievances as an important source of violence? What is the solution besides militarization?

What is the strategy to tackle problems related to cyber communication?

What is the role of Afghan government in reducing people’s support for international and Afghan security forces?

Answering the first question ambassador François Richier argued that “grief” is not the main source of violence. He repeated that greed, domination, revenge and punishment, insecurity and psychiatric reasons could be some of the key elements for conducting violence.

Mr. Tamim Asey, fellow researcher at AISS, commented that we must be very careful with our terminology, what we are dealing with in Afghanistan is not insurgency but we are facing a proxy war on behalf of foreign hands. Dr. Spanta commented on this remark saying that the problem with terminology is that in Afghanistan other people make terminology for Afghans. He denounced the discourse to replace “terrorism” with “insurgency” put forward for the first time in 2010 during the London conference. He said that it was David Miliband, former Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, and his Anglo-Saxon Afghan ministers who attached the terminology of “insurgency” into the official documents. “What we are facing is terrorism which is used to destroy our government.”

Dr. Amin in his final words suggested that religious groups must join the Afghan civil society to bring about desired changes.

Panel 2: New Global Disorder; Return of History

Moderator:

Mr. Tamim Asey, Director of Policy & Strategy at Afghanistan's National Security Council

Speaker:

- Dr. Seyed Kazem Sajjadpour, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran and President of Iran's Institute for Political & International Studies
- H.E. Ambassador Yao Jing, Ambassador of China to Afghanistan
- Dr. Bruno Tertrais , Senior Research Fellow at the Foundation pour la Recherche Stratégique, France
- Dr. Christine Fair, professor, Georgetown University, USA
- Ambassador (R) Dr. Ali Engin Oba, Advisor to the Chairman of TASAM, CAG University, Turkey

The first speaker of the panel Dr. Seyed Kazem Sajjadpour tried to answer the question, “How do we analyze the order and disorder in our contemporary world.” He said that looking into the world politics we would identify players, rules and the playground. “There is no power which can impose its will globally, there is no persuasion to accept the global order and finally we miss predictability in contemporary politics.” To explain why there is disorder and unpredictability at global level he talked of three factors. A) “Abundance of players” including state and non-state actors. B) Backwardness of old institutions. They are not able to create order anymore and there is no replacement for them. He named UN one of such organizations. C) Competition of narratives. In today’s world there are parties who want to impose their own narratives on reality and exclude others. For example he said “the concept of Global world is a western concept which is not inclusive enough to take all humanity in one body, another example is Islamism which manipulates Islam.” He suggested that although the role of the United States is very important, regional players have an important role too. But he regretted that regional players are not mature enough and they are being rather angry and emotional. “There are areas where the eventuality of disorder is designed or shaped. One is the area that we call it West Asia, conflict in Syria. To solve the problem I think firstly we must accept others as they are and

not try imposing ourselves on them. Secondly, we must set boundaries or principles. International law which was made by the west now is being ignored by them. ... And finally the key is cooperation. We need to cooperate.” At the end of his speech he called upon the audience to read Hafiz, Sadi and Pir-e Herat.

The second speaker of the panel H.E. Ambassador Yao Jing at the beginning of his speech appreciated Dr. Sajjadpour’s for mentioning traditional wisdom in the region which he described as compatible. With regard to the topic of the panel, he said according to Chinese traditional wisdom “order and disorder are transferable. We enjoy some period of order then we go to a period of disorder. But with the efforts of people we can make the order return.” Ambassador Yao Jing talked about China’s view of security in the region. He emphasized that we are part of Asia but first one must know what Asia means for the security. He said, “Our concept of security must be based on our community.” Only based on peace we can achieve our goals. “As far of Chinese version of security there are four principles: First, we look at common security. We believe that we cannot live securely by ourselves. The security is interlinked. Therefore, we give a lot of importance to the security of Afghanistan too. And we believe that this common security must be built and established with respect to national sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries. Secondly, we believe that the security must be comprehensive. The security is so diversified including both traditional threats and new threats like terrorism. Thirdly, security is cooperative. We can achieve security through cooperation. And our fourth concept of security is sustainability. To have a sustainable security we must pay attention to development.” He assured that China will work for the security of the region but it needs cooperation in the region to succeed.

In her speech Dr. Fair acknowledged that she is not qualified to talk about the world affairs as her area of expertise is south Asia. She suggested that she would focus rather on the latter part of panel’s topic “Return of history” as a considerable issue of the time. She recalled a brief background history of current problem with regard to Afghanistan and retreating of the international community. “In 1999 when the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan, the international community also withdrew, particularly my country [the United States] and we ended up handing over our Afghan policy to the Pakistanis. We know what happened; the Pakistanis were very effective at managing and sustaining a civil war until they were able to put the Taliban into place ... Once again I fear that my country is going to hand over the Afghan policy to Pakistan and I fear we will see the same problems.” She warned that nowadays Taliban is connected to a worldwide network of terrorist groups like ISIS. Dr. Fair spoke of USA failures

in Afghanistan including in building up a trustable government and having Pakistan, a sponsor of terrorism, as an ally. "Pakistan has been fighting a straightforward war. It is taking money from my government and giving it to anti- government forces in Afghanistan to kill you, to kill my country. This is a fact that nobody can deny... this is a return of history which I fear." She said that she warned the US government about Pakistan in 2004 but back then nobody believed her. She warned that "Taliban will be given the power of bullet but they can't get the power of ballot and that means that Pakistan has won." She stated that Pakistan would prefer Afghanistan in chaos regretting that it doesn't matter what Pakistani people think but it matters what clowns and killers of Rawalpindi think. She suggested that "Afghanistan government must act together. We need to get an economic transition for this country which may be sustainable. And finally Pakistan must be isolated and labeled a state sponsor of terror and it cannot be done without the help of others partners like China and Iran." She asked China to stop protecting Pakistan. She concluded that with respect to Afghanistan, Iran, United States and Afghanistan have much in common with each other than Pakistan had with Afghanistan.

The next speaker of the panel Dr. Bruno Tertrais gave a conceptual view about the topic of the panel. He said that first of all he doesn't agree with the notion of getting more disable or chaotic. He recalled that the so-called Cold War period was not a stable and still period either but included surprising fluctuations and events. He stated that the contemporary world is not more violent. "The number of wars, the number of people killed by war and etc. is less. I'm not saying that death of people does not matter but we are not in a more violent world. If you say a more dangerous world, then I would say, yes. We live in a more dangerous world. Because we have a combination of worldwide threats and existence of terrorism and also regional conflicts. Finally, we have a more unpredictable world." Then he gave his perspective on how to define the current situation based on two concept templates. "One, we are witnessing the combination of 19th century and Middle Age. The importance of religion and power politics is greater today than it was fifty years ago. Islamic fundamentalism is not the only aspect here, we know of the importance of evangelicals in US Republican Party, the Orthodox Church of Russia is also a big part of the political picture and I could talk of Israel too. That is the Middle Age part. Second, axis is what I call the revenge of history. Nations and borders are beck with a vengeance including in Europe. It's a reaction against progress, liberalism, modernization, cosmopolitanism. It's a desire to go back to one's roots against something called westernization. You see countries like Russia, Turkey and China mobilizing the past for political causes. Daesh is also mobilizing." He concluded by warning about a nuclear war and at the same indicating his optimism based on

global economic interdependence which can refrain countries from going to war. In his final remarks Dr. Tertrais suggested that limiting the use of veto power of the UN Security Council is an elementary step for any future reform of this international body.

The last speaker of the panel Dr. Oba started his speech appreciating Dr. Sajjadpour's remarks. Then he pointed out the importance of the west and its contribution in shaping the modern world. He talked about the enlightenment project of German philosopher Immanuel Kant and its impact on the Turkey's regional atmosphere. He emphasized that in order to get rid of poverty and discrimination the notion of cosmopolitan must prevail. "If we want to live in a secure world we need a cosmopolitan world. Cosmopolitanism should be taken into consideration once again." In this regard he named the UN as an important international institution. He also raised the concept of regionalism upon which the European Union was shaped. "European Union is a major attractive destination in today's world because it is a very successful and powerful union which reflects regionalism through promoting democracy and economic prosperity. In this way it is the destination of all people from poor regions. Refugees are willing to go there. Therefore, regionalism is an important issue." He warned about the emergence of micro-nationalism in Middle East. He suggested that greater nations in the region must take the leading role to create a union in this troubled area. Dr. Oba referred to Herat as a city where Turan and Iran meet. Where Turkic nations and Iranian nations are constituting the most important parts of this region. "This is responsibility of all of us to create a regional organization... we need plans like Marshal Plan under the guidance of soft power and diplomacy." He concluded that through such a roadmap we can think of a new world order.

Question and Answer Session

The second panel followed by Q&A session. Here are some of the important comments, questions and answers:

-If the existing security mechanisms are not functioning well, what to do?

Mr. Ahmad Saeedi thanked Dr. Fair for telling the truth about the Pakistan, but he emphasized that people of America must know that destructive policies of countries like Pakistan and Saudi Arabia by whom Islam is taken hostage are approved by the US government. He also protested against China's friendly policy toward Pakistan.

Brig Saab Mohammad, from Pakistan, commented on Dr. Fair's remarks. He disagreed with her perspective about Pakistan. He described the US government as emotionless vulture who

destroyed different parts of the world including Vietnam, Korea, the Middle East, Afghanistan's region, Argentina and elsewhere to fulfill its greed and prosperity. He said that if Dr. Fair condemns the so-called clowns in Rawalpindi, she must also think of American clowns who were happy with their Pakistani counterparts in times of the Cold War. He praised China for its international policy saying China, unlike USA with its poor four hundred years history, is an ancient civilization who knows what to do.

Responding to Mr. Mohammad's comments, Dr. Fair said that Pakistan started "Jihad policy" in 1974 under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan. She emphasized that she has been critical toward the United States too for taking Pakistan as partner. She said that Afghanistan is destroyed because of this partnership. She hoped that USA and Pakistan relationship will soon change. She once again asked China to stop supporting Pakistan in order to contribute to peace and stability of the world.

-How China is going to make its notion of "cooperative security" beneficiary for all regional countries?

Ambassador Yao Jing in his final remarks emphasized that China cannot provide a solution to the complicated regional problems. He said that China is willing to work with other countries to find suitable solution to complicated problems of the region.

Panel 3: Crisis of Islamic Civilization: Sacred violence

Moderator:

Ms. Nasrine Gross, a writer and adviser to Afghanistan's Chief Executive Officer Dr. Abdullah, chaired the session

Speaker:

- Mr. Tarek El Sonoty, Head of the Diplomatic Section, Al Ahram News Daily, Egypt
- Mr. Mohammed Moheq, religious scholar and adviser to the Afghan Government
- Dr. Ayesha Siddiqa, scholar and writer from Pakistan

Based on Mr. Tarek El Sonoty's observations, the subject of Islam and terrorism are being misinterpreted in the Middle East, particularly in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Sudan and other nations which are mainly the center of all major disputes. In general, if we talk about Muslim nations, we have the Islamic Organization for Cooperation (IOC). An organization made up of fifty-seven countries that usually meet once in two years on a regular basis. The main objective of the IOC is

to discuss all the major difficulties that exist within the Muslim countries and try to resolve them peacefully through dialogue and cooperation. Since its formation as an organization and as a major body for the whole Muslim world, the IOC's role has been symbolic and thoroughly ineffective.

El Sonoty indicated that there are four main regional powers in the Middle East including Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The relations between these four regional powers are poor and economic cooperation is fairly limited. For instance, the relationship between Iran and Egypt are not healthy as there have always been tensions between the two nations, as a result they do not have any diplomatic relationship since 1979. The relationship between Iran and Saudi Arabia are identical. There is also problem with the relationship between Turkey and Egypt. Currently, Saudi Arabia and Turkey have relatively close relationship and so is Iran and Turkey, even though Iran and Turkey are quite distinctive when it comes to politics and foreign policy. It indicates that there have always been political and economic tensions between these four major power players in the region. As a result, they have not been able to engage in dialogues and fully cooperate with each other.

He emphasized, the main threat that the Middle Eastern countries face is the Islamic state (IS) or Islamic State of Syria and Iraq (ISIS)—a terrorist and barbaric group that not only exists in Syria and Iraq but also in many other countries in the region. Currently, there are about 17 different terrorist groups fighting against the Syrian government. Besides these terror outfits, we also have Boko Haram and al-Shabab— the two other extremist terrorist groups in West and East Africa—who have been trying to come to Middle East and join the Islamic State and make the region more dangerous. A group that all the countries are talking about fighting against it but there have been very little changes on the ground as the IS terrorist group keep dominating. It makes people wonder, if all of these countries such as the US, Russia, France and European countries are really fighting against the IS and they are trying to eliminate them then where does this one terrorist group such as the IS get all their funding from, who support them and how come they have come about becoming one of the most powerful terrorist groups in the world in a short period of time.

We always hear about the negotiation between the two most powerful countries in the world such as the USA and Russia who talk about Syria without any real outcomes. It's clear to us that the negotiations between these two countries have always been about their benefits and personal interests and has never been about Syrian people solving Syrian problems. Islamic

countries have not played any role in resolving these major problems either. As result the image of Islam and Muslim nations been tarnished all around the world. El Sonoty also talked about the conflict between Shia and Sunni. He believes that the conflict between these major Muslims groups is political rather than regional.

According to him, from long we had not heard any problems between Shia and Sunni. Shia people used to live quite peacefully without any problems in Saudi Arab, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Iraq, which are mostly Sunni nations. The conflict between Shia and Sunni are mainly started when America invaded Iraq. He thinks the Islamic State and terrorism in general are a huge threat to the whole Muslim world and it's about time for the all Muslim countries to engage in dialogue and find solution to all the problems that exist within the Muslim world.

According to him, there is no solution to Syrian war unless countries such as USA, Russia, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia engage in honest dialogue and proper negotiations and try to accommodate each other to eliminate the Islamic State terrorist group and solve the major problems that exist within the Muslim nations. He concluded his remark by saying that the only way to defeat the Islamic State is through dialogue and cooperation.

Based on Mr. Mohammad Mohaqiq's convictions, in history of Islam, there are some great points and experiences which had been implemented to curb violence and institutionalize peace and security. He emphasized that today's era also needs to apply and enforce these experiences because current problems and insecurities in Islamic countries have historic roots, besides political and economic difficulties. He said, "We cannot cut off our connections with the past. However, we need both today's political and economic knowledge and past experiences to pass through the current situation."

We have a great deal of historical Islamic experience from the past that had been carried out by some great thinkers and jurists on how to contain violence and on how to institutionalize peace and instability. Based on Mr. Mohaqiq's points of view, the political, economic and security challenges that the Islamic countries currently have are similar to the difficulties that existed within the Muslim nations before. In order to restrain we need to refer to the past and use some of the effective techniques and methodologies that had been used and are proven to be effective and implementable.

He defined a specific religious expression which is called sedition (fetna) believing it can be partly helpful. It is an Arabic word but gives different meaning in different countries. He

pointed out that each civilization has three stages which traverse the formation of youth, prosperity and stagnation. First and second century of Islamic history tells that the formation of Islam civilization began in the world arena nevertheless at these stages there were a great barrier which threatened the formation of Islamic civilization and it was civil wars and conflicts among Muslims. So, they are similar to the difficulties that existed within the Muslim nations before and to restrain we need to refer to the past and use some of the effective techniques and methodologies that had been used and are proven to be effective and implementable. Educated scholars of Islamic world finally succeeded to end up the conflicts and feuds and found solution with the help of juridical and verbal theories.

According to him, if any religion or any civilization that recognize, prescribe, and legitimize fight, in fact they are recognizing a historical scandal. That is why we say that there is a prescribing war in the history of Islam which is completely different from offensive war and it has been called Jihad. Muslim religious book (Quran) has instructed that legitimate war has been not prescribed at any situation unless it contributes to fight off sedition. However, today some Islamic groups try to legitimize their war based on specific interpretation of the Holy Quran verses. He further said, "I will like to point it out that based on this expression, majority of Islamic scholars are against these kind of wars and called them illegitimate war because, in reality it is not eradicating sedition it is the creator of sedition.

He indicates that there are historical profiles that have revealed, civil war had been erupted among the same religious followers and killed each other for definite reasons and historians called it as a stage of sedition. Therefore, it has been announced illegal. They allowed that if the current government would be able to conduct regulation, it has the right to stand against them even the government would be a corrupted and cruel.

He concluded that his statement by saying that current war exists among the Muslim countries has not just political reasons but mainly it is ideological war which drives people towards war and disputes. He recommended that Islamic influential institutions such as Al-Azhar University and Qum religious institute are responsible to hold discussions through Islamic countries because our thoughts and beliefs are still immature and cannot differentiate between right and wrong. People, especially those in remote areas, still think that one side of the conflict is Muslim and the other side is non-Muslim. They have not reached to the position which discern that one side is law and regulation and the other side is sedition. Everyone has religious, moral and legal obligation to select one of them and according of him, can solved one of the problems.

Aisha Siddiqi started her speech talking about the civilization of Muslims and Islamic values. She said that unfortunately, today extremism and violence in the Muslim countries gave a bad image of Islam to the world. It is our elites and thinkers responsibility to work closely. They can play significant and valuable role in resolving conflicts.

She said that people have to understand and condemn ideas which generate tensions as we know the violence is based on a large platform and ideologies. One of the reasons of violence in Muslim countries is multiple interpretations and separation between Islamic countries. In Muslim societies religious radicalism has been increasing and it damaging all the world and particularly Islamic countries and our mistake is that we want to solve all problems based on Islam and we believe that Islam is a way of life it has generated tension between religion as it would be integrated as part of life or Islam as a way of life. As we see all the terrorists and insurgents groups have the same strategy and goals they are struggling for the power and using ideologies for the power, for instance Taliban in Afghanistan and the Islamic State (in Iraq and Syria) are fighting for toppling the governments. In this situation the powerful elites can play significant role for decreasing and controlling violence in the Muslim world. But unfortunately they have been acting against it and many Islamic countries have been supporting and supplying militants groups. Now we see tension between integrated Islam as part of people life and Islam as a way of life.

She said, "Islam did not give us formula of a particular political state. The political state that we visualize today or trying to bring into force is modern imagination. Muslim elites should implement that political system In the Islamic countries according to the wishes of the people. Unfortunately, they have been imposed against the people that creates tension and space between people at the end it will produce tensions among Muslims."

She suggested that if the leaders of the Islamic countries want to curb violence they have to engage in real politics and they must focus on close cooperation among Muslim states which will help for reduction of conflicts. We must find other alternatives besides combatting.

She expressed that "Islamic leaders need to move state away from non-state and also it is necessary in a conflict situation, therefore, to develop a methodology of positively interacting with thinkers. Unfortunately, they have never thought about that and our societies definitely need multi-polarity and multi-culture and we do not need to call it secularism or westernization etc."

She indicated the important thing is the beginning of dialogue within the Islamic world unless we do not solve tension between the modern and the tradition and should discover where the problem is and what right Islam is and what is Islam to be followed. It created tension which needs to be addressed and unless we start the dialogue it will create spaces for our people, spaces for our societies. I do think this will end violence. Unless we solve this issue, we will see more victims and more violence in our societies.

Panel 4: Afghanistan: Stability, Legitimacy and Future of Democracy

Moderator:

Ms. Wazhma Forough, Advisor to the Ministry of Defense, Director at Women & Peace Studies Organization, Afghanistan

Speaker:

- Mr. Arian Sharifi , Director, Office of National Security Council, Afghanistan
- Mr. Aziz Rafeei, Director, Afghanistan Civil Society Forum
- Mr. Jandad Spinghar, President, Afghanistan Election Watch
- Mr. Mullah Salam Zaeef, former Taliban Official

Arian sharifi's studies on terrorism and insurgents in Afghanistan demonstrate that currently, terrorism and insurgents are major challenges for people and government of Afghanistan as they are defying and destabilizing the security and peace in Afghanistan. According to him, four distinctive groups of terrorists have been operating in Afghanistan. However, the prime and major terrorist which has been challenging the security and peace in Afghanistan is Afghan terrorist group. This group consists of Quetta Shura with two other allied groups—Peshawar Military Council and Miransha Military Council. Moreover, Mr. Arian revealed that there are also different groups of terrorists which are not just a major threat for Afghanistan but they also pose serious threat to regional and international countries. He said that these groups are Haqqani Network, Pakistan terrorists, regional terrorist groups and international terrorist groups.

The Haqqani Network is responsible for some high-profile attacks in the Afghan war and this group is also involved in a number of criminal activities in Afghanistan, including the most horrible suicide attacks and bomb blasting, kidnapping and smuggling. The group also has a

close connection with Miransha Military Council while they are independently struggling against Afghanistan's government.

Pakistan terrorist groups consist of several factions such as the Tehreek-e-Taliban, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Lashkar-e-Jangavi and Jaish-e-Mohammad and they all have been fighting against Afghan government, but Tehreek-e-Taliban also fight against Pakistan.

Regional terrorist groups are assembled in Afghanistan and belong to different countries. They are the East Turkistan Islamic Movement, consisted of Chinese, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. They all have a strategic target in regional countries but presently combating Afghan security forces and contributing to destabilization in Afghanistan.

International terrorist groups encompass distinctive complicated outfits while the two dense groups which have been operating in Afghanistan are al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. Mr. Arian said that only Afghan terrorist groups (Taliban and Haqqani Network) want to topple the Afghan government. They just think internally to take control of government and do not think beyond of that while the rest of terrorist groups have global and regional designs. The major aim of these terrorist groups is to make inroads in Russia, China and Central Asian countries. However, Afghanistan is at the frontline of this war. As a consequence, whenever we demand and beg the international and regional countries for help, it has an obvious reason that Afghan troops are fighting in lieu of them in the battle ground.

He said there is a direct connection between the terrorist groups and global drug mafia which is a major threat to regional and international communities. We should seek solutions to resolve the outstanding problems. He thinks the problems cannot be solved only by fighting but we should explore other ways such as dialogue and firm sanctions against terror supporters.

He concluded that terrorist groups are posing serious threats to Afghanistan and other countries. The regional countries and world community should know that if Afghanistan is insecure and instable, they will not remain safe and secure too. He recommended that the international community should come forward to get rid of this menace.

According to Mr. Mullah Salam Zaeef, in Afghanistan we have serious and fundamental problems. If we look at the past we had peace and good economy before the country was invaded by super powers like Russia and US. These countries had their own interests and were in the quest to safeguard their interests. They ignored Afghans. According to his point of view, there is no specific and exact definition of terrorism right now and who is terrorist. Terrorism is

the killing and kidnapping of the innocent people, and occupying the countries. According to these activities it includes all the powerful countries. But I really have not known the real meaning of terrorism till now. So I know one thing they call those groups terrorists who are reacting against the US interests. If we think like this about terrorists, there is no need of negotiations with them they should be removed from the earth. The Taliban and Haqqani have been leading from one center and have one leadership. It would be a big mistake of Afghanistan government to see these groups differently. Hikmatyar may have different views. Hikmatyar's delegations and Afghanistan government have been exchanging formal letters but Taliban have completely different position on the Afghan government.

For long time, we have been looking for that strategy to bring peace and stability in Afghanistan. I believe in one thing, as long as the Afghan people do not get rid of deprivation and do not respect the Afghan people, they will react against them.

He said, "They put pressure on Afghans and it is an imposed war. And it has different causes at this time. The government should provide some facilities to the anti-government armed groups to join peace program and prevent Afghanistan from division. I do not want another country take to decision instead of Afghans. It does not mean that Afghanistan shall not have any diplomatic relationship with another country. I appreciate and support diplomatic dialogue of government with Pakistan and other countries for finding solution to the problems and I disagree with those people who think that fighting is the only solution to the current challenges."

Based on Aziz Rafee's point of view, the discussion of public violence and its causes in Afghanistan is the same as has been standing in worldwide. He pointed out that Afghanistan is facing the same violence which is existed in the world. The primary reasons and causes of distinctive violence are rooted in unfair and injustice behavior and also mistrust among nations which not only exists between world powers but also between non-governmental organizations and the world powers too. However, what is so importantly related to security in Afghanistan and specifically all discussions relating to democracy and on how acceptance of citizens in Afghanistan might seriously be rooted in violence which has been occurred in Afghanistan since past. Afghan people have even done violence against democracy and it has been tenser than any other countries in the world.

According to him, if it has been thought regarding solution ways beyond democracy, he would like to firmly say that "there is no other way or solution except democracy to save Afghanistan."

If democracy is being looked at with regard to its meaning or content which results to the role of law and bridging and balancing between justice and freedom, he considered it very helpful which can be seen as a solution for Afghanistan.”

Today, democracy has been seen ineffective and failed in Afghanistan because figures—such as Mullah Zaeef—who were top officials in the Taliban regime, can sit beside democrat figures like Jandad Spinghar, and can speak freely. Though they were not even be able to breath freely during the Taliban regime which the regime yelled, bullied and whipped women with cables. He indicated that it is a golden time and opportunity as people who were one day the top legislature and enforcer of the Taliban legal system can freely talk with women, men and that is the sign of freedom and democracy. Therefore, it demonstrates that democracy and generalization of democracy would be the key factor for Afghanistan to set out peace and security.

According to his understandings, along through five decades of political history of Afghanistan, Afghan people have tested different types of political regimes such as absolute monarchy, Islamic regime of Taliban and finally current government. He observed that those regimes, except the current democratic government, were unable to provide a free space though it is full of defects and mistakes.

However, he concluded that even during the current government there has been hostile approach towards the constitution and democracy. The facts show that during ten years, the constitution was violated 290 times and we saw the worst ever election in the history of world. Democracy has been misused and violence occurred in front of the eyes of crowded people. For instance, people killed, an innocent girl among people with no sin or proven her guilty. Moreover, he thought that one of the reasons would be lack of social and cultural readiness and scholars should create a basement for democracy in Afghanistan. He said no matter this democracy would be western or eastern or Islamic because the past experiences revealed that any of the ideological regime does not work well in Afghanistan.

According to Mr. Jandad Spinghar’s observation election and democracy is an important subject for almost all countries as it delivers political stability and internal order in those countries with successful election and democracy. According to Jandad Spinghar, political stability and internal order has a close connection with each other, therefore the only way is holding election in a transparent manner.

He emphasized that election is very important factor for the nascent democracy in Afghanistan while unfortunately our recent presidential election in 2014 has been not pleasant and even it was unacceptable to local people and international community as it was concluded with a massive rift among rivals. He suggested that the election system is not effective and operative.

It needs to be reformed because people of Afghanistan and international partners cannot trust the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan for second time after its scandals during the previous presidential election. It is our responsibility as members of the community to speak against ineffectiveness of the electoral system till changes are brought. Even though, the president and the acting president promised to bring necessary reforms in the electoral system. But still we are observing that they do not have any firm decision to reform the system. He summed up with some challenges which the government has been facing: The Lack of a firm determination at the government level as the president and the acting president have the power to bring changes whenever they decide. Currently president, the acting president and parliament try to not bring fundamental changes in the electoral system as they want to keep their influences and they would like to have their political power in the next election. Unfortunately, we do not have a strong opposition party to bring pressure on the government to initiate the reforms process. The deteriorating security, economy and social situation caused the government not to prefer reformation as an important agenda.

Besides these challenges, we are optimistic that civil society with cooperation of media and support of world community enable us to bring more pressure on the government to kick off the reforms process.

Panel 5: Counter-violence Narratives

Moderator:

Dr. Nilab Mobarez, former UNAMA spokesperson, chaired the session

Speaker:

- Dr. Magnus Marsden from Sussex University, UK
- Dr. Eshraq Hussein, a scholar and university lecturer from Afghanistan
- Dr. Sardar Rahimi, Deputy Minister of Education and a university lecturer, Afghanistan

Dr. Magnus said that based on his recent year's anthropological inquiries in the Central Asian countries, there are potential sources available in the region which can play important role in fighting against current challenges. In particular, he reported from existence of important factors helping Afghanistan to develop its trade with the Central Asian states and consequently Russia and Europe. According to his findings, Afghan traders are experts in trade throughout Central Asia. Dr. Magnus disagreed with the current broad-level policymaking process of the regional countries which ignore tiny but effective forces which momentarily accommodate the success of long-term developmental strategies. According to him most policies and strategies which aim to develop trade and economic relation are made by high officials in the capitals with insufficient knowledge of what is going on the ground. Supporting his argument, Dr. Magnus said that during his long term assessment of the ground situation, he approached several groups who are able to contribute to expansion of trade and economic relations between Afghanistan, Central Asia and in the long run, Russia and Europe. He claimed of speaking with several famous Afghan traders in Central Asian countries who are well aware of how to improve trade and business relations in the region. The strongest point of these traders according to Dr. Magnus is that they are equipped with high quality experience and information of both Afghanistan and the countries where they do business. Therefore, in his final remarks, he emphasized on the importance of current regional and international projects such as the 'New Silk Route' economic program, to get these traders involved at greater level. According to him, strategic location of Afghanistan is another positive point in success of regional projects which Afghanistan is involved in.

Dr. Eshraq Husseine, a lecturer from Herat University, picked up another approach to describe nature of violence and methods to overcome it. Evaluating the culture of violence and how to address this challenge from theoretical perspective, Dr. Husseine, looked after an intellectual analysis of the root causes of violence. Quoting from a number of well-known philosophers—Kant, Descartes and others—he identified the violence a result of forming an ideological walls between what he termed “we versus others” through dogmatic and extreme interpretation of religious texts and doctrines.

Explaining negative impact of the problem, he argued that violence is the direct result of dissemination of inflexible religious ideologies as their followers are so sure of themselves being the only group who got the absolute truth while others are being misguided on the wrong ideological path. He warned of devastating influence of the trend on current civilization and its values and norms. First, this issue hampers flourishing of any kind of exchange of ideas among

civilizations and different ideologies. Lack of dialogue, according to Dr. Husseine, encourages the prospect of clash among civilizations. Degrading human values to a mere commodity seems another consequence of emergence of such ideology and violent culture. As, the followers of this creed only consider themselves complete and true human, they underestimate the basic human values and rights while behaving with people who do not share the same belief. Rather, they ethically justify their violent conduct against what they consider as “others”. Moreover, violence is a serious threat to the regional’s pluralistic and inclusive ideological setting which used to play very crucial role in advancement of multi-cultural framework not only among Muslim communities but to the world. In particular, he pointed out to Sufism and few other rational based Islamic schools which raised few centuries after emergence of Islam in some of Islamic countries as an example that are endangered by the emerging violence based dogmas.

As a solution, Dr. Husseine insisted that working on revival of Sufism values and institutionalizing debates over current statements of critical but enlightened philosophical thoughts and schools are effective ways to struggle against the threat of ideologies that encourage and create culture of violence. He further supported recommendatory views by urging the regional societies to follow the track of western civilization method of adjusting their ancient philosophical views for their modern problems.

Dr. Sardar Rahimi, deputy minister of education and a university lecturer, who attempted to seek the solution to combat the culture of violence through improvement into the Afghan education system. Rising the testimonial that education system has the potential to play role in both suppression and flourishing of violent culture, he pointed that the current education system in Afghanistan is more likely to foster than suppressing the problem. To support his approach, he briefly pointed to different education system which play different role with regards to countering violence. The first is among those systems which are delivered by some developing countries where education system is arranged in a manner to generate certain public sentiments which support the states against their opponents. In this context, as he thought, the system might generate the sentiments that might have culture of violence in it. In contrast, Dr. Rahimi referred to the educational structure of developed countries which are set to institutionalize liberal and ethical values that directly oppose the violence and its root causes. Speaking on situation and quality of education system in Afghanistan, he said that the education system is different from both of the above mentioned broad categories. He listed a number of notable shortcomings of the system which directly or indirectly encourage students to develop violent personalities. The first problem is that the current educational policy of Afghan

government is vague and poor and the government does not care about the fact that how important the system is for overall development of Afghanistan as a nation-state. Such vague and poor policies led to preparation of poor curriculum for public schools. Textbooks are filled with miscellaneous subjects, which in some cases are not relevant to one another and partly conflicting. Additionally, some section of text books filled with contents which seem to follow no particular goals or objectives. Moreover, amount of textbooks obliged to be thought in particular grade is also problematic. Giving an example, he said that even for primary classes, several books are dedicated to be thought which are beyond capacity of students who are child yet and need more informal education than those of thick and rigid formatted textbooks. Being obsolete and incompatible with the current needs of society is another challenge of Afghanistan's educational curriculum. All these problems with education system of Afghanistan according to Dr. Rahimi can pave the way for baffling students which in some respect led to evolution of violent mentality among students. Plus, such poor quality education system also diverge mind of students to radical ideologies such as the one Taliban or other extremist groups. Because, he argued, the problem with formal education has resulted in establishment of unofficial education centers. As those centers are vulnerable to infiltration of radical religious views, as a consequence its students who become the final victims of such extreme ideas. Dr. Rahimi concluded his remarks by urging the Afghan government to prioritize development of education system as the most effective way of combating the emerging culture of violence in the country.

Shedding lights on his long experience of being in Afghanistan, a delegate from India said that in the past, Afghanistan has been a great source of spreading various thoughts including those of moderate religious interpretations for the region. He mentioned, Imam Abu Hanifa, who was from Kabul and founded one of the greatest schools of *fiqh* (Hanafi). Speaking on the regional impact of Afghanistan throughout its history, he referred to Indian sub-continental religious context in which Hanfi is the dominant sects among Muslim communities. In further arguments, he lamented over the current situation of Afghanistan with such a brilliant historical influence, nowadays sadly drawn to such miserable condition. One thing is very clear that such misery has not accrued simply and there are various and complicated factors behind the problem. "Now there is a great need to see how Afghanistan faced such situation and what can be the way forward to take out the country from the existing problems," he said. Analyzing root causes of the problem, he said, adding that as the problem in this country somehow has religious base, role of religious thinkers and spirituals should not be underestimated.

“There are leading thinkers and religious spirituals who have great role in our region and they are full of knowledge who can support and protect public mind from the harm of extremist interpretation of the religion,” he added. His next point was on threat of violent radicalization and the duty of religious scholars to attempt showing the true face of Islam which according to him is peaceful in nature and support co-existence. In his final part of speech, he said: “Propitiously, Afghanistan has great religious thinkers who can do the job in a great manner. Even India also can play role in this respect, because in India there are many religious thinkers who have enough knowledge to professionally refute all the claims of founder of radical religious ideologies. Religious leaders and spirituals are the most effective force in combating violence, extremism and terrorism. The nature of challenge needs to be ideologically combated.” Additionally, the organizational and individual context of radical religious institutions and groups show that, only poor and underprivileged people are not caught by the ideology, rather there many individuals from high socio-economic classes who join the groups. This issue shows that the sources which people get radicalized involve complex mechanisms and need to be addressed. In addition to organizational efforts of radical groups, there are many other sources which led to self-radicalization of people. Easy availability to speeches, books and reports published by extremist leaders are found on internet which play huge role in self-radicalization. He concluding his remarks by saying that in addition to efforts of religious preachers and thinkers to shape public views through media, mosques, universities, one very simple and effective ways as India used it, is to broadcast the real face of the radical and terrorist groups which are much dark and brutal than they show of in the public. This job can be done by the media by narrating stories and experiences of member of these groups who had jointed terrorist groups like ISIS in Iraq and Syria, but due to unbearable brutality and barbarism, they managed to escape.

Question and Answer Session:

During question and answer part of the panel, a number of participants criticized the vague and abstract solutions proposed by some panelists and asked the panelists to propose more concrete and real suggestions. Other speakers criticized representative of the ministry of education for his unilateral negative views on the education system in Afghanistan. They argued that despite the existing problem, it is worth mentioning that educational system in Afghanistan has been notably improved during the last decade.

In response, panelists had further illustrated parts of their speech to make their points clearer for the audience. With regard to educational system, the panelist from the ministry of education reiterated that lack of experts to develop suitable and up to date educational curriculum as the best way of fighting with harmful views and traditions including culture of violence raised as the big educational problem of Afghanistan. He asked the Afghan government to take the issue seriously.

Speaking in the regional context, it was highlighted that it is beneficial for all the regional countries to invest on infrastructure and economic and trade potentials rather than on weaponry or guns and other military-centered mechanism. In this regard, making use of Afghanistan's human resources considered to be a key factor in success of such programs.

The last elaboration of views was restating the ways help Afghanistan and the region to overcome the current problem. Suggestion to fight against invented and fake interpretation of religious doctrines was the first suggestion. Second, misuse of religion for political goals was underlined as another issue which needs to be combated. Emergence of fake Hadiths and interpretation of religious text that different individuals and groups produced to pursue their personal interest by attaching them to the religion was another noteworthy challenge that had to be addressed. Reviving the pervious rich culture of the region help in a great deal to overcome the current cultural and social challenges in the region and Afghanistan was the final remark shared by a key note speaker.

Panel 6: New Regional Security Architecture: Principles; Roadmap

Moderator:

Dr. Nasir Andisha, Deputy Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, chaired the session

Speaker:

- Ms. Fareshta Sakhi , former director, Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs & University Lecturer at American University of Afghanistan
- Dr. Mohsen Shariatinia, Researcher, Center for Strategic Research, Tehran, Iran
- Dr. Vladimir Evseev, Head of Caucasus Department, CIS Institute, Russia
- Lt. Gen. General Mohammad Asad Durrani (Rt), former DG of ISI, Pakistan
- Lt. Gen. Prakash Chand Katoch (Rt), Indian Army

The sixth panel focused on the description of security condition of the region including Afghanistan and the ways to address the challenges. The moderator, stated the current security in Afghanistan has root to a complex set of regional and international factors. He went further with the following statements:

Without regional and international efforts it is quite difficult to address the security issue in Afghanistan. Due to such complexities, instead of thinking on superficial ways, there should be an effort to come up with new idea and policies. The main impeding factor is that the entire region is in state of flux which is watered from multiple regional and international sources. However, getting sense of these sources is not too difficult. The problems are a result of Iranian nuclear controversy, India-Pakistan rivalry, and recent challenges in Ukraine which led to Russian-west political tension, Iran and Saudi Arabia political problems, and so on. In this respect Afghanistan is and has been to be a traditional center of conflict. The problem is the fact that Afghanistan only remains a passive observer and pays the cost without getting something out of such chaotic situation. However, Afghanistan has the potential to play important role in the region. Being a bridge to connect South and Central Asia is one of such aptitudes. But this is only possible if the country wisely encounter with the events.

Ms. Fareshta Sakhi, analyzed the regional security issues by sharing the following views, it is a great pleasure to participate in this conference. HSD provides a brilliant platform for academic debate on the regional issues. Since 2001 onwards, NATO ASDF and several other organizations and countries helped Afghanistan in maintaining its security. Their efforts in this respect are worth appreciation and commendable. There are three main agendas that my statement will be based on. The first one is on the current security situation in Afghanistan. Secondly, considering the issue in a broader context, and third, mechanism which can help to address the issue.

Root of insecurity in Afghanistan is multidimensional and cross cuttings. Poverty, migration, energy, organizing criminal groups are all issues which influence and complicate the wave of insecurity. Security problem is so hot and widespread that no one feels safe in this country. My case is an example. Around a month ago during a Taliban attack on the American University of Afghanistan, I was inside the campus and severely suffered from the ruthless incident. Considerable usage of IED (improvised explosive device) indicates the depth of insecurity in the Afghan society.

Sad part of the problem is that the sanctuaries of rebel groups and root cause of insecurity is easy to know, but regional countries do not react seriously to tackle them. The only way to truly

overcome insecurity is to fight against the root of this challenge. Widespread illegal cultivation and trade of narcotics further pave the road for terrorists and criminal groups to fuel their subversive activities inside Afghanistan. Political rivalries between different factions and misuse of ethnic identity as a tool to continue such rivalries have promoted such tricky situation. Afghanistan has signed numerous bilateral military and strategic partnership agreements with NATO, USA, India and a few other countries. But regrettably, their way of assistance do not meet Afghanistan's needs properly. Conflicting agendas of the Afghan partners led to such indecency in their support. Looking for new solution by experts, and attempt to invent new resolution in the regional context and exclusion hegemonic approach on Afghanistan are main solution to overcome insecurity not only in Afghanistan but the entire region. Improvement of economic relation is another effective way to reduce tension and improve security.

Dr. Mohsen Shariatinia, based on his speech theoretical perspective to describe the root causes of regional challenges, particularly on problem of state building process in the region. He believes that root causes of the regional countries problems are much bigger than factors raised in conventional debates. He explained his views as follow:

The current political problems of our regional countries give us a lesson that same political setting raised from ancient Greek philosophy and adopted by western countries do not seem to practically work in our region. These theories are well thought in universities, but when it comes to reality, public mentality is not well fitted with such structures. In the western hemisphere, they know how to adjust with democratic system, nation-states and institutionalized relation between power and security. But in our countries, still people do not get full sense of national borders, the relation between power and security. As the alternative, it would be worth thinking to seek the solution through the indigenous faith mechanism which has long standing roots in this part of the world.

One major problem in our region is that it has been attempting to revive the glorious past. But despite failure in this respect, this trend still continues. Such failure but continuing efforts seems to be one impeding factor against development of the region.

To overcome the current issue, the efforts should be started on small scale and with tangible steps. Culture has very strong positive as well as negative role. Our cultural similarities have the latent to bring us together. But if it used wrongly, it has unprecedented negative effect. The current cultural issues in the region are worrisome and need to be addressed before it gets too late.

Recent controversy over the name and identity of Maulana Jalalludin Balkhi between Iran, Turkey and Afghanistan is a small example of the issue. Therefore, to make a positive use of our shared cultural elements, it is important to build consensus about our cultural heritage and belongings. Sadly, the regional states have been weak in the efforts to improve solidarity at regional level. In contrast, it was non-state actors which had strong role in shaping the regional proceedings. At the end it would be worthwhile to mention a small statement from the ancient philosophy of China which defines crisis as a dangerous opportunity. So, let's consider the current regional crisis as a dangerous opportunity to find our way ahead.

Gen. Mohammad Asad Durrani, he appreciated AISS for providing special learning and idea sharing space about Afghanistan and the region. He went ahead expressing his views of the session topic on a number of below mentioned main points:

The present-day reality of Afghanistan shows that traditional approaches and strategies have failed to effectively address the existing problem of this country. It is unfair to blame Pakistan for every problem in Afghanistan. During the last half century, Pakistan government tried to improve the relations among its neighboring countries, particularly between Kabul, Islamabad and Tehran, via proposition of confederation-based strategies, which indicate the fact that this country is not opposing any idea which can help the neighboring countries to get closer to each other. Likewise, many serious peace talks were also initiated by Pakistan. Peace initiative by the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto, is an example.

But main question is that why all the traditional efforts made by not only regional countries, but also by Europe, NATO and so many others failed. Failure of post-2001 is very more intriguing. Such failure generates many perceptions regarding finding a solution. Looking for an alternative initiation with indigenous nature seems the most realistic and feasible one. Because historical experience of different efforts show that multinational organization have been unsuccessful in making peace and stability in this part of the world and it's our duty to solve our own problems and think about a new architecture for the region. Considering the importance of seeking solution by our own, there is a need for each other much more than the past.

Dr. Vladimir Evseev, suggested a notion of compromise to global changes for the regional countries. He further argued: "There is a need for further discussions and dialogues among experts to get real picture of the problems in the region and find real answer." There are complex competitions going on among different states of this region which has made it difficult to have a look for opportunities. Henceforth, finding way to compromise instead of competition is the most realistic way. In particular, such compromise is very important between China and

Russia as decisive power of the region. Political competitions among some regional powers negatively impacted the regional developmental projects. For instance, when Turkey develops a regional program tries to underestimate or ignore important role of Iran and vice versa. As a conclusion, though role of Russia in the region is conclusive, but this as a reality that Russia cannot solve problems alone and there is a need for joint efforts.

Gen. Prakash Chand Katoch, a retired Indian military officer, mostly focused his views by criticizing the destructive role of Pakistan's foreign policies in the region:

The situation of the regional countries in terms of security is worrisome. According to global security index, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India are worst with number 2, 4 and 6 respectively in the ranking. The security deterioration in these countries escalated activities of numerous terrorist organizations. Creation of proxy wars in this region further worsens the situation, even for supporters of this war. Differentiation between terrorist organizations and categorizing them into good and bad is another huge mistake of some countries which will have unprecedented impact on the future of the region including Pakistan.

Moreover, prearranged projects to radicalize youths for political objectives further complicate the scenario and will be very dangerous for the region. One of the consequences of the project is that militant *jihad* becomes part of the culture in ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan and Kashmir. And worst of all, despite negative impacts, Pakistan still deliberately support terrorist organizations. These challenges hugely impede the neighboring states to make best use of their rich economic source and play role in overall development of the region.

However, it does not mean that we have to stop doing anything. To start with practical efforts: first, there should be consensus-building efforts to honestly fight terrorism; second, help Afghanistan to empower its security and defense forces; and third, the international commitment to Afghanistan should not be limited to a short period of time, rather the commitment should be similar to the one which was for South Korea. And forth, nationalist sentiments such as ethnic, religious or linguistic identities should be used as a political tool to fulfill particular groups' aims.

Question and Answer Session:

The outstanding questions in the session were concentrated on a nature of Pakistan's role in the region, particularly Afghanistan. Some suggested the Pakistan government instead of interfering in the affairs of its neighboring countries should address the existing gap between Pakistan government and its people. The critics stressed that if Pakistan's strategies in Afghanistan failed

for more than 15 years, then there is no hope for its success and this country should change its policy towards Afghanistan. Issues of border and conflict over water sources were other points raised during question and answer session with warning that if these problems are not solved properly, they have the potential to further complicate the existing problems of region.

In response to such critics, panelist from Pakistan, blamed such negative approach and perceptions about Pakistan's negative role in the region and asked not to blame Pakistan for every problem the region and Afghanistan are facing. He argued that the current war in Afghanistan is an Afghan war. He suggested that there are enough experts in the three countries—Afghanistan, Pakistan and India—to set together and find solution without reliance on any other country or outside organizations. Regarding issue pertinent to border, he said that in accordance to democratic norms, it is majority who makes decision and people who create problems by debating over borders are in minority. He also blamed media for its devastating role in creating mistrust among the regional countries and asked them to play constructive role.

Another speaker from Afghanistan had shared quite a different view toward conflict over water and said that water is the main source that can bring peace instead of conflict if utilized properly. He stated the existing water sources should be shared fairly between upstream and downstream countries. He lamented over lack of enough experts on water management in Afghanistan to make a clear policy for the water in the country.

A participant from Pakistan blamed Indian speaker for his harsh views towards Pakistan and asked to raise views that bring two countries closer rather than increasing the gap. He also asked Afghanistan not to use India against Pakistan and Pakistan against India for its own interests.

A delegate from Russia responded to a Tajik participant who criticized Russian's harsh security agenda for protection of Afghan-Central Asian borders. He highlighted Russia's support and improved economic and trade relation between Central Asian countries including Tajikistan with Afghanistan.

The Iranian panelist further supported his main speech points and stated that future of our region depends on changes in the global power context. He said change in the US policy towards the region has important impact on the regional countries such as China and Russia. The second layer, according to him is the role and changes in policies of regional powers such as Iran and Saudi Arabia. Another noteworthy issue is the changes in political structure of Turkey as one of the leading player of the region which will have its impact on the future of the region. As Turkey goes toward securitization of political system, the issue gets even more complex. Another

important influencing factor on the future of the region according to him is the trend of political Islam. The final issue raised by him was that the Islamic countries suffer from internal conflicts which destabilize the region. Regarding all these issues, he supported homegrown approaches to overcome the existing problems.

Concluding Panel: The Way Forward

The concluding panel of the HSD 5 comprised of Mr. Harun Najafizada, a senior journalist as moderator, and Dr. Davood Moradian, Director of AISS, who gave the “Note of Thanks”.

Kicking off the panel proceeding, Mr. Najafizada talked about conflicting interests and suggesting that the solution would be to hold dialogue like the HSD conference. Then he asked the audience to speak out. Here are some of the important comments:

A gentleman from India emphasized that all efforts to help Afghanistan have been done based on Afghanistan’s call for help.

Mr. Ramin from Afghanistan said that with regard to the way forward there are two important points to be taken into consideration: One is that the political process—began in 2001—and its continuity and legitimacy must be protected. He said that Afghan government is committed to peace but it is also aware of surrounding threats. And the second point is the necessity of regional and international cooperation. He said that the existing security approach towards Afghanistan’s problems must be replaced by an economic approach which could open up opportunities for all parties to be engaged in a fulfilling partnership. Mr. Ramin emphasized the importance of a win-win approach for cooperation.

Mr. Ruyesh from Afghanistan commented on the way forward saying that we must catch the moment to move forward. He said that all parties must think about a brighter future and not stick with harmful approaches that we experienced during the past years.

Pupols, Armands, representing the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), emphasized on the role of regional organizations saying that the UN is looking forward to increase the role of regional organizations in the future according to many advantages it holds including cost saving, responsibility, accountability, cultural similarities and geographical proximities etc. He named Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Istanbul Process as some of the regional platforms for cooperation and said currently there is a need to promote the existing regional organizations. He said that economic development is the key for long term solution to Afghanistan’s problems as there is a positive trend within the context of regional economic cooperation.

Note of Thanks: Dr. Davood Moradian, Director of AISS, started his speech thanking all the participants' especially foreign guests who risked coming to Afghanistan. Then he thanked security officials of Afghan government and NATO and other foreign embassies who helped holding the conference. He also thanked those individual volunteers from Afghan civil society and common people of Herat who participated in preparing the environment for holding the conference. Mr. Moradian reminded of Mr. Khalil Parsa, AISS representative in Herat, who has recently escaped an assassination attempt. He thanked India, the US and France embassies and the Asia Foundation for founding the conference. Mr. Moradian emphasized that the conference was held through the cooperation of all parties. AISS director finally talked about his approach on the way forward. He mentioned to Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti (who is being respected by people of Afghanistan, Pakistan and India) as an example of intertwined identity for coming together of all parties with different interests in the region. He said that Afghanistan could symbolize the legitimate concerns of all parties. "The message that we would like to reinforce through the Herat Security Dialogue is that we can help you to have a Conceptual Connectivity if your request is reasonable. If there is a degree of reasonability of all competing interests I think Afghanistan and Afghans can address that. The challenge for us is to show to external partners our capacity to address their concerns and I think the challenge for external partners is to articulate their request and symbolize it in order to be understandable." He concluded that this is only the beginning of our dialogue as we are looking forward to the next conferences. Mr. Moradian promised future provincial conferences to be held in Mazar, Bamian and Kandahar.

Annexes

Annex 1: Agenda

Thursday October 13

Throughout the Day	Participants' Arrival in Herat
19:00-21:00	Private dinner/free time

Friday October 14

Opening Session

08:30-09:30		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recitation of Holy Koran 2. National Anthem 3. Recitation of Hymns of Khaja Abdullah Ansari 4. Sufi Musical Performance 5. Welcoming remarks by AISS chairman of advisory board, Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta 6. Welcoming remarks by the Governor of Herat
Panel I: Violence: Sources, Reasons and Manifestations		
09:30-11:00	Moderator	Ms. Jyoti Malhotra, Senior journalist from India
	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Rohullah Amin, Director of American Institute of Afghanistan Studies 2. Ms. Wasima Badgisy, Professor, Herat University 3. Mr. Christopher Kolenda, Former Pentagon/US Army 4. H.E. Ambassador François Richier, Ambassador of France to Afghanistan
Discussion		
11:00-11:30	Tea Break	
Panel II: New Global Disorder; Return of History		
11:30-13:00	Moderator	Mr. Tamim Asey, Director of Policy & Strategy at Afghanistan's National Security Council
	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Seyed Kazem Sajjadpour, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran and President of Iran's Institute for Political & International Studies 2. H.E. Ambassador Yao Jing, Ambassador of China to Afghanistan 3. Dr. Bruno Tertrais, Senior Research Fellow at the Foundation pour la Recherche Stratégique, France 4. Dr. Christine Fair, professor, Georgetown University, USA 5. Ambassador (R) Dr. Ali Engin Oba, Advisor to the Chairman of TASAM, CAG University, Turkey
Discussion		
13:00-14:00	Lunch	

	Panel III: Crisis of Islamic Civilization: Sacred violence	
	Moderator	Ms. Nasrine Gross, Afghan writer and adviser to Afghanistan's Chief Executive Officer, Dr Abdullah
14:00-15:30	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Tarek El Sonoty, Head of the Diplomatic Section, Al Ahrum News Daily, Egypt 2. Mr. Mohammed Moheq, religious scholar & adviser to the Afghan Government 3. Dr. Ayesha Siddiqa, scholar and writer from Pakistan
		Discussion
15:30-16:00	Tea Break	
	Panel IV: Afghanistan: Stability, Legitimacy and Future of Democracy	
	Moderator	Ms. Wazhma Forough, Advisor to the Ministry of Defense, Director at Women & Peace Studies Organization, Afghanistan
16:00-17:30	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Arian Sharifi, Director, Office of National Security Council, Afghanistan 2. Mr. Aziz Rafeei, Director, Afghanistan Civil Society Forum 3. Mr. Jandad Spinghar, President, Afghanistan Election Watch 4. Mr. Mullah Salam Zaeef, former Taliban Official
		Discussion
19:00-21:00	Official Reception hosted by Herat's Provincial Council, Venue	

Thursday October 15

08:30-09:00	Traditional Sufi Music	
	Panel V: Counter-violence Narratives	
	Moderator	Dr. Nilab Mobarez, former UNAMA spokesperson and civil society representative
09:00-10:30	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Sardar Rahimi, deputy Afghanistan's Ministry of Education & University lecturer 2. Professor Magnus Marsden from Sussex University, UK 3. Shrinivas Rao Sohoni, Scholar, India 4. Professor Eshragh Husseine, Scholar & University lecturer from Afghanistan
		Discussion
10:30-11:00	Tea Break	
	Panel VI: New Security Architecture: Principles; Roadmap	
	Moderator	Dr. Nasir Andisha, Deputy Foreign Minister of Afghanistan
11:00-13:00	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms. Fareshta Sakhi, former director, Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs & University Lecturer at American University of Afghanistan 2. Dr. Mohsen Shariatinia, Researcher, Center for Strategic Research, Tehran, Iran 3. Dr. Vladimir Evseev, Head of Caucasus Department, CIS Institute, Russia 4. Lt. Gen. General Mohammad Asad Durrani (Rt), former DG of ISI, Pakistan 5. Lt. Gen. Prakash Chand Katoch (Rt), Indian Army
		Discussion
13:00-14:00	Lunch	
	Panel VII: The Way Forward	
14:00-15:30	Moderator	Mr. Harun Najafizada, Senior Journalist
15:30-15:35	Note of Thanks: Director of AISS, Dr. Davood Moradian	

Annex 2: List of Participants

Name	Designation	Organization
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan		
Aasey, Zia	General Director of Evaluation and Monitoring	Ministry of Interior Affairs
Abobaker Gross, Nasrin	Advisor	Afghanistan's Chief Executive Officer
Adeel, Mohammad Juma	Border Police Zone Commander, Herat	Ministry of Interior Affairs
Ahmadi Farid, Nahid	Member	Afghanistan Parliament
Alizai, Kamran	President	Herat Provincial Council
Amin, Rohullah	Director/ Senior Research Fellow	American Institute of Afghanistan Studies
Andisha, Nasir Ahmad	Deputy Foreign Minister for Finance and Administrative Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ansari, Mohammad Ayoub	Chief Police of Herat Province Herat	Ministry of Interior Affairs
Arwin, Naqib	District Administrator	Engil District
Asey, Tamim	Director of Policy & Strategy	National Security Council
Ayoubi, Najiba	Director General	The Killid Group
Azam, Farouq	Chairman	Movement of Peaceful Transformation of Afghanistan
Azimi, Zaher	General	Ministry of Defense
Badghisy, Wasima	Lecturer	Herat, University
Baheen, Sultan Ahmad	Director	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Balkhi, Mirwais	Head of Africa and Middle East desk at Center for Strategic Studies	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Baluch Zada, Ajmal	Activist	Civil Society
Barikzai, Simin	Member	Afghan Parliament
Bashir, Marya	Activist	Civil Society
Enabi, Daad Mohammad	Director of Eslah Daily News paper	Ministry of Information and Culture
Erfani, Ayoub	Advisor	The First Vice President
Fakhri, Sayed Ghulam Hussain	Director	Anti-Corruption Authority
Fayez, Sharif	Founder	American University of Afghanistan
Frogh, Wazhma	Director	Women and Peace Studies Organization
Haidari, Ashraf	Director of Policy and Strategy	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Hakim, Fahim	Former Commissioner	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
Hashemi, Fardin	Lecturer	Kabul University
Husseini, Eshraq	Director	Nebras Research and Studies Organization
Kargar, Rangina	Member	Afghanistan Parliament

Kawa, Parwiz	Editor in Chief	8subh Daily Newspaper
Khalid, Abdul Hadi	Senior Advisor to the Minister	Ministry of Interior Affairs
Mobarez, Nilab	Former UNAMA spokesperson	Afghanistan
Moheq, Mohammad	Researcher and Writer	Adviser to the Office of the President
Mortazavi, Sayed Baqer	Public Order Brigade Commander	Ministry of Interior Affairs
Mostafavi, Mojgan	Deputy Minister for Publications	Ministry of Information and Culture
Mudaris, Enayatullah	CEO	Arezo TV
Mujjahed, Abdul Hakim	Deputy chairman	Peace High Council
Muradi, Shaker	Chief of Staff	National Security Council
Najafizada, Enayat	Policy Advisor	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
Najafizada, Haroon	Senior Journalist	Freelance
Neiayesh, Farhad	Mayor	Herat Governorate
Neshat, Zalmai	Advisor	Chief Executive Officer
Niazi, Rafiullah	Director	Academy of Sciences of Afghanistan
Qattali, Sayed Wahid	Former Director	Herat Provincial Council
Rafiee, Azizullah	Executive Director	Afghanistan Civil Society Forum
Rafiq Sediqi, Mohammad Rafi	CEO	Khorshid TV
Rahimi, MohammdAsef	Governor	Herat
Rahimi, Sardar Mohammad	Deputy Minister for Literacy	Ministry of Education
Rahimi, Sayed Abdul Qader	Director	Herat Human Rights Independent Commission
Ramesh, Somaya	Member	Herat Provincial Council
Ramin, Amir	Director General for Regional Cooperation	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Raofyan, Aria	Director	Herat Culture and Information Directorate
Royesh, Aziz	President	Marefat High School
Saafi, Mariam	Chief Executive	Institute for Policy Research and Development Studies
Sabet, Abdul Saboor	Director General of Herat Province	National Directorate of Security
Saeedi, Ahmad	Political Expert	Civil Society
Saihoon, Saifuddin	Professor	Kabul University
Sakhi, Fareshta	Professor	American University of Afghanistan
Sharifi, Arian	Director	National Security Council
Sohail, Sanjar	Publisher	Hasht-e-Sobh Daily News Paper
Spanta, Rangin Dadfar	Former Foreign Minister	Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Shahir, Mohammad Rafiq	Director	Herat Experts Council
Spinghar, Jandad	Director	Election and Transparency Watch Organization of Afghanistan

Tahery, Jahantab	Member	Herat Provincial Council
Tamanna, Faramarz	Director General of Center of Strategic Studies	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Taqwa, Abdul Jabbar	Former Governor	Kabul Province
Tawakoli, Mohammad Jafar	Religious Scholar	Civil Society
Wafayezada, Mohammad Qasim	Deputy Director General on Policy and Planning	Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority
Zazi, Hamid	Activist/Director	Civil Society
Zia, Sayed Hameed	Director General	Hamida Barmaki Organization for the Rule of Law
Zaheef Abdul Salam	Envoy to Pakistan	Taliban Movement
United States of America		
Fair, C. Christine	Associate Professor	Georgetown University
Sedney, David	President (acting)	American University of Afghanistan
Kolenda, Christopher	President & CEO	Kolenda Strategic Leadership Consulting, LLC
Neumann, Ronald E	President	American Academy of Diplomacy
Arsalan, Hamid	Program Manager	National Endowment for Democracy
People's Republic of China		
Jing, Yao	Ambassador	Embassy of China
Hongtian, Zhao	Political Counselor	Embassy of China
Qianjin, Wang	Political Official	Embassy of China
Peng, YAN	Political Official	Embassy of China
Arab Republic of Egypt		
Fouda, Ibrahim Mamdouh	Charge d' Affaires	Embassy of Egypt
El Sonoty, Tarek	Head of the Diplomatic Section	Al Ahram Daily Newspaper of Egypt
French Republic		
Richier, François	Ambassador	Embassy of France
Tertrais, Bruno	Scholar	Strategic Studies Institute
Josso, Guillaume	Political Counselor	Embassy of France
Barthet, Elise	French Media Analyst	Embassy of France
Légiot, Patrick	Defense Attaché	Embassy of France
Republic of India		
Vohra, Manpreet	Ambassador	Embassy of India in Kabul
Chandra, Vishal	Associate Fellow	Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses
Jaideep	Consul General	Consulate General of India, Herat
Sohoni, Shrinivas Rao	Scholar	
Sharma, Bal Krishan	Deputy Director & Head of Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation	United Service Institution of India.

Katoch, Prakash Chand	Member	United Service Institution of India.
Malhotra, Jyoti	Senior Journalist	Indian Media
Islamic Republic of Iran		
Sajjadpor, Seyed M. Kazem	Deputy Foreign Minister	Education & research/(IPIS)
Tisha Yar, Mandana	Member	The Institute for Iran-Eurasia Studies
Shariatinia, Mohsen	Senior Expert	Center for Strategic Research
Gheginizada, Ghulam Ali	Vice President	AllamehTabataba'i University
Tohidi, Zahra	Researcher	Center for Strategic Research
KhodaGholipour, Alireza	Researcher	Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS)
Shoorijeze, Mahmood	Researcher	Center for Strategic Research
Afkhami, Mohammed	Consul General	Consulate General, Herat
Islamic Republic of Pakistan		
Durani, Asad	Former Director	Inter-Services Intelligence
Khan, Aziz Ahmad	Former Ambassador	Embassy of Pakistan-Kabul
Mohammad, Brig Saad	Former Defense Attaché	Embassy of Pakistan to Afghanistan
Ali, Brig Sikandar	Chief Executive Officer	Universal Testing Services
Hassan, Raof	Director	Regional Peace Institute (RPI)
Siddiq, Ayesha	Fellow	St Antony's College, Oxford
Ayub, Tahmina Arif	Social Activist	Awami National Party
Sufi, Juma Khan	Professor	Peshawar University
Baidar Khan, Bakht	Consul General	Pakistan Consulate General, Herat
Russian Federation		
Nessar, Omar	Director	Center for Contemporary Afghan Studies (CISA)
Evseev, Vladimir	Head of Caucasus Department	CIS Institute
Republic of Tajikistan		
Bekmukhamedov, Kasym	Scholar	Center for Afghanistan and Regional Studies
Republic of Turkey		
Akin, Ali Sait	Ambassador	Embassy of Turkey
OBA, Ali Engin	Advisor of Chairman	TASAM, Çağ University
Orhan, Osman	Director	World Islamic Forum and World Turkic Forum
United Kingdom		
Marsden, Magnus	Professor of Social Anthropology	University of Sussex
International Organizations		
Swagemakers, Timotheus	General Manager	Agha Khan Foundation
Pupols, Armands	Political Affairs Officer	UNRCCA
Osman, Khalil	Head of Herat Office	UNAMA

Annex 3: Links of the National and International Media covered the conference

- [BBC Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Salam Watandar Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Arezo TV Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Rasad Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [8am Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Ariana TV Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Farsi Alarabiya Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Pajhwok Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Payam-e-Aftab Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-v](#)
- [Tasnim Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Ava Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Bokhdi Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Etilaatroz Reports on Herat Security Dialogue -V](#)
- [Azadi Radio Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Vice of America Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Farda TV Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Tamadon TV Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Shafaqna Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)
- [Fars News Reports on Herat Security Diallogue-V](#)
- [Dari Reports on Herat Security Dialogue-V](#)

Annex 4: ACAD-III logo and photos

HSD-V Logo



Sample of the Conference Photo



End