

**ROLE OF POLITICAL ELITES IN FOREIGN
POLICY TRANSFORMATION: A CASE STUDY OF
AFGHANISTAN, 1996-214**

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SHARIF HOZOORI



Diplomacy and Disarmament Division

Centre for International Politics, Organization and Disarmament

School of International Stud

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

NEW DELHI-110067

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Date: 15.07.19

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled “**Role of Political Elites in Foreign Policy Transformation: A Case Study of Afghanistan, 1996-2014**” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work.

The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

Sharif Hozoori

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Prof. Yeshi Choedon
Chairperson, CIPOD



Chairperson / अध्यक्ष
Centre for International Politics
Organization and Disarmament
अंतर्राष्ट्रीय राजनीति, संगठन एवं निस्स्त्रीकरण केन्द्र
School of International Studies
अंतर्राष्ट्रीय अध्ययन संस्थान
Jawaharlal Nehru University
जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
New Delhi/नई दिल्ली-110067

Dr. Happymon Jacob
Supervisor



Centre for International Politics
Organization and Disarmament
अंतर्राष्ट्रीय राजनीति, संगठन एवं निस्स्त्रीकरण केन्द्र
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जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
New Delhi/नई दिल्ली-110067

**Dedicated to the children of war including
my elder brothers who could not finish their
education**

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Chapter I: Introduction

A successful foreign policy is the key to the development of a country across all sectors, and the political elite in the country are the people who play the major role in shaping it. This study examines the role the political elite play in transforming the foreign policy and focus on Afghanistan as a case study from 1996 to 2014.

The current research attempts to analyze the role of the political elite in initiation of the crises (political instability) and the transformation of the foreign policy of Afghanistan. Further, the study looks to answer how the elite factions contributed to creating instability in Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, which led to the civil war and the Islamization of its foreign policy. Finally, this research attempts to find out how consensus among the political elite had led to the formation of a democratic polity and adoption of an inclusionary foreign policy after 2001 in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan was isolated during the Taliban period until the operation 'Enduring Freedom' began which Maley calls a rescue mission (Maley 2006:7). It was followed by the establishment of the democratic regime in 2001, and thereafter Afghanistan has not remained isolated but "connected to the world by complex considerations of cultural affinity, geopolitics, the regional tensions of Southwest Asia, economic ties and ideology, as well as its new relationship with the United States" (Maley 2006:101). In this period, Afghanistan was witness to a major political transformation called "easy democratization with a little outside help" (Werfel 2007), and it adopted a broad and inclusive strategy in its foreign policy (Maley 2006:101-110).

Scholars, who have written extensively about Afghanistan, believe that the political transformation in the country and the changes in its foreign policy had much to do with external intervention. However, this study would like to pose a series of hypothesis in order to provide different explanations for such political and foreign policy transformations. First, a (elite) settlement between Dauod and the communist leaders could have prevented the bloody 1979 revolution. Second, a consensus amongst the

communist elites could have stopped further skirmishes between the *khalq* and the *parcham* factions of the People's Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and thereby prevented the Soviet intervention and invasion. Third, an elite settlement between the different Islamic parties of Mujahidin in Pakistan and Iran could have prevented the destructive Civil War and the emergence of the Taliban. Fourth, a consensus and compromise among the elite over essential issues led to the successful conclusion of the Bonn Conference and Bonn Agreement.

Acknowledging the role of external forces, this research put emphasizes on the role of political elite in causing stability and instability in the country. It argues that external intervention is not the only reason that causes instability in Afghanistan but elite factions and elite fragmentation play the essential role in it also.

This study argues that factionalism and disunity among the elite factions in the country are the main reasons for the political instability and political crises in Afghanistan. However, this research also argues that the settlement the elite factions reached and the consensus among them contributed greatly to the establishment of the democratic system after 2001.

1.1 Definitions, Rationale and Scope

There are certain concepts that this research deals with, and they have been defined as follows: *elite* defined as “a distinguished group with high levels of qualification, ability and willingness to achieve the highest goals” (Hartman 2007:2)

The term *political elite* is defined as “people who are in a minority in size (numbers) but their preferences prevailing even while there are differences in key political decisions” (Dahl 1970:269).

The term *elite settlement* is defined as, “deliberate and lasting compromises of core disputes among political elite” (Higley and Burton 1989). *Consensually unified elites* happen when the “elite share a largely tacit consensus about rules and codes of political conduct” (Higley and Burton 1989).

In *Elite fragmentation*, rival parties would disagree on power-sharing and governmental positions. They engage most of the time in fighting each other over dominance and sharing of resources (Higley and Burton 1989). In the elite faction, elite engage in zero-sum game and view politics as the winner take all. Fear and distrust are pervasive among different factions of the elite.

Afghan political elite are defined as those who have influence and authority due to their position such as heads of state, ministers in the cabinet, governors, Members of Parliament, religious and ethnic leaders and leaders of political parties.

This study is relevant because it gives new and different explanations for instability, war, foreign policy and regime changes in Afghanistan. Also, it gives different reasons for the relative stability established post 2001. There are many academic works that have been undertaken on Afghanistan, but the level of their efficacy and depth are not sufficient enough to satisfy the current research. By focusing on Afghanistan this study tries to find out the role of the political elite in domestic politics in general, and their role in transforming the foreign policy in particular. Here it must be added that the value of this study would be theoretical and does not attempt to offer any suggestions to the country's policy and decision makers.

The scope of this study is limited to the role of the political elite in domestic policy and the transformation of the foreign policy of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2014. By studying the Taliban regime and the Hamid Karzai administration, this study covers almost two decades of Afghanistan's political history.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What are the linkages between political elites, crises (political instability) and foreign policy transformation?
2. What influenced the regime changes and foreign policy transformation of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2014?
3. How have the political elite contributed to the regime changes and the foreign policy transformation of Afghanistan?

4. How have elite disunity and factions contributed to the instability and transformation of the foreign policy of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001?
5. How have settlement and consensus among the elite contributed to the establishment of democratic polity and adoption of an inclusive foreign policy post 2001 in Afghanistan?

1.3 Hypotheses

1. Fragmentation among the elite in Afghanistan due to tribal, religio-ideologic and ethnic factors had led to the country's political instability and incoherence in its foreign policy from 1996 to 2001.
2. The elite in Afghanistan arriving at a consensus due to the presence of NATO military, the relatively satisfactory power sharing agreement amongst the various factions, and the establishment of various institutions had led to the political stability and inclusive foreign policy post 2001.

1.4 Research Methods

Since this research focuses on the role of the political elite in transforming Afghanistan's foreign policy, case study would be the best method suited for the current research. Case is defined as "an instance of a class of events of interests to the investigator such as instance of revolution, types of governmental regime, kind of economic system or personality type" (Bennett 2004:21).

The literatures which this research is going to use are more peer-reviewed journals and books, and it is based on qualitative research method. The researcher would use primary resources like native books (Persian) and interviews for the current research which again have to be authentic and academically acceptable. The researcher intends to interview senior diplomats in the field by going to different branches of the foreign ministry of Afghanistan and speak with scholars doing research in the field, particularly think-tanks. The researcher will be aware about conducting an interview in different ways like unstructured, semi-structured or structured. Since the interviews will be more with the

elite, care has to be taken to prevent it from being changed to a completely unstructured one.

1.5 Tentative Chapters

Chapter I

Introduction

In the first and introductory chapter, the research questions, hypothesis and general framework of the current research will be included.

Chapter II

Theoretical aspect of foreign policy, elite studies and the role of political elite in society and foreign policy

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section called locating foreign policy studies in International Relations, I would examine realism, liberalism and constructivism theories of International Relations. For each theory, the details of what the theory is all about, its evolution, the major thinkers, and the relation between each theory to foreign policy would be examined. The main reason for such exploration is to find out which theory is accommodative to foreign policy or which theory can locate foreign policy better in its domain.

Conceptualization of Foreign Policy composes the second section of this chapter. Throughout this section, first, the importance of foreign policy would be highlighted, then the evolution of foreign policy analysis shall be discussed and after that the models of foreign policy analysis such as strategic model, decision-making model, and the systemic models would be discussed in details. Further, the concept of changes in foreign policy will be introduced and explained in this section. The vitality of this concept, the reasons why it had been undermined in the past and the levels of changes in the foreign policy would be explained in great details.

The third section of this chapter would take help from the studies on the elite in order to explain and examine the political elite and their role in formulating the country's foreign policy. First, it would discuss the meaning of studies on the elite by tracing the classical literature including the works of Mosca, Pareto, and Mitchel. Then various approaches such as the functional approach, the Marxist approach, and the pluralist approach would be discussed.

Having defined the political elite, the concept of ultimate units such as predominant leader, single group and multiple autonomous actors shall be explained. The main reason is to examine the role of the political elite in domestic and foreign policies. Further, at the end of this section, the effect the settlement among the elite and the elite factions had on the instability and the stability in the society shall be highlighted. There it would be discussed how consensus and compromise among the elite over core values can help keep coherence in a society. Thereafter it would be argued how competition and factionalism among the elite can be harmful and further destabilize a society. In the conclusion of the chapter, the summary of each section and a glimpse of the topics covered in the chapter shall be produced.

Chapter III

Political elite and foreign policy in Afghanistan: A general overview

This chapter is divided into three sections. Since the role of the society matters in politics as well as in the composition and formation of the political elite, in the first section, the major focus would be on the Afghan society. Here the study would look into the composition of the Afghan society and examine factors such as tribe, ethnicity and religion that affect the citizens' relationships and the interaction among the political elite. In the same section, an attempt would be made to define the Afghan political elite and to discuss the differences between the old and the current political elite.

In the second section, the role of the political elite in politics and the society in the past history of Afghanistan shall be examined. Here the roles of ethnicity, religion and tribe would be highlighted as the main factors for the disunity and factionalism among the

political elite. In the third section, the role of the political elite in formulating the foreign policy would be discussed. Here the role of the political elite in formulating the foreign policy under different regimes and political systems from the Afghan dynasties to the republic of Dawood Khan, from the communist regime to the Islamic government in Kabul would be examined. The chapter would end with a conclusion.

Chapter IV

Disunity among the Taliban political elite: domestic instability and incoherence in foreign policy (1996-2001)

This chapter has been divided into four sections. In the first section the emergence of the Taliban, the disunity among political elite of Mujahidin, and the socialization of the Taliban would be discussed. In the second section, the composition of the Taliban political elite and the role of ethnic, religion and tribal factors in the formation and recruitment of the Taliban political elite shall be examined. In the third section, the effects of the fragmentation of the political elite on the domestic policy of the Taliban would be researched. In the fourth section, the Taliban foreign policy, its principles and objectives, its relations with Pakistan, Iran, the US, Russia and the United Nation would be examined. In the end, the outcome and the summary of the chapter shall be produced.

Chapter V

Consensus and unity among the political elite: establishing the democratic political system and adopting the inclusive foreign policy 2001-2014

This chapter would examine the effect the political consensus among the elite had on the country's political stability and coherence in its foreign policy. This chapter concentrates on the events following the US invasion of Afghanistan. The Bonn Conference and the Bonn Agreement are the focus in this chapter. It shows how the four different groups, namely the Northern Alliance, the Rome, the Peshawar and the Cyprus groups, worked together and compromised over certain issues.

To carry the research smoothly, this chapter has been divided into three sections along with their own sub sections. In the first section, the US invasion and the emergence of the new political elite shall be examined. Here the research would reveal how the operation ‘Enduring Freedom’ helped eradicate the Taliban regime, paving the way for the Bonn Conference and allowing the emergence of the new political elite.

In the second section, the role of the political elite in arriving at a consensus on domestic politics and political stability would be examined. Here the importance of the role played by the political elite in establishing domestic stability and smooth functioning of politics shall be highlighted further. In the third section, the role of the political elite in reaching a consensus on Afghanistan’s foreign policy post 2001 would be examined. In that section, the principles and the objectives of the foreign policy of Afghanistan post 2001 would be explained. Further in the section, Afghanistan’s engagement with some of its neighbors, major world powers and the United Nations would be examined in details.

Chapter VI

Summary and conclusion

The final chapter will have the general outcome of the current research, the result of tested hypotheses and the answers to the research questions.

Chapter II: Theoretical Aspect of Foreign Policy, Elite Studies and the Role of Political Elite in Society and Foreign Policy

2.1 Introduction

Every discipline has a theoretical background that enables it to build its theory on, or on which the phenomena of the field dominate, and International Relations (IR) as a discipline is not exempt from this. Rationalist approaches in IR assume the state as unitary entity and the main actor in international politics. Further, they blackbox the state and ignore the domestic constituencies as well as the events taking place inside a country (Hudson 2007:3). On the other hand, Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) argues that all the interactions between and across nations is caused by actions of decision makers individually or in a group.

FPA considers IR to be a discipline similar to other social sciences. It enquires as to how perceptions and misperceptions, actions and reactions of a human being toward his/her environment matter and how the actions of individuals influence or are being influenced by the world around them (ibid:2).

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section called 'locating foreign policy studies in International Relations', I would examine realist, liberal and constructivist theories of International Relations. For each theory, the details of what the theory is all about, its evolution, the major thinkers who advanced it and the relation between each theory to foreign policy would be examined. The main reason for such exploration is to find out which theory is accommodative to foreign policy or which theory can locate foreign policy better in its domain.

Conceptualization of Foreign Policy composes the second section of this chapter. In this section, initially, the importance of foreign policy would be highlighted and then the evolution of foreign policy analysis would be discussed, and after that the models of foreign policy analysis such as strategic model, decision-making model, and the systemic models would be discussed in detail. Further, the concept of changes in foreign policy would be introduced and explained in this section. The vitality of this concept, the

reasons why it had been undermined in the past and the levels of changes in foreign policy would be explained in great detail.

The third section of this chapter would take help from elite studies in order to explain and examine the political elite and their role in shaping foreign policy. First, it would discuss the meaning of elite studies by tracing classical literature including the works of Mosca, Pareto, and Mitchel. Then various approaches such as functional approach, Marxist approach, and pluralist approach would be discussed. After having defined the political elite, the concept of ultimate units such as predominant leader, single group and multiple autonomous actors would be explained. The main idea is to examine the role of the political elite in the domestic and foreign policies.

Further, at the end of this section, the role the settlement among the elite factions played in bringing instability or stability in society shall be highlighted. Here it would also be discussed how consensus and compromise among the elite factions on core values can keep coherence in the society. Thereafter it would be argued how competition and factional feud among the elite can be harmful and could further destabilize the society. The conclusion of the chapter will have a brief summary of each section and a glimpse into the topics covered.

2.2 Locating foreign policy studies in International Relations theory

In order to find out which theory can accommodate Foreign Policy Analysis better, this section deals with the three mainstream aspects of International Relations Realism, Liberalism and Social Constructivism. From its nascent stage, International Relations (IR) has now emerged as a theoretical discipline. E.H. Carr's *The Twenty-First Century Crisis* and Hans Morgenthau's *Politics among Nations* are both works on theory.

However, both of them claim that any attempt at reforming the international system without considering the power struggle factor would end up in failure. They place the responsibility of interwar crisis on the liberal international institutionalists' worldview (Burchill et al. 2009:1-2). The works of scholars like Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Carr, Morgenthau, Schelling, Waltz, and Mearsheimer are categorized under realism. They tend to use a social-scientific analysis in studying the structure and process of world

politics. Instead of taking the norms and values seriously their tendency is more to ignore them.

However, Liberalism encourages cooperation rather than conflict. Transnational non-governmental ties, mutual exchange, economic interdependence and democratic peace are highlighted in the liberal thoughts. Lock, Bentham and Kant are categorized as classics of liberalism; later scholars such as Karl Deutch, James Rosenau, Ernst Haas, Robert Keohane and Joseph R. Nye elaborated further on the works of the classic liberals and offered a new understanding of Liberalism (Jackson and Sorensen 2012: 100-102).

Social constructivism on the other hand focuses on the social aspect of IR, emphasizing the importance of beliefs, ideas and shared understanding among international actors. While rejecting the objective understanding of social reality and international politics, constructivists argue in favor of inter-subjective awareness. They believe that the international system is a set of thoughts and ideas and hence a human invention. They further argue that if international politics is in some ways the arrangement of ideas and norms by certain people at certain times, then by changing the time and the people, it would also change and be transformed. This school of International Relations was established and continued by Alexander Wendt, Nina Tannenwald, Nicholas Onuf, Martha Finnimore, Peter Katzenstein and Ted Hopf (ibid: 209-223).

2.2.1 Realism

Realists are thinking in the line of power that is exercised by states. In other words, their main concern is realpolitik. Briefly, realism's main assumptions are: that international system is anarchic; that states are the main actors in international politics; that states are rational actors and think only about their national interests while interacting in international system; that national security and survival are the main concerns for all states and finally they believe that it is the national power and capabilities that determines the interaction among states (Ghosh 2015:24).

They believe power politics will not give way to cooperation till anarchy rules international politics. Most of the realists differentiating between domestic and foreign polics thus consider the first happening under hierarchy and the latter under anarchy

(Qawam 2011: 298-304). Since realists believe that security is the main agenda of the states, therefore the success of all policies, including foreign policy, is fully dependent on it.

The structural realist, Kenneth Waltz, gives more credit and weight to international politics rather than domestic politics. He identifies three important features while comparing the structures of domestic and international politics.

By 'ordering principles' he means the element that the structure is organized accordingly and it clarifies whether actors stand in equal relations or in super or subordination to each other. He argues that the relations among actors in domestic politics are based on command and obey form, but in international politics ordering principles is hierarchical. According to him, contrary to domestic politics, the actors in international politics are equally sovereign and therefore the ordering principles would be anarchical in nature.

The 'character of units' is another feature that he talks about. Waltz believes that units in the domestic political system are performing different functions, but in the case of actors in international politics, they are performing the same functions such as internal order and external defense. When it comes to the third feature, 'the distribution of capabilities' (the extent of material resources distributed across the units), he emphasizes that this feature constitutes variation and brings the difference in outcomes. It means that the changes in distribution would bring changes in the system too. It does not matter whether the system is hierarchical or anarchical (Waltz 1979:101).

For the evolution of realism it is enough to say that realism in its classic form is reflected in the *Peloponnesian War* of Thucydides, *The Princes* of Machiavelli, *Leviathan* of Hobbes and *On War* of Clausewitz. In modern times, realism is reflected in the works of Hans Morgenthau (*Politics among Nation*), E.H. Carr (*The Twenty-First Century Crisis*), Kenneth Waltz (*Theory of International Politics* and *Man, State and War*). Academician turned practitioners such as Henry Kissinger, George Kennan and Zbigniew Brzezinski expanded the realism thought further. There are different brands in the realist school of thought. Classical realism as the first sub-brand of realism focuses on human nature and

its role in human interactions as well as conflict and international relations. Neo-realism that emerged after classical realism tends to concentrate on the role of the structure of international politics and international anarchy in international relations. Further, neoclassical realism considers domestic variables while explaining international phenomena such as conflict and peace.

Realism is divided into two types; defensive realism and offensive realism. The first type is security maximizer and status quoist. It believes power politics, security dilemma and accumulation of power must be continued until the security of the state is guaranteed. The second type is power maximizer and expansionist. It looks to power as the end rather than the means for security.

Believing in the logic of anarchy, survival, self-help and considering international politics as a market (Waltz 1979: 89), the realists think national security as the prime goal in foreign policy. They prescribe the same pattern of foreign policy for all states irrespective of the difference in their culture and domestic politics. Since realism defines national interest as a struggle for power among all countries, it does not give enough space for foreign policy analysis. Realists don't recognize the cultural, economic, historical and political differences of the actors while explaining the state behavior. Since foreign policy analysis takes into consideration the behavior of each state as dependent variables and not as the pattern of outcome of interaction, the development of theory at this level got very little attention in the realist thought (Rose 1998).

Foreign policy analysis is ignored in realism thought because realists believe that decision making in foreign policy takes place inside the 'black box'. Moreover, economic aspects, political factors, cultural differences and the style of functioning of the leadership of the countries involved are undermined in realism while analyzing foreign policy. Realists consider the identity and national interests of all actors as similar to each other; power hungry or seeking security. Therefore, realism does not feel comfortable in accommodating foreign policy studies in its realm. The main focus of realism is international politics and the events taking place behind the doors of states is left to comparative politics which is the subfield of political science (Hoffman 1977).

Fareed Zakaria, a neoclassical realist, argues that “using the parsimonious theory is useful for some purpose, but taking help from the same theory is not advisable to explain the events, trends and policies which are too specific, and therefore the explanation provided by domestic politics is far more useful in this matter” (Zakaria 1992:198). Further, Zakaria mentions that “a good foreign policy should not ignore domestic politics, national culture and individual policymakers” and he emphasizes that “such foreign policy must separate the effect of the various levels of international politics” (ibid: 197).

Some scholar like Holsti argues that classical realists especially the likes of Hans Morgenthau was FPA oriented because they were well aware of the contextual imperatives and national attributes such as geography, history, economics and politics (1998:19). But Morgenthau who considered the state as the most important actor, characterizes it as unitary and labels it as rational, undermining the importance of national characters in the states and their influence on foreign policy (Kubalkova 2001:26). Scholars like Rose argue that neoclassical realism considers both internal (material capabilities) and external (international system) factors while explaining foreign policy but in this neoclassical realists’ arrangement, larger attention has been given to structural factors (ibid:26). Further, it is true that neo classical realism considers internal factor (material capabilities) in foreign policy analysis, however it considers it as intervening variables and the structural factor as an independent variable.

The concept of ‘the primacy of foreign policy’ has a different meaning for realists (Zakaria1992:179). As per its first meaning, the international system strongly affects domestic politics and the foreign policy of states. These effects would be applied through the distribution of power among states (international system) or through the distribution of economic activities and wealth (Gourevitch: 1978).

Realists such as Gourevitch believes that the anarchical nature of the international system poses the threats of being conquered, occupied and annihilated, and therefore to counter such adverse threats, states automatically accumulate power and seeking total security (ibid:896). Further, Realists believe that the effect of the international economy on domestic politics can be seen in the past history of international relations such as during the Great Depression of 1873-96 and the oil crisis of 1973. Therefore, according to

realism, it is the international system that determines the foreign policy of countries and not domestic politics and the national political elite.

The second meaning of foreign policy primacy in realism is the 'strategic reasons'. It means that the foreign policy of a state is formulated for strategic reasons and it gets influenced by the international pulls and pushes rather than domestic pressures or necessities. Waltz when discussing political structure in his book *Theory of International Politics*, clearly excludes domestic politics in explaining interstate relations (Waltz 1979:100-101). According to realists, the broad issues of security, survival and self-help determine the foreign policy of states and not the domestic players. However, the neoclassical realists do not deny the role of domestic politics in foreign policy but give more weight to systemic pressure and international competition rather than the political pressure emanating from inside of a country (Zakaria 192:180).

To conclude this section it is argued that realism with all its brands, including neoclassical realism, considers security as the main goal of a state's foreign policy. Since it considers the state as a unitary and rational actor, it prescribes a similar pattern of foreign policy for all states irrespective of differences over culture, identity, history and the type of political system. Under the 'primacy of foreign policy' argument, realists talk about foreign policy, but they give more weight to the international system and international economy rather than domestic factors. Moreover, realists believe that countries formulate foreign policy for strategic reasons and are influenced by international elements rather than domestic pressures and necessities.

2.2.2 Liberalism

Liberals defend modernization because it promises a better life, offer material welfare and helps citizens to free themselves from an authoritarian government. Moreover, according to Jeremy Bentham, the Liberal modern states would bring "the greatest happiness of the greatest number". The liberal theory of International Relations questions the concept of power politics as the only game in international politics. Arguing for absolute gains, it emphasizes mutual cooperation. It believes that international

institutions, non-state actors and domestic constituencies are influential in framing the states' preferences.

The core assumptions of liberalism listed by Moravcsik are as follows: First, it is assumed that the individual and private groups comprise the fundamental actors in international politics. Second, it is considered that the state is the representative of its citizens. Third, it is believed that the configuration of interdependent preferences of states determines the foreign policy (Moravcsik: 516-520).

There are three important aspects of liberalism such as belief in progress; maintaining positive views towards human nature and emphasis on the importance of international regime and institutions. First, paying attention to human progress in the modern world is one of the most important aspects of liberalism. John Lock believes that such progress in the capitalist economy and modern civil society could be achieved when individual liberty is guaranteed. Generally, liberalism is considered as an 'inside-out' approach in which endogenous forces determine the exogenous. It means that domestic politics and democratic society would affect international politics and make peace to prevail (Jackson and Sorensen 2013:100-101).

Second, maintaining positive views towards human nature means that human reason would conquer human fears (Smith 1992:204), and that it would lead to cooperation and mutual benefit. Liberals agree that individuals are self-serving and therefore competing for limited resources. At the same time, liberals feel that there are certain limit to such competition and believe that it would not escalate into the level of a conflict. Liberals argue that despite differences in many areas, individuals share certain common interests that make them cooperate. Since cooperation is beneficial in domestic politics, liberals believe that it will expand to international politics as well.

The third aspect of liberalism is its belief in international regime and institutions. Classical thinkers such as Bentham, Kant and Mazzini have emphasized the importance of global institutions and regimes in reducing uncertainties among nations. They argue that such institutions will open the path for cooperation and trust building. In the 1980s and 1990s, liberals argue that international norms and institutions could boost

cooperation among countries and solve international issues such as environment, trade and disarmament.

For example, the works of Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye have focused on institutional multilateralism in this period. According to them, institutionalism would reduce strategic competition on relative gains and could increase international cooperation. They have not come to such a conclusion before emphasizing the role of communication, transportation, finance and travel in transnational relations and world politics. They have argued that these factors had heavily transformed beliefs, ideas, people movement, goods transportation and transnational money transactions (Nye and Keohane 1971).

The evolution of liberal thinking can be traced back to the emergence of the modern constitutional states. The foundation of the present liberal tradition in International Relations is rooted in the thoughts of classical liberals such as Adam Smith (the founder of commercial liberalism), John Locke (the proponent of liberal individualism), Immanuel Kant (the forerunner of republican liberalism), John Stuart Mill and Giuseppe Mazzini.

In modern times the liberal tradition has been taken forward by Karl Deutch, James Rosenau, Ernest Haas, Robert Keohane, Joseph Nye and Michael Doyle. With some differences, all these figures have arrived at a consensus on certain concepts such as individual freedom, private property, equality of opportunity, political rights and political participation (Doyle 1983).

Moreover, there are four essentials that liberalism is committed to: equality before law, people's sovereign right, right to private property and the rules of supply and demand in the economy (Doyle 2011:1434).

Liberalism as a theory has contributed much in understanding foreign policy. It highlights how individuals, social forces and political establishments play their roles in foreign policy. Doyle argues that 'by opening the blackbox of states', though it complicates foreign policy analysis further, it is good enough for better prediction and incorporation of ethics in foreign policy. Doyle thinks that liberal and democratic countries tend to make a separate zone of peace amongst them. He believes that liberal states might be

aggressive in dealing with non-liberal countries but prefer compromise on vital issues while interacting with their own liberal countries (Doyle 2012:54-58).

According to liberalism, force is no more useful as a means in foreign policy because it would escalate the nuclear tension, provoke protest by citizens, have a negative effect on the economy and consolidate resistance of people in poor countries (Nye and Keohane: 1987). According to Nye and Keohane, Liberals believe that state interests can be changed through ‘interaction game and learning’, therefore through bargaining in foreign policy, states can find the way for cooperation. It means that states are not always seeking competition and war, but through learning and repetition, they would know each other better and thus start cooperation for absolute gains (ibid). It can be concluded that contrary to realism, liberalism believes in changes to national interest.

Concerning foreign policy and contrary to realists, liberals believe that states behave differently in terms of building relations with other states. According to liberals, if a state believes in a constitution that guarantees human liberty, life and property, it would adhere to international norms and laws in its foreign policy as well and try to establish a respectful international system. Immanuel Kant calls such states republican and maintains that cooperation among them would lead to the perpetual peace in the world.

Liberals pay great attention to the role of the political system and the democratic character of a government in foreign policy. It was Immanuel Kant and Thomas Paine who laid the foundation of such thinking, and later in 1938 Clarence Streit pointed out the relations between the democratic system and peace. Dean V. Babst validated further the hypothesis by providing statistical data in 1972. Kant introduced the concepts of ‘pacific union’, ‘cosmopolitan law’ and ‘interdependence of commerce’ as the reasons for the peaceful relation among democracies.

While interpreting Kant’s democratic peace, Doyle (1977) gives credit to the ‘shared liberal values and domestic institutions’ that encourage democracies to cooperate with each other instead of getting immersed in war and conflict.

In this context, Schumpeter claims that even the capitalist democracy is peaceful despite Machiavelli’s claim that democracy is quite good in expansionist policy (Doyle 1986).

While giving the reasons for democratic states intervening militarily in non-democratic states, the recent liberals have built their argument around the works on classic liberalism.

Here cosmopolitan interventionists take support from Kant's moral theory and urge the liberal states to use military action against those states that violate human rights. On the other hand, liberal internationalists emphasize on the sovereignty of the states and argue that domestic liberal mechanisms in the countries concerned should be encouraged through economic and diplomatic assistance to overcome human rights violation in their regions (Doyle 2011).

It is a fact that liberalism has contested certain beliefs of realism and contributed to the understanding of foreign policy. It claims that economic interdependence makes a state to prefer cooperation rather than competition or use of force. Since democratic states are more peaceful than the authoritarian ones, the general identity of such states as power hungry is contested by liberals. While giving international institutions special space for accelerating cooperation, contrary to realism, liberalism takes domestic politics into account (Walt 1998:32).

Two reasons of subjecting foreign policy of states to international institutions and sharing some similarities with realism make liberalism to be critiqued and contested in the matter of foreign policy. The problem with the liberal theory of IR is its focus on the role of international actors such as multinational companies, international trade unions, international institutions and organizations on the foreign policy of states. According to them, the effects of these actors would make the states lose control over their foreign policy (Keohane and Nye 1971). They believe that the power of the international actors would bring changes in the attitude of the states. Liberals believe that international non-state actors would bring international pluralism, interdependence and finally facilitate the emergence of new autonomous actors such as multinational companies (ibid).

Keohane and Nye consider complex interdependence as part of the liberal theory, but to justify the similarities between liberalism and realism, they argue that both the theories complement each other. Their views on the world are utilitarian in nature, view politics as

a process of political and economic exchange, believe in bargaining, and accept the rationality of the actors. Therefore, they do not have a different conception of the nature of the political action (Keohane and Nye 1987).

Since liberals consider international institutions to be the main cause for bringing changes in the interests and behavior of a state, Stephen Kasner calls them “weak realists who could not go beyond the limitation of the realists” (Wendt 1992:391). Robert Keohane in his book *After Hegemony* takes liberalism further to the side of realism. He accepts the state as the main actor in international politics, considers anarchy as an important factor that affects the behavior of a state and agrees with realists that states are entities interested in the self (Reus-Smit 2009:214).

To conclude this section, it is argued that liberalism stands for individual rights, human progress, the international regime and international institutions. By contesting realism and power politics, liberals argue about the possibility of establishing international cooperation through iteration games. Further, they give the non-governmental actors and other domestic players a special role in setting the state’s preferences and agendas.

Liberalism gives major roles to systemic factors such as international institutions and international organizations. Thus it makes liberalism similar to realism and therefore not a good candidate in accommodating foreign policy analysis as a subject in its domain.

2.2.3 **Constructivism**

According to Alexander Wendt Constructivism is a “social theory of international politics”. Contrary to mainstream IR theory that subjects international relations to the egoist human nature or forces of international politics such as material capabilities or international institutions, Constructivism emphasizes on the social construction of international relations. Constructivism argues that IR is socially and historically constructed, and thus it is not the outcome of human nature or determined by the character of international politics.

The basics of Constructivism can be summarized as follows: That the actors’ behavior and actions can cause changes in domestic and international politics; that those changes

in the international system are subject to the changes in the norms and rules proposed inside the country; that domestic and international politics are mutually constituted; that the 'system is the artifice of the manmade institutions' and is composed and regulated by the norms. Therefore, changes to any of these would bring alter the entire system (Koslowski and Kratochwil 1994: 216-223).

Constructivists believe that domestic forces such as nationalism can change the definition of the norms, identity and interests of the states and their perception of international conduct. According to them, the emergence of a new leader and changes in the domestic policy not only bring changes in the country but also influences the region and international politics (ibid:224). Moreover, constructivists argue that material structure would have a different meaning in a different social context. For example the UK and Israel possession any number of nuclear bombs being of less concern to the United States than North Korea, Pakistan or Iran possessing even a single bomb.

Constructivists discuss the nature of both human being and the states and examine their relations with environments. Regarding nature of states they argue that the identity and interests of states are not exogenously given and static, but endogenously created in interaction with the social structure and environment (Checkel 1998). In Constructivism, theory, idea and belief, the process of structuration, the concept of meaning and mutual constitution of agent and structure, have special places.

Constructivists argue that, it is the idea and belief that form the state's identity and its interests in international politics (Wendt 1992). In the case of agents and structure, it argues for structuration and interaction between the two. It means that both the individual states and international structure affects each other and it is not the one way that realists argue.

In Constructivism, great emphasis has been placed on meaning and it is its fundamental principle while approaching material reality. Constructivists argue that people approach objects and actors based on the meaning; therefore, the state also behaves differently toward enemies and friends (ibid 1992). Constructivism emphasizes on mutual

constitution of identity and interests and therefore believes in the transformation of both in the process of time and context (Jackson and Sorensen 2012:217).

The philosophical roots of Constructivism go back to the writing of Wilhelm Dilthey, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and R. G. Collingwood (Chernoff 2008: 68, 132). It was Berger and Luckman who used the word Social Constructivism in the book called *Social Construction of Reality* (1966). The tradition was continued by John Searle through *The Construction of Social Reality* (1995) and Ian Hacking in *Social Construction of What?* (1999). Serious statement and works on Constructivism authored by Onuf (1989), Kratochwil (1989), Ruggie (1998) and Wendt (1992, 1999) (Smith 2001:39).

The origin of Constructivism in IR goes back to the mid-1980s when the critical and postmodern theory challenged the mainstream IR theories (Smith 1995:25). According to Reus-Smit, three important factors were influential in the emergence of Constructivism: first, critical scholars wanted to reassert their own conception of international politics against mainstream tradition. Second, the end of the Cold War and the lack of explanation for it or any prediction about it by the mainstream IR created the space that was filled by Constructivism. Third, young critical scholars wanted to produce and develop a new theory of their own (Reus-Smit 2006:219).

Among the three factors mentioned above, the end of the Cold War was crucial for the emergence of Constructivism. Constructivists argue that the end of the Cold War came about because of the introduction of Perestroika in the Soviet Union followed by the 1989 revolutions in East of Europe. In the due process, the Warsaw Pact collapsed and the Soviet Union disintegrated. The demise of the USSR therefore not only restructured national and regional politics but also transformed international politics. Constructivists say that mainstream IR like neo-realism could not provide a coherent explanation for such transformation and therefore Constructivism that came up with an alternative explanation along with a particular theoretical framework entered the field (Koslowski and Kratochwil 1994:215-216).

Constructivism has many variants and different scholars offer different categorization. John Ruggie (1998:35-36) distinguishes three types of Constructivism: Neoclassical that

focuses on inter-subjective understanding and has roots in the thoughts of Durkheim and Weber; postmodernism that epistemologically questions the modernists and is derived from the works of Nietzsche, Derrida and Foucault. The third and final variant is Naturalistic which believes in the doctrine of scientific realism and is influenced by the works of Bhaskar.

Adler (1997:335-336) identifies four forms of constructivism, namely modernist, rule-based, post-modernist and narrative knowing. Contrary to them Katzenstein et al. identify three versions of Constructivism; conventional, critical and postmodern (1998:675-678). Smith (2001:40) believes that the problems with these classifications reveal that either there is little agreement what social constructivism implies or that there is very similar faultiness between constitutive and explanatory theory.

Constructivism contributed extensively to the progress of IR. First: by contesting the rationality of the actors and the security-based foreign policy, it challenged the mainstream IR (Flockhart 2012:80). Second: by seeking assistance from other disciplines, it broadened the theoretical contour of IR and made it an interdisciplinary subject (Checkel 1998). Third: by insisting on the temporariness of interest and identity of actors, it introduced the prospectus for change in International Relations (Hopf 1998). Fourth: by giving the alternative notion of anarchy, Constructivism pronounced that 'anarchy is what states make of it' (Wendt 1992). These contributions would be discussed in details by using the constructivists' rational.

Trine Flockhart argues that Constructivism is closer to being a substantial theory and therefore contradicts its critics. She applies constructivism in explaining the European security and NATO's continuity. She shows how and why power politics can be transformed through institutionalism, leading to changes in the identity, interests and practices of the states. According to her, Constructivism challenged the assumption that foreign policy was made by rational actors. Further, it questions the belief that national security constitutes the prime concern of all states and that states are the unitary actors and power accumulators (Flockhart 2012:80).

Checkel argues that Constructivism has broadened the theoretical contour of International Relations. He believes that Constructivism explores the issues of identity and interests more and takes help from sociological methods while explaining events and issues in International Relations. According to him, this theory emphasizes more on the social structure rather than the structure and agency argument (Checkel 1998).

Hopf argues that Constructivism gives an alternative understanding of the major concepts of International Relations. It gives different meanings to anarchy and balance of power and takes into consideration the vital relations between state identity and interests. Further, Constructivism gives different accounts of balance of power and believes in the prospectus for change in international politics. Moreover, Hopf mentions that states as international actors own different identities and therefore different national interests. According to him the identity of states are endogenously given rather than being imposed exogenously (Hopf 1998).

In order to discredit rationalism, the static views on international politics, the argument of absolute-relative gains and power politics, Wendt proposes culture differentiation to explain anarchy. According to him anarchy in Hobbesian culture would bring enmity, in the Lockian sense, it would mean rivalry and countries that follow Kantian culture views each other as friends (Wendt 2003: 246-311). Moreover, Wendt argues that the logic of anarchy (Hobbesian) and distribution of power cannot solve the problems. He therefore gives importance to the process (interaction and learning) and institutions while explaining international politics.

He emphasizes the role of 'distribution of knowledge' because it is important in the creation of perceptions and misperceptions. The concepts of identity and interests have been fully explained by Wendt. He argues that both of them are socially constructed and therefore subject to change. Wendt considers self-help as an institution and defines the institution as the structure of identity and interests that depends on collective and inter-subjective knowledge. Since the structure of identity and interests is the production of the process, it is not exogenously given but rather endogenously made and is subject to change and transformation (Wendt 1992).

In the case of foreign policy, Constructivism first contests the basics of mainstream IR and then gives a different understanding of national interests, identity and foreign policy. Alexander Wendt believes that today the debate is between rationalism and Constructivism. Rationalism concludes that state actions and behavior depend on the structure (material capabilities and anarchy) while Constructivism argues for the process (interaction and learning) and institutions that affect the behavior of the state.

In his article 'Anarchy is what States make of it' Wendt says that the interaction among states will determine their identity and interests and vice versa, therefore both depend on the context and might be subject to transformation and change (Wendt 1992). Moreover, Constructivism argues for transformation in international politics through institutionalization. It means that institutions would bring changes as per the interest, identities and practices of the actors. By asking where a state's interests arise from, constructivists assume that different identities would produce different outcomes and therefore a different foreign policy.

In the case of relations among states, Constructivism follows the logic of meaning toward objects. It means that based on the knowledge about each other, countries deepen or reduce their diplomatic relations (Flockhart 2012:92). Compared to realism that subjects a state's behavior to anarchy and international structure, and contrary to liberalism that subjects a state's foreign policy to interaction and iteration, Constructivism believes that the self is a reflection of the actors' socialization. It means that through the process of learning, states define their identity and interests vis-à-vis other states, therefore constructivism follows the *signal* → *interpretation* → *response* formula in the conduct of foreign policy (Wendt 1992).

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that social Constructivism is far closer to Foreign Policy Analysis than the mainstream of International Relations, namely realism and liberalism. Constructivism argues that actors make their world and in this case, foreign policy is what a state makes of it (Smith 2001:38). This is similar to the Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) assumption that agents make the structure and both are mutually constituted.

Moreover, foreign policy is a matter of choice and it is the actor who interprets, decides and implements it. Therefore, foreign policy is an act of construction made by the actors (individuals). Thus Constructivism and FPA are complementary to each other and made for one another (ibid: 38). Contrary to the mainstream IR that considers the international system as a cause for the behavior of a state, Constructivism and FPA similarly focuses on a state's attributes by opening the state's blackbox. To compliment this claim, Singer argues that FPA is the state-level account of international politics which is different from the systemic-level account of the mainstream IR (ibid: 38).

2.3 Conceptualization of Foreign policy

In this section, I am trying to conceptualize foreign policy first by defining foreign policy and the discipline of foreign policy analysis. Second, by examining the works of different scholars in the field, the evolution of foreign policy studies would be explained generationally. Third, after notifying the objectives and the determinants of foreign policy, the types of strategies in foreign policy and the models of foreign policy analysis would be highlighted. Fourth, as the current research focuses on the transformation of the foreign policy of Afghanistan, understanding the concept of change in foreign policy becomes necessary that would hence be introduced at the end of this section.

2.3.1 Definition of foreign policy

The discipline of International Relations (IR) is divided into two subfields internally: first is the systemic International Relations that studies the relationships among the units in the international system and examines the influence of the international structure on a state's behavior. Second is sub-systemic Foreign Policy Analysis that emphasizes the actions of states, and studies the influences of domestic elements on a state's behavior. This distinction depends on how the concept of foreign policy is defined.

States as important actors in international politics cannot remain isolated from the rest of the system. In the globalized world, there would always be a reason for interaction between states across political, economic and cultural sectors, therefore the platform to conduct interactions and relations among states is called foreign policy.

Here *Policy* is considered as ‘a guideline to an action’ and *Foreign* means ‘territorial units existing beyond the national boundaries’. Therefore, *foreign policy* can be considered as “a set of guidelines for choices made about territory and nations beyond the boundaries of the state concerned” (Ghosh 2015:95-96).

Foreign policy has been defined in different ways by different scholars. Hudson defines foreign policy as a “strategy or approach chosen by the national government to achieve its goal in interaction with external entities”. He argues that it might include doing nothing (Hudson 2012:12). Padfield and Lincoln define it as courses of action which states undertake to fulfill their national interests in relation with other nation-states (Padelford and Lincoln 1954:306). According to Sharma (2000: 112-113), George Modelski defines foreign policy as “the system of activities evolved by communities to change the behavior of other states and to adjust their own activities in international environments”.

Foreign Policy Analysis refers to a complex and multi-layered process consisting of the government’s objectives and its choice of means to reach the goals. Certainly, governments pursue these objectives relying on their experts in diplomatic, military and economic affairs. Therefore, foreign policy encompasses complicated processes such as communication within the government and amongst various government agencies. It includes perception and misperception of the agents, images of other countries and finally the impact of domestic politics (Kubalkova 2001:17).

2.3.2 The evolution of foreign policy analysis

The works of the scholars such as Richard Snyder et al. *Foreign Policy Decision Making* (2002), James Rosenau’s *Pre-theory and Theories for Foreign Policy* (1964), and Harold and Margaret Sprout’s *Man-Milieu Relationship Hypotheses in the Context of International Politics* played an important role in the evolution of FPA. Contributions by Snyder et al. focus more on the decision-making process as an explanation for foreign policy and it helps researchers to look below the nation-state level. Snyder et al. emphasize the process and structure of the foreign policy decision-making group. They mention that:

We adhere to the nation-state as fundamental level of analysis but we have discarded the state as a metaphysical abstraction. By emphasizing decision making as the central focus we have provided a way of organizing the determinants of action around those officials who act for the political society. Decision makers are viewed as operating in dual aspect setting so that apparently unrelated internal and external factors become related to the action of the decision makers (Snyder et al 1954:53).

On the other hand, Rosenau's work was influential in encouraging scholars to tease out the cross-national theoretical generalization of state behavior. He says that "foreign policy analysis lacks in comprehensive systems of testable generalization and is devoid of general theory" (Rosenau 1966:98-99). In doing so, Rosenau wanted to build the middle range theory. Further, he considers the introduction of game theory and rational choice theory as heydays of foreign policy analysis because they allow the rational agents to choose the actions, based on the actions of the next party (Kubalkova 2001:29).

Sprouts' research lay emphasize on the psycho-milieu of individuals who are involved in the decision-making process, including political and social contexts (Hudson 2012:14). It means that the mind of foreign policy decision makers is affected by beliefs, values, experiences, emotion, style, and memory. Therefore culture, history, geography, economy and political institutions matter in shaping the mindset of decision makers (Hudson 2007:22).

Hudson categorized the evolution of studies on foreign policy analysis into three generations. The first (1954-1974) and second (1974-1993) generations are called the era of classical scholarship (1954-1993). In this period scholars concentrated on the conceptualization of foreign policy and efforts have been put into data collection and methodological experimentation. Both generations concentrated on how the character of a nation can produce different outcomes in its foreign policy? In this period the dynamics of the small group and the large group of decision makers have been analyzed carefully to find the answer to the question, "How does a group understand, frame and represent foreign policy?" (Hudson 2007:17-18).

In this period scholars such as Morton Halperin and Graham Allison worked on the role of organizational process and bureaucratic politics on foreign policy. For example in the *Essence of Decision*, Allison questions the unitary-rational-actor-model of foreign policy

in the Cuban crisis and emphasizes on the organizational-process-model and the bureaucratic-process-model of both the Soviet Union and the United States. He managed to place rational choice in the social context, particularly in foreign policy decision making.

Moreover, by identifying the three approaches to the rational conduct of foreign policy, Allison was successful in summarizing the large body of FPA literature. According to him, the realist approach considers the state to be a unitary and rational actor. The second approach emphasizes that how in the process the limits put on rationality by large and hierarchical organizations hinder the decision making. The third approach views foreign policy decision making in the context of various governmental bureaucracies that each has their own preferences suits its functional mission (Kubalkova 2001:30).

Michael Brecher's book *The Foreign Policy of Israel* (1972) emphasizes on the role of a nation's psycho-cultural environment such as history, culture, and geography on the foreign policy of Israel. In the same period, Robert Jervis authored a book called *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (1976) and emphasizes the role of decision-makers' cognition. He says that the deterrence strategy would fail catastrophically if the intention of one side is misperceived by the other. Moreover, the role of national and societal characteristics on foreign policy was discovered in this period.

K. J. Holsti in *National Role Conception* points out how a nation thinks about itself and its place in international politics. He emphasizes that a nation's conception about itself is fabricated in the socialization process. The first and second generation FPA scholars focused on the state as a frame of reference; they were guided by the middle range theory and studied domestic politics as sources of foreign policy (Kubalkova 2001:18). According to Hudson, the third generation started in 1993 and continues to this day.

The historic moment for FPA was the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union. It was proved that the systemic level of analysis had failed to predict the Cold War, and therefore to build a middle range theory and to follow the multi-causal explanations, the third generation of FPA emerged. It is committed to utilize the

potentials of other disciplines and to look below the state as the level of analysis (Hudson 2007:31).

2.3.3 Objectives of Foreign policy

According to Breuning the traditional objectives and the subject matter of foreign policy studies were to study the balance of power as well as the country's power and security. The concentration was on studies on war and peace. After the Cold War and the emergence of globalization and interconnectedness, the scope of foreign policy expanded gradually and economic relations of countries came into the ambit of foreign policy.

The foreign policy agendas expanded further and various issues such as environment, human rights, population growth, migration, terrorism and energy policies got included in the foreign policy agenda (Breuning 2007:5-6).

Regarding the objectives of foreign policy, it has been said that a state forms its foreign policy to safeguard its national interests and to fulfill its national objectives. Holsti identifies four broad and general objectives that each state considers while formulating its foreign policy. They are security, autonomy, welfare, status, and prestige (Coulombis and Wolfe 1981:43).

In the same manner, Padelford and George (1954:306) identify four aims of foreign policy national security, economic development, augmenting national power in relation to other states and international prestige.

2.3.4 Determinants of foreign policy

Having stated the objectives, it must be noted here that there are also certain determinants that guide foreign policies. Peu Ghosh Gosh 2015:99-103 has classified these determinants into internal and external factors. Geography is the first determinant and considers the size of a country, its climate, topography and national resources.

History and culture are the second internal determinant. Economic development, national interests, national character, national morale, political structure, social structure, ideology and public opinion are considered the rest of the determinants in foreign policy.

According to her, international regimes, international institutions, international public opinion and foreign policy of other states are the external determinants of the foreign policy of a nation (Gosh 2015:99-103).

Knowing the determinants helps us to answer the question of who or what influences the foreign policy? Leaders of a country are applauded or blamed for the success or failure of its foreign policy; but they are not alone in this matter. Domestic constituencies, advisory groups and international politics also affect the foreign policy of a country.

2.3.5 Levels of analysis of foreign policy

Level of analysis as a framework can help us understand and analyze the various factors that affect foreign policy. The individual level of analysis concerns about leaders and decision makers. According to Breuning (2007:11-13) in this level, individual play a great role in shaping the history of humankind and also drive the course of events. Therefore to trace their role in foreign policy it is necessary to focus on their personalities, traits, beliefs, values, and perceptions.

The state level of analysis concentrates on the internal dynamics of states that compel them to follow a certain foreign policy. It includes the nature of the political system, interests groups, ethnic groups, public opinion, media, economic condition, national culture, history and physical aspects such as geography and population. System level of analysis focuses on the interaction among states in international politics. It believes that material capabilities determine a state's behavior in the international system (Breuning 2007:11-13).

Hudson resorts to micro and macro levels of analysis in studying foreign policy (Hudson 2007:143). According to her, national attributes such as size, natural resources, geography, demography, political system, military capabilities and economic capabilities compose the micro factors. Hudson considers the international system as the macro factor that influences foreign policy. The macro level of analysis focuses on a number of factors in the international system like power distribution, the major poles, the amount of compliance, the formal and informal alliances and finally the presence and absence of international organization. (ibid: 143-160).

To overcome the dilemma of which levels of analysis should be taken into account in studying foreign policy, Robert Putnam argues for the “amalgamation of domestic and international situations”. According to him, the decision makers have always stuck to satisfying both the domestic constituency as well as international imperatives, thus requiring the balancing of both these factors for a successful foreign policy (Putnam 1988).

Hudson (2007:165-166) argues for the integration of all the three levels in explaining foreign policy. Since integration allows scholars to undertake a comparative examination of the relationship among these factors, it is bound to improve the theory by increasing its explanatory prowess and power of prediction. Breuning also believes in the complementarities of the three levels of analysis because it helps us to understand the causes of events better (2007:14).

2.3.6 Strategies in foreign policy

Having discussed about level of analysis in foreign policy, it is important to know about strategies in foreign policy also. It would help us to know about different strategies in foreign policy and it guides us to analyse the foreign policy of a particular country better. Strategies that countries follow in their foreign policy depend on their geopolitical location, domestic needs and the structure of international politics. Nations might use different strategies such as neutrality, isolation or alliance in their foreign policy.

According to Holsti, if a particular nation is to adopt a neutral strategy that must be guaranteed by great powers under a collective agreement. Further, a neutral state is prohibited from using its military power against any country except in its defense (Holsti 1981:112-114). Neutrality is divided into legal, traditional, temporary, permanent, positive and negative type that each carries its own terms and conditions.

Non-alignment strategy means that the country concerned does not follow power politics or make alliance with any power. Having a friendly relation with the power poles and non-dependency on any of them are the principles of this strategy (Nehru 1951:397).

Isolation strategy is based on reducing diplomatic, economic, cultural and military relations to its minimum with the rest of the world. In the current globalized world where political borders are somewhat blurred, it is difficult for countries to be committed to this strategy. In a non-friendly environment and immanence of security threat, states would follow an alliance strategy. In the case of a state adopting this strategy, it would have to be committed to certain rules and regulations.

2.3.7 Foreign policy change/transformation

After discussing the levels and strategies in foreign policy, we are now proceeding to discuss the concept of changes in foreign policy. Since the topic of this research is foreign policy transformation of Afghanistan, explaining the concept of changes in foreign policy is necessary.

It was argued earlier in this chapter that mainstream IR such as realism and liberalism do not believe changes in IR or foreign policy, but do believe in the status quo. It mostly considers IR as power politics, state as the main actor in International Relations and anarchy as the main feature of international politics. But Constructivists believe that interests and identity of states are not given exogenously and is thus subject to changes and undergoes transformation.

To give importance to the concept of change, Holsti (2016:39) argues about the era of “alteration and adaptation, growth and decline and the era of discontinuity with the past”. In the same line Rosenau (1997:7) speaks about the era of ‘post international politics’ and ‘epochal transformation’. In support of the above argument, Koslowski and Kratochwil (1994) consider the end of the Cold War as a phenomenon that not only brought about changes within the system but also brought about changes of the system and the transformation of international politics.

Change here is defined as replacement, addition, dialectical change and as transformation (Holsti 2016:43). Replacement here means a new pattern would replace the old one in which the characteristics of the new pattern would be different from the old. Addition here means adding some new mechanisms to the old establishment. Dialectical change is also similar to addition but with a small difference, that is novelty would be there along

with continuity. In transformational change, the old form is replaced partly. The new pattern would therefore carry the legacy of the old (ibid: 44-45).

It was in the 1980s that the concept of foreign policy change caught the attention of scholars. In this decade and the following years, scholars tried to conceptualize foreign policy change, its sources, and process. The book called *Why Nations Realign: Foreign Policy Restructuring in Postwar World* (1982) by K.J Holsti opened the path for the next generation scholar to do research on foreign policy change. In this book Holsti along with his colleagues, try to analyze the process of radical changes in foreign policy. In the book, they have explored the foreign policy of six countries that attempted to alter their foreign policy orientation.

Holsti termed foreign policy change as foreign policy restructuring and defines it as “the dramatic, wholesale alteration of a nation’s pattern of external relations” (Holsti 1982: ix). Contrary to the normal changes made to foreign policy, Holsti argues that restructuring “takes place quickly and expresses an intention for fundamental changes”. Dependence, vulnerability, the perception of weakness and massive external penetration are the reasons why nations restructure their foreign policy (Holsti 1982:199).

Foreign policy change falls within the subfield of foreign policy analysis and emerged as a topic of inquiry in the 1980s. Those who do research within this framework are interested in cases where states have changed their previous position in foreign policy. The questions of how it occurs, when it happens and what factors influence such changes would be addressed by these scholars.

Richard Snyder and his associates were among the first to theorize FPA in a scientific manner. Contrary to the rationalist IR main streams, they considered individuals in the context of their operation as the sources of foreign policy. Snyder argues that though there is focus on the nation-state as a fundamental level of analysis, the metaphysical character of the state has been discarded. He emphasizes on the decision makers as action determinants (Snyder et al. 1954:53). James Rosenau is another scholar who deeply advocated a scientific approach while studying foreign policy. By emphasizing the

process of decision making and developing the 'if-then hypotheses', Rosenau defended generalization that could apply across foreign policy analysis (Rosenau 1980:119).

Rosenau, a leading scholar in the study of foreign policy, argues that foreign policy analysis would be more fruitful if the concept is incorporated into the field (Rosenau 1976:371). Here the question as to why study foreign policy changes and transformation arises. Huxsoll (2003:16-18) gives four reasons as answers to this question. First, if foreign policy is considered disruptive then changes to it would have a profound effect on regional and international politics. Broken pattern and interrupted foreign policy can generate conflicts and uncertainties among the states (Volgy and Schwarz 1994:24).

It can be argued that the minor changes in foreign policy would have a great effect on international politics, particularly among great powers. Second, by enriching the theoretical aspect of IR, foreign policy change can contribute to a better understanding of foreign policy and International Relations. Third, since restructuring of foreign policy would generate empirical research, it would be more substantial and meaningful than abstract theories. Fourth, foreign policy change would generate various perspectives, thereby being able to integrate larger approaches than other studies on foreign policy analysis.

Unfortunately, the study of foreign policy change remained a neglected phenomenon for various reasons. K.J. Holsti argues that "an aspect of foreign policy analysis that received little attention in the theoretical literature is foreign policy change" (Holsti 1982: ix). Huxsoll (2003:19-20) argues that the newness of the field of foreign policy change, the rise of behaviouralism, the search for middle range theory, the American centrism of IR scholarship in post-World War II, and finally the conservative bias of Western scholarship make the study of foreign policy change a neglected area.

There are different levels of foreign policy change. Charles Hermann (1990) introduces four levels of foreign policy changes. By adjustment changes he means changes at the level and scope of recipients; by program changes, he means a change in the quality of method and means; changes in problem and goal happens when the problems and goal

are replaced; by international orientation changes he means the redirection of an entire country's relations toward international environments.

At the same time, Herman writes that four agents drive foreign policy changes. According to him, leader-driven changes "results from the determined efforts of an authoritative policymaker". Bureaucratic advocacy will bring changes in the foreign policy when a group or organization inside the government has full access to the highest officials. Domestic restructuring agent of changes comes from outside the government, from the politically relevant part of society that government is dependent on for keeping its functions. External shock is the result of international events that would have a quick impact on foreign policy, therefore, cannot be ignored.

To conclude this section it can be argued that foreign policy is a set of guidelines of choices that a country considers in its relationship with other nations. And foreign policy analysis is defined as a complex process consisting of government's objectives and the means it takes to achieve those objectives. On the objectives of foreign policy, it can be argued that it contains not only security and economic issues but also issues of the environment, human rights, population, migration as well as terrorism. Foreign policy determinants have been divided into internal and external determinants. Geography, history, culture, economic development, national character, national morale, political and social structure and ideology are considered as internal determinants, and international regime, international institutions and foreign policy of other states are considered as external determinants.

Regarding foreign policy strategy it has been mentioned that based on their geopolitical locations, domestic needs and the structure of international politics, countries would choose neutrality, isolationist or committed strategy in their foreign policy.

Since the current research focuses on the foreign policy transformation (change) of Afghanistan, the concept of foreign policy change has been discussed in this section. It was argued that restructuring of foreign policy happens when a sudden and wholesale alteration occur in the pattern of the foreign policy of a country. This process would take place very quickly and reflects the intention of the fundamental changes brought about.

These changes can be adjustment changes, program changes, problem and goal changes or international orientation changes.

2.4 Elite studies and Political Elites

The studies on the elite have attracted the attention of scholars more than a century ago. The golden age of such attention was in the late 19th and at the turn of the 20th century particularly 1930s and post-world War II. The word *elite* comes from the French word “*elire*”, meaning select. It has been used commonly through the 17th century and entered the German language later in the 18th century. There the meaning and definition of elite got changed and it came to be defined as a distinguished group with “high levels of qualification, ability and willingness to achieve the highest goals”. Further, the elite have been defined as a group that has a great influence on the society (Hartman 2007:2). James Meisel defined the elite using the formula of three Cs: group consciousness, coherence, and conspiracy (Meisel 1962:4).

Historically, both the elite and the social distinction they held have had a very long history. The ancient societies of the West and the East; the Greeks and the Romans, and the Chinese and Indians experienced such distinctions. Even the earlier societies saw such distinctions (Grantt 1978). Mosca points out that in every civilization and in every society there have been two classes of the people: a minority, who rules, enjoys privileges and monopolizes power, and the majority who are ruled (Mosca 1939:50). He called the first the elite and the second the masses. Robert Dahl uses the term homo-civicus for citizens who are not interested in politics (masses) and homo-politicus for those interested in political activities such as the political elite (Dahl 1961).

2.4.1 Classical literature on elite studies

The classic literature on elite studies reflected in the works of Le Bon, Mosca, Pareto and Michels. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, scholars concentrated on the urban masses which emerged throughout Europe as a result of the population explosion following the industrial revolution.

It was Gustave Le Bon who wrote on the *crowd: a study of the popular mind* in 1895. He talks about the fear of the middle class on account of urbanization and people mass shifting into the cities. He characterizes the mass as barbaric, easily influenced, lacking in reason, and impulsive. Giving credit to the small group of intellectuals as the creator of civilization, he labels the mass as the destructor of civilization. Le Bon did not use the term elite or ruling class, but analyzed the relation between the mass (large population) and the leader (small community of aristocratic intellectuals) (Le Bon 1895: xv-xx).

Gaetano Mosca was the first to attempt theorization of the elite from a sociological perspective. In his book *The Ruling Class*, Mosca affirms the existence of the elite in every society:

Among the constant facts and tendencies of the life of a state, one is so obvious that it is apparent to the most casual eye. In all societies from societies that are very meagerly developed and have barely attained the dawns of civilization, down to the most advanced and powerful societies two classes of people appear a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first, in a manner that is now more or less legal, now more or less arbitrary and violent, and supplies the first, in appearance at least, with material means of subsistence and with the instrumentalities that are essential to the vitality of the political organism (Mosca 1939: 50).

Further, Mosca considers the mass as less organized and the political class (elite) as more organized. When it comes to the intellectual superiority of the political class, he does not agree with Le Bon that it is inherited biologically. Instead, gives credit to material prowess and wealth (social force) that help individuals to attain intellectual superiority (ibid: 55-65).

Vilfredo Pareto, another prominent social thinker, wrote *The Mind and Society* in 1916, and proposed the 'circulation of elites'. In the book, he highlights the changes, rise and the decline of the elite. According to Pareto, the elite are recruited from those people who register the highest achievement in their own field of activities (Pareto 1935:2032-8). Further, he subdivides the elite into ruling and non-ruling elite. According to him, being in the highest level of power, the ruling elite play an influential role in the society and politics.

He argues that such a small minority exists in every society and political systems and even in a parliamentary democracy. He terms representative democracy a fiction and gives more credits to the ruling elite. The most important contribution of Pareto to the studies on the elite is his 'elite circulation' concept. It means that the old elite will be replaced by new ones. Pareto argues that if the old elite (existing ones) keep welcoming new ones and accommodate them warmly then the circulation process would take place smoothly without shaking the foundation of the society. But any effort to blockade the entrance of a new elite would lead to a crisis and revolution, the outcome being conflict and violence (ibid: 2043-59).

Robert Michels is the third classicist who wrote *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchic Tendencies of Modern Democracy*. His basic concern was about modern political parties. Since they give birth to professionalism, professional leaders and strong leaders, he argues that political parties would weaken democracy and bring dictatorship. The power of strong leaders would grow further when the mass worship and regard them as heroes. He argues that the passiveness of the masses would further be reinforced when they witness the professional superiority of the leaders. However such practices and the solidification of political parties would make the circle of old elite static and clear the path for dictatorship (Michels 1911:21-36).

The literature on studies on the elite has been divided into three waves. The first wave came about in Europe against Marxism's concept of class (Zartman 1980:1). The second wave emerged in the 1950s and 1970s that focused on elite recruitment, elite composition, elite circulation and elite political culture. It also focused on the social background of the elite and the way of their socialization. The third and the current wave focuses on the role of the elite in the transition process, particularly from authoritarian to the democratic regime (Werenfels 2007:17).

2.4.2 Elite Studies Approaches

There are different approaches to exploring the studies on the elites. The functional approach tends to focus on the positive function of the elite in a given society. Here the superiority of the elite is the matter of concern. Their degree of quality, intelligence,

character, skill and capacity make them special and distinguish them from other members of the society. Pareto as a classical scholar in the field is the forerunner of this approach. He divides the elite into two categories: governing elite and non-governing elite (Pareto 1935:28).

The Marxist Approach focuses on the concept of domination. According to the followers of this approach, history is the witness to the conflict between different classes of society. In this process, the one who controls and possesses material power tends to dominate the ones who are denied access to it. In another way, Marxists believe that there was always a struggle between the haves and the have-nots (Bottomore 1964:17).

The followers of this approach argue that class domination is not only economic based but has political contents as well. Further, they argue that those who avail of material capabilities would dominate knowledge production as well. According to Gramsci, this domination would be transformed as hegemony of intellectuals. According to him, the intellectuals as the dominant group in society carry forward the social hegemony and the political governance (Gramsci 1971).

The Marxist approach was criticized by functionalists on the basis of certain accounts. First, the Marxists' belief in the closed structure of the ruling class is contrary to the circulation theory of elite that emphasizes the openness of the elite structure. Second, a classless society as argued by Marxists seems impossible as long as the elite exist permanently in the society. Third, the concepts of economic and military power that Marxists put forth cannot guarantee the ruling by the elite as certain superior quality is needed for success (Ambedkar 1992).

A pluralist approach generally explains the functions of the democratic socio-political system. It critiques the two above approaches, namely functionalist and Marxist. The pluralist approach to power is different as it defends decentralization against accumulation of power in the hands of a few. It supports a pluralist political system because the decision-making body composes of several groups instead of one or a few people who control the entire decision-making process.

Concerning power and ruling, this approach argues that political parties would compete together in a democratic environment. Accordingly, a few would be elected to govern and the rest shall follow the rules because everyone would have certain rights and responsibilities. The main feature of the pluralist system is the direct participation of the people in legislation and administration. The concept of democracy has an outstanding place in the pluralist system because through this platform the deprived classes of the society can get access to political institutions (Bottomore 1964:8).

Karl Mannheim argues that when citizens feel that their aspiration is addressed, then the society and the system is democratic (Mannheim 1936). Schumpeter and Aron have different views on the democratic plural system. The former believes that it must have a high quality of human resources (elite), well-trained bureaucrats and effective political decisions. The latter emphasizes more on efficiency of checks and balances system (Aron 1957).

The Reputational Approach to study the elite was first proposed by Floyd Hunter. He locates the power in the community and believes that individuals take their power from the community. The power of the individual would be effective when it is structured through association, clique and institutional pattern (Hunter 1953). According to him, the power of the elite and their dominant position in the community are legitimized because the community does not resist it. He says that to safeguard their own interests the elite defend the status quo and ignore the demands for change. Hunter in his study found that the elite do not care about others' ideas while taking decisions.

The positional approach was coined by C. Wright Mills. He argues that the power of the elite is due to their important positions and occupations. He focused on the military, the state and the corporations while studying the American society and found that those who occupied the "strategic command post" constituted the power elite of the American society (Mills: 1956).

2.4.3 The definition of the Political Elite

Scholars have distinguished between the formal structures of the political authority (*de jure*) and the informal structure of the political authority (*de facto*). Formally sovereignty

is placed in the hands of the people, but informally it is a small organized group called the (political) elite that dominates the decision-making process (Ahuja 1975:4-5).

C. Wright Mills calls the political elite as the power elite and defines them as men in positions whose decisions have deep consequences. He further argues that the political elite command the major hierarchies and organizations in modern society (Mills 1956:3-4). Robert Dahl calls the political elite the ruling elite and defines them as “people who are a minority in size but their preferences prevail while there are differences in key political decisions” (Dahl 1970:269).

Geoffrey Roberts defines the political elites as a minority within a social collectivity which has political influence within that collectivity (Roberts 1971:79). T. B. Bottomore describes the terms political elite as a the political class and as a group which exercises political power and influence. This group is directly engaged in the power struggle and seeks in the political leadership (Bottomore 1964:10). The members of governments, high- levels administrators, military leaders, influential aristocratic families family of aristocracy and leaders of powerful enterprises comprise the political elites (Sharma 1999:36).

The above definitions are not without any critique. The general problems about the above definitions are outlined below by Zuckerman: First: if the political elite are defined as those having effective power then it will be very difficult to find who they are. Second: considering the political elite as those who occupy institutional positions limits the cross-national comparison. Third: the way some definitions are framed makes it impossible to find and examine the political elite (Zuckerman 1977).

2.4.4 Role of elite settlement and elite factions in stability and instability of society and political regime

The elite and the society are closely interrelated because the elite might guide the society and in return, the society determines the nature and characteristic of the elite. To know the role of the political elite in the society and politics better, studying the social background of the elite is very important.

First, the background of the political elite influences their behavior and decision-making process. Second, it would help to predict what policies the political elite would pursue. Some scholars might undermine the effect of the social background because the views and attitude of political leaders might change fundamentally on account of political socialization. There are pros and cons for the current debate, but looking at the social background of the political elite would help us to understand them better and analyze their decision-making process more precisely.

The political elite have a great role in social change, regime change, stability and instability in the society and transformation of the foreign policy. Highlighting the importance of the political elite, Morlino argues that the stability of a democratic regime and its society is determined by the behavior of the political elite and the amount of their commitment and cooperation (Morlino 1989). Therefore the stability and consolidation of a political system depend on the cooperation and assistance of the political elite.

In this section, the importance of the elite factions reaching a settlement (consensus) among themselves would be examined. Elite settlement may be understood as a sudden, deliberate and lasting compromise among the elite over core values. Through settlement, politics is tamed and the elite leave their hostility aside and come together and cooperate (Hegley and Burton 1998:98-115).

Both Hegley and Burton believe that though they reach a settlement, the political elites will still keep their membership and loyalty with their own parties, organization or movement, but at the same time share the consensus on government institutions with rival groups and obey the code of conduct in political competition. It is worth noting that a settlement among the elite would not be reached easily and would necessitate requirement and preconditions.

First, the opposing groups (elite faction) should have experienced tense and costly conflicts that ended in an impasse. Second, they must be anticipating much severe political crises and deadly conflicts if the current scenario continues. Third, there has to be skilled and talented political leaders with a certain autonomy, authority and legitimacy (Burton and Higley 1987).

If there is no settlement and elite disunity persists rival parties are bound to disagree on power-sharing and governmental positions. They would engage most of the times in fighting each other over dominance and resources (Higley and Burton 1989). The elite factions would engage in zero-sum game and view politics as the winner take all. Fear and distrust would be pervasive and each group would follow its own code of conduct that has fewer similarities with the rests (ibid). Since every faction would be struggling for political power through violence, regular seizure of executive offices followed authoritarian regimes exercising power ruthlessly on the society would be normal.

From the above discussion, it is clear that crises and deadly conflicts are the preconditions for negotiations taking place and elite factions reaching a settlement amongst themselves. The elite factions are generally autonomous entities, and display great maneuverability in times of crises. However, they are not fully independent actors, but are not puppets of economic, ethnic or religious forces either.

2.4.5 Role of Political Elites in foreign policy

Foreign policy analysis treats domestic politics as an independent variable that strongly affects foreign policy. Since domestic politics is vast and consists of too many elements, question arises as to which aspect of domestic politics is more influential on the behavior of the state in International Relations? Scholars have answered this question quiet differently with each highlighting their own elements. While answering this question Kissinger, Allison and Halpin have emphasized the role of bureaucracy, its character and functions.

However Kissinger, Wilson and Lenin have highlighted the positive and negative roles of mass and public opinion. Gilpin, Krasner and Katzenstein argue for the role of state strength and autonomy. Scholars like Jervis and Brecher emphasize on the role of leaders that affect the state behavior and its foreign policy most (Gourevitch 1978:901).

The above argument establishes the relations between domestic politics and foreign policy and shows the effects of domestic elements on foreign policy. Hermann and Hermann (1989:361) argue that there are actors in every government who are in the apex of the decision making body and can mobilize resources. They have the capability to

prevent any attempt by the opposition to reverse decisions. They are called the ‘ultimate decision units’ which not only have the position to take decisions in foreign policy but can also prevent any move to reverse these decisions.

Herman and Herman divide the ‘ultimate decision units’ into three: predominant leader, single group and multiple autonomous actors. A *predominant leader* is the single person who has the power to set the choice and ignore the opposition. A *single group* is a group of persons who are members of a particular body and take the ultimate decision by working close and through compliance. The *multiple autonomous actors* are separate individuals, groups and coalitions that influence the government policy but are not able to take any decision individually (ibid: 361).

Having discussed the importance and character of the ultimate units, now the role of each type of units in making foreign policy shall be discussed separately. First: while examining the role of the *predominant leader* in foreign policy, the pre-existing beliefs, knowledge and the style of leaders should be studied and taken into account while analyzing their influence on foreign policy. Therefore it is necessary to understand the character of the *predominant leader*; how much he values his own view while taking the final decision; his personal interest in foreign policy decision making; the amount of diplomatic training the leaders avail and finally how often he listen to advisors and colleagues concerning foreign policy (Hudson 2007:38-39).

Robert Jervis in his book *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* emphasizes on the leaders’ world view, their beliefs and their understanding of international environment. On their decision making prowess he argues about the possibility of the relation between policy preferences and the decision makers’ perception from their environment (Jervis 1976:14). Of course, there is difference between the ‘psychological milieu’ (the way the leaders look at the world) and the “operational milieu” (the actual world) but Jervis emphasizes that policies and decisions shall be mediated by statesmen’s goal, perception and calculation (Jervis 1976:13).

Breuning in the second chapter of her book, *Foreign Policy Analysis* (2007), discusses the role of leaders in shaping foreign policy. According to her, in an undemocratic regime

where the accountability of the leaders is the minimum, the role of leaders in shaping foreign policy is more prevalent (Breuning 2007:11). Hudson discusses the effect of perception and cognition such as stereotype, biases and heuristic in leaders' decision-making capacity. She argues further on the role of emotion and body health such as free from stress and sickness in leaders' decision-making capability (Hudson 2007:40-48).

Second is the role of the *Single Group* in decision making. Since one individual cannot control and determine the foreign policy, there will be a single group that takes charge of the decision-making process. That a group would act as the ultimate decision making unit if all members are interconnected closely, comply with decisions and equally participate in the decision-making process (Hermann and Hermann 1989:366). Moreover, it is argued that the unit does not need to be legally and formally established but has to be capable of taking decisions and stalling any attempt by the opposition in creating hindrance or seeking modifications like the Standing Committee of the Communist Party in China and the National Security Council of the United States (ibid).

Scholars also take into account the circle of advisors and associates surrounding a decision-making group who help the leaders to shape the country's foreign policy. They may be the whole bureaucracy of the government or a small group of people (Breuning 2007:89). Breuning argues that the effectiveness of such circles depend on the way they organize and function. She proposes three kinds of structures for such circles, namely formalistic, competitive and collegial.

In the formalistic structure, the circle would be hierarchical in nature with the chain of command from top to down. In the competitive structure, the members of the circle would compete with each other and the chance of cooperation is very less since all know that the leader seeks information from variety of the channels. In the collegial structure, the spirit of team work would be cultivated and the members would prefer cooperation rather than competition (ibid: 90).

The type of structure and the actual functions of the circle in decision making would depend on the political system. Generally the democratic system has a collegial

arrangement, the autocratic system follows the formalistic circle, and some, including the three, might use the multiple structures system.

In a decision making group, the role of the small group with a few people in it is important in taking the ultimate decisions. The members of this core group meet face to face and analyze the information they receive from different agencies for taking the final decisions. They are the political elite whom Snyder calls the self-serving imperialist group that hijack the state and block all the opposite views (Snyder 1991: 14).

According to the Marxist theory of imperialism, this small circle of governing elite follows the narrow class or sectoral interest. To take their individual interests forward, to mobilize the resources for implementing their own agenda in domestic and foreign policy, this group may exaggerate the threats and other problems the country faces (ibid: 15).

If there is neither an ultimate leader nor a single group as an ultimate unit, the alternative would be two or more *distinguished entities with independent structures* that affect the decision making process in foreign policy. In this kind of decision making body, one actor can hinder the other's initiatives by using veto power; can impose his will by threatening to withdraw from the coalition. He can also withhold cooperation and can initiate counter measures to hurt the objectives of the other actors (Hermann and Hermann 1989:368). Such a kind of system is seen in coalition governments in which stability is not assured.

To conclude this section on studies on the elite and the political elite, we defined elites as distinguished groups with high level of qualification and the ability and willingness to achieve the highest goals. The political elite were defined as those holding power as well as men in positions where their decisions have deep consequences.

To highlight the role of the political elite we examined the role of the elite factions and the effect of the elite arriving at a settlement on the stability and instability of a regime. It was argued that the outcome of elite faction and disunity shall be instability and crisis and the result of settlement among elite would be peace and stability of the regime and political system.

In examining the role of the political elite in foreign policy we argued about the concept of ultimate decision units. The members of such units not only take decisions regarding the foreign policy but also prevent any move to reverse the decisions that have already been taken. The ultimate decision unit was categorized into ultimate leaders, single group and multiple autonomous actors.

2.5 Conclusion

In the first section and on mainstream IR it was argued that realism with all its brands, including neoclassical realism, considers security as the main goal of any state foreign policy. Since it considers the state as a unitary and rational actor, it prescribes a similar pattern of foreign policy for all states irrespective of their differences in culture, identity, history and the type of political system. Under the ‘primacy of foreign policy’ argument, realists talk about foreign policy, but they give more weight to the international system and the international economy as factors of pulls and pushes on foreign policy. Realists also argue that countries formulate foreign policy for strategic reasons influenced by international elements rather than domestic pressures and international necessities.

On liberalism, it was argued that it stands for individual rights, human progress, the international regime and international institutions. Contesting realism and power politics, liberalism argues about the possibility of international cooperation through iteration games. It also gives a role to non-governmental actors and other domestic players in setting the state’s preferences and agendas. The three variants of liberalism have been discussed in the chapter. Liberals consider domestic players as determinants of foreign policy but give the major role to systemic factors such as international institutions and international organizations. Therefore it makes liberalism similar to realism and is not a good candidate in accommodating foreign policy in its domain.

Constructivism holds that actors make their own world and in this case, foreign policy is what a state makes of it (Smith 2001:38). The Constructivist argument is similar to the assumption of foreign policy analysis (FPA) that agents make the structure and both are mutually constituted. Accordingly, FPA argues that foreign policy is a matter of choice and it is the actor who interprets, decides and implements it. Contrary to mainstream IR

that considers the international system as a cause for behavior of the state, both Constructivism and FPA focuses on the attributes of the state by opening the blackbox of states.

The second section dealt with foreign policy, its determinants and objectives, the concept of foreign policy analysis and foreign policy change. Foreign policy has been defined as a set of guidelines of choices that a country considers in its relationship with other nations. Foreign policy analysis is referred to as a complex process consisting of the government's objectives and the means it takes to reach those objectives. On the objectives of foreign policy, it was argued that it contains not only security and economic issues, but also the environment, human rights, population, migration and terrorism.

The foreign policy determinants were divided into internal and external determinants in which geography, history, culture, economic development, national character, national morale, ideology and political and social structure, are considered as internal determinants, and international regime, international institutions and foreign policy of other states are counted as external determinants.

Regarding strategies that are adopted while formulating foreign policy, it was mentioned that countries on the basis of their geopolitical locations, domestic needs and the structure of international politics would choose either neutrality, an isolationist policy, a policy of commitment or strategic strategy as their foreign policy. The concept of foreign policy change has also been discussed in this chapter. It was argued that foreign policy change happens when a sudden and wholesale alteration takes place in a nation's external relations. The process would take place very quickly and would reflect the intention for fundamental changes. The foreign policy change can be adjustment changes, program changes, problem and goal changes or international orientation changes.

The third section concentrated on elite studies and definition of the elite and the political elite. The elite were defined as a distinguished group with a high level of qualification and the ability and willingness to achieve the highest goals. Political elite were defined as people in high positions whose decisions would have deep consequences.

To emphasize the role of the political elite, the concepts of elite factions and elite settlement were examined. It was argued that elite factions are formed when the elite disagree on power sharing and on governmental positions, and the parties enter into disputes and indulge in armed conflicts. If they arrive at a settlement, the factions compromise over vital issues, putting aside their hostility and opening the path for cooperation.

Though they keep up their allegiance to their own groups, they share consensus on power-sharing with other factions and also obey the lawful code of conduct in interacting with them. While examining the role of the political elite in foreign policy, the concept of ultimate decision units was also highlighted. Here the members of the units not only take decisions regarding foreign policy but also prevent any move to reverse those decisions. The ultimate decision units are compartmentalized into ultimate leaders, single group and multiple autonomous actors.

Having concluded this chapter the question of why I covered certain concepts there and how it would be helpful for the entire thesis needs to be answered. I focused on IR theory as general and the constructivism and foreign policy analysis in particular because they can explain the current case study better comparing to realism and liberalism. Moreover explaining about foreign policy, foreign policy change and elite studies was necessary since I am focusing on foreign policy of Afghanistan in certain period by examining the role of political elite.

Chapter III: Political Elite and Foreign Policy in Afghanistan: A General Overview

3.1 Introduction

We can't be speaking about the political elite without touching the concept of power. Once we begin probing this concept, questions are bound to follow. Questions like: What is power; where is power located; who holds power; how do they get access to that power; is power vested in the hands of a few individuals or is it with the community, etc.

In this chapter my main task would be to find out and define the political elite in Afghanistan, and analyze their roles in bringing about stability or instability, as the case maybe, to the different regimes that have wielded power in the country in the past. Here I would also examine briefly the role of the political elite in the foreign policy of Afghanistan in the last two hundred years.

To enable a smooth research, this chapter has been divided into three sections. Since the role of the society matters much in politics as well as in the composition and formation of the political elite, in the first section, the major focus would be on the Afghan society. The study would look into the composition of the Afghan society and examine factors like tribe, ethnicity and religion that affect the relationships among the citizens and the interaction among the political elite. Here I also would try to define the Afghan political elite as well as examine the differences between the old political elite and the present crop.

In the second section, the role of the elite in politics and the society in the past history of Afghanistan would be examined. There, the role of ethnicity, religion and tribe would be highlighted as the main factors behind the disunity and faction feud among the political elite. In the third section, the role of the political elite in the country's foreign policy under different regimes and political systems from the Afghan dynasties to the republic of Dawood Khan, and from the communist regime to the Islamic government in Kabul would be discussed. And as a conclusion, the main points in the chapter would be summarized.

3.2 Character of Afghan society that the political elite comes from

At the outset, it is essential to look into the composition of the Afghan society, a society that is differentiated based on segmentation (Roy 1989). To understand the segmentation of the Afghan society, it is important to distinguish between the three levels of communal identity: the clan, the tribe and the ethnic group (Roy 1989). Understanding these factors would enable an outsider to make sense of the solidarity among the groups, which unite them against outsiders and play an important role in local and national politics.

The *Taifa* or clan does not have a similar and collective meaning for the Afghans, and it can be applied to the extended family, tribes and even to the ethnic groups. The term *Qabila* or tribe is mixed with ethnicity and may have different connotations to different groups, and needs further clarification. Glatzer argues that tribe is the sub unit of an ethnic group and that it is based on “the notion that their members share common ancestors through agnatic descent” (Glatzer 1998:173).

Currently the tribe system only exists in eastern and southern Afghanistan which Pashtuns mostly identify with. It has its own ideology and a system called Pashtunwali: a set of values including honor, hospitality, shame, revenge and institutional platform such as Jirga (assembly). *Qawm* or ethnic group is “a principle of social order and social boundary based on identification of oneself and of others with social units” (ibid: 168). Each ethnic group has a distinctive cultural quality which is different from others and the members of each group identify themselves with the past and future of the group. Ethnic identity gets more attention when member of a group interact with member of other ethnicity, but clan or *Taifa* identity matters when two individuals from the same ethnic groups interact with each other.

Ethnic groups in the country like the Tajik, Hazara and Uzbek no longer follow the tribal distinctions. They follow the clan pattern in intra group relations, and the ethnic pattern in inter group relations. Roy (1989) explains better by saying that “the clan segmentation is prevalent at the local level and the ethnic division is more visible at the national level”. The three factors, clan, tribe and ethnicity, are the main features of the Afghan society and they are also the major hindrance when the need for a settlement among the different elite factions arises.

Below, first the Afghan political elite would be defined, and then the role of ethnicity, religion and tribes in elite factionalism would be discussed.

3.2.1 Historical evolution of Afghan Political Elite

Generally the political elite are defined as “those who occupy strategic positions in any powerful organization or movement and are able to influence decisions and outcomes in national politics” (Dogan and Higley 1998). As Mosca argues, there are two groups in every society; one is the ruler (elites) and the other the ruled (mostly the underprivileged and disadvantaged masses). Afghanistan is no exception, and like other societies, have a similar structure; the elite and the masses.

Eberhard (1962) defines the Afghan political elite as a group which “consists of a small circle who are members of families which have an aristocratic background”. He divides this small circle into four categories: the royal family, people related to the royal family, people who belong to the tribe of the royal family, and the influential heads of tribes. Taking into account the date on which Eberhard wrote this article, it can be inferred that he is speaking about the Afghan political elite before the major crisis the country went through in the 20th and the 21st centuries.

The pre 1970s elites that Eberhard talks about were coming from the major Kabul families or from the aristocratic families of eastern Afghanistan, which is considered the bastion of the Pashtun tribal zone (Eberhard 1962). Therefore, having an aristocratic background and being affiliated to some particular ethnic or tribal groups is considered to be the basic requirement for becoming the member of the political elite.

From the above argument it can be concluded that the political elite before 1979 was mostly aristocrats. If we look at the history of the major pre-industrial and traditional societies, it can be found that the aristocrats had more privileges and were considered the governing elite. And apparently, the aristocrats had a close-knit structure restricted the entry of any newcomers into their fold.

From the comments and thoughts of Aristotle and Plato we can safely conclude that by aristocracy or nobility, they meant a people of a privileged/superior class (Bashiriye

1995:194). In the West there were three kinds of aristocrats; an aristocracy based on ethnicity; military aristocrats and administrative aristocrats. They had the monopoly in military, political and administrative affairs.

In the East, the situation was not very different with the aristocrats having the rights and the privileges to change even the kings or the ruling dynasties. However in the West the aristocrats were recognized as the land owners who had monopoly over the land, but in the East, particularly in the Middle East, aristocrats monopolized the administrative and military posts and their power and privileges depended on the prevailing political and economic system and structure (ibid).

In the case of Afghanistan, aristocrats as political elite have had deep influence in politics from the day of its establishment till the communist revolution of 1979. Mohammad Ghobar, the famous Afghan historian says that out of the 301 members of the *Loya Jirga* which approved the 1931 constitution, 209 were government officials or military officers with aristocratic background (Naderi 2007). Naderi (2007), quoting from Sabahuddin Kushkaki, says that “except for the seventh round of elections to parliament (1949-1952) in which intellectuals and non-aristocrats were allowed to participate, all other elections were manipulated to suit the interests of the aristocrats”. It therefore is clear that in the pre-1979 era, the political elite comprising aristocrats with affiliation to certain tribes and ethnicity held sway in Afghan politics.

According to Barnett Rubin, a political scientist and leading expert on Afghanistan, the Afghan political elite can be divided into two categories: the pre-1979 era old political elite, and the revolutionaries, that is the Marxists and the Islamists. He defines the old political elite in Afghanistan as those “who served as heads of state, ministers in the cabinet, governors and member of the Supreme Court during the Musahiban (Nader Shah and Zahir Shah) family rule”. And he calls the Communist and Islamist political elite as revolutionaries who emerged in the democracy decade (1962-1973) and ruled Afghanistan from 1979 to 1992 and from 1992 to the present. Having said about the composition of the pre 1979 political elite, it seems necessary to write briefly about revolutionary political elite namely leftist-communists and the Islamists.

The platform that brought the leftist-communist elite under one single banner was the political organization called People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). The PDPA emerged as a communist organization in 1965, but after two years split into two factions, *Khalq* (people) under the leadership of Noor Mohammad Taraki, and *Parcham* (flag) led by Babrak Karmal. The two factions did not unite till the Soviets exerted pressure on them to do so and a successful alliance came into being in 1977. But after the communists rode to power in 1979, the rivalry between the two factions resurfaced and that led to instability of the communist regime.

The Islamist elite emerged by the establishment of Muslim Youth Organization (*Sazman-e Jawanan-i Musalman*) in 1965 and was mostly dominated by the followers of the Sunni sect of Islam. Initially it was a secret association of religious professors, but later started recruiting students from the campus and became influential among the students of Kabul University. The leaders of the movement created the leadership council (*shura*) and through that selected Burhanuddin Rabbani as the chairman of the council and Gholam Mohammad Niyazi as the ultimate leader of the movement. After Zahir Shah was deposed by Daud Khan in 1973, the new regime under him began suppressing the Islamic movement and that led to the Islamists fleeing to Pakistan and settling down in Peshawar.

While in exile, the Islamic movement split into two factions the Jamiat-I- Islami under Burhanuddin Rabbani, and Hizb-i-Islami under Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. The disputes between these two factions turned into hostility after they captured political power in 1992. The fight among them and the following civil war brought about the total destruction of Kabul and the overall crumbling of the economic and political systems. From 1992 onwards ethnicity and tribes played a great role in alliances being forged or conflicts arising among the political elite.

The Islamist political elite whom Sharan (2009) calls the Jihadists were survived and resurfaced after the 2001 Bonn agreement. According to him, after the two prominent political leaders, Ahmad Shah Masoud and Abdul Ali Mazari, had been killed, there was a shift in the composition and positions of the political elite after the collapse of the Taliban regime. Along with the Jihadist political elite, new political elite called pro-western technocrats had also entered Afghan politics. Maley calls the Bonn Agreement an "elite

restructuring”, but it was more like an elite reshuffling rather than restructuring, with minor changes in the nature of power (Maley 2002:197).

3.2.2 Defining Afghan political elite

Among Functionalist, Marxist, Pluralist, Reputational and Positional approaches that we discussed in chapter two, the current research uses Positional Approach in studying and defining the Afghan political elite. According to this approach, the power and influence of the political elite depend on their strategic position (Mills: 1956). While taking this approach, it should not be forgotten that the political elite come from different social, political, economic and educational backgrounds and therefore it is essential to examine the nature of their socialization, personalities, families and societies.

While defining the Afghan political elite, here it will be appropriate to mull over Guy Rocher’s definition of the political elite. He defines the political elite “as individuals and groups that have great influence on the society due to their power over decision making” (Guy Rocher 1992:153).

On the basis of two criteria, namely authority and influence, he categorizes the political elite into different types: traditional-religious, charismatic, symbolic, ideological, technocrats and ownership elites. The influence and authority of the religious and traditional political elite rest on their roots in the structure of the society or on people’s belief.

The technocratic political elite are more connected to state structure and administration. Their authority comes from their skills and capabilities, and they are high-level managers who can be found in the government, different organs of the state, and industrial and financial institutions. The ownership political elite wield their influence and authority through their wealth. Their financial clout would empower them to pressurize traditional and technocratic elite and enable them to exercise influence on the country’s economic, political and social life.

The charismatic political elite are those people having extraordinary capabilities and talent. Those capabilities would able the charismas to influence the general environment.

The ideological political elite are those individuals and groups whose particular ideology bind them together. They are influential in introducing some particular ideology in the society (ibid: 161-172).

The Afghan political elite can be said to be a mixture of all the types that Rocher mentioned above. The pre-1979 political elite in Afghanistan were a combination of traditional and religious elite. In that period the aristocrats, *ulema* and religious leaders, played a great role in politics and the society. Towards the end of the Musahiban dynasty, we can see the emergence of Islamists and communists as ideological political elite whom Rubin calls the revolutionaries.

Initially, the political organizations of both the communist and the Islamist political elite didn't have much of an ethnic, sect or religious identities. By adopting the Marxist ideology, the communists wanted to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and to build a classless society. The Islamists adopted the Islamic ideology in order to form the *ummah* (religious nationalism) and an Islamic society. After 2001, as Sharan mentions, we witnessed the emergence of the technocratic elite who had had training in some particular skill and who mostly had a scientific background with degrees from western universities. For the current study, Afghan political elite are defined as those who have influence and authority due to their positions such as heads of state, ministers in the cabinet, governorst, members of Parliament, religious and ethnic leaders and leaders of political parties. The types of Afghan political elite have been shown in table I.

N O	Category	Period	Characteristics	Type of government	Example	Remarks
1	Traditional/ Aristocratic	1880- 1979	Tribal/Royal affiliation	Authoritarian/ Monarchical	Abdurrahman (1880-1901) Habibullah (1901-1919) Amanullah (1919-1929) Musahiban (1929-1979)	Religion, tribal/ Royal affiliation played great role in elite elite composition and elite recruitment
2	Ideological/ Revolutionary	1979- Current	Strict follower of ideology	Dictatorship/ Sharia	Communist regime (1979-1992) Mujahidin (1992-2001) Taliban (1996-2001)	Ideology, ethnicity, religion played great role in the formation and recruitment of elite
3	Technocratic	2001- Current	Believe in liberal values	Democratic	Hamid Kzarzai (2001-2014) Ashraf Ghani (2014-current)	Though the constitution is liberal but still the ethnic background is important for elite recruitment

Table I

Source: drawn by author

3.3 Elite Factions and Political Instability in Modern Afghanistan

While analyzing the political history of Afghanistan, we can see that the struggle for political power was always through violent means. The reasons were the dynastic rivalries and conflict among the princes, as well as factionalism and division among the political elite. Violent rivalry among princes was the common game for taking the throne in 19th

and early 20th century. This dynastic rivalry extended further and led to the Daud Khan coup against Zahir Shah in 1973 that ended the monarchy in Afghanistan. The clashes between *Khalq* and *Parcham* factions of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) had led to the disintegration of the state in 1992. The Mujahidin factional feuds had led to the Civil War and the emergence of Taliban.

In the first section of the current chapter, the Afghan society has been discussed and the Afghan political elite defined. Three elements such as tribe, ethnicity and religion mentioned as the major features of Afghan society. These elements define not only the Afghan society but affecting the relations among political elite also. In this section the role of these elements that led to disunity among the political elite would be examined.

3.3.1 Tribal identity matters in elite formation and elite recruitment

The main reason for examining the tribal factor in the Afghan society is to examine its role in power, alliance formation, politics, elite formation, elite functions and elite recruitment. Tribes play a major role when it comes to competition among the elite particularly in times of conflicts. Scholars have identified the Afghan society as tribal one, but tribal society does not mean it is a simple or primitive society. The term tribal assumes importance when it comes to kinship and solidarity among groups of a particular community in relation to another community.

Tapper (1983:4) defines tribe as a “localized group in which kinship plays a dominant role in the matter of organization. The members of a tribe define themselves as culturally different from others in terms of origin, language and customs”. Tapper says that the tribal groups in Afghanistan cannot be examined through the universal features of a tribe such as “pastoral economy, nomadic movement, organization of the group, centralized leadership and egalitarian ideology” (Tapper 2009). In Afghanistan people who live in agrarian settlements in villages even without a tribal chief are considered a tribe.

The tribal system not only serves as a platform for political alliance but is also the basis of alliance for a confederation against imperial powers. To show the historical importance of tribes in formation of the state, it is enough to mention that “the state and tribes formed a

single system in which no state was without the tribal element and no tribes exist without having relation with at least one state” (ibid).

In the 18th century, it was the confederation of tribe that abled the Ghilzai Pashtuns to conquer Isfahan, the capital of Safavid in Iran. However, due to rivalry among the sub-tribes, they failed to capitalize on their gains and had to retreat. The Abdali-Pashtun confederation, established in 1747, was also based on tribal values. Tribal affiliation and tribal values made tribal leaders form an alliance with Ahmed Shah Abdali to establish a confederation and to transfer power from Ghilzai to Abdali sub-tribes. Scholars argue that the Abdali dynasty must be considered a confederation of tribes and khanates rather than a centralized monarchy (Gregorian 1969:48).

By confederation of tribes, Tapper (1983:4) means “local group of tribes which is heterogeneous in terms of culture, descent and even class composition, but politically unified, usually under a central authority”. The tribal setting determines who should be trusted as the leader to lead the community at the local as well as national level. Glatzer (1998:177) elaborates the features of a tribe as follows: “they attract their guests through lavish hospitality; channel foreign resources and distribute it among their followers; demonstrate superior rhetoric and sound judgment in *Shura* and councils and show bravery in war and conflict”.

He believes that in a tribal society, those who possess the above qualities can attain power and leadership positions very easily and confidently. Sociologists, political scientists and foreign political analysts might argue that the tribal identity is not relevant any more in Afghan politics and in the formation of alliances but this research argues that the role of tribal identity has in fact increased rather than decreased in politics since the late 1970s.

The Mujahidin factions and the failure in state building, the strong identification of Taliban with Pashtun tribe (Durrani), their policy of ethnic cleansing based on tribal identity, and finally the Bonn power-sharing according to the percentage of ethnic groups confirm that ethnic and tribal identity still matter in formation of elite groups and recruitment of the elite in Afghanistan (Tapper 2009).

Tribal factor influenced the relations between the political elite and led to the formation of factions among them in the modern history of Afghanistan. The outcome of tribal rivalries was instability in the political regime, decay of dynasties and the civil war. To examine the real effect of tribal factor, it is necessary to study the past history of Afghanistan.

Following the assassination of Nader Shah, the king of Persia, in 1747, the eastern territory (current Afghanistan) came into the hands of a young army officer by name Ahmad Khan. Since this territory was a land of tribes and different ethnicities, politics here was some kind of a bargain among clans, tribes, regional population and elementary solidarity group (Saikal 2004:4) which Roy calls *qawm*.

It was through bargaining that *Loya Jirga* selected Ahmad Khan as the king of Afghanistan and called him *dorr-i-doran* or Durani (Sharan 2016: 66). The dynasty that Ahmad Shah built continued till his son Timor Shah died in 1793. The reason for 47 years of smooth rule and political stability was on account of the settlement reached among the elite (Morlino 1989).

According to Morlino, stability in the society is dependent on the political elite and therefore their cooperation and assistance is essential. Ahmad Shah and his son Timor Shah shared power to some extent with other tribes and other ethnicities in the country. Rahimi (2008:96) quotes Shahrani to say that “they did not monopolize power in order to suppress or curtail the autonomy of others. Hazaras in Centre, Uzbeks in the North and Noristanis in the East had their own autonomous regions with their khans as political elites”. Timor himself was successful in sharing power among his 24 sons, but after his death, fighting for power between two royal families, Saduzai and Mohammadzai, ensued and continued for almost two decades.

Finally Dost Mohammad Khan (1826-1838 and 1842-1863) from the Mohammadzai clan emerged victorious in this struggle and he ruled Afghanistan for the next 30 years with the help of foreign donors, particularly the Qajar dynasty of Iran and British India (Noelle 1997). After the death of Dost Mohammad Khan, his sons fought among themselves and finally Sher Ali Khan succeeded to the throne (1863-1866 and 1868-1879). Sher Ali Khan was successful in making his government stable as he adopted the multi-ethnic approach

in politics. He followed the policy of his predecessors by sharing power among all ethnic groups. The years of conflict clearly shows the lack of compromise among the political elite and the role of the tribal factor in it. Dogan and Higley (1998) argue that there will be factional feud among the elite when no one is ready to compromise over vital issues and to agree on a power sharing arrangement.

Towards the end of the 18th century and after the reign of Ahmad Khan and his son Timor Shah had come to an end, certain minority groups (political elites) took control of the entire system of the government in Afghanistan. Noelle terms it as monopolized leadership (political elites) that constituted the core of the Durani dynasty. He notes that Saduzai and Mohammadzai clan of the Durani tribe, and Hotak and Tokhi clan from the Ghilzai tribe assumed leadership of the tribes and created collective kingdoms. In those days the head of tribes, particularly those from Pashtuns occupied the strategic positions (Noelle 1997:222-3).

Afghanistan experienced instability and struggle for political power throughout the reign of the Durani dynasty (1747-1880). Scholars attribute these to be the main reasons for the turmoil: cultural and social diversity, rivalry among royal families (Saikal 2004), geopolitical position of Afghanistan (Kakar 2006), and the policy of discrimination followed by the kings (Mousavi 1997). The reasons offered above are well justified, but they fail to explain the real problems as there are many societies with similar societal character, but have survived and in fact thrived without problems. Scholars like Barfield believe that the sources of instability in the above period are rooted in the Pashtun politico-tribal organization and the tribal code of conduct they adhered to. He thinks that the enmity and friendship among communities emanate from the tribes (Barfield 2012:78).

From the above discussion, it is obvious that the heads of tribes had indefinite influence in mobilizing the tribes against the king or in support of the king. By exercising this power judiciously, the tribal leaders ensured that the kings did not ignore them or underestimate their power. Kings also had to ensure that he maintained balance while sharing power with tribes which were rivals and always competed with each other. Ahmad Shah, his

successor Timor Shah, and to some extent Dost Mohammad Khan, maintained peace in the kingdom by judiciously using the balance of power mechanism among tribes.

Monarchs like Zaman Shah (1793-1801), Shah Shuja (1803-1809), (1839-1842) and Sher Ali (1863-1879) however tried to weaken the power bases of the tribal elite to strengthen the central government for further centralization of power, but this led to their regimes being toppled by coalitions of rival tribes. The policy of centralization pursued by Abdurrahman Khan, and suppression of tribal autonomy, particularly that of the Hazaras and the Uzbeks, sowed the seeds of animosity among ethnic groups, and that continues even now. The modernization policy of Amanullah Khan that ignored tribal values and norms brought about tribal mobilization and that led to the disintegration of his regime. However the tribal element was influential in creating factions among the communists, Mujahidin and the Taliban in 20th century.

3.3.2 Ethnic factor in Afghan politics and its role in formation of political elites

To discuss the role of the social forces and to understand the relation between ethnicity and the political elite, first it is necessary to highlight the ethnic composition of Afghanistan. A number of anthropologist and ethnographers have tried to estimate the number of ethnic groups in the country. Erwin Orywal and his associates have listed 55 ethnic groups (Orywal 1986:18-19). Arab, Gojar, Baluch, Brahui, Hazara, Tajik, Uzbek, Pashtun, Nuristani, Pashai, Qazaq, Qizilbash, Sikh and Turkmen are among the names he has listed (ibid: 9-18). It is common knowledge that the country has four main ethnic groups: Tajik, Hazara, Pashtun and Uzbek, which have played a significant role in Afghan politics and have competed among themselves for political suzerainty.

Since there has never been a formal head count to ascertain the number of people in each of these ethnic groups in the country, the exact number of people in each ethnic group is not known. Without any kind of census being conducted, the Pashtun have claimed that they have an absolute majority in population terms. The Hazaras have asserted that they have an equal number of people as the Tajiks, and the Uzbeks say they are more in number than the Hazaras. Hence, in the absence of any official census it will be better to

refrain from undertaking any exercise to find out the percentage of people in each of these groups.

The Pashtuns live more in the South, South East and East of Afghanistan. There is no reliable figure on the total population of Pashtuns who live both in Afghanistan and Pakistan. They speak the Pashto and have a strict tribal code of conduct called *Pashtunwali*. The Pashtuns are further subdivided into sub tribes who play a significant role in local politics in times of peace and conflicts. The Tajiks are spread across Afghanistan but mostly live in the northern provinces of Takhar, Parwan and Badakhshan.

The Hazara are mostly Shia Muslims though there is significant number of Ismailis and Sunnis among them. The Hazaras speak Persian and live across the country, but their mainland is located in the central part of Afghanistan concentrating in the province of Bamiyan, Daikondi, Wardak and Ghazni. Due to the mass killings and suppression at the hands of Amir Abdurrahman in the 1890s and allotment of their best agricultural and pastoral land to the Pashtun nomads, Hazaras migrated to neighboring countries and a sizeable population now live in Quetta in the Baluchistan province of Pakistan as well as in Mashhad city, east of Iran (Barfield 2010:26). The Uzbeks speak Turkish and adhere to the Sunni sect of Islam. Uzbeks live mostly in the northern part of Afghanistan in the provinces of Faryab, Samangan and Kunduz.

Thomas Barfield (2010:17) argues that “in Afghanistan, tribal and ethnic identities get more recognition than any individual identity and hence it is important for a student of Afghan politics to become familiar with these identities and their role in politics and the society”. The people in Afghanistan are generally loyal to their kin, village, clans, tribe and *Qawm*. Though the term ethnicity does not have an exact or collective meaning as it is mixed up with tribe, clan and *Qawm*, the people in the region mostly identify themselves by their ethnic identity (ibid).

Fredrick Barth defines an ethnic group as having four criteria: “biologically self-perpetuating, sharing the fundamentals of cultural values, constituting a platform for communication and identifying itself as well as being identified by others as different from others”(Barth 1969:10-11).

Of the above mentioned criteria, the fourth draws the boundaries of the ethnic groups in Afghanistan. Because there is a rule of thumb that “if a group of people identify themselves as such and such, and their neighbors agree that they are such and such, then they are such and such” (Barfield 2010:21). Anthropologists consider ethnicity to be circumstantial and open to choice and change, but political scientists believe ethnicity is primordial.

Abdul Qaioom Sajjadi, in his book *Political Sociology of Afghanistan*, when explaining the Afghan society, argues that “the factors of ethnicity and religion (sects) have been dividing the Afghan society from the very beginning to the current period”. According to him, “these two important social forces have heavily influenced the political history of Afghanistan” (Sajjadi 2012:12 and Barfield 2010:18). These forces affect the formation of political parties and define the relationship among the political elite.

Afghanistan is a multi-ethnic society and ethnicity plays the prime role in politics. In ethnic politics, each group tries to highlight its own ethnic status and attach indefinite number of positive characters to it. And at the same time, each group plays down the importance of other ethnic groups as well as magnifies their negative aspects.

There are different reasons for the emergence of ethnic politics in any society: the *Ethnic competition approach* emphasizes the socially constructed boundaries and that intensifies ethnic differences. Conflicts arise when different ethnicities compete for the limited resources available. These resources might have political, economic or social values.

According to Olzak, three factors trigger ethnic conflicts: “racial threats, economic competition, and threat to balance of power and political control”. When any of these factors occur, ethnic mobilization begins. Ethnic mobilization arises when the power and status of the dominant ethnicity is threatened by new comers. In this situation, the most powerful ethnic groups would mobilize collective action in order to prevent further loss of political control (Olzak 1992).

The *Relative deprivation approach* was proposed first by Michael Hechter in 1982. As per this, to restore “honor, prestige, authority, power and posit” the suppressed ethnic groups would initiate collective action against the dominant ethnic group (Hechter, M. et al.

1982). The consequences of deprivation are marginalization of the suppressed groups and the revival of sub-national affinities such as ethnic and tribal identities. Further, it will empower the ideology of hatred with the marginalized groups seeking an opportunity to harm the dominant ethnic group.

The *Elite competition approach* emphasizes the role of the elite in stability and development as well as destruction and division in the society. The role of the elite as a “superior group or higher ranking nobility” (Bottomore 1993:1) is very prominent in less developed countries. Paul Brass argues that it is the political elite who enjoy privileges during ethnic mobilization, and construct identities for particular religious and ethnic groups. They use cultural elements to construct a new identity for a community which is distinguished from others. Further, he argues that to maintain their political power, the political elite deepen the division among social groups. Brass describes vividly how the religious elite had identified Muslims in South Asia as a religious community, how the aristocratic elite had painted them as a historical-political community, and later how the secular elite had identified them as a nation and mobilized them against the Hindus (Brass 1991:88-93).

The *Cultural imposition approach* tends to argue that in multi-cultural societies each distinct cultural group has its own way of life, tradition and customs. When a culturally hegemonic group tends to impose its culture, the groups getting dominated would mobilize themselves against it to defend their own sub-cultures. Researchers have shown that most ethnic conflicts have taken place inside the territory of a particular region in order to pressurize the central government to give up its hegemonic cultural policy imposed on cultural minorities (Sajjadi 2012:50). Of the above mentioned approaches, the *Ethnic competition approach* and the *Elite competition approach* better explain the Afghan society and its past political history (ibid 52).

Ethnicity was always important in Afghanistan but the peak was experienced in 1980s and 1990s. It was the communist regime that politicized the ethnicity first and then the Mujahidin fought against each other on the basis of ethnicity. Soon afterwards when Pakistan based Mujahidin entered Kabul in 1992, two of the strongest groups, Jamiat-i-Islami led by Burhanddin Rabbani and Hizb-i-Islami led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar

confronted each other leading to violence. The agreements arrived at Peshawar in 1992 and Islamabad in 1993 that were signed by seven Sunni groups of Mujahidin in Pakistan could not bridge the factional divide and failed to establish a stable and inclusive political establishment in Kabul.

Saikal (1998:31) believes that the clash was partly due to personal rivalry and partly because of the traditional linguistic differences. But it seems that the ethnic factor was the prime reason for the armed clashes between Mujahidin. The Jamiat represented the Tajiks did not want the monopoly of Pashtuns and Hizb-i-Islami the mouthpiece of Pashtuns was not able to accept the ruling of the other ethnic groups except the Pashtuns'. Later the Junbish-Milli belongs to the Uzbeks and Hizb-i-Wahdat-Islami representing the Hazaras entered to the race of clashes demanding the equal rights for their own community. This was the period when the demands by the political parties were based on ethnic line. The fighting among the Mujahidin continued in Kabul and across the country and that led to the emergence of the Taliban who captured Kabul in September 1996.

After the Taliban took the power in the capital, they began issuing the new decrees like banning women from stepping out without burqa (veil), prohibition of music, use of tape (cassette), homing of pigeons and kite flying. Taliban's radical policies including human rights violations, suppression of minorities and women, offering sanctuaries to terrorist organizations such as Al Qaida, etc made them a target for the US and its allies in 2001. The Bonn conference (Germany) brought different political elites together and the outcome was the establishment of a new democratic regime. However the ethnic politics remained intact after the collapse of the Taliban and continued till the present. The Bonn power sharing agreement in 2001 concluded on the basis of ethnicity. Seats and the posts distributed on the basis of assumed percentage of each community groups.

3.3.3 Religion's role in formation and destruction of the political elite

Religion is another important factor that plays a key role in the Afghan society and in the formation of the elite groups. Religion has remained the ideological base of the Afghan state from the day of its establishment in 1747, and it is so even today. According to Article 2 and 3 of the current Afghan constitution, Islam is the religion of the state and no

law shall be enacted against it. Hence it can be safely argued that Islam is not only the legal and the moral base of the society, but also it is under its framework that for centuries the youth have been educated and trained. Religious training is important in Afghanistan and those with religious knowledge have had great influence in interpretation of the *Sharia* and also in supervising public morality.

Throughout the country's history, *ulemas* have been in charge of public educational institutions as well as governmental offices. Elphinstone (1972:277-278) has noted the different levels of paid positions of the *ulemas* during the reign of Abdurrahman Khan. The position of *mullah bashi* was a channel between the ruler and other *mullahs*; *Shaykh ol-Islam* was the accountant who dispersed stipend and pensions of *mullahs*, and *Sadr* acted as magistrate of the city keeping the register of religious lands. The *ulemas* held various official positions like that of the *Qazi* (judge), *Mufti* (one who issued fatwa), *Darugha* (one who supervised the judicial process) and *Muhtasib* (public moral enforcer).

In the past as well as at present, because of the tribal character of the Afghan society, whenever the central government is weak, the *ulemas* play the role of peace makers among the tribal groups that engage in conflict. The mediation role particularly in times of crisis boosts the political and social influence of the *ulemas* further (Olesen 1995:39). Issuing the fatwa of Jihad against infidels like they did during the Anglo-Afghan wars, and discrediting the heads of tribes by labeling them as bad Muslims are some of the methods *ulema* used, and are still using, to enhance their importance in the society and politics.

From the day Afghanistan was established, religion has been used by every ruler to implement his policies. Abdurrahman Khan (1880-1901) used Islam and the religious elite to legitimize his rule and called himself the servant of God who was in power to resolve the grievances of the Afghans. He therefore identified his kingdom with divine law and those who rioted against him were counted as the enemy of God and he was allowed to engage in Jihad against them (ibid). Also, in his time that jurisprudence based on the Sunni Hanafi school of thought and *Sharia* was imposed on the society. Abdurrahman Khan used Islamic concepts such as Jihad and Ghazi not against foreign invaders but to suppress independent communities in his own kingdom. To crush the

Hazara Shias who had led an independent existence till he became the king, he called them *kafirs* (infidels) and waged Jihad against them.

To subjugate the Hazaras, he mobilized the Sunnis, particularly the Pashtuns, giving them a free hand to loot and enslave the Hazaras with impunity (Kakar 2006:132). Through a notice that was read out on February 12, 1895 from a mosque in Kabul, Abdurrahman ordered that Shias should not be considered Muslims and that wherever found they should be killed (Olesen 2006: 78). He was among the first to introduced sectarian politics in the country by criminalizing Shias, particularly the Hazaras. His policy of considering Shias as infidels provoked the Mujtahids of Mashhad (Iran) into declaring war against the Sunnis and forced the Persian Shah to pressurize the British to request Abdurrahman to give up his anti-Shia policy (Kakar 1971).

In the 1950s and 1960s religion became highly politicized with the Islamists introducing political Islam in Afghan society and politics. It cleared the path for the Islamic movement and parties being formed on the basis of religion in Afghanistan. The communists capturing power in 1979 and the subsequent Soviet invasion further increased the role of religion and Islamists. In the name of Islam they began fighting against infidel Russian invaders. It was religion that divided the Mujahidin in the post-communist era in Pakistan.

The tension between Shias and Sunnis intensified after the Mujahidin began discussions on a transitional government and the seven Sunni groups in Pakistan framed the structure of the government in the absence of the eight Shia groups in Iran. The undermining of the Shia population by Mawlawi Khalis and his group and denying Shias share in the power structure further fragmented the Mujahidin. The outcome was a long civil war which brought about destruction, mass killings, displacement, migration and finally the emergence of Taliban. The Taliban began implementing the strict Sharia law which intensified the ethnic rivalry as well as increased the suspicion between Shias and Sunnis.

3.4 Determinants and historical evolution of foreign policy of Afghanistan

The Afghan political elite was defined in the first section and the role of tribe, ethnicity and religion in elite factionalism was explained in the second section. In this section, the determinants of Afghanistan's foreign policy would be discussed and then while

examining the evolution of Afghanistan's foreign policy theoretically, the role of the political elite in foreign policy will be discussed also.

3.4.1 Determinants of foreign policy of Afghanistan

There are certain important factors such as *geo politics, economic needs and ethnic structure* of Afghanistan that drive its foreign policy (Hasan 1964). Throughout the late 19th and the early 20th centuries, its *geopolitical position* of being the buffer state between the two super powers of that period had forced Afghanistan to follow an isolationist foreign policy. The reason for adopting such a policy was to avoid being dominated by either of the two super powers of the time Russia and Great Britain. Fear of domination by its neighbors had made Afghanistan search for countervailing powers outside its geographical region such as pre-war Germany and post-war United States (Maley 2000). Currently Afghanistan's position of being between two troubled regions of South Asia and the Middle East is affecting its security and foreign policy. The poisonous relation between Pakistan and India in South Asia is making Pakistan look to Afghanistan as its strategic depth, and the rivalry between Shiite Iran and Sunni Saudi Arabia has been further complicating the issues for Afghan foreign policy makers.

Since Afghanistan is an underdeveloped and landlocked country, the *needs for economic development* also affects its foreign policy. The needs of a transit corridor and aid for development are essential for Afghanistan and these can hence be detrimental to its foreign policy. The tense relation between Pakistan and Afghanistan in the 1950s and 1960s had made Afghanistan conclude an agreement with Soviet Russia (Hassan 1964), and presently for the same reason, Afghan leaders are getting close with Central Asian nations and Iran to find an alternative transit route. The country has received aid from both the Soviet Union and the USA, in the past, and is getting aid from other international communities also at present.

The *ethnic factor* is another determinant in foreign policy of Afghanistan. Its effect on the Afghan foreign policy is reflected in the "Pashtunistan disputes" that soured the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. It happened in 1960s and 1970s when the Daoud Khan regime demanded a separate land for Pashtuns while rejecting the Durand Line that

demarcated the boundaries of the two countries. Currently that dispute again troubling the relations between the two nations.

Considering the above determinants, it can be said Afghanistan followed different strategies and approaches in its foreign policy. For decades Afghanistan had followed neutrality (*bitarafi*) and non-alignment to guarantee its security and economic development. The policy of neutrality was followed for almost a century, from 1901 till 1979. Therefore, it is necessary here to examine and explain briefly the concept of neutrality. In its simplest way neutrality can be described as strategy in which the neutral state would refrain from supporting or helping either side in a conflict. The proper definition of neutrality is “observance of strict and honest impartiality; not offering help to any party in a war; following a policy of peace with all the parties involved in a conflict, and not assisting any party in a war” (Bouvier: 1843:772).

Among the three broad policies of neutralization (permanent neutrality), neutralism (nonalignment) and neutrality (militarily non-aligned), Afghanistan advocated and adopted neutrality or being militarily nonaligned in its foreign policy statement (Andisha 2015). The neutrality which the Musahiban dynasty (1929-1978) opted comes from the Persian word *bitarafi*, meaning without sides. Dupree believes that Afghans were not truly neutral, but followed their own version of *bitarafi* and did not take sides in the conflicts between great powers such as during World War I, World War II and in the initial decades of Cold War (Dupree: 1988:1).

The strict observance of war time neutrality helped the country to be safe during the First and Second World Wars. That helped Afghanistan to remain impartial in the ideological confrontation of the Cold War and maintain friendly relations with both West and East blocs. The communist coup and the subsequent invasion by the Soviet Union disrupted the balance in foreign policy and placed Afghanistan in the center of hostility between the East and the West. Afghanistan shed its policy of neutrality and became the defender of international communism. The outcome was war, destruction and the conflicts that continue to affect the security of the entire region even today (Andisha 2015). Many scholars in the West and the East suggest that Afghanistan should return to its foreign

policy of neutrality like Switzerland and Turkmenistan, and that the international community shall support such a move (ibid).

3.4.2 Theoretical analysis of Afghanistan's foreign policy evolution and the role of elite

From the day of its establishment, Afghanistan rulers had focused more on domestic issues, personal rivalries and struggle for power, leaving foreign policy aside. British India was the first country that Afghanistan had external relations with. The first official contact took place in 1809 when British envoy Mount Stuart Elphinstone met Afghan king Shah Shuja Sadozay in his winter capital, Peshawar, to sign an agreement. According to the agreement, Shah Shuja assured the British that the French would not be allowed to use Afghanistan as a gateway to attack India. Both the parties also promised non-interference in the domestic affairs of each other (Norris 1967: 159).

Throughout the first half of the 19th century, Afghanistan remained as principalities such as Kandahar, Herat, Kabul and Peshawar. In that period, two great European powers, Britain and Tsarist Russia, were extending their area of influence in the Far East and the Indian subcontinent, and so Afghanistan became the battleground for their proxies. Both the powers, Russia in particular, tried to win over Afghan kings and princes, but with their military campaigns ending in failure, both the powers agreed to accept Afghanistan as a buffer zone preventing each other from extending their influence in each other's sphere.

The aggressive policies of both Russia and Britain in the late 19th century, and their forces advancing to the northern and southern borders of Afghanistan had alarmed both the powers, and in 1873 these two empires signed the Granville-Gorchakov agreement by which they accepted Afghanistan as a buffer state, putting aside plans for territorial conquest (Olesen 2006:26).

The North-Western and the North-Eastern boundaries of modern Afghanistan was drawn up by the Russian-British Boundary Commissions of 1884 and 1896. The buffer status of Afghanistan was officially reassured through the Abdul Rahman–Sir Mortimer Durand Agreement of November 12, 1893. The British called it as scientific frontiers and it demarcated the borders between Afghanistan and British India, and Afghanistan and

Russia. Based on Article 2 of the agreement, British India assured the Afghan king that they would not interfere in his territory, and the king agreed not to exercise his influence beyond the Durand Line (Kakar 2006:237).

Later, both Russia and Britain defined their sphere of influence under Anglo-Russian convention of 1907. According to this, both the powers could wield their influence in Central Asia, but Afghanistan would remain under British control (Olesen 2006:28). During the 19th century, the domestic politics and foreign policy of Afghanistan were strongly influenced by the geopolitical position of the country, being a buffer state (ibid:20). Reshtia believes that it was with reference to Afghanistan that the term buffer state was used for the first time, in 1883, by officials of British India (2010:101).

Being sandwiched between the two great powers not only affected its domestic and foreign policy, it was also a great loss for Afghanistan. The subsequent rivalries between Russia and Britain over Afghanistan resulted in the so called Anglo-Afghan wars and the limitation on its foreign policy. The rivalries between France and Britain and then between Britain and Russia after the 1809 Treaty, forced Britain to adopt a 'forward policy' to keep hegemony over Persia and Afghanistan. Afghanistan from then on began to be treated as the frontier of India, and European powers were barred from conducting commercial and political activities there or interfering directly or indirectly in Afghan affairs (Gregorian 1969: 96).

The besiege of Herat, considered to be the gateway to India by Iran and Russia, in 1837 threatened British India, forcing it to make alliance with the rulers of Herat, Kandahar, and Kabul. In 1838, British India concluded an agreement with the deposed Shah Shuja and Sikh ruler Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab for further cooperation. According to the treaty that was followed by the first Anglo-Afghan war of 1839, Shah Shuja was to be reinstated as the Afghan king, and in return, the British government was entitled to control the foreign policy of Afghanistan. Under this treaty, Ranjit Singh of Punjab received some Afghan territory and in return British India was to get his help and assistance in defending the northern border of British India against the intruders (Olesen 2006:23).

Britain did not fully succeed in restricting Afghanistan in its foreign policy as it was defeated badly in the first Anglo-Afghan war, and Dost Mohammad Khan recovered and united northern Khanats, Kandahar and Kabul. Britain therefore urged British India to sign a friendship treaty with Afghanistan in 1857. Turbulence on the frontiers of British India and Afghanistan, and Russia advancing in the north of Amu Darya and the fear of a Russian coalition with the frontier tribes and plotting against the British government forced Britain to once again return to its 'forward policy'. This time the objectives of its 'forward policy', as announced in 1874 by Prime Minister Disraeli, was as follows: "To preclude any Russian gains in Central Asia, to provide India with scientific frontiers, and to bring Afghanistan under strict British control and supervision" (Ghose 1960:10).

Despite the 1873 agreement between Russia and Britain on their sphere of influence, Russia dispatched a diplomatic mission to Kabul seeking support of Amir Sher Ali Khan in case of a Russia-Ottoman Empire conflict (Khalifin 1981:105-106). By concluding an agreement with Russia independently, Amir Sher Ali Khan had undermined the restrictions Britain had placed on Afghan foreign policy. It angered British India resulting in the second Anglo-Afghan war of 1878. Afghanistan was defeated, and the Gandumak Treaty was imposed on Sher Ali's successor, Yaqub Khan, on May 26, 1879. Singhal believes that "the main aim of the treaty was to transform Afghanistan into principalities" (Singhal 1971:46), but the main aim was to control the foreign policy of Afghanistan and to station British officers in the country to supervise the activities of the government further (Kakar 2006:28).

3.4.2.1 The shadow of realism on foreign policy of Afghanistan

During the reign of Abdurrahman Khan (1880-1901), the British influence over the foreign policy of Afghanistan was further sealed. In return for an annual payment of 1,200,000 rupees, he affirmed the Gandumak Treaty that was signed by Yaqub Khan in 1879. Abdurrahman also signed the Durand Agreement in 1893 with British India, and through this agreement, he expected to get autonomy in his foreign policy. He wanted to avoid British India and establish direct contact with London, but his attempt to send a diplomatic mission to London failed. Abdurrahman's intentions angered British India and it accused him of making trouble in the frontier areas (Gregorian 2010:273-274).

As realists argue on the role of external forces on foreign policy of a country, here also the pressure and threat of British India was detrimental for Abdurrahman Khan to keep silence and follow the isolationist foreign policy. Although Abdurrahman's son and successor Habibullah Khan did not sign the 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention on sphere of influence but due to the same source of threat, he continued his father's isolationist foreign policy.

The role of external factors and the influence of the political elite on foreign policy can be seen during the reign of Habibullah Khan. The German-Turco mission to Kabul in September 1915 put Amir Habibullah Khan under great pressure. They wanted Afghanistan to abandon the Gandumak Treaty and to declare war against the British in solidarity with Turks brethren.

Opinion on the issue among the political elite or the court was divided; one group comprising Amir Habibullah, Prime Minister Abdul Qudus Khan and the widow of the deceased Amir Abdurrahman Khan was pro-British and insisted on Afghanistan maintaining neutrality. The second group was against the British and pro war. They comprised traditionalists, religious leaders, tribal leaders and modernists such as Mahmood Tarzi and Sardar Amanullah Khan (Olesen 2006: 104).

Finally Amir summoned *Jirga* (grand assembly) consisting of *ulemas* and state dignitaries to review the policy of Afghan neutrality and to enter the war against Britain. The majority of the participants wanted Amir to declare war and nullify the Gandumak Treaty, but Amir did not accept it and sought the advice of Hazrat Sahib of Chaharbagh. Hazrat advised Amir against declaring *Jihad* till an appropriate time (ibid: 106). For Amir Habibullah, country's economic and political factors were the main reasons for not entering the First World War and for maintaining neutrality in foreign policy. He had realized that Afghanistan would not survive a military invasion and that blockade of trade with Russia and Britain would damage its already weak and dependent economy (Gregorian 2010:277). Therefore he accepted the advice of Hazrat Sahib and remained committed on isolationist foreign policy.

We can see the realism shadow over foreign policy of Afghanistan during the reign of Abdurrahman Khan and his son Habibullah. State, survival and self-help are the three principles of realism. According to realists, national interest and security are the prime aims of any state in adopting its foreign policy (Gourvitch 1978). Therefore, states would consider their survival while initiating or drafting their foreign policy. Realism emphasizes on the role of international structure and power capabilities that drive the foreign policy of a country. Gourvitch (1978) believes that the anarchical nature of the international system poses the threat to a state of being conquered, occupied and annihilated. These factors make states think about their own security.

As far as the foreign policy of Abdurrahman Khan and his son Habibullah Khan was concerned, it can be argued that the British threat of conquering Afghanistan had made the two kings to choose the policy of isolationism. The main aims of their foreign policy was the security of state and the stability of regime, hence they chose isolationism rather than taking the risk of following an independent foreign policy and get invaded by the external power such as Great Britain.

3.4.2.2 Translating Afghanistan's foreign policy through constructivist approach

After the death of Habibullah Khan, his son, Amanullah Khan, was formally crowned as a king on February 27, 1919. And his father-in-law Mohmud Tarzi was named the Foreign Minister. Since Afghanistan was prohibited from establishing direct relations with foreign powers, such move was a direct provocation for Britain. In less than two months of his ruling, and during a mass meeting in the Eadgah grand mosque in Kabul, the new king declared *Jihad* against the British (Saikal 2004:61). By ordering his troops to attack three places across the border with British India, he set off the third Anglo-Afghan war in April 1919.

The war lasted for a month, from 3rd May to 3rd June 1919. The Afghan army was defeated and sought armistice. The political outcome of the war was however a clear victory for Afghanistan as opened the way for serious diplomatic negotiation with British India (Saikal 2004:62). Britain accepted the armistice and the treaty of Rawalpindi was concluded in August 1919. Britain also recognized the sovereignty of Afghanistan and left

it free to conduct its domestic and foreign policy independently (Farhang 2001:1085). Though the Britain recognized Afghanistan as a sovereign country in 1919 and then under separate treaties in 1921 but direct diplomatic relation between the two was established only in 1922 (Saikal 2004:63).

The war of independence boosted the position of King Amanullah Khan across the Muslim world and he extended his support to the Khilafat movement in India and attempted to recognize the independence of Khiva and Bukhara in Central Asia (Barfield 2010: 182).

The most important outcome of the third Anglo-Afghan war for Afghanistan was the country gaining its freedom in foreign policy after long years of restriction. Shortly, the king, who had now begun calling himself a sovereign king, began independent foreign policy initiatives. Primarily he focused on Russia and Britain as great powers. He concluded an agreement with Russia on 13 September 1920 and that increased the chance of bargaining with Britain. According to the agreement, Afghanistan was allowed duty free goods transit through Russia and in return Russian was allowed to open five consulates across Afghanistan.

At the same time, Amanullah dispatched Mohammad Wali Khan to Belgium, France, England, the Baltic countries, Poland, Italy and the United States for establishing diplomatic relations. He was successful in making diplomatic relations with France, Italy and Germany. On March 1, 1921 Afghanistan signed the Turku-Afghan agreement by which the Turkish side accepted the sovereignty and independence of Afghanistan. Further, on June 22, 1921 the country signed friendship agreement with Iran that facilitated postal relations between the two counties (Gregorian 2010:288-291).

By reviving the Foreign Ministry and appointing his father-in-law as the Foreign Minister, Amanullah Khan had taken a hard stand on foreign policy and provoked British India. Such an act had proved the influence of the new political leader and the political elite on formulating foreign policy. Contrary to the realism approach that gives primary importance to international structure and external factors, Constructivism focuses on the influence of social forces in defining the identity and interest of the state. Amanullah

Khan's approach proved that the actor's behavior and actions could bring about changes not only to the domestic policy but also to the foreign policy. It proved that the political elite could be detrimental in defining the interests and identity of the state.

The foreign policy of Afghanistan in this period cannot be analyzed through the realists' views. The external threat, the international system and the power of Great Britain could not deter Amanullah Khan from initiating an aggressive foreign policy. Here the constructivist approach will be best suited to analyze the foreign policy of this period. Constructivists believe that the international system is subject to the changes of rules and norms inside a country. In other word, constructivism argues that domestic politics and international politics are mutually constituted.

Further, they give importance to the concept of nationalism which not only influences the definition of norms, identity and interest of the states, but also shape the views and perceptions of the political elite viz a viz international conduct. Constructivists give the example of Gorbachev and the changes of leadership in the Soviet Union that not only brought about changes in the domestic policy of Russia but also greatly transformed the foreign policy of that country (Ruggie 1998:224).

Amanullah's initiatives, both in foreign and domestic policy, had dire consequences which finally bringing about the downfall of his regime. Initially his pan-Islamic and anti-British stand in foreign policy brought him vast support from the religious elite as well as the people. Religious figures (*pirs*) such as the followers of Hadda-I-Sahib in eastern Afghanistan and the Hazrat of Shor Bazar in Kabul, Fazl Mohammad Mojaddadi (Shams al Mashayekh), supported his policy (Olesen 2006: 133). But the reforms which the king initiated faced opposition from the same traditional power groups.

Opposition first surfaced at Jalalabad in 1923 when all the eastern religious and tribal elite got together and the king read out the new constitution (*nizamnama*). Since the *nizamnama* supported a secular educational system, defended empowering of women and introduced conscription to the army, the most prominent cleric, Hazrat Sahib of Charbagh, termed the *nizamnama* harmful to Islamic teaching. Reportedly, the tribal elite were also dissatisfied with the *nizamnama* because it curbed their power and reduced their

remuneration in comparison to Amanullha's predecessors. Dissatisfaction on this account was higher among the Ahmadzai tribe as they had been receiving better monthly income from the central government for decades (Barfield 184).

In March 1924, the Khost rebellion took place and lasted for nine months. *Ulema* were at the center of this rebellion because the new arrangement was a threat to their authority and livelihood. They condemned the new laws and regulations and considered them to be illegitimate and contrary to the Sharia law. The rebellion did not shake Amanullah's regime and was suppressed, but it exposed the weakness of his government as he had to take help from other tribal forces to suppress the rebellious tribes.

The rebellion also proved that the conservative clerics, tribes and the rural population had acted unitedly against the urban, modern nationalists including Amanullah. Soon a civil war erupted with some demanding succession on dynastic lines and other forces directing their power against the government itself (Barfield 2010: 191). Following the civil war, Amanullah was unseated and Habibullah Kalakani took the throne and remained there for nine months. Amanullah's reforms and foreign policy initiatives faced an unceremonious end. Abdul Samad Ghaus believes that the tribal uprising, the unbalanced foreign policy of Amanullah, hostility toward Britain and welcoming Russian and other European powers may have contributed to the collapse of the Amanullah's regime (Ghaus 1988:47).

According to Constructivism the political elite and social forces are not only influential but also determinant in defining the identity and interest of the state. Amanullah Khan as a political elite was influential in formulating both the domestic policy and the foreign policy. But the negative response from social forces like the religious and tribal elite to the reforms he initiated proved detrimental to his policies. It also resulted in regime change and installation of the religious regime of Habibullah Kalakani.

3.4.2.3 Continuance of realism shadow on foreign policy in 20th century

The the shadow of realism continued under the Musahiban family, which too adopted neutrality in their foreign policy. Nader Shah, the founder of the Musahiban dynasty, declared neutrality in foreign policy. His son, Zahir Shah, too followed suit.

During the period of the Musahiban family (1929-78), world politics had undergone a sea change. After the First World War Tsarist Russia had disappeared and now the region was known as the Soviet Union under the communists; British India was not there anymore, and the new countries of Pakistan and India had been born, Great Britain was not a superpower anymore and the United States had taken that position. Afghanistan, however, remained strategically important for regional and global powers.

It was after taking into account the international environment that Nadir Shah (1929-33) crafted the country's foreign policy. He didn't want to provoke powerful neighbors like Russia and British India. He explained his foreign policy at the parliament inauguration ceremony thus: "In my opinion, the best policy for Afghanistan is to follow neutrality", adding: "Taking our national interest into consideration, the country should have warm relations not only with its neighbors but with all great powers as well." He continued: "Afghanistan must assure its neighbors a mutually friendly conduct and I think it would be the best foreign policy in the interests of Afghanistan" (Gregorian 2010:395).

By declaring 'positive neutrality', Nader wanted to achieve three immediate objectives: No provocation, a balancing act between Russia and British India, and preventing the Islamic states offering aid to his opponent Amanullah Khan to bring him back to power (Saikal 2004:102). The objectives clearly show that fear of provocation; the concept of balancing power equations and the fear of foreign interference had determined the foreign policy of Nader Shah, the founder of the Musahiban dynasty. It tells us that external forces defined the identity and the national interests of Afghanistan in that period.

To assure Russian, Nader Shah concluded the non-aggression pact, and to please them further he repressed the Basmachi Movement in Central Asia. As part of trust building, Nader Shah stopped aids to the tribes fighting against British India in the North Western Frontiers. He also tried hard to curb the activities of *khudai khidmatgaran* (Servants of God) established by Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan (Gregorian 2010:404).

In his relations with the Muslim world such as Iran and Turkey, Nader Shah followed the line of Amanullah Khan. He sent ambassadors to affirm brotherly relations with them (ibid: 410). Nader was keen to establish close relations with powers that did not share

borders with Afghanistan, countries like Germany, Japan and the United States that had no interest in taking Afghan territory. He looked to them as alternatives to offset any political pressure that may be imposed on the country by his immediate neighbors, as well as for financial assistance for economic development.

To some extent this aspect of the foreign policy of Nader and his successor was successful because Japan concluded a friendship agreement with Afghanistan in 1930, USA recognized the Musahiban regime in 1934, and finally Germany dispatched hundreds experts to Afghanistan and worked with the Afghan government by promising to provide machineries for developmental projects (Barfield 2010: 207). However, as luck would have it before these countries could deliver on their promises, the Second World War between the Allies and the Axis forces started, and Afghanistan acceded to the demands of the Allies to expel the Axis subjects from Afghanistan.

To clarify Afghanistan's position in the war, *Loya Jirga* was summoned and Afghanistan declared its neutrality like it did under Habibullah Khan who had chosen neutrality in the First World War. The policy of neutrality saved Afghanistan during the war and this policy continued till the end of the Musahiban rule in 1978.

Neutrality as a strategy in foreign policy must be guaranteed by the great powers and the neutral country must restrain itself from using military force except for defense (Holsti 1981:112-114). The neutrality of Afghanistan was appreciated by both Russia and British India, and Afghanistan remained truly neutral throughout the war.

The dissolution of British India on its southern border in 1947 was a great shock for Afghanistan for two reasons: first, there was no more a great power as a balance against the Soviet Union; second, issues related to the Pashtuns on the other side of the Durand Line surfaced as a major problem that could deteriorate relations with the newborn country, Pakistan. The balancing vacuum was filled by the USA, and provided Afghanistan the opportunity to initiate agricultural developmental projects and to expand its educational sector through American and western aid. At the same time, the Soviet Union granted it \$25 million worth of tanks, jets and other military equipment, helping Afghanistan to modernize its military (Barfield 2010:209).

However, the second problem remained unsolved. It, in fact, became more acute with the demand for a separate land for Pashtuns intensifying in Daoud republic, embittering further the relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan (Fahang 2001: 896). The neutrality and non-alignment strategy continued, but towards the end of the Daoud regime the foreign policy of Afghanistan was transforming into a committed alliance strategy, and with the communist regime taking over Kabul this got a further boost.

Political rivalry among the elite in this period not only affected the domestic political arrangement but also influenced the country's foreign policy. This rivalry had come to the fore right after the death of the founder of the Musahiban family, Nader Khan in 1929. When his son, Zahir Shah, succeeded him, he was only 19 years old and was not considered matured enough to rule the country. Therefore, his two uncles, Mohammad Hashim (1933-46) and Shah Mahmud (1946-53) holding the portfolio of Prime Minister, ruled the country.

During the period of Mohammad Hashim, Zahir Shah was completely excluded from the decision making process (Saikal 2004:106). Both these Prime Ministers followed neutrality in foreign policy, and since they gradually succeeded in centralizing power and suppressing their opponents, there was no real opposition to their policies and way of governance.

The nature of the political elite and their relation with the state had changed drastically in the time of the Musahiban dynasty. The government was no longer dependent on the power of the traditional elite like the *Khans* and heads of tribes like in the times of Abdurrahman and Amanullah, nor was there any need to mobilize tribes for conquests. Therefore, the *Khans* and *Ulemas* who had had great influence in the past played only a symbolic role during the Musahiban reign (Rubin1995:62). However, the overall structure of the political elite did not change as the royal family and those with indirect link to it still remained a privileged sect, and their role in politics expanded further.

In the 1933-1953 period, though the political elite had a role in the country's foreign policy, but since the overall strategy in foreign policy was neutrality, their role was not a game changer. According to Eberhard (1962) the old political elite was a small circle of

aristocrats who were mostly from the royal family, therefore Dauod Khan and his associates who belonged to the royal family had outstanding role in the foreign policy of the Musahiban dynasty.

Dauod Khan was the son of a Musahiban brother, Mohammad Aziz, and played a great role during the Musahiban family rule. When he was the governor of Kandahar from 1935 to 1938, he was introduced to the Pashtun ultra-nationalist circle composing Abdul Hai Habibi, Mohammad Din Zhwak and Abdur Rahman Pezhwak. Dauod and the circle he was involved with, staunchly believed in the notion of Pashtun supremacy, he therefore defended the unity of Pashtuns in both Afghanistan and British India. Dauod and his circle were behind the campaign to make Pashtu the national language and the only means of communication in the country (Saikal 2004:112).

In 1947, when Shah Mahmud was the Premier, Dauod established the party, *wikh-i-zalmian* (Awakened Youth), to consolidate his power further. Under the leadership of Dauod and the overall supervision of Abdul Majid Zabuli, the new *kolup-i melii* (National Club) was established and the members of Awakened Youth were asked to join it. It soon became the spot where Kabul's power elite and Daud's nationalist circle gathered (Gupta 1986:12). At the time of the Second World War, this group under the leadership of Dauod, made inflammatory speeches seeking self-determination for the Pashtuns in British India, a move that could jeopardize neutrality in foreign policy (ibid:113).

The Pakistani Pashtuns voted for union with Pakistan in 1948, but Afghanistan rejected the move and recognized the independent Pashtunistan that was formally announced by the Afridi tribesman in August 1949. Such a foreign policy stand may have come up because of the pressure exerted by Dauod's circle (Qureshi 1966). In June 1941, Abdul Majid Zabuli, the founder managing director of Afghan National Bank and an influential figure in the Dauod circle, had held discussions with German officials on the possibility of Afghanistan entering the war on the side of the Axis powers if "British possession in South-East and south of Karachi and the Indus could be attached to the Afghan border" (Dobrynin: 434).

The real clout of the political elite on foreign policy was witnessed when Dauod became the Prime Minister in 1953 under a 'gentlemen's agreement' with King Zahir Shah. Dauod with the help of two domestic groups such as western educated intellectuals and the national bourgeoisie (Sikal 2004:118) initiated modernization projects with the intention of transforming the country into a rentier state by tilting it excessively toward the Soviet Union. By demanding funds from foreign powers and seeking self-determination for the Pashtuns in Pakistan, he transformed the foreign policy of Afghanistan, bringing the country under the Soviet influence and escalating tension with the new country, Pakistan.

Though Dauod announced neutrality in foreign policy, and Afghanistan attended the Bandung non-alignment conference in 1955, the demand for Pashtunistan not only irritated the Pakistanis; it also had serious repercussions in Afghanistan's relations with great powers like the US. The United States was an ally of Pakistan and the demand for an independent Pashtunistan was unacceptable to that country. Dauod's shenanigans with the Soviet Union in the 1960s made western policy makers consider Afghanistan to be a dependent state falling within the Soviet sphere of influence (Hangen 1966).

His stands on Pashtunistan jeopardized the country's diplomatic relations with Pakistan in the 1961-63 period; the outcome of the standoff with Pakistan was a no-peace, no-war situation, economic depression and dependency on the Soviet Union (ibid:65). The king, Zahir Shah, soon intervened to stop Dauod from further degradation of the economy and creating problems in the foreign policy. This led to Daud's resignation and another 'gentlemen agreement' on March 9, 1963.

After Dauod stepped down as the Prime Minister, the relation between Pakistan and Afghanistan normalized, and cooperation was initiated with Iran and other Islamic countries. Zahir Shah warmed the relations with the USA further by visiting that country in 1963 and clearing the air on Afghanistan's relations with the USSR. In 1963 the rupture with Pakistan finally healed after Afghanistan and Pakistan were invited to Tehran by the Shah of Iran for mediation. The relation with Pakistan further warmed when Afghans assured Pakistanis that they would not intervene in the Pakistan-India war of 1965 and

assured Pakistanis that Afghanistan had no problems in tribal youth joining the Pakistan army to fight against infidel Hindus (Ghaus 1988:100).

Zahir Shah did not honor the second gentlemen's agreement of further democratization and liberalization, hence Dauod brought down the king through a coup with the help of Marxist Parchamis in July 1973. After Dauod came to power and Afghanistan began supplying arms and ammunitions to Pakistani Pashtuns and Baluch rebels, the relations with Pakistan deteriorated again (Ali 1974). But soon a new rivalry arose, between Dauod and the leftists, and that led to the bloody communist revolution of April 1978 and the killing of Dauod and his entire family.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, Afghanistan witnessed an alliance and commitment strategy in its foreign policy. After the communists took power, the nature and structure of the Afghanistan foreign policy began to change drastically. Neutrality was abandoned and replaced by a committed-and-alliance strategy, forcing the state to formulate its policy on certain lines as well as being committed to certain values at the same time. From that time onwards, the country's foreign policy framework was drawn up in Moscow and communist leaders in Kabul implemented them without any kind of extra maneuvering or manipulation (Farghang 2001: 1026).

Farhang (ibid) says that contrary to diplomatic protocols, communist officials and the head of state, Noor Mohammad Taraki, used to attend parties in the Soviet embassy, and that Soviet embassy officials used to be stationed officially in Afghanistan's foreign ministry to supervise ministry's activities. It was a sort of patron-client relationship between the country's communist leaders and the Soviet Union. Andisha notes that though the PDPA in its rhetoric claimed adherence to non-alignment and positive neutrality, after the Soviet military invasion, there was nothing left of Afghanistan's autonomy or neutrality in foreign policy (Andisha 2015).

Factionalism among the political elite and political rivalry inside each faction contributed to the crises Afghanistan saw during that period. The PDPA was divided into *khalq* and *parcham* factions, and the two couldn't see eye to eye. After the consolidation of power by Noor Mohammad Taraki (Khalqi) as general secretary of the PDPA and the country's

President, Hafizullah Amin (Khalqi) emerged the strong man by occupying the posts of the Deputy of Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister. Soon the ruling *khalqi* faction started arresting, executing and sending hundreds of Parchamis into exile. This not only intensified the animosity between the two factions, but also destabilized the regime, leading to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Amin's power continued to rise. In March 1979, he became the Prime Minister, and four months later took over the post of the Defense Minister too. To clear the way for personal dictatorship, he quickly planned to eliminate Taraki's associates from the administration and the army. The Pule Charkhi prison in Kabul suburb overflowed with over 12,000 political prisoners, and that squads worked at night to make space for new comers (Saikal 2004:192). Taraki's criticism of Amin's policies brought about his death in October 1979. Amin had ordered that a grave be dug for Taraki in the Qul-I- Abchakan cemetery before he had been killed (ibid: 193). But in less than 9 months of his rule, Amin was killed by the Soviet Special Forces in his Darulaman palace in Kabul on the evening of December 27, 1979.

The successor of Babrak Karmal, President Najibullah initiated a reconciliation policy to deescalate the political tension. The name of PDPA was changed to *Hizbe Watan* (Homeland Party); he proclaimed adherence to Islamic principles and promised a more democratic government (ibid: 206). He referred to the Soviet forces in Afghanistan as enemy forces and sent his Foreign Minister to Rome to persuade Zahir Shah to return to the country and become the head of the state. However, his national reconciliation policy did not work and fighting continued till the Islamic state of Afghanistan was established on April 25, 1992.

It is important to note that the political rivalry between the elite factions, *Khalq* and *Parcham*, had led to the Soviet invasion, injuring and killing of 1.24 million people, and five million refugees fleeing to Iran and Pakistan during the 1979-1989 periods. Moreover, the Soviet invasion had dire consequence for Afghanistan in its relations with countries in the region including Pakistan, Iran and China who had feared further Soviet expansionism. This led to these countries intervening in Afghanistan's affairs by supporting the Mujahidin and their proxies.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the main task was to define the political elite in Afghanistan. Attempts were also made to examine the factions among the political elite and their influence on the stability and instability of a political regime in the course of Afghanistan's history. The role of the political elite in transforming the foreign policy was also discussed. To conduct the research smoothly, the chapter was divided into three sections. In the first section the composition of the society that the political elite come from, and for that reason the Afghan society as a whole, was examined.

Attempt was also made to find out what brought about solidarity among the people in the Afghan society. The study found that it is the factors such as clan, tribe and ethnicity that brought solidarity among people, as also made individuals or groups antagonistic to each other. These factors are highly influential not only in day to day contact among the citizens of the country, they also define factionalism and unity among the political elite.

In the first section, attempt was also made to define the political elite in Afghanistan. Historically the political elite of Afghanistan were divided into three types. The traditional political elite date back to pre-1979 and comprised religious, tribal, feudal and royal elites with certain aristocratic background. The revolutionary political elite emerged in the 1960s and came to power in the 1980s and 1990s. They were the communists and the Islamists. The third type of political elite is the educated technocrats who generally emerged after 2001.

By taking help from Guy Rocher (1992:153) political elite in Afghanistan defined as individuals and groups that have great influence in the society on account of their power, influence and decision making capability. Therefore, it can be concluded that the political elite of Afghanistan are those that have influence and authority on account of their position such as head of state, ministers, governors, members of parliament, religious and ethnic leaders and leaders of political parties.

In the second section of this chapter, the study found that ethnicity, tribal affiliation and religion were highly influential in creating factionalism and disunity among the political elite. It was also found that tribal rivalry and competition for power among the political

elite were responsible for dynasties being uprooted throughout the history of Afghanistan. Further it was found that ethnicity and religion had created tension between the so called revolutionary political elite like the communists and the Islamists. If we look at the current clashes and instability in Afghanistan we can see that even now similar forces are responsible for creating factionalism and disunity among the political elite in the country.

In the third section of the chapter, first a clarification on foreign policy determinants was sought and then the evolution of foreign policy of Afghanistan examined theoretically. While examining the foreign policy historically and theoretically, the role of the political elite in the foreign policy of Afghanistan was also addressed. It was found that geopolitics; economic needs and the ethnic structure were the major determinants of Afghanistan's foreign policy.

It was also found that the external forces had deep influence on Afghanistan's foreign policy during the reigns of Abdurrahman Khan and his successor Habubullah Khan. Therefore forced them to follow the isolationist-neutral foreign policy. Neutrality in foreign policy followed by the Musahiban dynasty was the continuance of the realist-isolationist foreign policy. The communist regime also took the realist approach while adopting the alliance-and-committed strategy in its foreign policy. In these three eras, as realists argue, it was the external factors that drove the foreign policy of Afghanistan.

The foreign policy of Amanullah Khan (1919-1929) cannot be studied through the eyes of realism. In the case of Amanullah Khan, the external threat of Great Britain and the international system did not restrain him from declaring Afghanistan's independence and having a foreign policy devoid of external influence. Therefore it can be said that Constructivism gives us a better opportunity to examine and analyze the foreign policy of Amanullah Khan. Constructivists believe that the international system as well as the interest and identity of the state are subject to change. They further emphasize the role of nationalism and domestic politics in defining new norms, identity and interest of states.

Chapter IV: Disunity among the Taliban Political Elite: Domestic Instability and Incoherence in Foreign Policy (1996-2001)

4.1 Introduction

Foreign policy and domestic politics are interdependent and Putnam believes that both are detrimental sometimes. He argues that “more interesting questions would be when and how” the domestic and foreign policies affect each other (Putnam 1998). This chapter would deal with Putnam’s question, that is, how and when Afghanistan’s domestic politics influenced its foreign policy in the 1990s? How the disunity among political elite affected the country’s unity and subsequently its foreign policy would also be examined in detail in this chapter.

Throughout the 1990s, particularly from 1992 to 1996, Afghanistan was a mini system of Regional Security Complex (RSC) that “reflected political fragmentation at the sub-state level but nonetheless generated a conflict formation that possessed most of the qualities of a state level complex”. In this mini system five basic forces played a great role. The first was the Pashtun radical Sunni forces under the leadership of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar supported by Pakistan and its allies, Saudi Arabia and the US; the second was the Hazara Shia who had their own system in central Afghanistan; the third force was the Uzbeks with their own system in the northern provinces supported and financed by Russia and Uzbekistan; the fourth was the Tajiks helped and assisted by Tajikistan, Iran and Russia under the military command of Ahmad Shah Masoud; in 1994, the Taliban came into this system with the help of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia later (Buzan and Wæver 2003:110-112). Domestically the outcome of this mini system was war and destruction, Afghanistan was isolated internationally and played the role of an insulated zone among the regions of South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia.

When the Taliban took control of Kabul, Afghanistan had started experiencing two governments, one de facto and the other, de jure, from 1996 to 2001, in its modern history. The de facto government was that of the Taliban who had a majority of the country’s territory under its control but did not have the recognition of the international community. The de jure government was that of Rabbani with just a small portion of the territory under its control, but had international recognition. This chapter would discuss

the foreign policy of Afghanistan as a whole in this period but would concentrate more on the Taliban regime, its political elite and its foreign policy.

For the smooth conduct of the research, this chapter has been divided into four sections. In the first section, the emergence of the Taliban, and the process of their socialization would be discussed. In the second section, the composition of the Taliban political elite and the role of ethnic, religious and tribal factors in the formation and recruitment of the Taliban elite would be examined. In the third section, the effect of the fragmentation of the political elite on Taliban's domestic policy would be researched. In the fourth section, Taliban's foreign policy, its principles and objectives, its relations with Pakistan, Iran, the US, Russia and the United Nation would be examined. The last part of the chapter would have the outcome and a summary of the issues discussed.

4.2 The Emergence of Taliban

The Taliban is a fact and part of the history of Afghanistan. For a certain period they had the major territory of Afghanistan under their control. They had their own unique style of government, administration and council of ministers. The Taliban government was recognized by Pakistan, the UAE and Saudi Arabia, and therefore had diplomatic relations with them. This section deals with the emergence of the Taliban. Here we would examine different approaches explaining the emergence of the Taliban and study the religious education and Pashtunwali as factors that affected the process of Taliban's socialization.

4.2.1 Different approaches for emergence of the Taliban

Taliban emerged as a new politico-military force from the Eastern borders of Afghanistan in 1994 and quickly expanded its influence across the territories of Afghanistan. In less than two years they captured the eastern and western provinces of Afghanistan and in 1996 established their government in Kabul and went to war against the Northern provinces. Disunity among the Mujahidin political elite as the main reason for the emergence of Taliban and the same factor was the reason why their influence spread fast across the country. The term Taliban is the Persianised plural form of the Arabic word *talib* and it simply means students. *Talib* is a common word used for the students of

seminaries in the Af-Pak region and across Afghanistan, but the *talibs* who seized Kabul in 1996 were not just a collection of students but a unified military forces with a particular name in Pashtu, *Da Afghanistano da Talibano Islami Tahrik*, or the Islamic movement of the Taliban (Maley 2009:218). There are different approaches in explaining the emergence of the Taliban.

Military approach tends to consider the Taliban as a military force organized, equipped and supported by external forces outside the territory of Afghanistan. According to this view, Taliban is nothing but an organization that was created by Pakistan, trained by the ISI and funded by Persian Gulf countries to play an active role in the civil war in Afghanistan (Crew and Tarzi: 104).

The proponents of this theory argue that after the Soviet withdrawal, Pakistan did not want non-Pashtuns gain power in Afghanistan and marginalize pro-Pakistan Jihadi groups such as Hizb-I- Islami Gulbuddin Hikmatyar. In the 1980s among the Mujahidin parties in Peshawar, the most radical Pashtun was Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, and his Hizb-I- Islami was the nearest and dearest to the ISI. Although Pakistan tried its best to meddle diplomatically and even militarily in support of Hikmatyar against Rabbani and his Tajik government, the move failed. For Pakistan, Taliban was the next best option to unseat the hostile Rabbani government in Kabul.

Anthony Davis believes that Pakistanis and the ISI were deeply involved with the issue before the emergence of Taliban in September 1994. According to him, Pakistan had long established networks of intelligence around Kandahar, particularly with the Kandahar Airport Shura of Commanders of which Mullah Mohammad Ghaws was the leader (Davis1998:44). This version relates Taliban emergence with one Naseerullah Babur's visit to the Chaman-Spinboldak border point in September 1994. Babur, a Pashtun, had deep knowledge of the frontiers and was an expert on Afghan affairs. As an interior minister in Benazir Bhutto government, he had deep interests in the Pakistan-Central Asian trade route through Afghanistan.

To survey the route he is said to have travelled to Baluchistan-Afghan frontier and on his return to Islamabad in late September 1994 announced that the road would be open to

trade convoys only till October of the same year. The question would be raised as to how he was sure of the deadline despite there being militants' checkpoints on the highway to Kandahar and from Kandahar to Herat and Turkmenistan if he had no close contact with the group called Taliban.

Babur may have been assisted by an ISI officer nicknamed Colonel Imam, who served as a trainer for the Afghan Mujahidin in 1982-83 in Baluchistan, to establish contacts with the Taliban. Among Colonel Imam's trainees there were a certain band of Mujahidin who used to call themselves *talib* belonging to Hizb-I-Islami Younus Khaled and Harakat-I-Islami Nabi Mohammadi. Colonel Imam is said to have kept these contacts intact in order to be used later while creating and supporting the Taliban movement. (ibid: 45).

This version considers Taliban to be the product of Jamiat-I-Ulema-I-Islam (JUI) madrasas across the frontiers. JUI's role was prominent when it was a close ally of the Benazir government in 1994 and its leader Mawlana Fazlurehman was then serving as the head of Foreign Relation Standing Committee of Pakistan National Assembly.

Meanwhile, when Taliban established its footprint in Afghanistan, JUI was lobbying for them inside the Pakistani administration and established close contact with the leader of Taliban Mullah Mohammad Omar. The head of JUI and other leaders were playing the role of consultants and the students of madrasas were sent largely as foot soldiers to assist Taliban in the battle field. Many of them were arrested and killed in Herat, Kabul and Mazar-I-Sharif.

The support of ISI, the Pakistan army and JUI helped Taliban to attack the Hizb-I-Islami check point in the border area of Spinbodak on October 12, 1994. With the help of Pakistan military forces Taliban freed the town within two hours. Exactly a week later, Naseerullah Babur invited the Islamabad based Ambassadors of the US, China, Italy, the UK and South Korea to a meeting and took them to Kandahar and Herat by flight. Following the incident in late October 1994, a trade convoy was loaded at Quetta to be unloaded in Turkmenistan via Kandahar and Herat provinces of Afghanistan.

The convoy was halted by Mujahidin militias near Kandahar and the militias demanded ransom. To help free the convoy Taliban help was sought. Taliban forces succeeded in

freeing the convoy on November 3, 1994. After capturing Spinboldak, the Taliban advanced further into Kandahar. Without much resistance the 2,500 men under the command of a Mujahidin commander Mullah Naqib left Kandahar city and surrendered before Taliban. Those commanders who resisted Taliban were swept from the city within two days, and it is said that there were only nine casualties among the Taliban (Ibid: 48).

Between October 1994 and January 1995, the Taliban movement witnessed a fundamental shift, being transformed from a small band of provincial force to crusaders whose mission was to impose their Sharia law across Afghanistan.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the above discussion is that Taliban, a band of humble villagers, poor refugees and pious clergies could not have overpowered the large territory of Afghanistan within a short period of time without external assistance both in terms of finance and military.

The *Indigenous approach* tends to brand Taliban as an indigenous force that was born in Afghanistan and expanded without any external support or assistance. Those who vouch for this version, consider the internal chaotic socio-political environment and power vacuum as the main reasons for the emergence of Taliban (Nojumi 2009:95). According to this approach, Taliban initially emerged as a small group in the southern province of Kandahar as a local response to the illegality, banditry and brutality being engaged in by former resistance groups in the area. Taliban wanted to free the locals from the influence of the resistance groups and defend Pashtunwali (local values) such as *nang* (reputation) and *namus* (respect to women).

The Taliban themselves are very much inclined to propagate the indigenous approach. In *My Life with the Taliban*, Abdul Salam Zaeef, a former leader and Ambassador of Taliban in Islamabad, considers Taliban to be pious men from villages who wanted to free people from the cruelty of the militia commanders (Zaeef 2010:62). According to Zaeef, it was in the autumn of 1994 at a meeting in Sangisar mosque in South Western Kandahar that the Taliban movement had emerged.

In that meeting of forty to fifty people, Mawlawi Abdul Samad was designated as the Amir of Taliban, and Mullah Mohammad Omer took oath as the commander of the

Taliban. According to Zaeef, in the same meeting, the objectives of the Taliban to fight against corruption and criminals were also outlined. Sharia was their guiding law, and all the founding members were committed to prohibiting vices and promoting virtues (Ibid:65).

In an interview, Abdul Hakim Mujahid, who represented Taliban regime in the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) and acted as the informal ambassador of Taliban to the United States, and was its ambassador to Pakistan, defended the Indigenous approach. According to him, “the Taliban Islamic Movement was not a political party. It was a movement and its members were mostly from Harakati Inqilabe Islami and Hizbe Islami of Mawlawi Khalis. Some commanders of Itihadi Islami Sayyaf, some commanders of Jamiate Islami of Rabbani and a few of Hikamtyar’s commanders later joined Taliban. They all had one common agenda, to bring peace and security to the region and save the country from the prevailing chaos” (Mujahid 2018). In an interview with Abdul Salam Zaeef he also voices support to the Indigenous approach. He has said that “the Taliban have not come together for concessions or material privileges, but on the basis of religious responsibility and for spiritual reasons. They came together to free Afghanistan from corruption and chaos and to make a new Afghanistan” (Zaeef 2018).

The followers of this approach undermine the role of external forces and the intelligence output from neighbors for the emergence of Taliban. Shaharani (2009:158) believes that the seeds of Taliban were sown a century before the Soviet invasion of 1979. According to him, to understand the Taliban a person must go back to the history of modern Afghanistan. Therefore three historical factors have had enormous impact on the birth of Taliban and Talibanism. According to him the role of Pashtun ruling elite in building the state by and for the Pashtuns, the legacy of Pashtun tribal politics based on kin and individuals and state discrimination against non-Pashtuns including Tajiks, Hazaras and Uzbeks were responsible for the emergence of Taliban and the idea of Talibanism.

The autocratic and paternalistic politics of Taliban has its roots in the Pashtun tribal, social and political organization. Tribal politics produced a person-centred political culture and blocked the way for transforming politics into something more participatory. Further, it prevented politics from becoming rule-based and inclusive with modern,

national and democratic institutions. According to Shahrani, the root of the Taliban demonization of the oppositions such as the Northern Alliance and their rejection of participatory politics can be traced back to the former Pashtun King, Abdurrahman Khan. Abdurrahman dubbed his disloyal subjects like Uzbeks, Hazaras and Nuristanis as ‘bad Muslims’ in order to justify his military rampage against them.

Like Abdurrahman who executed 60% of the Hazaras after calling them infidels (Lee 2018:399), Taliban also executed the Hazaras in Mazar-I- Sharif and Bamiyan raising similar slogans in 1997 and 2001. It was Abdurrahman who ordered his successors not to make themselves puppets in the hands of representatives by setting up a free and democratic system of governance; Taliban too has similar beliefs (Ibid: 165). Internal colonialism, the Pashtun-dominated political culture of the past and the exclusionary mind-set of the Pashtun kings had led to the ethnic and cultural differences among the people dividing the society into fragments. After 1979, this social fragmentation coloured with ideology produced an ethnic confrontation that led to the emergence of Taliban.

The *politico-economic approach* considers Taliban to be a product of the transportation and energy mafia. It is the geo strategic position of Afghanistan that made the followers of this approach to think as they did. Located in the heart of Asia, Afghanistan connects Central Asia to South Asia and Eurasia to West Asia. The untapped energy resources of Central Asian republics and the trade between South Asia and Central Asia are the major factors that this approach focuses on. It was argued that the Central Asian countries wanted to export their energy to boost their economy and that countries like Pakistan required that energy for purposes of urbanization, and industrialization. In such a scenario all the stakeholders were searching for a viable transition corridor.

Oil and gas multi-national companies were competing among themselves to convince parties concerned in the region on their capability to open pipelines to transport oil and natural gas, but the chaotic situation and the lack of parties to guarantee the security of the pipeline in Afghanistan was a major obstacle. Instability was not only threatening the pipeline but had also halted the cross border trade between Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Central Asian countries. Therefore, traders, the mafias and traffickers were all unhappy with the situation.

To overcome these problems, beneficiaries were looking for a group or a strongman who could put an end to the chaos by suppressing the warlords in the region and secure the trade corridor. There was no force better than Taliban, which had promised to bring peace in Afghanistan by ending banditry and violence, to do the job. Proponents of the politico-economic approach believe that two multinational oil companies American UNOCAL and Argentinean Bidas, invested heavily in propping up Taliban and were in competition with each other in bribing Taliban to procure the contract. The proponents have also claimed that UNOCAL not only bribed Taliban but also promised to lobby with the US government to get Taliban political recognition if the company got the contract.

In an interview former Taliban ambassador Abdul Salam Zaeef admitted to the competition that existed between UNOCAL and Bidas over the pipeline project that was meant to transport gas from Turkmenistan to Pakistan and India through Afghanistan. He claimed that the competition between these two companies had negatively impacted the relations between Taliban and the United States. Zaeef added:

There was competition between UNOCAL and Bidas. We had realised how important UNOCAL was to the US, but we had the national interest of Afghanistan in mind, and so did not consider the interests of UNOCAL and the US. They therefore started to conspire against us. The US wanted the project to be awarded to UNOCAL, but we resisted it. Honestly speaking the US did not directly tell what they wanted from us. Unfortunately in politics and diplomacy, people do not say directly what they want; therefore it becomes difficult to understand them (Zaeef 2018).

The followers of this approach believe that Pakistan's lobby of transportation and smuggling mafia had influenced the trade initiatives of Pakistan Interior Minister Nasirullah Babur in 1994. They also believe that the lobby donated a considerable amount to the Taliban for its initial build up, recruitment, arms purchase and rapid expansion (Rashid 2001: 7-8).

In an interview, Abdulhakim Mujahid, denied the allegation that Taliban was a protégé of the transportation mafia. According to him, local finance was the Taliban's main source of income. He says: "There is no doubt that Taliban had no economic support. They only collected alms (*zakat*) and *ushr* and some customs revenue. The members of Taliban were volunteers. It had no standing army with any particular salary per month therefore needed less money and resources" (Mujahid 2018).

Understanding the Taliban's system of governance and objectives and finding out the reasons for their emergence and expansion, is a very difficult task. The practise of excessive secrecy, the lack of press releases, the absence of policy statements or press conferences by officials of the Taliban regime, make the task of researchers in this field all the further more difficult. Hence taking a single approach would not be enough to answer the question how Taliban emerged and expanded. Here a multi-pronged approach might help us to understand these issues better.

Initially the members of the Taliban and its leaders were recruited from among the rural folks who had lived in the refugee camps in Pakistan and trained in Pakistani madrasas. Later they were trained and equipped by the ISI and became a notorious military force that swept across Afghan provinces captured Kabul in 1996 and implemented their interpretation of the Sharia law. However, infighting and the chaotic situation created in the border areas near Kandahar had halted the illegal trade and smuggling therefore made the mafias to donate finance to the Taliban to open the way and to maintain the peace.

4.2.2 Socialization and Taliban Background: religious education and Pashtunwali

The founding leaders of Taliban and the majority of its armed forces were the products of madrasas across the Afghan-Pakistan border. Most of them belonged to poor refugee families which in order to escape the war were living in camps inside Pakistan. Poverty and the absence of formal education forced the families to enrol their children in the madrasas that provided free education, food and accommodation. Living apart from their families in their childhood and religious learning in the madrasas were the socialization processes that most of the Taliban leaders went through. This not only affected their social behaviour and personality, but also determined the mode of their leadership and political behaviour. Therefore to understand their political behaviour, decision making process and strange policy statements, it is necessary to study their socialization process focusing on religious education and examine the role of Pashtunwali (Pashtun code of conduct).

Political scientists and sociologists emphasize the role of general and political socialization play on a person's political behaviour. Of the agents of socialization like the family, school, peer group, college and community living, political scientists consider childhood to be the most important stage when political ideas of a person begin to be formed. Therefore families, schools and to some extent peer groups play a great role in shaping an individual's world view and personality at this stage. At this stage, an individual also learns about political authority including politicization, personalization, idealization and institutionalization. It is at this stage that children begin to understand that there are higher authorities above them: first their parents, school teachers, and then agents of the state like administrators and the police (Niemi and Sobieszek 1977).

There are also certain factors that determine the religious behaviour of an individual such as group involvement, belief orthodoxy, religious commitment and demographic variable. Involvement with a religious group is likely to make an individual more religious and the feeling could become more intense if there is deep in-group rather than out-group involvement.

In the case of out-group interaction, an individual who interacts with other groups as well is likely to have a lesser degree of religiosity. The orthodox beliefs of their parents would also influence children to develop an affinity toward religious groups. Their orthodox beliefs can influence parents to enrol children in religious institutions. Religion can also be a source of succour for the economically or socially deprived individuals, adding these demographic variables also to test the deprivation theory (Cornwall 1989).

There is enough consensus that social, cultural and psychological factors affect the political behaviour and the decision making nature of leaders. Therefore the condition of the environment that leaders emerge from would certainly influence their world views and shape their future actions. On this matter, Joseph Nye argues that in order to understand and predict the political behaviour of political leaders it is essential to study the beliefs and value system of the society they come from, as well as understand the historical situation, and cultural and institutional contexts (Nye 2008). However, this research considers the Taliban's religious background, informal educational system of the

madrastas and belief in Pashtunwali as the main factors behind Taliban's strange political behaviour and their harsh decision making system.

As mentioned above the Taliban was the children of Jihad against the Soviet Union. Many of the Taliban were born in the refugee camps in Pakistan, trained in the cost free madrastas in North Western Frontiers of Pakistan (NWFP) and trained militarily by the Mujahidin. Many of them took part in the Jihad under the banner of Hizb-I-Islami Yonus Khaled or Harakat-I-Islami Mawlawi Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi in the 1980s and suffered casualties.

However, after the so called victorious Jihad in 1992 most of them remained along with their families in North Western Frontier and Baluchistan provinces of Pakistan. According to Ahmed Rashid a majority of the Taliban obtained Pakistani identity card and thousands of them voted in the 1997 Pakistan general elections (Rashid 1998:73).

The young Taliban attended madrastas belonging to the Jamiat-Ulema- Islam (JUI) and studied the Quran and Islamic laws. They didn't have to pay for education, accommodation or food. The activists of these madrastas were Deobandis with their harsh interpretation of the Sharia. In their dealings with women and Shias, the Deobandis were rather uncivilized. Students were trained to negate any political role for women and to be hostile to Shias.

Since the Taliban attended such madrastas, the process of their general and political socialization was greatly influenced by their religious socialization. Orthodox beliefs, economic deprivation and religious commitment had made the Taliban families introduce their child to these religious groups. The deep in-group involvement and less out-group interaction from the initial stages of socialization had made the Taliban orthodox religious zealots. Many of them had either lost their parents in the war or had become orphans at young age. Some of them had left their houses in their childhood to be trained in the madrastas.

They had never experienced normal socialization, authority of family, formal schools or colleges. When the JUI got split into Jamaat Ulama Islam under Mawlana Fazlurrahman (JUFI) and Jamaat Ulama Islam under Mawlana Samiul Haq (JUIS) in the 1990s, many

more extremists groups like Sepahe Sahaba and Lashkari Jangvi emerged out of it. Each one of them had their own madrasas with particular systems of education. The young Taliban also enrolled in these schools and became more radicalized.

According to Mawlana Samiulhaq who talked with Ahmed Rashid, eight Taliban cabinet ministers had graduated from his Darul uloom Haqania in Peshawar, and many governors, judges, military commanders and bureaucrats had finished their studies under his supervision (Rashid 2001:91).

The JUI religious education and the Deobandi ideological influences had hence deeply affected the socialization process of the Taliban and determined their future socio-political behaviour and actions (Rashid 1998:74).

Training in religious schools is the main factor that influenced the character and world view of the Taliban, but that was not the only factor. The society's system of values also determined the future political actions of their political leadership. The Taliban was Pashtun and certainly the Pashtunwali (Pashtun code of conducts) greatly influenced in shaping their personality.

Pashtunwali or the unique social code of the Pashtuns is the set of values and unwritten rules that are universally recognized and understood by every Pashtun. It defines the Pashtun culture. Pashtunwali is the tribe's collective expectation from members of its community to conform to its rules and regulations in order to ensure the survival of the tribe as a distinct socio-cultural entity. To put it simply, Pashtunwali is "the way of the Pashtun" (Johnson and Mason 2008).

It is not only considered as the legal framework for social interaction among Pashtuns, Pashtunwali is also part of the Pashtun identity and shapes the Pashtuns' social and political behaviour from the cradle to the grave (Ibid). The crux of Pashtunwali comprises independence and freedom, honour and revenge, hospitality and protection, and forgiveness and tolerance. It is the concepts of freedom and independence that make the Pashtuns not to surrender before any authority, and unite them for the cause of holy war, and obey the decrees of their religious leader.

The honour or *nang and namus* in Pashtunwali restrict the role of women, confining them to the role of wife, mother and housewife, restricting them within the walls of their houses. The concept of hospitality or *melmastia* makes it obligatory for the Pashtuns to not surrender the person who takes refuge in their territory. These values have deeply influenced the political behaviours of the Taliban and the way they take decisions. And when Pashtunwali is mixed with the harsh Deobandi interpretation of Sharia, the outcome could be much more unpleasant. The refusal to extradite Bin Laden, providing shelter to insurgents/terrorist groups and obedience to religious leaders relate to Pashtunwali or the Pashtun code of conduct that Taliban had belief in.

The former Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, Abdul Salam Zaeef, admits that religion, the Pashtun code of conduct and rural culture had greatly influenced their policies and the way they made decisions. He says:

There is no doubt that tradition and culture greatly influenced the way Taliban took decisions. I agree that the rural culture and the Pashtunwali had affected the Taliban. The decrees that Taliban issued were based on the Sharia, and religious scholars had a great say in them. It was religious scholars' decisions that were announced through the decrees (Zaeef 2018).

4.3 Composition of Taliban Political Elite and Fragmentation in their Administration

The structure of Afghanistan political elite was transformed deeply post 1979. The old (traditional) structure was replaced by the revolutionary political elite, first by the Marxist-Leninists and then by Mujahidin Islamists. The emergence of the new political elite not only transformed the structure of the political elite but also deeply fragmented it. This fragmentation became much more pronounced after the Soviet withdrawal in 1980. The central government was led by Dr Najibullah and the Mujahidin were led by different factions based in Peshawar and Tehran (Nojumi 2009:94).

However after coming to power in 1992, the fragmentation in the Mujahidin camp turned into conflict and the subsequent infighting led to the emergence of the Taliban in 1994. The Taliban as the new political elite were more radical in their ideology and policies and considered the former political elite, particularly the Mujahidin as corrupt and redundant.

Taliban also accused the Afghan intellectuals and technocrats of being agents of the West and excluded them from the process of decision making (Rashid 3001:97). In this section, the composition of the Taliban political elite would be examined and the role of ethnic, religious and tribal factors would be studied in detail.

4.3.1 The Composition of Taliban Political Elite

Taliban was not a monolithic force and their political leaders were not only madrasa educated simple villagers coming from remote areas of the country; they were from a complex mixture of social and political milieu (Maley 2009:223). Among the rank and file of Taliban there were Mujahidin, clerics, communists, common Pashtuns and the foreign fighters who had joined them as the movement expanded. Mujahidin groups like Hizb-I-Islami of Mawlawi Yonus Khalis and Harakat-I-Islami of Mawlawi Nabi Mohammadi were supporters of Taliban and some of the founding leaders of Taliban had fought Jihad under the banner of these two political parties.

Some of the Taliban were victims of the Soviet war and were orphans from refugee camps in Pakistan. Some communist Khalqis who were trained soldiers also later joined the Taliban and assisted them in manning tanks and the artillery. They were the follower and friends of General Shanawaz Tanai, a Khalqi Pashtun who had attempted the failed coup against Najibullah regime in 1990 and fled to Pakistan. It was from this group in exile that Taliban later recruited technicians to enhance its military capacity. Although many of them were expelled from the Taliban ranks in the 1998 crackdown, a lot of them were retained.

A former Taliban official however rejects the claim that there were former communists in their ranks or that there was some foreign country behind the Taliban movement. He says:

I totally deny and reject this propaganda that was fabricated against the Taliban. When Taliban captured Kabul and created their own government, the bureaucrats who had been with the previous regime remained with the Taliban government. There might be Tankists in the Ministry of Defence or pilots in the Ministry of Aviation who used to work with the previous regime and opted to continue under the Taliban. But it is totally wrong to say that Khalqis and Parchamis were hired as a group by someone and some country, trained and sent to assist the Taliban (Mujahid 2018).

Among the Taliban rank there were also moderate Pashtun who had joined Taliban in the hope of bringing back the King Zahir to re-establish Pashtun rule in Afghanistan. In this matter the Northern Pashtuns who were the descendants of the settlers brought by Abdurrahman Khan in the 19th century also joined the Taliban ranks in the 1997- 1998 period (Davis 1998:55).

These people who knew the society, geography, culture and language of the North played an important role in the expansion of the Taliban rule in Northern provinces. Taliban also made use of the international militants in their ranks. Arab combatants from Osama Bin Laden's 055 brigades, militants from the Uzbekistan Islamic Movement, Kashmiris and members of Pakistani extremist groups like Sepah-I-Sahaba and Lashkar-I-Jangvi were also in the Taliban ranks.

Although Taliban had fighters from different backgrounds, ideology and even nationalities, its real power was vested in the hands of a small but powerful circle called the Kandaharis. They mostly belonged to the Durrani Pashtun tribe and were from Kandahar, Uruzgan or Hilmand provinces. Taliban's highest decision making body was the Supreme Council located in Kandahar.

Mullah Omar was the head of the council which was dominated by his Durrani-Kandahari friends. Of the ten members of the council, six were Durrani; there was also a Tajik, from Badakhshan, the only non-Pashtun in the Council. Thus the Supreme Council or the Kandahar Shura was unrepresentative and monopolised by the Durrani in particular and the Pashtuns in general. However the former Taliban officials disagree about identifying the Taliban as a Pashtun dominated monopoly group. Abdulhakim Mujahid says:

I do not agree with this comment that Taliban was and is a Pashtun-dominated movement. It is totally a propaganda. I think the Tajiks in its ranks, particularly the people of Badakhshan, sacrificed more than the Pashtuns. If you go to the Logar province, you will find many graves of Badakhshan Taliban who got killed in the battle for Kabul in 1996. Also, among the leaders there were many from among the Tajiks and the Uzbeks (Mujahid 2018).

In the same line of argument, another former Taliban official ignores the comment that the Taliban was monopolised by the Pashtunists. He says:

I don't cater to this line of thinking. The Taliban did not have any negative policy regarding the Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras; its only agenda was to implement the Quran, Hadith and Sharia. Individuals were judged by their Taqwa (goodness) and their capability in carrying out functions of the Taliban government. Issues about Pashtun domination arose because the Pashtuns trusted the Taliban more and the Taliban movement initially started in the Pashtun belt. Since we had a war with Ahmad Shah Masoud, who was a Tajik, this kind of propaganda began being circulated (Zaeef 2018).

The Kandahar Shura was the most powerful governing body; the other two Shuras in Kabul, the Council of Ministers and the Military Council, were to take orders from it. Although the Council of Ministers acted as the cabinet and dealt with the day to day activities of the government, even small decisions made by it, like for example permission granted to journalists, could be revoked by the Kandahar Shura.

Hence, it should be said that the actual decisions were taken in Kandahar rather than in Kabul. Generally it is assumed that it was the Military Shura that took care of the army and planned strategies and implement them, but in effect the Military Council had no decision-making powers as Mullah Omar was the Command in Chief of the armed forces (Rashid 2001:97).

To show the importance of Mullah Mohammad Omar and his authority over the Military Council, it will be noteworthy to quote the former representative of Taliban to the US, Abdulhkim Mujahid. He says: "Mullah Mohammad Omar was the most powerful leader of the Taliban with full authority over others and the military commanders" (Mujahid 2018).

But on the Taliban establishment too, Abdulhakim Mujahid has a different interpretation. He says: "Taliban had just one Shura and not two. First it was in Kandahar and later moved to Kabul and assumed charge as the Council of Ministers or *Shuray Wozara*. Mullah Rabbani was the acting head of the Council of Ministers. All the ministers were acting ministers and temporary as it was a war situation. The real cabinet was to be formed after the war ended" (Mujahid 2018).

Abdul Salam Zaeef agreeing with Mujahid's comment and added: "Since the Taliban movement had started in Kandahar, the Kandahar Shura comprised mostly of Durrani Pashtuns and Kandaharis, but after the Taliban captured Kabul, the Council of Ministers was set up and the Kandahar Shura was abolished. There were no two Shuras at any given time" (Zaeef 2018).

The interesting point to note here is the influence of these different forces in the Taliban ranks. Though the Kandahari Shura was the dominant organisation and the others did not have as much power they could definitely play the spoilsport. The Mujahidin who joined the Taliban ranks wanted Taliban to engage the oppositions in dialogue. The communists who were pawns in the hands of the ISI were interested in persuading Taliban to blindly follow the commands of the Pakistanis. The foreign fighters and Al-Qaida were pressurizing Taliban to stand up firmly against the US and the international community, thereby leaving no place for compromise.

The presence of Uzbeks and Central Asian fighters in Taliban ranks could further jeopardize its relations with Russia and Central Asian Republics. And finally the extremist Pakistani groups with connections to Pakistan Intelligence and the madrasa networks across Pakistan kept pressuring Taliban to take stringent restrictive policies against women and the minorities, and also curb cultural activities. The outcome was confining women to their homes and the Taliban genocidal policy against Hazaras and Shias.

Former ambassador of Taliban to Pakistan Abdul Salam Zaeef, who vouched for Taliban's unity of words and action, however, denies this and says:

Initially Taliban was a unified force, and all followed the command of Mullah Omar. It was then natural for the Mujahidin commanders to ally with them when the Taliban captured Kandahar. But the communists Khalqis and the communist Parchamis did not join them. When the Taliban reached Kabul, many joined the Taliban and called themselves Talib though in reality they were not, but still followed the Taliban dictacts and were united. You cannot find any movement in the history of Afghanistan in which a person like Mullah Omar issued a decree and all the members abided by that without questioning it. It shows how united the Taliban was (Zaeef 2018).

4.3.2 Role of ethnicity, religion and tribal factors in formation of Taliban political elite

In chapter three it was argued that ethnicity is very much important in Afghanistan. The Afghan society is fragmented on the lines of clan, tribe, ethnicity and religion. People identify themselves on the basis of their ethnicity, religion and tribe or clan. Therefore people have the habit of attributing any number of positive qualities to their identity (ethnicity, religion and tribe or clan) and showing all others in a poor light. In order to expand their rule, the Taliban therefore utilised these factors whenever they found it useful.

4.3.2.1 Ethnicity

Olzak (1992) argues that competition would arise among different ethnicities when competing for the limited resources available. These resources may have economic, political and cultural values. Competition may lead to conflicts when dominant ethnic groups feel threatened about losing their dominance. They therefore would use the mechanism of ethnic mobilization to restore their dominance.

In the case of Afghanistan, the Pashtuns were the dominant ethnic group that ruled Afghanistan from 1747 to 1992, but the advent of the Mujahidin and the establishment of the Rabbani regime in Kabul changed their calculations as this had questioned the tradition of Pashtun dominance. Using ethnic mobilization mechanism, Pashtuns under the leadership of Hikmatyar and with the help of Pakistanis took on the Rabbani regime, making the Mujahidin regime unstable. Taliban was created adopting a similar mechanism and with the idea of restoring Pashtun dominance by uniting all Pashtuns.

In chapter three it has been argued that ethnization of politics was initiated by the communist regime in the 1980s. Under the guidance of the Soviet Nationality Policy, the communists questioned the dominance of the Pashtun culture by promoting Uzbeki, Pashaei, Baluchi and Turkmen languages and dialects to the level of national languages. From then on these languages received enough attention on the national TV, Radio and the Press. The communists also began allocating quota for non-Pashtuns in the military too (Crew and Tarzi 2009:21).

The politicization of ethnicity increased further after the Mujahidin entered Kabul and each ethnic group demanded a share of power in the new administration according to the strength of its population. The Hazaras questioned the Pashtuns by proposing a federal system and drafted a constitution that was titled Constitution of Federal Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in which Afghanistan was divided into six states. The Hazaras are Shias and demanded that the Shia Jafari School of Jurisprudence be included in the judicial system. The Pashtuns were of the opinion that the demand for a federal constitution was equivalent to partitioning of Afghanistan.

In the case of Taliban, ethnicity played an important role in mobilization of the forces. If we look at the history of the Taliban it can be seen that it was an ethnic movement that used Pashtun ethnic symbols to unify the Pashtuns in the country. There are certain factors that show the importance of ethnicity in the formation of the Taliban movement. First: It had its beginning in the Pashtun heartland of Southern Afghanistan and gathered force and established itself quickly in the Pashtun provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Uruzgan and Zabul without much resistance. Taliban brought provinces like Uruzagan and Zabul under its control without even firing a shot (Davis 1998:51).

Second, Persian had remained the language of the court ever since the birth of Afghanistan, and it was the language that the urbanites mostly spoke. But Taliban changed that, and not only spoke Pashtu but also restricted the administrative communication to the Pashtu script; the government gazette used to be printed only in Pashtu, and the language used by the national radio *Radio Shariat* was also Pashtu.

Third, most of the leaders of the Taliban belonged to Pashtun oriented Hizb-I-Islami Khales and Harakat-I-Islami Mawlawi Mohammadi. These groups not only had an exclusionary mindset but also a certain amount of animosity toward non-Pashtuns, particularly the Hazaras and Shias. Putting the population of the Hazaras in Afghanistan at less than one percent, it was Mawlawi Yonus Khales who used to argue against offering political power or posts and seats to the Hazaras in the Mujahidin administration in Kabul in 1992.

Fourth, one look at the highest decision making body of the Taliban such as the Kandahar Shura, the Council of Ministers and the Military Councils was enough to understand that the extend of Pashtun monopoly and the non-representation of the non-Pashtuns.

Fifth, as Taliban gained from strength to strength, their real attitude towards non-Pashtuns, especially the Hazaras, began to unfold. On their way to the North, they not only killed people, but also burned the trees and destroyed the livelihood of non-Pashtuns. While capturing Mazar-I-Sharif in the North in 1998, they killed thousands of Hazara civilians; again at Bamiyan in 2001, Hazaras were hunted down. This clearly shows how dear Pashtuns were to them, and how they considered non-Pashtuns to be their enemies who had to be exterminated. Sixth, most of those recruited to the Taliban ranks, including the Madrasa students, the communist officers and the Mujahidin commanders, were Pashtuns.

Taliban believed wrongly that the Pashtun were an absolute majority in Afghanistan and for that reason they justified Pashtuns monopolizing power. Akbar Agha, a former official in the Taliban administration, acknowledges indirectly the above statements and points to the importance of the ethnic factor in the Taliban regime. He says: “There is no doubt that the Pashtuns are in a majority. That is why governments have been in the hands of Pashtuns across the country’s history and during the time of the Taliban. But during the Taliban period there were Uzbeks and Tajiks also as ministers and officials. There were other ethnic groups among the Taliban but the leadership was in the hands of Pashtuns” (Agha 2018).

4.3.2.2 Religion

Religion was the major influencing factor in the formation of the Taliban and the platform that they socialized on, and which legitimized their rule. Taliban is a religious word. The plural form of the word *talib* means students. It is commonly used for students of religious schools or *darulloom* in Persian literature. The Taliban socialization took place in the refugee camps and the madrasas in Pakistan. There they socialized politically and their personality developed. This particular type of socialization not only affected

their world view but also influenced the way they took decisions and formulated policies while they ruled Afghanistan.

The Taliban were the follower of the Deobandi ideology and were trained in Deobandi madrasas in Pakistan. Therefore the roots of the Taliban can be traced back to 19th century India. It was in 1867 that a group of Muslim scholars, including Rashid Ahmed Gangohi and Mohammad Yaqub Nanautawi, established the Darul Uloom Deoband in India. They were religious reformers who wanted to purify Islam in the subcontinent from deviations such as Sufism, visitation of shrines and the Shias.

From that initial stage and despite restriction imposed by the government of Afghanistan many students joined Deoband and the teachings of this school spread among the Sunnis of Afghanistan. On the threshold of India's partition, the Deoband School split into two: the Jamiat-I-Ulama-I-Hind and the Jamiat-I-Ulama-Islam (JUI). The former was for a united India and opposed the creation of Pakistan, but the JUI was pro Pakistan and supported the Two Nations Theory.

After independence, the Indian Deobandi schools remained moderate but those in Pakistan became more radicalized under the Ziaul Haq Islamization policy. The Deobandi Jamiat-I-Ulama-I-Islam and the Islamist Jamaat-I-Islami of Qazi Husain Ahmad got close to the Ziaul Haq regime. The outcome was the mushrooming of Deobandi schools across Pakistan.

However, on the issue of working with the Ziaul Haq regime, the JUI split into two: the JUI (F) of Mawlana Fazlurrahman and the JUI (S) of Mawlana Samiul Haq. The former opposed Zia's policies and distanced itself from him, but the latter continued to cooperate with Zia's regime. When the Jihadists won in Afghanistan and the Mujahidin entered Kabul in 1992, they were not able to establish an Islamic state and a civil war erupted that continued in the coming years.

In the meantime, the JUI (S) utilised this opportunity to set up its madrasas across the frontiers of Pakistan and the states of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These newly established madrasas taught strictly puritanical Islam based on orthodox and medievalist interpretations. The curriculum of these schools was based on Saudi

Wahabism and the Deobandi brands of Islam. The students were trained to be dedicated to the traditionalist and radical interpretation of Islam as well as to be completely devoted to the concept of combative Jihad.

They were asked to be ready to sacrifice their lives whenever it was needed to defend the land of Muslims against infidel attacks. These students were also trained to oppose the concept of nationalism and were encouraged to work for a single community of Muslims (*umma*) under an Islamic government. The Shias, Sufis and Ahmadis were excluded from this community of Muslims.

It was the orphan from the refugee camps and children from the poor families who attended these Deobandi schools in Pakistan. They were trained to be intolerant to women and the Shias. Their prime concern was religion and religious rituals. Therefore immediately after the Taliban conquered Kabul, they proclaimed the establishment of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, and to legitimize his rule Mullah Omar began to wear the so called cloak of Prophet Mohammad in Kandahar.

The rampaging Taliban militia imposed the medieval Sharia law in which ever land they subdued on their way to Kabul. In the name of stability and security, they imposed strict laws and banned the religious rituals of the Shias and banned women from taking part in any cultural performances.

The main reason behind such a weird political behaviour was the religious socialization and training they had undergone in the radical, medieval madrasas in Pakistan. Although the Islamization of the Afghan society can be traced back to the policies imposed by Abdurrahman in the country in the 1880s and later promoted by the Mujahidin government, it was the Taliban which thoroughly radicalized it and made it intolerable. The Taliban's Department for Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice introduced stoning and lashing and these punishments were carried out publicly in stadiums and city squares.

All the three former senior Taliban officials who were interviewed for this research concurred with the above findings on the impact that religion and religious education had on Taliban policies and political behaviour. They agreed that most of the Taliban leaders

had been trained in Pakistani Deobandi madrasas, but denied the existence of a radical curriculum in those Deobandi madrasas. They also denied any relation between Deobandi and Salafism, and argued that these two schools of thought contradicted each other.

Akbar Agha said: “I must first say that Deobandi is against Salafism. Second: Mawlana Samiul Haq, the owner of the Haqqania School, belongs to the Tariqat School which is also against Salafism. Most of the teachers there belong to Tariqat. No one in the world has ever said that this madrasa had any affinity to Salafism” (Agha 2018).

Abdul Salam Zaeef was of the opinion that the Indian Deobandi madrasas and the Pakistani Deobandi madrasas, where the Taliban got their training, were very similar in nature. He said: “There is no difference between them as far as thought and curriculum are concerned. But there might be differences in their way of teaching. Deobandi means that they are Hanafi Sunnis and moderate, not extremist. Their curriculum is based on the Sharia and Islamic law” (Zaeef 2018).

4.3.2.3 Tribal factor

If one were to go by Tapper’s (1983:4) definition of a tribe as a “localized group where kinship plays a dominant role”, then it could be argued that the tribal factor was also important in the formation of the Taliban movement. A mere look at the composition of the Taliban government would make it clear as to how less represented the non-Pashtuns are in it and how over represented the Durrani Pashtun tribe is in it.

This proves that the Taliban leadership had deep belief in tribal values and tribal identity. In the Kandahar Shura, the Council of Ministers and the Military Councils, people from the Durrani tribe were over represented. However, hostility to women is not just the result of Taliban’s religious socialization; it is also because of the rural background of the leaders of the Taliban as well as the Pashtunwali.

In southern Afghanistan and in Pashtun villages, women are only allowed to appear in veil and girls are not allowed to attend schools. Such traditions were internalized and became part of the Taliban value system that restricted women to their homes (Rashid

2001:110). Applying Pashtunwali or the Pashtun code of conduct in the day to day practices of the Taliban shows the importance of tribal values in the Taliban movement.

Melmastia (hospitality), *badal* or seeking justice and taking revenge, *nanwatai* or giving sanctuary, *namus* or sexual honour of women are the most important values in the Pashtun code of conduct. Each Pashtun is expected to observe them (Ali 2013).

It was their sense of hospitality that made the Taliban offer shelter to dangerous terrorist organizations like Al-Qaida, Uzbekistan Islamic Movement and Sepah-I-Sahaba of Pakistan. These values forced Taliban to ignore Western pressure to surrender Osama Bin Laden after 9/11 that led to Afghanistan being bombed by the US and later ousted from power. Their domestic policies against the Opposition like burning the Shamali agricultural land in Northern Kabul and the killing of Hazaras in Mazar-I-Sharif and Bamiyan were influenced by the Pashtunwali values of seeking revenge.

The concepts of *nang* and *namus* were the reason behind Taliban banning the presence of women in public and depriving them of their basic right like education. Emphasizing on the *Jirga* or local councils rather than establishing state institutions to deal with problems is another factor that shows the vitality of tribal values in the Taliban movement. The practices of Pashtunwali blurred the line between the Pashtun code of conduct and the Sharia.

That is why many of the Taliban punishments were drawn from Pashtunwali rather than Sharia. The commitment to Pashtunwali and tribal values such as hospitality and revenge sustained the Taliban alliance with the Al Qaida chief, and provoked the oppositions to non-Pashtuns. And this undermined Taliban's capacity to govern the country (Crew and Tarzi 2009:9).

4.4 The fragmentation of the political elite and its effect on Taliban's domestic policy

From 1996 to 2001 the Afghan political elite were fragmented according to ethnic, linguistic, religious and even regional factors. Neither the Taliban nor the opposition Northern Alliance (NA) were united. Although the NA brought the Uzbeks, the Tajiks

and the Hazaras and moderate Pashtuns under a common leadership to fight against Taliban, their unity depended on the prevailing situation. There are enough incidents when the Uzbeks defected to the Taliban side and later returned to the NA.

This instability prevented the NA from sustaining itself as a unified force. In the meanwhile, the Taliban political elite were also fragmented according to tribal, region and ideological lines. Tribal wise the historical rivalry between the Ghilzai and the Durrani tribes had deeply fragmented the Taliban. The Kandahari Shura, the backbone of the Taliban, was monopolized by the Durranis, marginalizing the Ghilzais who mostly carried out the tasks reserved for foot soldiers.

Region wise, the Pashtuns of the South, particularly the three provinces of Kandahar, Helmand and Urozgan, had more representation in the Taliban administration and had more privileges than others. Also, in terms of ideology the Taliban political elite were divided into extremists and moderates.

The extremists strictly followed the Deobandi interpretation of the Sharia law as per which women were not allowed to work and denied access to education; religious minorities were to be suppressed and international values were considered contrary to Islamic values and hence were to be ignored or resisted. The moderates had a more realistic approach to domestic and international environment and believed in negotiations and inclusion of the opposition in administration. Of course, the division among the Taliban political elite on tribal, regional and ideological lines had enormous impact on their domestic and international policies.

The problems among the Taliban political elite were quite severe, but since the regime followed a policy of secrecy, there was a tendency to water them down. On September 25, 1998, Taliban arrested 55 army officers mostly with communist background accusing them of conspiring to topple the Kabul regime. Taliban claimed that the arrested generals had confessed to the plot.

Following this there were more arrests, this time in other cities including Herat and Jalalabad (Frontier Post 1998). Confirming the arrest in Jalalabad city, Mullah Sadre Azam, Deputy to the Governor of Nangarhar, said: "They were planning to explode

bombs and fuel lawlessness. Their plan was to foil the Taliban effort to implement Sharia and combat crimes” (News 1998).

Following these arrests, the extremists in the Taliban began side lining the moderates. On November 24, 1998, the acting Prime Minister and head of the Council of Ministers, Mullah Mohammad Rabbani was sacked in Kabul and hardliner Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, the Nangarhar Governor, succeeded him. Mullah Rabbani was one of the moderates and had accepted a ceasefire with the opposition. He had expressed his readiness to include the oppositions in the government at a meeting with US Special Envoy Bill Richardson. However, Mullah Omar publicly denounced the deal. Rabbani was summoned to Kandahar. He later died of some unknown disease (Nation 1998).

The disunity among the Taliban political elite, as well as their animosity towards the rest of the political elite in the country had a deep effect on Taliban’s domestic and foreign policies.

4.4.1 Taliban’s domestic policy

Bellow, the effects of elite disunity on the domestic policy of the Taliban across three sectors minority rights, women’s rights and dealing with foreign fighters in the country will be examined.

4.4.1.1 Minority rights

The Taliban regime did not have an inclusive policy toward religious and ethnic minorities. Afghanistan is a land of minorities in term of ethnicity, and no one including the Pashtuns, can claim an absolute majority. However, in terms of religion, the Sunni Hanafi Islam has an absolute majority; Shias compose of 25% of the population. Besides Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and Jews have lived in the country for centuries. There are many factors that led the Taliban to follow an exclusionary policy against the minorities. The legacy of the past regimes, particularly that of Abdurrahman Khan, the fragmentation of the society during the civil war, religious socialization and the Deobandi ideology, tribal values and the belief in the supremacy of the Pashtuns, greatly influenced Taliban’s policies viz-a-viz the minorities.

The Taliban religious socialization in the Deobandi madrasas and the influence of the Deobandi ideology on them led Taliban to adopt much more severe policies toward religious and ethnic minorities. They were trained in Deobandi madrasas to hate religious minorities, particularly the Shias (Kamran 2016:65). Their belief in the supremacy of the Pashtuns led Taliban to discriminate against religious and ethnic minorities and eliminate them.

According to Kamran the Deoband school was established in British India in the 19th century as a reaction to the overwhelming influence of the Shias in Lucknow and beyond under the Nawab of Awadh (Ibid: 66). The work of Yusuf Ludhianvi, *Ikhtilaf-e-Ummat aur Sirat-e-Mustaqeem* (Dissent in the Ummah and the Right Path), was widely taught in the Deobandi madrasas as part of their theology curriculum.

According to Ludhianvi's thesis "there is no doubt about the infidelity of the Shias". He considered Shia to be "antithetical to Islam" (Hashmi 2016:153). It can be concluded that it was because of such dogmatic training that the Taliban was virulent against the Shias and other religious minorities.

Taliban asked individual Sikhs and Hindus to wear yellow badges and to hoist yellow flags on their houses in order to distinguish them from Muslims (Barfield 2010:266). The idea was simply to exclude them from the society, to curb their social activities and even to encourage others to refuse to associate with these minorities. For the Shia minority the situation was even worse; their religious rituals such as the Muharram procession were banned. When the war prolonged and the Hazara fighters put up resistance, Taliban resorted to blockading and starving them.

In a statement in November 1997, the UN coordinator for Afghanistan Alfredo Witschi-Cestari said that "the four months blockade had brought the mountainous Hazarajat region almost near to starvation", and he continued by saying that "the consequence of this blockade is the cruellest thing to happen this year". Despite the plea by the UN, the Taliban Information Minister said: "We have banned things being transported to Hazarajat because they are using it for the military purposes" (Dawn 1997).

This author was a child at that time and can recall that a sack of flour in the Pashtun neighbourhood was AF 6 to 7 lakhs at that time while a sack of flour smuggled to the Hazara neighbourhood and sold there was between AF 20 and 24 lakhs. Then not being satisfied with starving the Hazara Shia population, the Taliban started a genocidal mission against them. After they captured Mazar-I-Sharif on August 8, 1998, the Taliban massacred nearly 5,000 to 6,000 Hazara Shias.

The Taliban commander is reported to have said that Mullah Omar had allowed them to kill for three hours, but that the killings continued for three continuous days. After conquering Mazar-I- Sharif, the commander of Taliban in the city, Mullah Manan Niazi, proclaimed from the city mosque: “Hazara Shias have three choices: convert to Sunni Islam, leave for Iran, or be ready to die” (Rashid 2001:74).

In January 2001, the Taliban killed a thousand Hazaras and burned houses in Yakwlang district of Bamiyan in a bid to capture Yakawlang district (Human Rights Watch 2018). Such hatred and exclusionary policies were the outcome of their religious socialization and belief in the supremacy of the Pashtuns, something that did not change or become moderate even under international pressure.

When former Taliban officials were asked about the domestic policy of Taliban viz-a-viz minority rights, they denied Taliban having an official policy against any particular ethnic group or religious groups in the country. According to them, excesses against certain ethnic and religious group were the doings of individual commanders and not part of the official policy of the Taliban.

They also denied Deobandi madrasas in Pakistan teaching anything anti-Shia and hence ruled out Deobandi madrasas having any role in Taliban’s anti-Shia and anti-religious minority campaigns during their military campaign to capture Afghanistan. On the massacre of Shias, Abdul Salam Zaeef said: “it was because of the war and was not any kind of ethnic cleansing” (Zaeef 2018).

Abdulahkim Mujahid also does not believe Taliban had a sectarian policy of any sort. Asked if the Taliban had an anti-Shia agenda, he responded saying:

I am talking to you about the general policy of the Taliban which was not anti-Shia. I am not talking about the activities of individuals who might have committed some crimes against a particular ethnic or religious group. Those individuals are responsible for such activities. The Taliban did not and does not differentiate between Shias and Sunnis. They consider all of them as Muslims of one country and one land (Mujahid 2018).

On the curriculum in Deobandi madrasas, Akbar Agha says: “Nothing was taught there about differences between Shias and Sunnis” (Agha 2018). Human Right and women activist Sima Samar rejects the above comments by Taliban officials and says: “Taliban’s actions against religious minorities were not individual acts, they were systematic ones. According to her “the economic sanctions against the Shia Hazaras, the Kandi Posht killing of Hazaras in Zabul, the Mazar and Bamiyan massacres cannot be called individual acts, Taliban acted in a systematic manner and by order of external agencies” (Sima Samar 2018).

The historical reasons, the Deobandi ideology, the Deobandi curriculum, the Pashtunwali and belief on Pashtun supremacy greatly influenced the Taliban policy towards minorities. However the disunity and factions among the Taliban elites should not be ignored in this matter. There were moderates and extremists among the Taliban ranks. The extremists like the Sepah-i- Sahaba, Lashkar-i-Jangvi, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Al-Qaida had very strict thought on Shia and other religious minorities therefore pressurizing the Taliban to follow their concerned policies against minorities. Since their role were essential in advancing and financing the Taliban’s war machine therefore the Taliban not only set their policies according to their will but also gave them free hand in doing any atrocities while capturing any regions that minorities living in.

4.4.1.2 Women’s rights

The religious background, rural culture and tribal values had a deep impact on Taliban’s policy toward women (Dupree 1998:150). The Deobandi madrasas advocate a regressive policy toward women and the Taliban studied there. Women are less visible in the traditional rural societies that the Taliban were brought up. The Pashtunwali has a strict code of conduct for women that the Taliban was greatly influenced by.

Those factors plus the disunity among the Taliban on different issues made them issue the statement on women when they captured Kabul on September 26, 1996. The statement said that “the women can no longer seek employment outside their houses” and ordered women to cover their bodies with full hijab while appearing in public. The statement also announced the closure of the schools for girls and banned women from getting access to education (Yosafzai 1996, Dupree 1998:148).

On October 1, 1996 Taliban Deputy Foreign Minister Sher Mohammad Stanakzai refuted the existence of such a statement and claimed it was a “big rumour”. He added: “according to Islamic rules, education is must for women and it is not limited either to men or women”. He further said that “Taliban are not against women and the ban on women working is just for a short period”. According to him the restrictions on both women workers and female students would be eased “when they prepare proper working atmosphere for women and construct separate schools for girls” (Frontier Post 1996).

Similarly Taliban Chief Justice Mawlawi Abdul Ghafoor Senanee once stated that “when the government becomes more stable women would be allowed to work and girls would be able to attend schools”. According to him the policy would be changed when “peace prevails and protection to women is fully guaranteed” (Abrar 1996). Such ideal conditions were improbable to achieve and it looks Taliban made such promises in order to save its face in front of the international community and to ease the domestic tension that prevailed on account of their policies.

Dupree argues that “Taliban as good Muslims and as ideal Afghan men wanted to protect the so called women’s honour. They were afraid that women could be sexually dishonoured. Therefore the best way avoid that was to confine them inside the walls of their houses surrounded by children, men and women they were familiar with” (Dupree 1998:151). Taliban even banned male doctors visiting female patients, a policy that put women’s health in jeopardy. In a society where the number of male doctors was limited, finding a female doctor was beyond imagination.

These restrictions on women were not confined to a bare statement; they were strictly implemented and supervised by the Taliban religious police called *Amre bilmaroof wa*

nahi almonkar (promotion of virtue and prevention of vice). The non-compliant women could be beaten and called names if caught by the religious police. Those drivers who give rides to women without *mahram* (male companion) could be punished and the husbands of those women or the father of the girl involved would be called to the police stations. The loss due this discriminatory policy against women was huge. 103,256 female students, 7,793 female teachers, 40,000 to 150,000 women employees were affected severely. The severeness of the issue can be understood when we realise that 50,000 of this women workforce were widows who were the only breadwinners of their families (Ibid:154).

This made the international community to react and to condemn Taliban's regressive policy toward women. Following the detention of the European Union Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs, Emma Bonino, in Kabul, European countries condemned the act and the European parliament started the campaign of "follower for the women of Kabul" (Maley 2009: 243).

This was followed by overt criticism by the US when the US Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, during her visit to the refugee camps in Peshawar called the Taliban policy toward women "despicable and great lack of respect for human dignity". Although western delegates took up the issue of gender discrimination at every meeting with Taliban officials, the Taliban did not budge. For them, the issue of winning the war was the priority rather than women's and girls' rights.

When asked about the connection between Taliban's regressive policy on women and their religious education in Deobandi madrasas, Abdul Salam Zaeef said:

Women's rights are a great discourse. Islam and Hadith have said particular things about women. Islam provides equal rights for women in education. It is banned in Islam to limit women to their homes and prevent them from going to work. Islam and Hadith have provided women these rights therefore the Deoband madrasas cannot interfere in these rights and it has not been doing so. When individuals do so, it is a deviation (Zaeef 2018).

Another former Taliban official, Abdulhakim Mujahid, says:" it was their rural culture and the prevailing war situation that had made Taliban come up with such a policy on women. He says: It is not true that the Taliban did not allow women to go to school. We

trained more than 2,000 midwives in Chahar Sad Bistar hospital in Kabul. The problem was different; it was the rural background that made Taliban promulgate such a decree. The problem was not Islamic ideology, there was a clash between two attitudes, rural and urban; 85% of the Taliban hailed from rural areas. That is why they departed from the policy of the previous government on women” (Mujahid 2018).

On women’s rights under the Taliban regime, another former Taliban official said: “We are Muslims and do not follow the law of infidels. We follow the Quran. It is mentioned in Sura Ahzab verses 33: “And abide in your houses and do not display yourselves as [was] done during the former times of ignorance”. Taliban believe in this verse from the Quran. Such recommendations can be found in other Islamic sources as well as in our Pashtun tradition” (Agha 2018).

Sima Samar, a human rights activist and the current Chairman of Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, says: “From the initial stage Taliban’s policies toward women were clearly regressive”. She adds:

When they got captured Kandahar they closed girls’ schools and women’ public bathrooms. Taliban proscribed women coming out of their houses in every city they conquered. In September 1995, after Herat fell to them and Taliban issued the ban order, women protested on the streets but they were brutally suppressed by Taliban forces. After they captured Kabul, their policy against women became harsher and it was announced on Radio Shariat. People were asked to paint the glasses on their second floor windows so that women would not be seen. If women were seen on the roofs while putting clothes to dry, their husband would be called to the police station and harassed. Taliban banned women from travelling alone, and they were only allowed to sit on the back seats in public transports. Women were not allowed to wear high-heel shoes because the sound as they walked might attract men’s attention and may make them commit sinful acts. Women were also banned from wearing white shoes as the Taliban flag was white in colour (Samar 2018).

According to Samar, “international pressure had forced Taliban to allow girls to attend schools till age nine, but the education was restricted to Islamic curriculum” (Sima Samar 2018).

As mentioned above this regressive policy against women was the result of Taliban religious and rural socialization. However the Taliban elite were not united in policy making. The radical wanted the strict implementation of Sharia law and the moderates

wanted some compromises. It made the Taliban unable to enact the universal law for women and therefore the situation of women in rural area was far better than the urban area.

4.4.1.3 Terrorism and terrorist groups

The evolution of Afghanistan as a terrorist sanctuary can be traced back to the time when a large number of Islamic fighters were attracted to the country on account of the so called Afghan Jihad. With the help of the ISI, the CIA and the Saudi petro dollar, these fighters from across the world first came to Pakistan, got weapon training there and then were sent Afghanistan to fight against the Soviet troops and the Afghan army. Taking advantage of this situation, President Ziaul Haq initiated Islamization of politics and society in Pakistan and allied with Islamic parties such as Jamiat-I-Islami and later with Deobandi Jamiat-I-Ulama-I-Islam (Ali 2013).

During this process a huge numbers of madrasas were constructed, funded and secretly asked to train fighters for the holy war in Afghanistan. The US government and its allies not only invested heavily in these madrasas but also initiated the radicalization process through formal education. The mission to design the new curriculum for the public schools under Mujahidin control was given to an American institution called Nebraska University. In new curriculum the concepts of Jihad, martyrdom and Mujahidin were so deeply glorified that even small kids in the school wanted to become a Mujahid as well as test an AK 47 (ibid).

Here the point is that there was no clear distinction between the formal and the informal education in helping students to get radicalized. Rashid (2001:89) gives a clear picture of the radicalization process when he says: “In 1971 there were hardly 900 madrasas across Pakistan, but by the end of Zia ul Haq’s regime there were 8,000 registered and 25,000 unregistered madrasas, educating half a million students.” It is worthy to mention that in the same period in Afghanistan under the control of the Mujahidin there was more or less the same number of madrasas.

To avoid detection by the Soviet bombers and the Afghan air force the allies shifted their training camps in Afghanistan into the long and intricate secret tunnels deep inside the

mountains. When the war was over and the Soviets withdrew, Afghanistan was left to deal with her problems alone. It had to take care of the nearly 35,000 Islamic extremists from 43 countries who had been radicalized in the Pakistani madrasas and baptized by fire in the Afghan Jihad (Rashid 2001:130).

Huntington (1996) says that the Afghan Jihad “left behind a variety of Islamic organizations which intended to promote the interests of Islam against infidels”. According to him, the Afghan war “left behind a legacy of experts and experienced fighters, training camps and of course logistical facilities”. The majority of these fighters did not return home overnight preferring to stay back. Though the Mujahidin government tried to convince them to return it didn’t quite succeed as some of the Mujahidin factions, particularly hardliner Hizb-I-Islami Gulbuddin Hikmatyar and the Jalalabad Shura, had close contacts with them. It was due to this close cooperation that the head of Al Qaida, Osama Bin Laden, had landed in Jalalabad after he was expelled from Sudan in 1996.

During the Taliban period Afghanistan became the hub of terrorist groups. In providing them shelter Taliban was influenced by religious ideology and the Pashtun code of conducts. The Taliban assumed those terrorists to be good Muslims and therefore *muhajir* (immigrants) according to Islamic ideology. And as *ansar* (supporter) Taliban had to provide them shelter.

Moreover, Taliban being Pashtuns and advocates of Pashtunwali or Pashtun code of conduct, they had to observe *Melmastia* (hospitality) and *Nanwatai* (granting asylum), the most important principles of Pashtunwali. They could never forsake a person seeking help or asylum. He had to be treated as a guest who should be protected from being extradited (Ali 2013). It was these factors that influenced Taliban to not abandon the extremist groups which they had taken under their wings.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), the Harakatul Ansar of Kashmir, Chechens and Uighurs militants, the Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat of Iran, the Sepah-Sahaba of Pakistan and most importantly the Al Qaida were provided shelter in Afghanistan. All these groups had training camps in the country. They were not only participating in the war alongside the Taliban, but were also undertaking terrorist activities in their own countries.

Some of them like the Al Qaida had global plans and wanted to exterminate infidels across the world. Al-Qaida in its meeting on February 23, 1998 in Khost, brought out a manifesto titled *The Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusader*, and issued a fatwa that said: “To kill the Americans and their allies civilian or military is the duty of every Muslims” and added that such people could be targeted anywhere and in any country (Rashid 2001:10).

The IMU was behind the bomb explosion in Tashkent in February 1999 that failed to assassinate the Uzbek President, but killed 16 people and wounded 128. In August the same year, Juma Namnagani of IMU entered Kirghizstan with 800 militants, seized villages and took hostages (Rashid 1999). The US has accused Al-Qaida of plotting the bombing of its embassies in Africa in August 1998 that killed and wounded many. Such activities in the Taliban territory forced the international community to accuse the Taliban regime of exporting terrorism across the region and the world.

Despite the international outrage and the UN resolutions and sanctions against it the Taliban did not move against the terrorists or remove their camps and facilities. Instead, the Supreme Leader of the Taliban condemned the international pressure and accused them of “not distinguishing between terrorists and Mujahidin”. Despite all the evidence presented, he claimed that “Afghanistan was not a sanctuary for terrorists in the past, and the Taliban is not supporting terrorist now” (News 1999). According to him all the foreign militants were holy warriors and merited being given sanctuary.

The Taliban was particularly adamant about protecting Osama Bin Laden and not extraditing him to the US. Abdul Hai Mutmain, one of the Taliban spokespersons argued that expelling Osama “is against Afghan traditions and the Islamic bond and therefore we cannot do that” (News 1999). His claim shows that the Taliban policy of sheltering international terrorists was grounded in Islamic ideology and the Pashtun code of conduct (Pashtunwali). In an interview, Akbar Agha, a former Taliban official, told this author the reasons for not surrendering Bin Laden who was in Afghanistan during the Taliban regime, to the US after the 9/11 2001 attack. He says: “He was our guest and delivering

him to the US would have been against Afghan hospitality as also against Islamic principle. But I agree he should have been kept under control” (Agha 2018).

Again in dealing with the foreign fighters and the international terrorist groups such as Al Qaida, there were great differences among the Taliban elite. Those hardliners could justify their presence on the basis of religion and Pashtunwali but the moderates demanded the expulsion of them. In the chapter five, it will be argued that even high official ranks among the Taliban wanted to cooperate with international community and the US to take action against Osama Bin Laden and to extradite him to the US.

4.5 Elite factions and its effect on Taliban Foreign Policy

In this section first the author deals with foreign policy of the Taliban and elaborates on their foreign policy objectives. After that I we will examine the relations of Taliban with neighbours particularly Pakistan and Iran, their dealings with great powers like US and Russia and finally their collaboration with international organizations particularly the United Nations. Before going to the depth of discussion there are some issues to be addressed and the questions to be answered.

First, from 1996 to 2001 Afghanistan had two governments. One was the Mujahidin government of which Burhanuddin Rabbani was the president, and the other was the Taliban administration under the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and Mullah Omar was its supreme leader. The Mujahidin government was the de jure administration representing Afghanistan in major international institutions including the United Nations, but Taliban was the de facto government, controlling the major territories of Afghanistan. The Taliban established diplomatic relations with countries like Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirate. In this section focus would be on the foreign policy of the Taliban and to some extend on the Mujahidin administration.

Second, a foreign policy analysis usually pays attention to the foreign policy of a state. Since the Taliban administration was not recognized by the international community, it has been said that the Taliban government cannot be considered a legitimate government and hence is out of the domain of foreign policy analysis. In this matter it is important to note that there are many influential organizations and political parties within a state

which are not in power but have a foreign policy. Their statements and declarations are essential to understand their foreign policy. Taliban was a movement and the de facto government in Afghanistan. Since foreign policy is a matter of words, statements and declarations, the Taliban had made a mark in this domain (Maley 2000).

Third, the main stream IR might argue that domestic politics is a matter of sovereignty and does not affect the foreign policy, but in the case of the Taliban, their domestic policy had a great influence on their foreign policy. The Taliban regime proved that the political elite not only affect foreign policy decision making but could also change the identity and the national interests of the state. In this section, Taliban's foreign policy objectives, its relations with neighbors, great powers and International institutions would be discussed.

4.5.1 Taliban's Foreign Policy objectives

A majority of the top officials in the Taliban administration had had only religious education and attended only madrasas in Pakistan, and hence were blissfully unaware of modern education. Most of the Taliban foot soldiers and commanders were completely illiterate and could not even read or write. Taliban hence didn't have the support of a competent bureaucracy or highly educated cadre. Also, the Taliban had little awareness about the outside world and world politics. They only knew a bit about the Muslim world and the rest was a big vacuum. Moreover, dealing with interlocutors needed practice of modern diplomacy, something that the Taliban lacked; this made negotiations with the Taliban and by the Taliban difficult.

In an interview, a former ambassador of Taliban to Pakistan highlighted the challenges Taliban's foreign policy faced. He said:

I want to make one thing clear. Taliban did not know enough about politics and the intricacies of world politics. Its leadership didn't quite understand the relationship among countries, nor the problems and issues involved. They were a simple people who wanted to pursue honest politics with the international community. Hence they faced too many problems in their foreign policy dealings which they found very complicated (Zaef 2018).

According to another former Taliban official, concentrating on winning the war was the main reason why Taliban did not focus on the foreign policy domain. He says: "Taliban

tried to have friendly relations with other nations, but it was not successful. Only a few countries recognized it. Taliban had an informal ambassador in the US, and had tried to build relations with the Islamic world. We should not forget that at that time the Taliban was concentrating more on defeating its enemies at home and therefore focused less on its foreign policy” (Agha 2018).

Analysing foreign policy needs some inputs in terms of statements and foreign policy manifesto, but the Taliban did not produce enough documents for an analyst to go through and draw up conclusions, making the task of a researcher very difficult. This research has hence tried to find out Taliban’s policy attitude and initiatives by going through their radio broadcast, the letters they sent to international agencies and through interviews with former Taliban officials. The focus would be on a number of individuals who played important roles in articulating Taliban’s foreign policy. On many occasions, the leader of Taliban, Mullah Mohammad Omar, Foreign Ministers, and especially their ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef have issued statements on the group’s foreign policy.

Taliban imposed medieval rules in the country after they entered Kabul on September 26, 1996. They destroyed girls’ schools and prohibited women from working. They publicly destroyed televisions, banned music, put restrictions on certain sports, and ordered men to grow beard. These regressive policies backfired and the international community kept them at bay. This made the new ten-member interim administration in Kabul formulate a foreign policy with certain objectives.

The first and foremost objective was to secure recognition of the international community and to represent Afghanistan in the UN, which was now being done by the Rabbani administration. Mullah Mohammad Ghaus, one of the ten members of the caretaker administration and the Acting Foreign Minister mentioned this in their first press conference in Kabul. He said: “I would like to emphasize that our first priority and demand is that the international community, the UN and the people of the world recognize this government as that would open the path for a representative government in Afghanistan” (POT 1996: 191).

For the matter of recognition and to secure the goodwill of the international community, Taliban softened their rhetoric against women. Mullah Ghaus, at the same press conference repeated Taliban's commitment to reconsidering the ban on women once calm, peace and security were restored in Afghanistan (ibid). As mentioned above, this softened rhetoric was the result of warning by the European Union Human Rights Commissioner Emma Bonina who asked EU members to withhold recognition of the Taliban till they retreat from their backward and medieval policies on women.

In that first meeting with foreign correspondents, Taliban Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs revealed that the caretaker government would transfer power to a representative government headed by someone who is "a true Muslim to safeguard Islamic law and system" in Afghanistan. He also emphasized that the administration would consider all citizens of the country to be equal irrespective of their ethnicity and language. On establishing relations with other nations, the Minister highlighted the eagerness of the Taliban to establish diplomatic ties with "all independent countries based on international law and accepted norms" (POT 1996:194).

It looks like all these statements were made in order to appease the UN and the international community after having violated international norms and law by forcefully entering the UN premises in Kabul and capturing President Najibullah. He was later hanged along with his brother after having been brutally assaulted in one of the squares in Kabul.

However except for Pakistan which proposed that the Taliban government be given the UN seat, most of the countries where the Rabbani government had missions such as the US, Australia, France and the United Kingdom maintained status quo. The UN has a clear policy viz-a-viz the situation when there is more than one claimant to a country's seat in its General Assembly. Resolution 396 (V) adopted by UN General Assembly in 1950 recommends that the UN membership "question should be considered in the light of the purpose and principles of the UN Charter".

The Taliban's armed attack on UN premises in Kabul worked to its disadvantage in this case, and the UN rejected their demand. Maley (2000) thinks that other factors too may have influenced the UN in handing over the seat to the Taliban. First, Pakistan's overt campaign for Taliban triggered suspicions that Taliban was a mere pawn in the hands of Pakistan for overthrowing the Rabbani government. Second, the representative of Taliban nominated to the UN post was a dimwit compared to Rabbani's Ambassador to the UN, who was educated in France and had worked in different capacity inside and outside Afghanistan.

The second broad objective of Taliban's foreign policy was to get foreign aid and attract foreign investment. The former Taliban Foreign Minister's saying that the "civil war had left Afghanistan devastated with many families being unable to feed their members" was an indirect appeal for international aid to rebuild the war torn country. He added: "We are hoping that all countries would participate in the reconstruction of Afghanistan because the whole administrative system and public services remain paralysed and without the cooperation and assistance of foreign countries we will not be able to rebuild the country and make it stand on its own feet" (Dawn 1996).

The Taliban was on the right path when it set seeking foreign aid as one of its foreign policy objective. History shows that the Afghan state has always been a rentier state, fully dependent on foreign aid for undertaking developmental projects. It is said that before 1979, over a third of the total state expenditure was financed by international donors (Rubin 1995:297). Here it should not be forgotten that to generate foreign aid international recognition was one of the top criteria, hence Taliban's efforts in this direction. And getting foreign aid was a top priority as the civil war had destroyed the economy and state institutions were finding it tough to generate revenue internally by collecting taxes.

Thinking on this lines, Taliban started negotiations with major multinational oil companies such as Argentinean Bidas, American UNOCAL and Saudi's Delta group for constructing the transit gas pipe from Turkmenistan to Pakistan and then to India through Afghanistan. By cooperating with UNOCAL Taliban wanted to generate revenue and garner the support of the US administration. Taliban also expected that the winner of the

bid for the pipeline project would provide electricity, gas, telephone lines, standard roads and infrastructure, thus rejuvenating the destroyed country (Rashid 2001:173-4). However, Taliban's dreams faded when UNOCAL suspended its operations in connection with the project after US cruise missiles hit the Osama Bin Laden sanctuaries in Afghanistan in 1997-98.

The third broad objective of Taliban's foreign policy was to introduce themselves to the international community and to clear their image which according to them had been tarnished by a hostile media and their enemy's propaganda machines. One of the Taliban ambassador abroad, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, who used to represent them in Pakistan said that "to strengthen Afghanistan's relations with foreign countries I used to hold regular meetings and discussions with foreign ambassadors and dignitaries across the world, as well as hold press conferences with foreign correspondents" in the Pakistani capital (Zaeef 2010:115-130).

He has had to justify the decrees of Mullah Omar that led to the destruction of heritage icons like Bamiyan's Buddha statues; explain away medieval penalties like stoning to death and *qisas* (eye for eye), as well as exonerate the Taliban administration from international condemnation for having offered asylum to heads of terrorist organizations like Osama Bin Laden (ibid:115-130). The Taliban ambassador has claimed that he had met all foreign envoys in Islamabad, except the Russian ambassador, to soften the image of the Taliban (ibid: 134).

The fourth objective of Taliban's foreign policy was to establish diplomatic relations with Islamic nations, Islamic parties and organizations. Therefore keeping close contact with them was a priority for the Taliban. They had assumed that Taliban's Islamic identity would help them get recognition by Islamic countries easily, and that in the long run would lead to being welcomed by the international community and the UN. Taliban was excessively in need of finance, especially since their foot soldiers had to continue fighting to bring the whole country under their control. Therefore keeping contact with the major Islamic charity organizations and Islamic political parties could bring finance as well as men to fight for the Taliban.

Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef claims that in order to achieve these objectives, he kept attending cultural programmes of religious political parties, held discussions with Islamic and extremists parties like Jamiat-I- Ulama-I-Islam (JUI), Jamaat-I-Islami and Sepah-I-Sahaba of Pakistan (Ibid:117). The religious parties and religious figures could help the Taliban in giving consultation in religious affairs also. The JUI of Mawlana Fazlurrahman was of so much importance that Mullah Omar contacted it in November 1996 to prepare the Taliban constitution and to send the *ulema* delegation for discussing important issues concerning women, Islamic banking, the Islamic way of governance, and penalties under the Sharia law (POT 1996:212).

The madrasas belonging to JUI of Mawlana Samiulhaq in Akora Khatak near Peshawar had trained most of the Taliban leaders (Hashmi 2016:149). It would be closed when Taliban needed soldiers to be sent to the battle field in Afghanistan (Rashid 2001:91-92). These parties not only offered advice on domestic issues but made recommendations on the foreign policy domains as well.

The author interviewed the former Taliban officials and sought their views on the objectives of Taliban foreign policy. On Taliban's foreign policy objectives, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef said: "My aim while in Islamabad was to tell the world that Taliban do not have any intention to harm any country in the world. I said many times that Taliban wanted to build relations with the international community based on international law and the UN Charter. The Taliban wanted to respect others and to be respected. Taliban was isolated because the US wanted us to be isolated. I wanted to change this image of the Taliban" (Zaeef 2018).

The Taliban representative to the US, Abdul Hakim Mujahid, speaking about his mission to the US and the objectives of the Taliban foreign policy, said: "First objective was to convey the message of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan to the international community through the UN platform. The message was that the Taliban wanted to have friendly relations with all the countries within the framework of international law. That would be based on mutual respect and mutual interests. The second objective was to have contact with international agencies and provide them facilities in Afghanistan to work in the country" (Mujahid 2018)

The Taliban administration did not succeed in fulfilling most of its foreign policy objectives. The main reason behind this failure was the contradiction between its domestic and foreign policies. It followed a very repressive domestic policy viz-a-viz women, and minorities, and externally they were struggling to get recognition and to attract foreign assistance for reconstruction. The international community and the UN asked the Taliban to observe human rights and behave within the international norms and standards as a precondition for the Taliban government being recognized.

Mullah Mohammad Omar however accused the UN of having “fallen under the influence of imperialist powers” and emphasized that “human rights discourse would mislead the Muslims from the path of righteousness”. He further argued that “the Taliban would not accept the impositions of others’ views in the name of human rights which are contradictory to the Quranic law”. According to Omar, the “holy Quran cannot adjust itself to people’s requirements, therefore others must adjust themselves to the requirements of the holy Quran” (Maley 2000).

It shows that the Taliban worldview was contradictory, uncompromising, non-conciliatory and unrealistic in the modern era. The result was increased lobbying by human right activists to put pressure on the international community and the UN to keep distance from the Taliban. It led to countries across the world as well as the UN backing off from engaging with the Taliban. It led to the Taliban being politically and diplomatically isolated further. The Taliban had been quite successful in building diplomatic ties with Islamic countries like Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, but their adamancy in not extraditing Bin Laden, as well as some of their regressive domestic policies soured these relations too.

Even Islamic organizations in Pakistan like Jamaat-I-Islami Qazi Husain Ahmad condemned the repressive policies of the Taliban. That party argued that Taliban’s policies would boost the Western’s anti-Islam propaganda, and called upon the Taliban to abandon them. This Pakistani group was of the opinion that according to Islam and Sharia, it was compulsory that women be educated rather than depriving them of such basic rights (Kaihan International 1996).

Disunity among the Taliban political elite, the existence of factions, the extremist-moderate divide, lack of enough knowledge of international politics, etc were the reasons for Taliban not achieving their foreign policy objectives. The main cause for this failure was the rivalry in the cabinet, particularly between the foreign ministry in Kabul and the office of Mullah Omar in Kandahar. The former had realistic views and was quiet moderate, but the latter was extremist and idealistic.

Abdul Hakim Mujahid, a former Taliban representative to the US, revealed that there wasn't a common platform for foreign policy decision making. He says:

In 2000 when I travelled to Afghanistan I visited Kandahar and met Mullah Omar and Mr Motawakil, the Minister of External Affairs, was with me. In the meeting I complained about foreign affairs. I told them that we had problems with foreign policy. After my comments Mullah Omar asked me what could be done to alleviate the situation. I responded by telling him to create a powerful committee of foreign policy consisting of different important ministries such as Foreign Affairs, Trade and Defence. I suggested the committee having ten to twelve members. This committee must draft a written foreign policy for Afghanistan. That policy must be according Islamic teachings. Mullah Omar then asked me how that plan could be implemented. I proposed that he nominate three authentic religious scholars as members of this committee and they were to ensure that the policy being drafted was based on Islamic principles. Then I said to Mullah Omar, you would not have the right of veto to the decisions taken by the committee. Mullah Omar accepted my suggestion, but after I returned to the US such a committee was not established. I do not know the reasons (Mujahid 2018).

4.5.2 Taliban's Attitude towards Neighbours: Iran and Pakistan

On entering Kabul on September 26, 1996 the Taliban sent wrong signals to the neighbors, countries in the region and the international community. First, they violated diplomatic sanctity by dragging out former President Najibullah from the UN premises in Kabul and later hanging him along with his brother. After dishonoring them by stuffing cigarettes and dollars in their mouths, noses and pockets, the Taliban left their bodies hanging for three days in Ariana Square for public display (News 1996).

Second, days after capturing Kabul, Taliban issued a decree banning women from working and shutting down girls' schools. On the same day, Kabul Radio announced the degrees of punishment for murderer *qisas*; thieves were to be amputated (Yosafzai 1996). These moves not only undermined Taliban's efforts to get recognition but also caused

dismay among most of Afghanistan's neighbors as well as the international community. Reacting to these pernicious acts, Amnesty International accused the new rulers of Afghanistan of establishing a reign of terror (News 1996).

Central Asian Republics (CARs) and Russia were afraid of extremism and terrorism spreading to their countries. The CARs had recently got their independence and two countries, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, were already facing threats from Islamic extremists operating from Afghanistan. Russia's Chechnya and China's Xinyang were volatile and restive while Chechen and Uighur extremists had taken refuge in Afghanistan. Both Russia and China were afraid that their regions would be infected with the Taliban virus. In this section an attempt would be made to examine the relations between Afghanistan and its two neighboring countries, Pakistan and Iran, under the Taliban administration. These are the two major neighbors that have the most political stakes in Afghanistan comparing to the others. That is why they engaged heavily in Afghanistan affairs during the Jihad era as well as in the times of civil war.

4.5.2.1 Pakistan as all-weather friend of Taliban

Afghanistan and Pakistan have 2,430 km of common border, and many religious, cultural and historical commonalities. The issues of terrorism, drug trafficking, uneasiness in trade relations and refugee influxes have affected the relationship between the two countries for decades. Their relationship has seen many ups and downs for the same reasons. The Afghanistan-Pakistan relations can be divided into two phases: pre and post-independence of Pakistan. The agreements signed between Afghanistan and British India have not only determined the relations between both the parties in the past, but also have had certain implications in the Pakistan- Afghanistan relationship from her independence till now, and will play an important role in the future too. Among the three agreements Lahore 1831, Gandumak 1879 and Durand 1893, the last one still puts to test the political and security policies of both the countries against each other.

After Pakistan gained independence though Afghanistan initially opposed it as a free nation in the UN General Assembly (Ahmadzai 2012:109), it later recognized Pakistan as a sovereign nation, and King Zahir dispatched his uncle, Shah Wali Khan, to Karachi as

Afghan ambassador in the same year. In the subsequent years the Durand Line and the Pashtunistan issue strained the relations between the two countries. First, the territorial claims raised by Afghanistan and then the border clashes in 1949 stopped the movements across the border between the two countries.

Second, the Pashtunistan issues and the Pashtun secessionists in Pakistan being helped by Prime Minister Dauod Khan forced Pakistanis to close the border from 1961 to 1963. During the communist period, Pakistan followed a two-pronged strategy in its relations with Afghanistan: it sought the unconditional exit of Soviet Union, and refused to hold direct talks with the communist leadership. For these reasons Pakistan chose to become an ally of the US in supporting Mujahidin in order to overthrow the Soviet-backed communist regime (Andishmand 2007:44).

In 1986 President General Zia ul Haq announced a policy of Pakistan gaining strategic depth in Afghanistan, and thereafter Afghanistan has remained the same in the eyes of Pakistan's political and military establishment. After the collapse of Najibullah government, of the seven Sunni groups in Pakistan, ISI invested in the radical Hizb-I-Islami headed by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar to take power in Kabul (Hussain 1990:57). When the situation on the ground did not turn as Islamabad wanted, the Pakistan establishment switched to the Taliban to take the lead.

These students were born in refugee camps in Pakistan, educated in Pakistani madrasas and trained by Afghan Mujahidin in Pakistan under the patronage of the Pakistani government (ibid). Through Taliban, Pakistan wanted to have a pro-Pakistan Pashtun regime in Kabul that would provide it a safe transit corridor to Central Asia (Rashid 2001:17-30). Pakistan's foreign policy viz-a-viz Afghanistan under the Taliban administration can be discussed in three phases: the initial material and virtual support for Taliban; the internal, regional and international campaign for recognition of Taliban, and finally Pakistan's 'war on terror' campaign to help defeat the Taliban.

Material and virtual support: After the Taliban takeover of Kabul, Pakistan was the first country to send a delegation to Kabul. On October 10, 1996 in Peshawar, the Interior Minister of Pakistan, Naseerullah Babar, announced support for the Taliban by

proclaiming “Afghanistan would be more stable under the Taliban rule.” He also labeled Taliban’s violation of human rights as “a smear campaign by the media to defame the new ruler in Afghanistan”. And at an informal chat with a group of journalists, Mr. Babur also said that a Pakistani embassy would be opened soon in Kabul and that PIA flights would start operating between Islamabad and Kabul. Pakistani authorities had already provided telephone lines for the cities under Taliban control (Dawn 1996).

To reduce the concerns of the neighbors and regional countries, it was Pakistan who acted as the goodwill ambassador of the Taliban. On October 6, 1996 Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto sent her special envoy to the three Central Asian republics neighboring Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, to assure them about the Taliban agenda (Dawn 1996). Days before, Russia along with CARs had warned that they would take appropriate measures if the Taliban brought its war machine to Afghanistan’s northern borders. The Pakistani envoy was seeking to cool down the tension, albeit with certain guarantee that the Taliban would not pose any threat to the northern neighbors.

And as was discussed in the beginning of this chapter, Pakistan and its Interior Ministry along with its Intelligence services were providing Taliban logistic and material support. Prime Minister Bhutto in an interview to BBC responded to a question on this matter by saying, “It is unfair and partly true” (Tehran Times 1996). Abjuring Pakistan’s responsibility in mentoring Taliban she said that Taliban was a product of the madrasas, constructed and expanded during the time of Jihad. According to her, along with Pakistan, the US and the Saudis also had to be blamed for the growth of Taliban (ibid).

Supporting the Taliban in that initial stage had had certain advantages for the Pakistanis: First, they were happy that their boys were in charge in Kabul. Second, they were satisfied about having knocked the Iranians out from Afghanistan’s backyard. Finally, Pakistan could boost its position against its rival Iran and get closer to Riyadh and Washington (Husain 1996).

Internal, regional and international campaign for recognition of Taliban: Pakistan used all its means to help the Taliban get recognition of the international community. For this, the Pakistanis first campaigned inside Afghanistan to soften the image of the Taliban in front

of its rivals and to expand further the rule of Taliban to northern Afghanistan. For this plan to materialize, the Pakistan Minister of Home Affairs, Naseerullah Babur, along with the Chairman of the Pakistan National Assembly Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs, Mawlana Fazlurrahman, headed a delegation that visited Kabul, Kandahar and Mazar-I-Sharif in 1996. The delegation wanted to persuade General Rashid Dostum of the Northern Alliance to work with Taliban and to agree to the expansion of Taliban to the northern parts of Afghanistan (Dawn 1996).

With the expectation that others would follow suit, Pakistan recognized the Taliban regime officially on May 29, 1997. It was of course a mere formality as Pakistan already had close relations with the Taliban and it was the first country that sent an official delegation to Kabul the day after Taliban took over Kabul. To boost Taliban's standing internationally and to justify the decision of Pakistan to recognize the Taliban government, Pakistan Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub said that "Taliban had fulfilled all the conditions for being recognized as it had almost all parts of the country under its control and had restored peace" (News 1996).

To persuade the international community to side with the Taliban, Pakistani diplomats convinced OIC members to keep the seat of Afghanistan in the organization vacant. Pakistanis pushed the vacant seat formula in the UN also, but all their efforts failed and the UN maintained status quo by recognizing Rabbani's delegation as the one representing Afghanistan (Maley 2000).

Becoming part of the war on terror campaign: The presence of regional and international terrorist organizations inside Taliban territory, acting against international norms and procedures, violating human rights by suppressing women and minorities, and most importantly, not extraditing Osama Bin Laden to the US made the international community to isolate Taliban further. Resolutions 1189 (August 1998), 1193 (August 1998), 1214 (December 1998), 1267 dated October 15, 1999 and 1333 dated December 19, 1999 were the major resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council calling for sanctions against the Taliban and curbing diplomatic relations with that group.

Affirming the resolution 1267, resolution 1333 directed nations to prevent any direct or indirect sale, supply and transfer of goods to the territories under Taliban control. The resolution urged those countries having diplomatic relations with Taliban to immediately close down Taliban offices in their territories. To curb Taliban officials' movement, the resolution asked countries to immediately shut down the offices of Ariana Afghan Airlines. Paragraph 14 of resolution 1333, directs countries to restrict the entry and transit of senior Taliban officials in the ranks of deputy ministers and above through their territories.

Pakistanis tried to convince Taliban to extradite Osama Bin Laden and to close down terrorist camps in territories under their control, but failed (Coll 2018:69). On many occasions, Pakistanis have stood with the Taliban and justified their domestic policies in international forums. Pakistan has often refuted the allegations, including those about discrimination against minorities and called it as smear campaign against the Taliban government.

However, international pressure finally forced Pakistan to act against the Taliban. On January 22, 2001 the Dawn newspaper reported that Pakistan had ordered the closure of all Taliban offices and the offices of Ariana Afghan Airlines, and ordered freezing of all accounts and assets of Osama Bin Laden in compliance with the UN Security Council Resolution. But in that time the Taliban ambassador in Islamabad, Mawlavi Abdul Salam Zaeef, dismissed the report by saying: "We have neither closed our offices nor received any order from Pakistan authorities to do so" (Dawn 2001).

However, it was revealed that an order had been issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Departments of Home and Tribal Affairs of all four states on January 20, 2001 to immediately close all the offices of the Taliban and Ariana Airlines across their respected regions (News 2001). But despite the order, Taliban somehow managed to keep their diplomatic missions in Pakistan open, but it was reported that Pakistan border officials had stopped four Taliban ministers from crossing into Pakistan in June 2001 (Statesman 2001).

9/11 changed Pakistani calculations when President George Bush, in his address to the joint session of Congress on September 20, 2001, gave a final ultimatum to the Taliban to surrender all wanted terrorists including Bin Laden without any further discussions and conditions. At the same time, the US administration asked Pakistan to snap all ties with the Taliban. An official from Pakistan administration confirmed this. “Yes, we were requested by the US to snap diplomatic ties with Afghanistan as the UAE has done (News 2001)”.

According to the official “Pakistan had told the US that snapping diplomatic ties would be counterproductive as it is the last window for any future talk with the Taliban” (ibid). Following the US request, in his interview with Bob Woodruff of ABC News, Pakistan Foreign Affairs Minister Abdul Sattar said that Pakistan had agreed in principle to allow the US and other international coalition to use its airbases against the terrorism inside Afghanistan (News 2001). In his interview to BBC World Service Radio, President Musharraf signaled the great shift in Pakistan’s foreign policy toward Taliban and Afghanistan. He said that from this time onwards “Pakistan wants to interact with the Taliban and not to save them”. According to him “the US action against Taliban is real and by keeping the door of interaction open, Pakistan wants to convey this to the Taliban”. Musharraf added: “Once the reality changes and the situation on the ground changes, you have to reevaluate your policies and reformulate them accordingly” (News 2001).

Musharraf ordered to close down the Taliban offices across Pakistan and arrested Ambassador Abdul Salam Zaeef and later handed him over to the American forces which transferred him to the Guantanamo base in Cuba. Here it can be seen that the domestic policy of the Taliban greatly influenced its relation with foreign countries and in this matter with Pakistan. Pakistan was the all-weather friend of Taliban and was not willing give up on them easily. But with the Taliban not ready to extradite Osama Bin Laden and the US pressurizing them further, it left Pakistan with no option but to do what they did. Later they joined hands with the Americans to topple the Taliban regime.

The factions among the Taliban ranks made them unable in taking effective action against the Bin Laden and to extradite him to the US and save their regime. The hardliners particularly the Mullah Omar Office in Kandahar had close relations with

Osama and was not ready to deal on him in any circumstances. That made the works of moderates in Foreign Ministry difficult and their move could be blocked by Kandahar easily and quickly.

4.5.2.2 The Taliban regime and Iran

Iran is located to the west of Afghanistan and the two countries share a 936-km long border. Their geographical proximity, as well as cultural, religious and linguistic factors influence the foreign policy of both these countries as also their relations with each other. Iran's foreign policy viz-a-viz Afghanistan has certain objectives: Iran's biggest concern is the security of its eastern borders, to be assured that a certain amount of water flows to Iran, to curb or at least reduce smuggling of narcotics from Afghanistan, and finally to find a solution to the refugee problem (a large number of Afghan refugees have been living in Iran for many decades). Iran's foreign policy toward can be divided into four periods: before 1978 and during the period of Zahir Shah, post 1978 and during the communist period, after 1992 and the Mujahidin period, and finally after 1996 and during the Taliban period (Nader et.al 2014:5, 8).

Iran enjoyed cordial relations with Zahir Shah and Iran's major goal in that period was to conclude an agreement on water sharing with Afghanistan. Iran was worried about the increasing influence of left ideology in that country and to curb the spread of communism it provided financial support to different organizations and parties in Afghanistan. The relations between both the countries remained tense from 1979 to 1992. The communist regime in Kabul and Iran's Islamic-theocratic government were ideologically at two opposite poles and both were keen on internationalizing and exporting of their revolutions beyond national borders.

Though Iran had helped, trained and supported militarily the Shia Mujahidin in fighting the communist regime, its war against Iraq gave it little time and resources to get fully involved in the problems in Afghanistan. However post 1992 and after the establishment of the Mujahidin government in Kabul, Iran got heavily involved in Afghanistan. When Mujahidin groups were fighting amongst themselves for control of Afghanistan, Iran stood with their religious and linguistic brethren such as the Burhanuddin Rabbani

government and provided assistance to the Hazara dominated Hizb-i-Wahdat-i Islami. However after the Taliban took control of Kabul in 1996, Iran along with Russia and India shifted its support to the Northern Alliance composed mainly of non-Pashtuns such as the Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras. The main reasons behind Iran's opposition to the Taliban were: Taliban's religious radicalism and its hostility to Shias; Iran's suspicions about Taliban as a US and Saudi project; its rivalry with Pakistan as it considered the Taliban to be a pawn in the hands of the Pakistanis. In short, if it was ideology that motivated Iran to interfere in Afghanistan during the communist period, it was real-politics that compelled it to interfere during the Mujahidin and Taliban periods.

The relations between the Taliban regime and Iran would be studied in three phases: first, the emergence of Taliban and the conquest of Herat province on the Iranian border. Second, the Taliban takeover of Kabul in 1996. Finally, the Taliban conquest of Mazar-I-Sharif and the killing of Iranian diplomats in that city.

First: When the Taliban emerged in November 1994 after capturing Kandahar in the South, Iran did not react and continued its normal business with Afghanistan. But Taliban rapidly expanding its influence and reaching the doors of Kabul in less than six months fluttered Iran, forcing it to react against the Taliban for the first time. In March, 1995 Abdul Ali Mazari, the leader of Shia Hizb-i-Wahdat -i- Islami, was killed by the Taliban and western Kabul populated by Hazara Shias, was occupied by the Masoud forces (Davis 1998:57).

The Iranian media then called the Taliban criminals and accused them to be puppets in the hands of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Iranian diplomats and prominent religious figures in Iran also expressed concern about the growth of the Taliban as a Sunni extremist movement which could pose a great threat to the Shia minority in Afghanistan. In this circumstances, the Iranian ambassador in Kabul urged the Rabbani government to ensure the safety of the Shia community in the country "whose life is in danger" (Nation 17.02.1995).

Taliban moving to the West and capturing Herat province further irritated the Iranians and they considered the presence of the Taliban in Iran's western border as a national

security threat. From this time onwards, Iranian officials strongly believed that Taliban was a creation of three powers, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the US, to harm Iran (Ahady 1998:127). This made Iran to increase its military support to Taliban's opponents and to extend its assistance to the former Herat governor, Ismail Khan, who had fled to Iran after the city had fallen to the Taliban.

Second: Iranians tried very hard to save Kabul by undertaking shuttle diplomacy among the groups opposing Taliban. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Allaeddin Borojerdi, met with Rashid Dostum, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and the representative of Hizb-I-Wahdat to convince them to stand with the Rabbani government in defending Kabul (Nation 1995), but the capital finally fell on September 26, 1996. In a sharp reaction to the ousting of the Rabbani government, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Vilayati insisted: "Iran still recognizes the ousted government" and dubbed Taliban as a "group of rebels who cannot pose any challenge to the legitimacy of the Rabbani government" (POT 1996:235).

Following that, Iranian authorities organized a conference on Afghanistan in Tehran towards the end of October 1996. It was attended by the OIC, the UN, India, China, Russia, etc. The conference called for an immediate halt to the military confrontation and asked the various factions in Afghanistan to adopt peaceful means to find a lasting political solution (Dawn 1996).

Six months after the conference, on June 2, 1997, the Taliban closed the Iranian embassy in Kabul and ordered Iranian diplomats to leave Afghanistan within 48 hours. The statement issued by the Taliban Ministry of Foreign Affairs accused Iran of "creating unrest among Afghans and releasing negative propaganda", and financing and arming the opponents of the Taliban (News 1997).

Following the capture of Mazar-I-Sharif on August 8, 1998 Taliban killed thousands Hazara Shia civilians in northern Afghanistan and ransacked the Iranian consulate in the city. They also killed ten diplomats along with an Iranian journalist accusing them of spying and offering military help to the oppositions. Following this Iranian President Akbar Hashimi Rafsanjani dubbed Taliban as an "irresponsible group that is doing

tremendous damage to the image of Islam” and added: “We cannot tolerate them in our neighborhood”. Frustrated by the behavior of the Taliban, Rafsanjani said: “We are opposed to the Taliban vision of Islam, their ideology and their war mongering” (News 1998).

From this moment onward the relations between Taliban and Iran became tensed and the two sides began threatening each other of using the military option. The Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said that “Taliban domination of Afghanistan is a threat to the region” and added “the Taliban as a Pashtun force cannot marginalize the other ethnic groups from the political scene” (Dawn 1998). Domestic pressure forced the Iranian government to think about military option against the Taliban and the Iranian military forces began mobilizing and started conducted drills in its eastern border.

Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khameneai asked said: “All officials including those of the military must be ready for a speedy, timely and decisive implementation of decisions taken by senior political and security officials that deem necessary for the security of the country” (POT 1998:175). In reply, the Taliban Foreign Minister Mawlawi Motawakil warned: “If the soil of Afghanistan is attacked by Iranians the Taliban will retaliate targeting Iranian cities”. He added: “Taliban is not at war with Iran, but if Iran attacks, we will use all possible measures to defend ourselves” (Dawn 1998). Finally the UN intervened and the tension cooled. But the relations between the Taliban and Iran did not improve for the better, and the Iranian regime refused to recognize Taliban till the very end when they were ousted from power.

The disunity among the political and military forces of the Taliban was responsible for the worsening relationship between Iran and the Taliban. The killing of Iranian diplomats in Mazar-e-Sharif was the reflection of the worst form of disunity and lack of organization among the ranks of the Taliban. Taliban later denied any hand in the massacre and said other radical groups among them were responsible for it. This proves the presence of various radical groups among the Taliban ranks who were out of their control and who could influence as well as jeopardize their domestic policy as well as foreign policy. The killing of Iranian diplomats in 1998 had brought the two countries close to a full-fledged war but timely UN intervention had prevented it.

4.5.3 The Taliban View of Great Powers: Russia and the US

4.5.3.1 Russia in the eyes of Taliban regime

The relation between Afghanistan and Russia is centuries old. The first embassy of Tsarist Russia was opened in Afghanistan at the time of Dust Mohammad Khan (1863-1873). By establishing diplomatic relations with Afghanistan, Russian wanted to counter the influence of Britain in their Southern borders and to retain balance in the Great Game (Ghobar 1960:4). Relations further strengthened when Vladimir Lenin accepted Amanullah Khan's letter in April 1919 requesting exchange of diplomatic missions (Government of Afghanistan 2007:273). In less than six years in 1926 another agreement was inked between the two countries, emphasizing on neutrality and non-intervention in the domestic affairs of both the countries.

During the Cold War, communist Russia became one of the poles in the bipolar world and wanted to have access to the ocean through its Southern borders and Afghanistan. It was with Russian help that the white revolution of 1973 and the bloody revolution of 1978 took place in Afghanistan. To unite and support the Afghan communist regime, Russian invaded Afghanistan on December 24, 1979, but after 10 years left Afghanistan with major human and material losses. In those turbulent years, the Russian presence had helped Afghanistan undertake major infrastructure projects. The Kabul-Pule Khumri Highway, the Salang Tunnels, Kandahar-Herat concrete road, major dams including Naghlo in Kabul and Darunta in Jalalabad, air bases and airports in Bagram, Shindand, Mazare Sharif, Kunduz, universities and hospitals including the Polytechnic University and the 400- bed army hospital in Kabul are among the many projects that were undertaken with Russian assistance (BBC 2014).

The foreign policy of Russia toward Taliban was tied to the security of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), particularly Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Despite Soviet disintegration, the Russian Federation continued to consider countries beyond its southern border as its backyard and any threat to the national security of these states was considered a threat to Russian national security. Looking from this point of view, the Taliban's expansion to the north could be considered as posing a serious threat

to the national security of Central Asian Countries particularly Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Considering the road linkage between Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kirghizstan and Kazakhstan, the Taliban advance to northern Afghanistan and then to the borders of CARs could be considered as posing military threats to this region.

Capturing the North could produce an influx of refugees heading to CARs and the Russian Federation was already mired in economic instability. Moreover, since the Taliban were notorious for producing and smuggling narcotics CARs and Russia were worried about this group smuggling narcotics through their territory into European countries and making their territories a transit hub for narcotic smuggling. Finally the northern, immediate and extended neighbors of Afghanistan feared terrorism and extremist ideology being exported into their territories jeopardizing their citizens (Abrar 1996).

When Kabul was conquered by the Taliban in 1996, Russian president Boris Yeltsin convened an emergency meeting of the CIS members in Almaty. Leaders of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan met in the capital of Kazakhstan and warned the Taliban to stay away from their borders or else the consequences would be severe. Basically, the October 4th meeting was convened as a response to the Taliban victory and the establishment of a new regime in Kabul (Tehran Times 1996).

As a reaction to the Russian warning, Taliban acting Minister for Culture and Information Mullah Amir Khan Muttaqi brushed off the Russian comments saying “Russian has not forgotten its past experience in Afghanistan, and I think they would not intervene and be forced to repeat that experience again”. Ridiculing Russian capability for war he said: “Russian has no further capacity to intervene in Afghanistan” (ibid).

In the meantime, the spokesperson of the Taliban in an interview to Radio Moscow said “The Taliban is aware of the Russian concerns and since the military and political activities of the movement is not directed at the CARs, they should not be worrying about the Taliban coming to power in Kabul”. He further said that Taliban would soon send an envoy to Russia and CARs to ensure them of Taliban’s non expansionist policy (Kaihan International 1996).

Taliban officials' statements and speaking to the media was one thing and the policy they put into practice was another. Contrary to their official standing, the Taliban provided sanctuaries to terrorist organizations which were national security threats to Russia and CARs. Once on February 4, 2001 the Secretary of Russian Security Council, Sergei Ivanov, accused the Taliban of "having set up approximately 30 training camps in Afghanistan and training terrorists from across the world including Central Asia, Arab nations and Europe" (Dawn 2001).

This clearly shows that the Taliban had intentions to destabilize other parts of the world including Russia and CARs. In another peculiar and strange diplomatic move, the Taliban recognized the Chechen administration as an independent state in January 2000. Then the former Chechnya president Zelimkhan Yandarbiev who was appointed as ambassador of Chechnya to Afghanistan, met with Mullah Omar in Kandahar. Both the parties established diplomatic relations and a Chechnya embassy was opened in Kabul. Following the opening of the embassy, Zelimkhan Yandarbiev visited Pakistan and at a public meeting with religious parties he urged the establishment of a Caliphate and the abolition of political borders among Islamic countries in the region (News line 2000).

Following this incident, the Russian stand against the Taliban became harsher and on May 22, 2000 Russia warned of preventive strikes against Taliban. One of the spokespersons of the Russian President said: "We might possibly carry out preventive strikes if there is any serious threat to Russia's national interests or the national interests of the CARs" (News 2000). Immediately a war of words between the Taliban and Russia began. The Taliban spokesperson reacted by saying that "if Russia commits the blunder of carrying out attacks against Afghanistan there would be dire consequences not only for Russia but also for countries that help them". He further said that "Russian could not succeed by supporting Masoud and Rabbani, therefore now wants to directly confront the Islamic Emirate" (Frontier Post 2000).

Meanwhile the Taliban Foreign Minister, Mawlawi Wakil Ahmad Motawakkil, drew the attention of the international community to the Russian threat by writing a letter to the United Nations Secretary General and other international institutions like the OIC. At the same time Taliban Supreme Leader Mullah Omar warned Uzbekistan "of dire

consequences if it allowed the Russians to bomb Afghanistan” (News 2000). Following this, Russia in the company of the United States, put pressure on the Taliban demanding that Osama Bin Laden be handed over to the US.

Senior officials from both American and Russian Ministries of Foreign Affairs in a meeting in Moscow on May 26, 2000 urged the Taliban to find a political solution to the Afghan crisis and expressed their serious concerns about Taliban’s support to terrorism. Both the countries also agreed to increase the pressure on Taliban by imposing sanctions through the UN Security Council (News 2000).

Russia had not actually reacted to the emergence of the Taliban in 1994. But when Kabul fell into the hands of Taliban, Russia reacted sharply and followed three levels foreign policy against the Taliban. Bilaterally Russia supported Masoud-Rabbani government, both politically and militarily. Regionally Russian was part of the India-Iran-Russia anti-Taliban triangle and at the international level, Russia was at the vanguard in moving the UN Security Council to pass the resolution against the Taliban regime.

In the case of Russia, it can be seen that the Taliban did not put up a united front in its foreign policy initiative. They were not aware that domestic and foreign policies are interdependent and not separate from each other. They allowed the Chechens to open embassy in Kabul and at the same time angry against Russia for supporting Taliban’s enemies. Apparently Taliban’s attitude to Russia was influenced by its religious ideology and the past history of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

In an interview former Taliban official Akbar Agha defended the Taliban policy of recognizing an independent Chechen state and argued, “the Russians invaded us, killed us; why should we not assist our Muslim brothers in Chechen and not kill the Russians and invade their country. Having relations with Russia is against Islam and we did well in offering Chechens help” (Agha 2018). However, Abdul Hakim Mujahid denied that the Taliban had at any time assisted the Chechens, thus pointing to the differences among Taliban officials over foreign and domestic policies.

Mujahid said: “What I can say is that the Taliban was against interfering in the affairs of others. The Taliban wanted to establish relations with the international community

according to International Law” he added further: “The UN Charter does not allow countries to interfere in the domestic affairs of others. The holy Quran says in Chapter 8, verse 72: ‘if the people of a country who are oppressed because of their religion seek help, assist them, but not those in countries that you already have signed a non-interference agreement with. The UN Charter can be counted as an agreement among countries not to interfere in the affairs of others. If the Taliban could be part of the UN then it would not allow itself and its people to interfere in the affairs of any other country” (Mujahid 2018).

It means the Taliban were interfering in the affairs of Russia by giving shelter to the Chechens because the Taliban regime had not been recognized by the UN and therefore did not have to abide by the UN Charter and the article related to non-interference.

4.5.3.2 United States and Taliban

After the British authority informed the Americans that “Afghanistan was officially free and independent in its affairs” the United States officially recognized Afghanistan on July 26, 1921. Following this diplomatic relation was established on May 4, 1935 when William H. Hornibrook, the US ambassador to Iran, presented his credential to the Afghan government. The US embassy was opened officially on June 5, 1948 and Ely Palmer was the US ambassador who presented his credential to the Afghan authorities in Kabul. On February 14, 1979 American ambassador Adolph Dubs was assassinated in Kabul and on January 30, 1989 the US closed its embassy in Afghanistan, assuming the new regime would not be able to protect its mission (US Government 2018).

The relations between the two countries can be studied under five periods: from 1948 to 1979, 1979 to 1989, the withdrawal of Soviet forces and the establishment of the Mujahidin regime from 1989-1996, 1996-2001 and post 2001. In the first period, the US didn't engage itself much with Afghanistan but focused more on developmental projects such as working on the irrigation system of the Helmand Valley.

The second period coincided with the Cold War and the rivalry with the Soviet Union, therefore the US, through its allies, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, was highly involved in Afghanistan and supported the Mujahidin and the Afghan Jihad. It has been said that the

Reagan administration assigned the CIA to spend more than \$3 billion for supporting the resistance groups (Mackenzie 1998:94).

Following the Soviet withdrawal and the establishment of the Mujahidin government in 1992, the US closed its embassy in Kabul and Afghanistan went out of the US foreign policy radar. Rubin (1997) argues that from 1992-1994 the international community and the US did not have any political strategy for Afghanistan. In the Taliban period, though the US did not recognize them, initially it engaged with Afghanistan through the UN in particular issues such as humanitarian assistance.

The US had certain concerns for human rights, and had encouraged private sector players to work with the Taliban. Finally the Osama factor and Taliban's refusal to extradite him forced the US attack Afghanistan on October 7, 2001. After 2001 the relations between the US and Afghanistan expanded further across all the sectors and both the countries signed an important Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) on September 30, 2014.

The USA-Afghanistan relations in the fourth period (1996-2001): In this period apparently the US had certain objectives while cautiously engaging with the Taliban covertly and overtly. The first objective was to use the Taliban against Russian and Iranian interests in Afghanistan and in the region. Second, since Afghanistan was long suffering from instability and civil war, the US hoped the Taliban would restore peace and normalcy in the country. Third, the CIA knew that terrorist camps in Afghanistan could be a threat to US interests and hoped to get rid of them through the Taliban. Fourth, the Pakistanis had convinced the US that with the Taliban coming to power it would be possible to open the trade corridor that would facilitate energy transmission from Central Asia to Pakistan and South Asia. Finally the US was convinced that the Taliban conquest would bring Zahir Shah back to power (Mackenzie 1998:96).

It was after taking into account the following objectives that the Clinton administration rushed to support the Taliban. After Kabul had fallen to the Taliban, Acting Spokesperson of the US State Department, Glyn Davies, said: "There is nothing objectionable" to the version of Islam that Taliban want to follow or impose on the Afghan society. And after two month of the Taliban regime in Kabul, the Assistant

Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Robin R. Raphel insisted in his address to the UN that the “Taliban must be considered as an indigenous movement with capability to stay in power” (Mackenzie 1998:9).

Although the US knew that the movement had violated women’s rights, minority rights and international norms in the last two months, this statement meant that the US did not have any problems with the Taliban staying in power (ibid:91). At the same time UNOCAL’s Executive Vice President Chris Taggart considered the Taliban victory as a positive sign and said that UNOCAL would give “non cash bonus payments” to the Taliban if they cooperated with the company in allowing the \$2 billion worth gas pipeline to cross Afghanistan and ensured its security (Friday Times 1996).

The US policy toward the Taliban has been influenced by the Taliban’s human rights record. Women rights lobby in the US pressurized the US administration to put further pressure on the Taliban to respect human rights. During her trip to the refugee camp in Pakistan in 1997, the US Foreign Minister Madeleine Albright stated: “I think it is very clear why the US is opposed to the Taliban. It is because of their approach to human rights and their despicable treatment of women” (Mackenzie 1998:90).

From then onward the US stand against Taliban became harsher. During the visit of some top Taliban officials to the US in late 1997, the US made UNOCAL investment on the pipeline conditional to Taliban guarantee on human rights and to the establishment of a broad based government (News 1997). Following the bombing of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the US found Osama Bin Laden and his Al-Qaida organization guilty of that crime. The US then attacked the hideout of Al-Qaida chief in Afghanistan using cruise missiles. Then the only US mediator left, UNOCAL withdrew from the pipeline project, and the relations between the US and the Taliban worsened.

There were certain reasons for the US to distance itself from the Taliban: Expectation that the Taliban would bring peace to the region did not materialize and in fact violence increased further. The US had also believed that the Taliban would put an end to the poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, but that did not happen. Also, the Taliban resisted the call by the US and the international community to respect women’s rights and to treat

women gently. Moreover, Taliban was quite insensitive to the US concerns about terrorism and finally, its refusal to extradite Osama Bin Laden after the 9/11 attack on US World Trade Centre sealed Taliban's fate. The US attacked Afghanistan on October 7, 2001 and the Taliban was ousted from power.

The Taliban political elite were not united in dealing with the US and western powers. There were clear differences between the extremists located in Mullah Omar's office in Kandahar and the moderates located in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in Kabul. Those Taliban ambassadors abroad and affiliated to the MFA knew the world situation better and could put forth better recommendations on foreign policy, but their suggestions were mostly rejected by the office of Mullah Omar in Kandahar.

On 9/11 attack and Taliban's reaction to that, a former Taliban representative to the US said:

Mullah Omar was too powerful and the MFA could be easily undermined by him. For example, when 9/11 happened, I asked the MFA to immediately issue a statement of condolence to the US, and condemn the notorious and vicious incident in New York. The MFA agreed with me and drafted the letter. When they sent the letter to Mullah Omar for approval, he was doubtful about the US policy. He thought that even if the Taliban issued such a statement, the US would still continue its hostility to the Taliban. He hence believed that such a statement would be bad for the prestige of the people of Afghanistan. As Mullah Omar did not agree to issue the statement, it was not issued (Mujahid 2018).

When Mujahid tried to justify issuing such a letter with Mullah Omar by calling him directly he responded "by reciting the verse number 120 of Chapter two of the Quran that says: "And never will the Jews or the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion. Say, indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance." If you were to follow their desires after what has come to you out of knowledge, you would have gone against Allah the protector or helper" (Ibid 2018). The two arguments above one by the Taliban ambassador in the US Abdulhakim Mujahid and the other by Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar show the disagreement in the ranks of Taliban in foreign policy and in dealing with international community.

4.5.4 Taliban's Relations with International Organizations: the UN

Afghanistan joined the United Nations in 1946 and from that time onwards the UN has worked closely with Afghanistan. The UN's real engagement with Afghanistan started after the Soviet invasion in 1979. Basically the UN engagement with Afghanistan can be divided into four periods: the communists' rule and the Mujahidin resistance of the 1980s, the Mujahidin period of 1992-1996, UN engagement with the Taliban from 1996-2001, and finally the UN engagement with the country after the US invasion in 2001.

First: when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, the UN General Assembly passed resolution ES-6/2, and without naming the USSR called for the withdrawal of alien forces. UN in fact passed a series of resolutions and called for halting the conflicts; demanded withdrawal of the foreign forces, explored options for UN assistance in finding a political settlement, and finally highlighted the problems of the refugees and those affected by the conflicts. In this period, the UN through its good offices in Afghanistan and Pakistan and with the help of the US and the USSR mediated the Geneva agreement on April 14, 1988. The agreement provided an opportunity to end foreign interventions and set a date for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

In the second period (1992-1996), there were intense wars among Mujahidin factions and then between the Mujahidin and the Taliban. The UN General Assembly in its annual assessment of the Afghan situation, passed a resolution, 47/119, on December 18, 1992 requesting emergency international assistance for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. When the Peshawar (1992) and Islamabad (1993) elite settlements failed and the war intensified in Kabul, the UN Secretary General set up the UN Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA). Through that the UN wanted to find out how it could offer its help to reconcile the rival parties and assist Afghanistan in the reconstruction process.

Third: the UN engagements with Taliban had ups and downs that brought certain sanctions against the regime that would be discussed in detail below. Four: after the US invasion and the ousting of the Taliban regime, it was the UN that organized a meeting in Bonn and came up with an agreement on provisional arrangement and power sharing on December 5, 2001. The UN Security Council's resolution 1386 authorized the establishment of the International Security Force (ISAF) to help the interim authority and to look after the security of Kabul till a national army and police were constituted to take

over the responsibility. Currently the UN has a mission in Afghanistan under the name UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) which assists the government across different sectors (UN 2018).

The Taliban's domestic policies not only brought negative reactions from the international community, it also saw the United Nations and other international organizations issuing non-friendly statements against the Taliban. The UN condemned the Taliban violation of diplomatic immunity of its mission when the Taliban entered the UN premises and arrested and killed the former communist President Dr Najibullah on 26 September 1996. The International Amnesty condemned the killing of the former President and called it a gross violation of human rights. The Amnesty accused the Taliban of establishing a 'reign of terror'.

Because of the Taliban policy on women, UNICEF had to halt its educational activities in territories under Taliban control as girls had been prevented from attending schools and women were banned from going to work. The European Union also reacted negatively and accused the Taliban of violating international law and human rights. The European Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs, Emma Bonino, who was touring a women's hospital in Kabul that was funded by the EU was arrested and detained for three hours. This further distorted the image of the Taliban in front of EU members and brought international criticism against the regime.

However, after some time, EU members through their humanitarian NGOs continued their relations with the Taliban (Andishmand 2004:239). In early 1998, the EU called for "sustainable peace in Afghanistan" and in its declaration said: "The EU attaches the highest importance to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" and denounced "the continuing discrimination against girls and women in Afghanistan" by the Taliban regime. Through its declaration the EU also showed its deep concern about the blockade imposed on the Hazaras and the massacre of this community in Mazar-e-Sharif and Bamiyan (Nation 1998).

The major activities of the UN in Afghanistan were focused on four broad areas, and these activities were carried out through its different agencies, especially from 1994

onwards: the peace making mission through UN Special Envoy for Afghanistan (UNSPA), the educational assistance to women and kids through UNICEF, humanitarian assistance and food distribution through FAO; and taking care of displaced people and refugees through UNHCR. As there was a civil war among various factions going on in Afghanistan the peace making mission through UNSEA would be highlighted more while examining the relation of UN with Afghanistan under the Taliban regime. Focus would be on the activities of two UNSEA, Dr Norbert Holl and Lakhdar Brahimi, from 1996-1999. It would trace the activities of the UN in Afghanistan and study the relations between the UN and the Taliban as well.

Dr Norbert Holl after being nominated to the UNSEA travelled to Afghanistan on July 31, 1996. It was the time when Taliban had besieged Kabul and was preparing for the final assault. The Taliban welcomed Mr. Holl by pounding the German embassy where he was staying with six shells. He reacted by saying: “I did not at all like the rocket attack against the embassy because it demonstrates a sort of contempt for my mission. I will take up the issue with the Taliban as this is not the way to treat a peace emissary; you do not receive a guest in your house by spitting on his face” (Frontier post 1996).

In his press conference on August 6, 1996 Dr Holl briefed the media about the priority of his mission. His priorities were: convincing the parties that war is not the option to win the conflict; to brief the regional stakeholders, Iran and Pakistan, to halt foreign intervention; to take all Afghans on board, particularly the intellectuals; to establish links between the UN agencies, and to conduct an overall analysis of the human rights situation in Afghanistan (Dawn 1996).

Dr Holl’s mission lasted only for a year. It ended in June 1997 and he was not able to fulfill any of the objectives he had hoped to achieve. First, the mission was not successful in halting the conflict and establishing a ceasefire. Second, it was not successful in satisfying the stakeholders, particularly Iran. According to the Iranian government, the mission was “disgusting, shameful and scandalous and brought about friction and animosity among the Afghan people” (Iran News 1996). Third, instead of bringing all Afghan groups on board, the mission engaged heavily with the warlords and did not invest much in engaging the Taliban.

The Taliban was not invited to the New York UN conference on ceasefire in November 1996, and the Taliban said the “International meeting in New York is not according to the desire of the people of Afghanistan and therefore it is bound to fail” (Jomhori Islami 1996). Fourth, by linking human rights with UN engagement in Afghanistan, UNSEA further sidelined the Taliban. The Taliban therefore not only became suspicious of UNSEA, their leader Mullah Omar even refused to meet Dr Norbert Holl, and considered the UN Charter itself to be a big obstacle to the Taliban getting international recognition (Rashid 2001:64).

Dr Norbert Holl was succeeded by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi on July 1997. Brahimi then undertook a three-week long tour of Afghanistan and the 13 countries in the region. He then came up with a report recommending mobilization of international pressure against Afghanistan’s neighbors to stop aiding the belligerent groups. The broad objectives of Brahimi’s mission were almost similar to that of his predecessor, and in order to find a solution to the Afghan conflict, his mission also focused on talks with the various groups in Afghan and the neighbor countries, particularly Pakistan and Iran. The only difference of his approach to that of his predecessor was calling for an arms embargo to limit the access of arms and ammunitions to armed groups in the country (Dawn 1998).

The relations between the UN and the Taliban were still tense when Brahimi had taken up the UNSEA post. Because of Taliban’s policy against women, the UN continued its boycott of activities related to education in Taliban territories. UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy who briefed media persons on April 4, 1998 said: “We will not resume our activities until we see concrete evidence of Taliban allowing formal education to females” (Dawn 1998).

The UN, through UNSEA and Mr. Brahimi initiated certain regional initiatives for peace in Afghanistan. He mediated the talks between armed opposition groups and the Taliban in Islamabad on April 1998 to try and persuade these warring parties to declare a ceasefire and to find a peaceful settlement to the Afghan conflict. The UN also brought together eight countries involved directly or indirectly in the Afghan imbroglio, to halt arms supply to the conflict parties. The Six plus Two initiative, in which Afghanistan’s six neighbors plus Russia and the United States participated, signed the Tashkent

Declaration in July 19, 1999 according to which these countries agreed to halt military assistance to their clients in Afghanistan and to find a peaceful solution to the violence in the country. However these efforts failed to halt the conflict as countries in the region continued their military assistance to their clients.

The UN's relations with the Taliban worsened after the Taliban captured Mazar-I-Sharif on August 8, 1998. They violated the international law and entered the Iranian consulate and killed ten Iranian diplomats along with a journalist. The Taliban had expected the UN and the international community to recognize it as it now controlled the majority of the territory in Afghanistan. But the Iranian embassy incident went against its aspirations.

The UN condemned Taliban's action and put off recognizing the regime. Even as the Iran-Taliban standoff over the killing of diplomats continued, Mullah Omar threatened to stop cooperating with the UN if the international body failed to recognize it as a sovereign entity (News 1998). But the threat proved counterproductive as the UN imposed sanctions on the regime for providing sanctuary to terrorist organizations. Finally, the UN Security Council resolutions 1368 and 1373 allowed the US to invade Afghanistan and topple the Taliban regime.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the effects of the political elite's disunity on the domestic and the foreign policies of Afghanistan. Focusing on a particular period (1996-2001) this chapter concentrated mostly on the Taliban political elite and examined their role in the group's foreign policy. To conduct the research smoothly, this chapter was divided into four sections. In the first section, the emergence of the Taliban and the mode of Taliban socializations were discussed. In the second section, the composition of the Taliban political elite and the role ethnics, religion and tribal factors played in their formation and recruitment were examined. In the third section, the effects of fragmentation of the political elite on Taliban's domestic policy were researched. In the fourth section, Taliban's foreign policy, its principles and objectives, its relations with the neighbors, great powers and international institutions such as the UN were examined.

The reason for the Taliban emerging as a strong political force was because of the disunity among the Mujahidin political elite that had led to domestic instability and a chaotic foreign policy. In order to find out the other reasons for the emergence of the Taliban, three factors Military, Politico-economic and Homogenous were examined. This research also focused on religious education, Pashtunwali, Taliban's background and their socialization process, as these are essential factors to understand the group's political behaviour viz-a-viz the domestic and foreign policies.

This chapter has tried to follow the Constructivist line of argument. The Constructivists argue that the actor's behaviour can cause changes in domestic and international politics; that the state's interests and identity are not permanent but subject to change; that domestic forces such as nationalism and the political elite can change a state's identity and interests. Here it was found that the Taliban had not only changed the identity of the state to Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan but also transformed Afghanistan's national interests.

Regarding the composition of the Taliban political elite and the fragmentation of their administration, it has been argued that the emergence of the new political elite not only transformed the structure of the political elite but also deeply fragmented them. The Taliban as the new political elite were more radical in their ideology and policy, and considered the former political elite, particularly the Mujahidin, as corrupt and redundant.

Applying the same logic, the Taliban also accused the Afghan intellectuals and technocrats as the agents of the West, and easily excluded them from the process of decision making. It has been said that the Taliban was not a monolithic force and that their political leaders were not just madrasa students or simple villagers from remote areas of the country, but that they had emerged from a different and complex mixture of social and political milieu.

Among the Taliban political elite there were Mujahidin, clerics, communists, common Pashtuns and foreign fighters who had joined them while the Taliban expanded its influence. It was argued that the Taliban political elite were not only fragmented politically and ideologically, but that fragmentation had its roots also in factors like

ethnicity, religion, tribal differences, etc. Moreover it was argued that elite factions as well as Taliban socialization influenced the domestic policy of the Taliban. To find out the effects, domestic policies of the Taliban toward women, minorities and the terrorism got examined. Further while examining the foreign policy of the Taliban and their dealing with neighbors, great powers and international organization, it was notified that following regressive domestic policy greatly undermined the Taliban foreign policy.

We can see the role of Constructivism in the foreign policy of the Taliban regime. It is true that Afghanistan's foreign relations were reduced to the minimum in the Taliban period. However, Taliban's foreign policy and its stand on domestic and international issues cannot be explained by realism but Constructivism. During the Taliban period, the country's political establishment and its domestic politics had a remarkable transformation.

Afghanistan was renamed the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. We witnessed a radical transformation in the foreign policy domain as well. International pressure, and sanctions by the US and the UN, could not change the behavior of Taliban or restrain them from destroying the world heritage site of Buddha statues in Bamiyan, nor could it prevented them from suppressing women and violating human rights. International pressure could not convince them to desist from allowing Afghanistan to become a safe haven for terrorist organizations like Al-Qaida.

That is why Taliban did not hand over Osama Bin Laden or extradite him to the US or a third country for being tried in a court of law. Realists believe in rationality of the actor, Hobbesian anarchy and the detrimental role of international structure on the behavior of the unit or state. According to realism, as a rational actor believing in anarchy, self-help and survival, Afghanistan and Taliban, taking the international pressure seriously, would have handed over Osama Bin Laden and closed the terrorists training camps.

But the scenario did not unfold according to the expectation and prediction of the realism school of thought. The behavior of the Taliban regime can be analyzed through Constructivism that believes in mutual constitution of domestic and international politics. They argue that the interests and identity of states is not permanent and are subject to

change. They say that the concept of nationalism among the country's leaders, their perception and their mode of socialization matter, and can lead to changes in the identity and interests of the state.

The socialization of Taliban as rural youth who got their training in the *madrasas* (religious school) across Afghanistan and the Pakistan border certainly influenced their perception. Goodson (1998) characterizes the Taliban elite as “having little serious formal education and administrative experience”. They were often illiterate, orphans of fragmented families affected by war, deeply ignorant of the wider world. The only knowledge they had was within the conservative Islamic framework.

When they took power they changed the name of the state and added Islamic feature to that. Such a move not only changed the name of the political system but also transformed the identity and interests of the state. They transformed the national interest of the state by supporting Jihad and acted as guardians of Muslims and Jihadists such as Bin Laden and other regional and international terrorists.

Chapter V: Consensus and unity among the political elite: establishing the democratic political system and adopting the inclusive foreign policy 2001-2014

5.1 Introduction

In order to convince them to surrender the main culprit of the 9/11, Osama Bin Laden, to the US authorities, the US pressure and the UN sanctions could not bring the Taliban to the negotiation table. In less than a month after the terrorists attack on Twin Towers, on October 7, 2001, the US invaded Afghanistan. The US Air Force strategic bombardment was assisted on the ground by forces opposed the Taliban in the country, the Northern Alliance. Within two months from the start of the operation, on November 13, 2001, Kabul fell into the hands of Taliban's opponents, and subsequently, on December 7, 2001, the Taliban abandoned their de facto capital, Kandahar.

To fill the power vacuum, the United Nations hosted the conference in Bonn, Germany from 2-5 December 2001. The conference was attended by several Afghan factions as well as the representatives of regional stake holders. The result was the Bonn Agreement that anticipated the action plan for establishing the democratic political system in the country. The Agreement outlined the different stages the country would have to pass through in order to establish the democratic government, such as the Afghan Interim Authority, the Transitional Authority, adoption of a new constitution and finally preparing the ground for general elections.

As was expected, the Interim Authority held the Emergency Loya Jirga (Grand Council) to establish the Transitional Authority (TA). Then the TA established the Commission for Drafting the Constitution, and passed it successfully in the Constitutional Loy Jirga in January 2004. After that the Presidential election was held on October 9, 2004 and Hamid Karzai who won 50+1 general votes was elected the new president on September 18, 2005. The Parliamentary and Provisional elections that allowed the Afghans to choose their representatives for the assemblies (CNN 2013) were also held.

This chapter would examine the role of the political elite in reaching a consensus on political stability and bringing coherence to the country's foreign policy. To do so, this

chapter would focus on the events following the US invasion of Afghanistan, the Bonn Conference and the Bonn Agreement being the focal point. It would show how the four different groups, namely Northern Alliance, Rome, Peshawar and Cyprus, worked together and compromised over certain issues.

To carry the research forward smoothly, this chapter has been divided into three sections along with their own sub sections. In the first section, the US invasion and the emergence of new political elite would be examined. The research would reveal how Operation Enduring Freedom helped to eradicate the Taliban regime, pave way for the Bonn Conference and made way for the emergence of the new political elite.

In the second section, the role the political elite played in reaching a consensus on domestic politics and political stability would be examined in detail. In the third section, the role the political elite played in reaching a consensus on the foreign policy of Afghanistan post 2001 would be examined; the principles and the objectives of the foreign policy would also be explained. Further in this section, Afghanistan's engagement with some of its neighbors, great powers and the UN would also be examined in detail.

5.2 The US invasion and the emergence of new political elites

Osama Bin Laden and his notorious Al Qaida organization were accused by the US government of bombing the US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998. Subsequently, US forces attacked Al Qaida hideouts in Eastern Afghanistan with cruise missile. The US and the international community also increased pressure on the Taliban to surrender Bin Laden to a third country for bringing him to justice. The United Nations Security Council then passed resolution 1267 in October 1999 and asked the Taliban to comply with this demand (UN Security Council Resolution 1267 1999). Noncompliance to the resolution brought about certain unpleasant outcomes for the Taliban including their accounts being frozen and their aircraft being prohibited from taking-off or landing.

The trade-off over Osama Bin Laden between the US and the Taliban authority continued till the 9/11 event. In the aftermath of the attack on US territory, the Bush administration identified Bin Laden as the main suspect behind the attack. Since Osama

was living in Afghanistan and was an ally of the Taliban government, the US government asked the Taliban to bring him to justice.

In a religious gathering in Kabul, the leader of the Taliban, Mullah Omar, called for restraint and asked the US to provide evidence against Bin Laden (Associated Press 2001). Omar argued that involving Osama in the 9/11 event was the strategy of the US to remove the Taliban from power and announced that the Taliban was ready for negotiations. The Bush administration however turned down the call for negotiations saying “It is the time for action and not for negotiation” (BBC 2001).

Closing the door on diplomacy, in his speech before the joint session of the Congress on September 20, 2001, President Bush declared the ‘War on Terror’. In his speech, there were three important points that could be considered as ultimatum to the Taliban which was sheltering Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan.

First, the Taliban was asked to surrender all Al Qaida leaders including Osama Bin Laden to the US. Second, the Taliban was asked to close all terrorist camps in Afghanistan and hand over all terrorists. Third, it was demanded that the US forces be allowed full access to all such training camps in the country (Ibid). When the Taliban insisted on further discussions and negotiations, the US air strikes began against Taliban positions on October 7, 2001, and the ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ started to root out the Taliban and the terrorists’ sanctuaries from Afghanistan.

5.2.1 Operation Enduring Freedom

The Clinton administration had concentrated more on the disparate issues in dealing with the Taliban. The issues were poppy cultivation, women’s rights, religious freedoms and human rights (Khalilzad 2016:102). However the US changed its strategy after George W. Bush occupied the Oval Office of the White House. In September 2001, the US government prepared a draft of Comprehensive Strategy in dealing with Al Qaida and the Taliban. The US plan in dealing with the Taliban was to be executed in three stages: first, one of the US envoys was to warn the Taliban to cut their relation with Bin Laden. Second, if the Taliban did not comply, the US was to increase its contacts with those opposing the Taliban and covertly assist them to attack Al Qaida positions and camps. At

the same time the US would start an international campaign to put pressure on the Taliban and isolate them more and more. Third, if the first two stages ended up in failure, then the US was to go all out for a regime change to oust the Taliban from power.

The 9/11 attack further transformed the US strategy towards Taliban and Afghanistan. The US was attacked and Bin Laden who was living in Afghanistan was the prime suspect in the act. President Bush in his address to the nation right after the incident, made no distinction between “terrorists who committed this act and those who harbored them” (US government 2001). It was clear that the US would target Al Qaida, which committed the crime, as well as the Taliban, which provided shelter for the wanted terrorists.

The US did not want to fight against the Taliban by putting boots on the ground, but rather by adopting the ‘light footprint’ strategy. It wanted to topple the Taliban regime and to arrest the terrorists using the indigenous forces. Therefore mobilization of the anti-Taliban Pashtun forces, assisting the non-Pashtun Northern Alliance, working with rival factions inside the Taliban regime, and using the US Air Force to bomb Taliban positions were their set priorities.

The task of identifying the influential Pashtun forces who were opposed to the Taliban regime was given to the US Central Intelligence Agency C.I.A. The CIA had to assess their power, the number of their followers and their influence among the community. There were many chest-thumping warlords and tribal leaders who exaggerated their influence in the community. The CIA through their ground agents therefore had to confirm the claims and only then add him/them to their list of reliable partners (Grenier 2016:139).

Of the few Pashtun leaders who were apparently opposed to the Taliban, the CIA agreed to work with only Hamid Karzai, Gul Agha Sherzai and Abdulhaq. The first two were from Durrani tribe of Southern Afghanistan, and the last one was from Ghilzai tribe of the Eastern part of the country.

In order to open a new front inside the Taliban strongholds on the eve of Operation Enduring Freedom, the CIA started sending these leaders into the Taliban territory.

Karzai, from his home in Quetta city in Pakistan, crossed the border to Kandahar on October 8, 2001 and within a few days reached Urozgan province in Central Afghanistan. Within a few days he had 700 and 1000 followers. He was keeping in contact with the CIA through the satellite phone that he had been provided, and US planes were dropping him food and ammunition from the air. The CIA was sure that it would be difficult to win the war against the Taliban through Karzai in Urozgan, but they wanted to use this as propaganda against the Taliban. They wanted to show that the Pashtuns were unhappy with the Taliban.

Besides the Pashtun mobilization against the Taliban, the CIA had also contacted the Northern Alliance of Tajik, Hazara and Uzbek forces. Gary C. Schroen was the head of the Northern Afghanistan Liaison Team (NALT) under the code name JAWBREAKER which was dispatched to the Panjshir Valley on September 26, 2001. The mission of this team was to meet the key Northern Alliance commanders and to ensure their cooperation in the Operation Enduring Freedom.

The team established a joint intelligence cell with the Northern Alliance to collect and share information related to the Taliban and Al Qaida. NALT had to map the positions of the Northern Alliance and the Taliban through GPS in order to strike the right target while aerial bombing. The team also had to prepare the ground for the US Special Forces to enter Northern Afghanistan on October 19, 2001 (American Special Ops 2018). The details of the CIA operation are published in Schroen's memoirs: *First In: An Insider's Account of How the CIA Spearheaded the War on Terror in Afghanistan*.

The CIA also had built contacts with Taliban factions long before 9/11. The first contact between the CIA Chief of Islamabad Office and the Deputy of Taliban Foreign Minister, Abdul Jalil, had taken place in January 2001 in Islamabad. Such meetings between Taliban officials and CIA officials must have taken place in the presence of the Taliban ambassador in Pakistan, but at this meeting neither the ambassador was present nor had Jalil used the official embassy vehicle to come for the meeting.

Of course, the CIA would have established contacts with the Taliban in the past, but this time the mission was different. The main intention was to identify the factions inside the

Taliban and to use it as a tool to engineer a coup against the Taliban regime. To do so, the CIA wanted to hire people from the high echelons of power in the Taliban administration and Jalil was probably a good candidate (Grenier 2016:51, 54).

After 9/11 and through Abdul Jalil, the CIA was able to meet the military commander of the Southern Zone, Mullah Osmani, in Quetta, Baluchistan. Mullah Osmani was close to Mullah Omar and a hard critique of Osama's presence in Afghanistan. The meeting lasted five hours and the CIA's Chief of Islamabad Office, suggested Mullah Osmani to attack Osama camps using his own men (Ibid: 85).

Again, on October 18, 2001 Abdul Jalil through his satellite phone informed the CIA office in Islamabad of a proposed CIA-Taliban meeting. The meeting took place on October 24, 2001 in Karachi between a CIA agent and Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar's (second after Mullah Omar) representative, Abdul Qadir. At the meeting it was agreed that Baradar would hand over eight Arab terrorists along with Osama Bin Laden to the US, and the CIA provided Abdul Qadir a satellite phone to talk directly to Mullah Baradar himself.

On November 8, 2001, Abdul Jalil informed the CIA that Mullah Baradar was ready to join the opposition forces along with his 700 to 800 men (Ibid:240, 241). Before Kandahar fell to the opposition forces, Abdul Jalil again called the CIA and informed that the Taliban leadership was ready for negotiations in order to surrender Kandahar peacefully (Ibid 244).

Although the CIA was not able to engineer a coup by using one faction against the other, the contacts they had established were helpful in facilitating future negotiations. On December 6, 2001, an agreement was reached on surrendering Kandahar among four Taliban representatives, Karzai and two CIA agents, namely Jimmy and Graig. Both the sides agreed that Mullah Naqib (the former Taliban commander) would look after the city's security; Gul Agha Sherzai was assigned the duty to safeguard Kandahar airport and Karzai was asked to nominate the governor.

Besides the clandestine CIA operations, the US air power played an important role in defeating the Taliban. Bombing strategic locations, targeting Taliban frontlines and

dropping ammunitions and equipment from the air were very vital to winning the war against the Taliban. It was the superiority of the US air force that enabled the war to be concluded in two months. The war had started on October 7, 2001 and ended on December 8 of the same year when the last Taliban stronghold in Kandahar fell into the hands of the US and its Afghan allies.

5.2.2 The composition of Afghan political elites post 2001

Before writing on the composition of the political elite post 2001, we need to understand who all took part in the Bonn Conference. The number and type of the participants would provide us the clue to distinguish and categorize the Afghan political elite after 2001.

The war was not officially over and the Taliban were still fighting in Kandahar, but the UN convened the Conference on Afghanistan in Bonn, Germany on December 5, 2001. Four groups had been invited to the conference but Hizb-I-Islami of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar along with the Taliban didn't find a place in the list. Among the participants, the Northern Alliance was the prominent group, composed of a loosely knit alliance of Jihadi groups that had fought together during the civil war and had later joined the alliance against the Taliban.

Although the Hazaras' main party, Hizb-I-Wahdat, the Uzbeks' Junbish-I-Islami and a few Pashtuns such as Rasul Sayyaf were part of the Northern Alliance, most of the power was concentrated in the hand of a military wing of Tajiks' Jamiat-i-Islami led by Panjsheri commanders.

The next important participant in the conference was the Rome group selected from Zahir Shah's close circle. The Shah had settled in Rome, Italy since being deposed in 1972. The member of this group were either the old political elite who had worked in the kingdom's administration or technocrats and intellectuals who were living in exile and were trained there or had grown up there. The next two groups with less power and importance were the Cyprus and Peshawar groups representing the interests of Iran and Pakistan, respectively.

Now let us look into the composition of the Afghan political elite after 2001. As discussed in details in the chapter three, Afghanistan's pre-1979 political elite came from the royal families, or at least from the dominant Pashtun ethnic groups. Post 1979, the structure of the political elite became ideological in nature; therefore their adversaries were marginalized, imprisoned or killed. The communists, the Islamist Mujahidin and the Taliban followed the same strategy. But post 2001, there was an *elite restructuring*. According to Maley (2002:197) "elite restructuring takes place when employment of outside forces results in changing the composition of the national political elite either through elimination of the parties or when there is a fundamental change in the nature of their power". We should not forget that in this restructuring, the new political elite called technocrats also added to the circle.

In the case of Afghanistan, the employment of international forces, particularly the US under Operation Enduring Freedom, eliminated the Taliban regime and the Taliban political elite. Thereafter, through the new arrangement conceived in Bonn, the national political elite acquired a new structure. Except the Taliban, all other factions were represented in this new arrangement irrespective of their ideology, ethnicity, religion or tribes. The technocrats and the western-educated elite were present in the Bonn Conference under the banner of the Rome group. The Islamist parties and their representatives attended the conference under the banner of the Northern Alliance.

Also, the Bonn Conference and what followed provided the political elite democratic and inclusive space in terms of activities and recruitment. Article 35 of 2004 new constitution provides every political party an equal space. Currently, the records in Ministry of Justice show that 73 political parties are registered with the government. A look into the background of the founders of these parties would confirm that they belong to different ideologies and thoughts. The Islamists parties, Dawat-I-Islami, Jamiat-I-Islami, Hizb-I-Islami; the leftists, Da Afghanistan Da Sole Ghorsang Gond, and nationalists-Chauvinists such as Afghan Mellat and many more are among the registered political parties (Government of Afghanistan 2018).

Although the Bonn Conference provided the political elite a democratic space, due to the unbalanced power sharing arrangement among the participants in the Conference, there

was competition among them, but it did not turn into conflict like the pasts. The main competitors were the technocrats and the Islamists. A look at the composition of the cabinets in the Interim (2001), the Transitional (2002) and the first elected governments (2004), will make us understand the nature of the competition.

The composition of the cabinet in the Interim Administration exhibits its “winner take all” nature. Since the Northern Alliance forces had captured Kabul from the Taliban, and 2/3 of the country was under their control, of the thirty posts in the Interim Administration, seventeen were given to them at the Bonn Conference. Within the Northern Alliance the Tajiks, particularly the Panjsheris, were handed the key portfolios like Defense, Interior and Foreign Affairs.

This kind of power sharing in Bonn Conference created tension between the Islamists and the technocrats, as well as among the groups of the Northern Alliance. There was uneasiness among Burhanuddin Rabbani and his protégés Yonus Qanoni and Abadullah Abdullah therefore Rabbani did not attend the Bonn conference. Hazara leader Mohammad Karim Khalili and a prominent Pashtun leader from the East, Abdul Qadir, left the conference early. The Uzbek leader, Rashid Dostum, also complained about less representation of the Uzbeks (Sharan 2016:98, 99).

Unlike the past agreements and elite settlements, the Bonn agreement clearly provided the road map for each phase. According to paragraph 3 of the Bonn agreement, the duration of the Interim Authority was limited to six months, and it was to be replaced with a Transitional Authority. It was also stated that an emergency Loya Jirga should decide the composition of the Transitional Authority.

In June 2002, the Loya Jirga selected Hamid Karzai as the head of Transitional Government, and he was asked to select the members of his cabinet. In doing so, Hamid Karzai was then under pressure from both the Islamist Northern Alliance and the Pashtun technocrats. The former wanted to keep their dominancy and the latter demanded an increase in the share of the western-educated elite in general and the Pashtuns in particular. Karzai, however, only increased the Pashtun representation from 11 to 16 posts in the new administration; the share of the other ethnic groups remained the same.

The new Pashtun technocrats who had entered the cabinet and subsequently the circle of the political elite were Ashraf Ghani as Finance Minister, Ali Ahmad Jalali as Interior Minister, Juma Mohammad Mohammadi as Minister of Mines, Anwarul Haq Ahady as Governor of the Central Bank, Zalmay Rasool as National Security Advisor, Hanif Atmar as Minister of Rural Development and Yosuf Pashtun as Urban Affairs Minister. Though there were substantial changes in the composition of the cabinet, the Northern Alliance kept their dominance over the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Johnson 2016).

The Transitional Authority not only restructured the administration, marginalized the Islamists and incorporated more technocrats in the cabinet, but also moved beyond Kabul to dislodge the Islamists from their stronghold in the provinces. In the first move, in August 2003, Karzai summoned the strong man of Kandahar, Gul Agha Sherzai, to Kabul and handed him the portfolio of Rural Development and then appointed him the governor of Nangarhar in the east of the country. In late 2003, three warlords, Atta Mohammad Noor, Rashid Dostum and Mohammad Mohaqiq, indulged in a series of fighting among themselves in order to take control of the northern Mazar-e-Sharif province. Karzai moved against Atta by supporting Dostum, but it was a failure and Atta expelled his rivals from the city, and Karzai was forced to install him as the governor of Mazar-e-Sharif. Noor remained in that post till he was ousted by Ashraf Ghani in 2017.

In July 2004, Karzai dismissed the most powerful and the successor to Ahmad Shah Masood, General Fahim, from the post of the Vice President, and in September 2004 he removed the Islamist governor of Herat Province, Ismail Khan, and expanded the control of the Central government further in western Afghanistan.

Timor Sharan (2016:106) considers the years 2002 to 2004 as an era of competition between two networks. On the one side there were Pashtun technocrats under the leadership of Hamid Karzai and his close allies such as Ali Ahmad Jalali, Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai and Anwarul Haq Ahady, and on the other side was the Northern Alliance network or the Islamists who had dominated the Interim Government after the Bonn Conference. In this period (2002-2004) the Islamist Northern Alliance lost certain key

portfolios and their regional allies were replaced with those who were closer to Karzai and his network.

As per the agreement arrived at in the Bonn Conference, the Transitional Authority had to give its place to the elected government. The first general presidential election was conducted on October 9, 2004, and Hamid Karzai was elected the president with 55.4 percent of the votes. In his new administration, Karzai dropped more Islamists from the cabinet. General Fahim was not the First Vice President anymore, and the moderate Ahmad Zia Masood, brother of Ahmad Shah Masood, was given that post.

Dr. Abdullah Abdullah was replaced with a western-educated Rangin Dadfar Spanta as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Defense portfolio was given to the US-educated Rahim Wardak, and the Ministries of Interior and Finance were also kept out of the Islamists' ambit. What important to note here is that despite losing the power by the Islamist figures, unlike the past they did remain committed to the Bonn agreement and played the politics through the ballot boxes.

However, the 2005 parliamentary elections changed the calculation of Hamid Karzai and his technocrat allies. The majority of the parliamentary seats were won by the Islamists and the warlords. The Mujahidin, through their vast regional and ethnic support as well as through threats and violence, garnered a majority of the votes and emerged the most powerful group in parliament.

Andrew Wilder describes the composition of the Lower House (Wolsi Jirga) as follows: out of 249 members, 81 are pro-government, 84 are pro-opposition and the rest 84 are non-aligned. Considering the ideological lines of the elected members, he classifies the 249 as follows: 66 members are conservative/ fundamentalists, 47 are moderate/traditionalists, 43 are liberal/left and 93 are independents (Maley 2006).

The constitution of Afghanistan recognizes the presidential system of governance, but the ministerial candidates have to obtain the vote of confidence from parliament. This constitutional right allowed the Islamists in parliament to send a strong message to Karzai that his government was under their thumps. This in fact forced the Interior Minister, Ali Ahmad Jalali, to resign and allowed the Islamist, Zerar Ahmad Osmani, to occupy that

post. In another move, parliament tried to oust Rangin Dadfar Spanta, who was the Foreign Minister, through a vote of no-confidence; though the parliament members succeeded, Karzai retained him illegally till 2009.

The competition between the Islamist and the technocrat political elite, and suppression of the Islamists by the technocrats did not continue beyond 2005. The main reason for this was the power projected by the Islamists through the ballot box both in the 2004 Presidential election and the 2005 Parliamentary and Provincial Council elections.

In 2004, most of the warlords contested in the Presidential election. A Hazara and leader of Hizb-i-Wahdat Mohammad Mohaqiq, an Uzbek and leader of Junbish-i-Milli Rashid Dostum, and a Tajik and member of Jamiat-i-Islami Yonus Qanoni nominated themselves for the presidential election. It was clear that these candidates would not win but they participated in order to show their support among their ethnic groups, and wanted the government to understand their sphere of influence and status, something that would come in handy during future bargains.

The outcome of the election proved their claim and sphere of influence, Karzai standing first with 55.4 percent of the votes, Qanoni second, garnering 16.3 percent of the votes, Mohaqiq coming third with 11.7 percent, and Rashid Dostum receiving 10 percent of the votes and being ranked fourth (Emadi 2010:217,218). The contest of Islamists in the Presidential election was symbolic, but they showed their clout in the 2005 Parliamentary and Provincial elections.

Winning the majority in both *Wolsi Jirga* (Lower House) and *Meshrano Jirga* (Upper House) allowed the Islamists to win the post of the Speaker in both the Houses. Yonus Qanoni was elected the Speaker of the Lower House and Sebghatullah Mojaddadi took the reign in the Upper House. This success brought back the power of the Islamists who had had to take the back seat in the period between 2002 and 2004, and created a balance between the Executives dominated by technocrats and the Legislatures monopolized by the Islamists.

Karzai was eager to keep his government stable and wanted to rule peacefully. His intention was to expand the authority of his administration beyond Kabul and across the

provinces that used to be considered the strongholds of the Islamists. Therefore he started to deal with the Mujahidin/Islamists and ceased to be in competition with them.

According to Timor Sharan, Karzai created the ‘patron-client’ network of political elite. For this, he became dependent on two kinds of networks: first, the individual networks composing the national leaders with certain influence among their ethnic groups, and in their own region. Second, the officials in the provinces and the districts across the country who occupied their posts through individual networks (Sharan 2016:108,109).

According to this patron-client arrangement, the political and economic resources were distributed by the center first to the individual networks, and then through them to the officials in the provinces and the districts. As a patron, Karzai was availing from financial and political resources and distributing it among the network of his individual clients. These individual networks were free to distribute those resources among their own clients in their concerned areas or region.

However, to keep this Patron-Client network going, Hamid Karzai intentionally did not establish an Independent Civil Service Commission, as was recommended in the Bonn Agreement, till end of his tenure in 2014. Karim Khurram, who worked as the Chief of Staff of President Karzai, has a different interpretation from the established client-patron network, however. He says:

History shows that in Afghanistan, the central government has enforced its authority across the country through *arbab* and *maliks*. But this was stopped at the time of Jihad and after the Mujahidin came to power. The new *khans* and *maliks* transformed the system and the commanders of the Mujahidin played this role. When Karzai came to power he initially trusted only the technocrats, but later his perception changed and he began supporting those whose life and families were there in Afghanistan. One more thing: Karzai understood that if he were to lose the support of these local commanders at some point in time, the American would use them against him. That is why kept up that circle you have mentioned (Khurram 2018).

Concerning the changed policy of Karzai in post 2005 and the client-patron networks he made with Islamist Mujahidin, a former high official in Karzai government Sadiq Modabber argued that “Mujahidin was incorporated into the government due to technical reasons. He says: “It was decided in Bonn that the western-educated Afghans must be given the prime role in the administration, therefore Mr. Karzai accepted them. After they

took up the job, they appeared very weak in administrative works. That is why the Mujahidin who had done enough practical work and had executive experience took over (Modabber 2018).”

A majority of the national leaders and the political elite across the ethnic groups were present in Karzai’s Patron-Client network. The individual networks comprised Burhanuddin Rabbani, Qasim Fahim and Ahmad Zia Masood from the Tajik community; Karim Khalili, Mohammad Mohaqiq and Sadiq Modabber represented the Hazaras; Din Mohammad and Gul Agha Sherzai from the East; and Ahmad Wali Karzai from Kandahar and Akhund Zada from Helmand represented Pashtuns. Others such as Uzbek Rashid Dostum, Sebghatullah Mojaddadi, Rasool Sayyaf and Pir Seyyed Ahmad Gilani were also in the network (Ibid:109).

These were individuals who used to be influential in the network; all the political and economic resources were distributed through them in the provinces and districts. The ministers, provincial and district governors, ambassadors, those appointed senators in the upper house, diplomats and even the simple bureaucrats in governmental offices were appointed by these individuals. Through this network Karzai was able to tame legislative members also. In times of emergency, Karzai used to bribe members of parliament through his individual networks to get vote of confidence for his ministers and for parliament passing certain laws.

In the 2009 presidential election, Karzai utilized this network to mobilize general votes for himself. He counted on Karim Khalili and Mohammad Mohaqiq for the Hazara votes, sought the help of Qasim Fahim and Ismail Khan to garner Tajik votes, took the help of Rashid Dostum to get Uzbek votes, and finally invested in his brother in Kandahar and Sher Mohammad Akhund Zada in Helmand to campaign for him among the Pashtuns.

The new arrangement post 2001 had provided a democratic atmosphere for the political elite to function. The Bonn Conference had invited both the Islamists and the exiled liberals to decide the future of Afghanistan. The new constitution allowed every Afghan to establish a political party and to nominate themselves for the post of the president or to be a Member of Parliament. But like in any other post conflict society, the Afghan

political elite faced stiff competition among themselves. The competition between two groups of political elites, the Islamists and the western-educated technocrats had seemed unavoidable from 2002 to 2004. But this competition did not turn to conflict as happened in the past and probably it was prevented by Hamid Karzai who created the patron-client network in 2005. The table II below identifies the structure of the political elite after 2001:

No	Type of Political Elites	Influential period	Remarks
1	Islamists/Mujahidin	2001-2002	Members of Northern Alliance/Tajik dominant/Panjsheri monopoly
2	Technocrat	2002-2009	Educated in the West and modernist
3	Islamist-Technocrat under Client-Patron Network	2009-2014	Mixing of both technocrats and Islamists but dominated by the latter.

Table II

Source: Drawn by the author

5.3 Role of political elite in reaching consensus on political settlement, political stability and domestic politics

The consensus among the elite greatly influenced Afghanistan's domestic politics and political stability post 2001. The unity among the political elite in Bonn Conference had led to the Bonn Agreement. Further, the cooperation among the political elite had led to the successful implementation of the Bonn Agreement such as convening the Emergency Constitutional Loya Jirga and conducting the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2004 and 2005.

Moreover, the political elite arriving at a consensus among themselves assisted the process of nation building, social welfare, rule of law, political and economic reconstruction and enhanced human rights, particularly women's rights. In this section, first the role of consensus among the political elite in conducting the Bonn Conference and the implementation of the Bonn Agreement would be discussed. In the second part, the role of unity among the political elite on nation building and social welfare would be examined. In the third part, the outcome of the elite arriving at a consensus on human rights and women's rights would be discussed in detail.

5.3.1 Consensus among the political elite on implementation of Bonn Agreement

The Bonn Conference brought together all the political elite in the country except the Taliban leadership. It united the political elite across Afghanistan irrespective of their language, religion, ethnicity and ideology. The participants of the Bonn Conference came from different walks of life, they were people mostly affiliated to some faction or the other, and had fought among themselves in the past. The Bonn Agreement proves that the elite factions showed an unambiguous desire for unity among themselves and compromised over vital issues and restrained themselves from the usual bickering they are known for, for the sake of political stability and the future of Afghanistan.

There is no doubt that the international organizations such as the UN and a great power like the US played a huge role in building such a consensus. This research aims to show the depth of the consensus among the elite that had led to the Bonn Conference of 2001. The outcome of this consensus among the elite was revealed further in the Interim administration, formation of the Transitional government and at the time of passing the new constitution. Although the political elite faced competition at certain periods, the creation of the Patron-Client network with Hamid Karzai at the helm, kept the consensus among the political elite intact and guaranteed the survival of the newly established political system.

However, not inviting the Taliban leadership to the Bonn Conference and their further marginalization in the following years caused insurgency to sprout again and instability

to set in post 2006. However, the Afghanistan state institutions have remained intact and its relations with the international community have further expanded.

According to Burton and Higley (1987:295,298) *Elite settlement* and *elite consensus* “occur when warring factions among the national elite suddenly and deliberately reorganize their relations and start negotiations on vital issues and compromise over most of their disagreements. Generally a settlement occurs among the elite after the political elite witnesses some deadly and costly experience after an essentially inconclusive conflict”.

The deadlock and the fear of future crises would invite an urge to act leading to the factions arriving at a consensus at the expense of compromising on important issues and their interests. Maley (2002:197) calls the Bonn Conference as the process of ‘elite restructuring’, but this research argues that it was both elite restructuring as well as a settlement among the elite. It was elite restructuring because the structure of the political elite got transformed and a new structure took shape. The Taliban elite were dropped, but the Mujahidin-Islamists resurfaced, and a new political elite called technocrat was also born.

It was also an elite settlement because despite the sour experience in the past and their real differences on issues still remaining, the participants in the Bonn Conference willingly compromised and agreed to establish a new arrangement for the future of the country.

The elite consensus and the elite settlement would be illustrated more when examining the Bonn Conference, the composition of the Interim Government, the Emergency Loya Jirga, the establishment of the Transitional Authority, the Constitutional Loya Jirga and the process of adopting the new constitution. Of course, there are certain pros and cons in considering the Bonn Conference as an elite settlement in which the political elite expressed great consensus and unity.

Of course there are pros and cons for the Bonn Conference to be called as elite settlement. Karim Khurram has different interpretation from it and says:

I was there at the Bonn Conference. At that time, I thought that the Bonn Conference was God's gift to the people of Afghanistan. I was hoping that looking at the chaotic history of Afghanistan and learning from it, the political elite would sign the new agreement to establish a new Afghanistan. Unfortunately, it did not happen as I wanted it to. The participants did not have the national interest in mind; the agreement and its content were imposed on us by the foreigners. That is why I do not believe that it was an elite consensus. After the Bonn Agreement too we have not been witnessing unity and consensus among the elite in the country. The new political elite have only been thinking about lining their own pockets and grabbing more money and property. The only element that had kept these political elite together was Hamid Karzai (Khurram 2018).

However the former Director General of the Office of Administrative Affairs & Council of Ministers Secretariat in Karzai administration, Dr. Sadiq Modabber, believes that consensus had emerged among the political elite in 2001. He says:

For certain reasons, I do believe it was elite settlement because of the consensus among the political elite in 2001 that Afghanistan witnessed political stability. First, the political elite were tired of the political atmosphere that Taliban had created. They wanted the government to be based on the political will of the people. Second, the international pressure followed by the Bonn Conferences also influenced a change of mind among the elite. The Bonn Conference provided the opportunity for the political elite to come together and discuss among themselves and find a solution for the turmoil in the country and look for a way forward. These factors along with the charismatic personality of Hamid Karzai were important in bringing the political elite together and the outcome of which was political stability in the country (Modabber 2018).

Mohammad Mohaqiq believes that the political elite had got united in Bonn because of the international community pressure and the bitter experiences of the past. He says: "The Bonn Conference was conducted after taking into account the past experiences, the failure of the Mujahidin to establish a government and the deadlock in the civil war. According to him "the Bonn Conference implemented successfully because of the consensus among political elite (Mohaqiq 2018).

Faramarz Tamanna argues that the Afghan political elite had not reached a consensus by themselves, but that they were made to do so. He says:

The Bonn Conference was initiated by the international community, and the Afghan political elite went along with it. Had the international community not taken the initiative and the world not stayed united on the Afghanistan issue, it would have been impossible for the Afghan political elite to sit together around a table. I think the

Afghan elite were passengers in the ship that was going to a pre-determined destination (Tamanna 2018).

Having reflected the views of pros and cons on calling the Bonn agreement as elite consensus and elite settlement now we are going back to discuss the Bonn agreement. Here the author would discuss that why it can be called as elite settlement.

Once the defeat of the Taliban was imminent, and Kabul had fallen into the hands of the opposition forces, the UN brokered a deal through a conference in Bonn on December 5, 2001. The aim of the conference was to establish interim governments for six months, then call an Emergency Loya Jirga for enabling the formation of a Transitional government, and then a Constitutional Loya Jirga for adopting the new constitution.

The Bonn Agreement also decided on a date for conducting the general elections, recommended reorganizing the Afghan military forces, demanded the establishment of an International Security Assistance Force to look after the security of Kabul, and requested the international community to release humanitarian and reconstruction aid to Afghanistan (Johnson 2006).

The good thing about the Bonn Agreement in comparison with the past elite settlements such as the 1992 Islamabad Accord was the details which had been incorporated into it. It also outlined four stages through which the democratic process could be taken forward so that it would culminate in a peaceful election that would enable the formation of a democratic government.

The four stages are illustrated in figure 1. The date, tenure and the members for each stage are clearly mentioned in the agreement. The first stage was the Interim Authority for six months. The second stage was the convening of the Emergency Loya Jirga to establish the Transitional government for 18 months. In the third stage the Constitutional Loya Jirga had to be convened to pass the constitution. In the fourth stage the presidential and parliamentary elections had to be held to elect the President and the Members of Parliament.

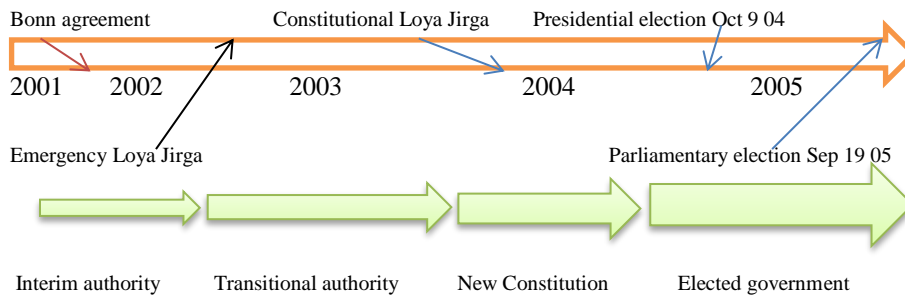


Figure I

Source: (Jhonson 2006)

Below it would be explained how the elite consensus orchestrated by the international community had helped in the smooth and successful implementation of the Bonn Agreement. If one were to look at each stage separately he would find that each stage had its deadlocks and difficulties. But international pressure and consensus and compromises among the political elite led to the success of the process.

For the Bonn Conference only four groups, Northern Alliance, Rome, Cyprus and Peshawar Groups, had been invited. The first two represented the Afghan factions and were considered the main players, while the last two represented the interests of Iran and Pakistan respectively. As more seats had been allocated to the Northern Alliance, particularly to Panjsheris, the Rome group was apprehensive about the outcome of the meeting; it had also objected to the power sharing arrangement. Even members of the Northern Alliance such as the Hazara and the Uzbek warlords were unhappy with the conference arguing that they had not been adequately represented in the Conference.

Abdul Sattar Seerat, an Uzbek and the head of the Rome Group, was upset when Hamid Karzai was selected as the Chairman of the Interim Government. He had already been elected as the Chairman of the Interim Government by majority votes, but in the final count it was Karzai who took the throne.

Despite the uneasiness, the parties involved did not repeat the mistakes of the post 1992 Islamabad Accord, and restrained themselves from challenging each other on the ground. The powerful Northern Alliance accepted the leadership of a Pashtun, Hamid Karzai,

Sattar Seerat withdrew from the post and accepted Karzai as the Chairman of the new administration. Later, the Hazara and Uzbek warlords nominated their candidates to the Interim Administration.

Taking into account the population of each ethnic group, the 30-member Interim Cabinet incorporated eleven Pashtuns, five Hazaras, eight Tajiks, three Uzbeks and the rest from other communities. To make this elite settlement successful, the American threat was effective along with the cooperation of the Afghan political elite who had arrived at a consensus on vital issues.

For example, when Burhanuddin Rabbani resisted retaining the Head of State and did not attend the Bonn Conference, the Americans asked him to withdraw his bid for power. As a show of muscle power, a rocket attack was staged near his home in Kabul and he reluctantly accepted the leadership of Karzai and endorsed the Bonn Agreement (Emadi 2010:209).

The second stage of the Bonn Conference faced serious problems. In the Emergency Loya Jirga, the participants argued relentlessly on choosing the Chairman as well as on identifying the composition of the Transitional government. There were often deadlocks. Who would lead the Transitional Administration; how would the cabinet posts be distributed, what role would religion play; what would be the type of the future political system, etc were vexing questions.

Moreover Karzai wanted to be elected again to the post of the Chairman, but the royalists wanted the deposed Zahir Shah to take that place. The Pashtun technocrats demanded a reduction in the share of the Panjsheri in the cabinet, and the Northern Alliance was keen on retaining their dominance.

There were differences among participants concerning the types of political system. The Pashtun representatives were pro presidential system and centralization of power, but the other communities demanded decentralization. The Hazaras and the Uzbeks, particularly, were for the federal system of governance and regional autonomy. The former also insisted on Shia being recognized as an official sect in Afghan jurisprudence, and the

latter demanded that their distinct culture and language be given enough space in the country.

However at the end of the Jirga, the royalists and Zahir Shah withdrew their demand and supported Karzai. The Hazaras and the Uzbeks also withdrew their demands while being promised recognition for the Shia sect in official jurisprudence and the culture and languages of minorities being provided enough space. The Panjsheris consented to relinquish the post of the Interior Ministry, and the Pashtun technocrats agreed to Fahim and Abdullah being Defense Minister and Foreign Minister, respectively.

Finally the participants agreed to establish the Transitional Administration with Hamid Karzai as the head of state, and he promised to incorporate more or less all the factions. Such an outcome would not have been possible without the political elite reaching a consensus and compromising on certain important interests. Zalmi Khalilzad, the US President's Special Envoy for Afghanistan, played an influential role in convincing certain factions to compromise on certain issues. (Khalilzad 2016:149).

The third stage of the Bonn Agreement was drafting a constitution and then passing it through the Constitutional Loya Jirga. According to the Bonn Agreement, the Transitional Authority along with the UN had to set up a Constitutional Commission within two months of assuming power. Accordingly a nine-member Drafting Committee was set up on October 5, 2002. Copying mostly from the 1964 Constitution, the Commission drafted the Constitution and submitted the draft to the 35-member Constitutional Review Commission that was established on April 26, 2003.

After it went through the process of changes, reform and referendum, the Constitution was ready to be passed in the Constitutional Loya Jirga. The Jirga was convened on December 13, 2003 and 503 representatives from across the country attended the Jirga. The Jirga lasted for three weeks; there were hard discussions and serious disputes, but the Constitution was passed successfully on January 4, 2004.

This stage also witnessed many disputes among the participants over several issues. The disputes were mostly based on ethnicity, language and religion, showing how fragmented the society really was. If one were to look at these disputes ethnic-wise: Tajik

representatives were for the parliamentary system against the Pashtun demand for a powerful central government with the presidential system; the Hazaras wanted regional autonomy and the Uzbeks wanted Turkic culture and language to be officially recognized.

The parliamentary versus the presidential system, the national anthem, the official language, and bestowing titles on great personalities were the issues debated the most in the Constitutional Loya Jirga. Pashtun representatives, and Pashtun technocrats like Hanif Atmar, Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai, Ali Ahmad Jalali, Anwarul Haq Ahady, and Islamist Pashtuns like Rasool Sayyaf were pro presidential system. According to them, as the society was fragmented and since there was a long civil war, there could be disintegration if there wasn't a powerful central government.

However representatives of other ethnic groups like the Tajik, the Hazara and the Uzbek were for the parliamentary system. According to them, the centralization of power could bring about dictatorship by an individual and monopolization of power by one ethnic group in the multi-ethnic society like Afghanistan. They were pro- parliamentary system as they felt it would provide a coalition government in which all ethnic groups would find representation.

The national anthem was another issue on which there was much disagreement. Pashtuns wanted the anthem in Pashtu language, but the Tajiks, Hazaras and Uzbeks who spoke Persian wanted the national anthem to be in both Persian and Pashtu. Bestowing titles on the legendries was the third issue that was highly contested. Pashtuns wanted Zahir Shah to be named the 'Father of Nation', Tajiks demanded that the title of 'National Hero' be bestowed on Ahmad Shah Masood, and the Hazaras wanted the title 'National Unity Martyr' for Abdul Ali Mazari (Rahimi 2016:158-162).

As none of the parties were willing to go easy on their demand, and because of the acrimonious debates that ensued, the duration of Constitutional Loya Jirga had to be extended. However, finally there was consensus on certain points and the Jirga came to an end after three weeks of its commencement.

On the issue of language, it was agreed to recognize Persian and Pashtu as the official languages of Afghanistan; it was also agreed that the languages prevalent in different regions and provinces would remain the official written and spoken languages of those regions and provinces. On the type of political system, the arguments for the presidential system prevailed, but the appointment of Ministers, the Governor of Central Bank and the Attorney General had to be approved by parliament. As per the Constitution, parliament could in certain situations impeach the President and depose him.

According to the decision of the Constitutional Jirga, the National Anthem was to be sung in Pashtu, but to placate the other communities it was decided to add the names of all ethnicities to the text of the National Anthem. And to please the Pashtuns, Tajiks and the Hazaras, Zahir Shah was given the title of ‘Father of Nation’, Ahmad Shah Masood was declared a ‘National Hero’, and Abdul Ali Mazari bestowed the title of ‘Martyr of National Unity’. The main reason why the Constitutional Loya Jirga ended on a successful note was the consensus among the political elite that led them to retreat from their original positions on important issues and agree to a compromise.

The fourth stage of the Bonn Agreement was also implemented successfully. Both the presidential and the parliamentary elections were conducted in 2004 and 2005, respectively. It was for the first time that Afghanistan had witnessed a democratic general election.

5.3.2 Elite Consensus and domestic policy

The consensus among political elite enabled the effective implementation of the decisions taken at the Bonn Conference and also helped maintain political stability in the country. This also led to the government formulating progressive and inclusive domestic as well as foreign policies. Below the effects of such consensus on domestic policy, nation building, social welfare and women’s rights will be examined.

5.3.2.1 State building and social welfare

When the Interim Administration took the reign in Kabul, Afghanistan was by all measures a ruined society. The economy was in a shambles, large population of Afghans were living in refugee camps in neighboring countries; women were deprived of their basic rights; a large number of illegal combatants were roaming free in the society, and there was no organized judicial system, a modern army or police in the country.

In these circumstances, it was the consensus reached among the political elite at the Bonn Conference that facilitated state building and implementation of welfare measures for the Afghan citizens in the following decade. From 2001 to 2005, Afghanistan made some positive gains in rebuilding state institutions. It also experienced a limited success in bringing changes in the life of its people. According to the Bonn Agreement and in terms of state building, Afghanistan convened two Loya Jirga; one for establishing the Transitional Administration and another for adopting the new Constitution.

The country also held two successful general elections; one presidential and one parliamentary, in 2004 and 2005, respectively. With the help of the international community, Afghanistan initiated the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process in 2003 and through this process demolished or reintegrated 60,000 former combatants.

And at the same time, it started building its own professional army and police forces to ensure the rule of law and to protect the country's territorial integrity. In terms of education and repatriation of refugees, Afghanistan enrolled more than four million children in schools and welcomed back four million refugees from the neighboring countries during the 2001-2005 periods. The consensus among its political elite and the successful implementation of the Bonn Agreement led the international community to continue their assistance and cooperation with Afghanistan across all sectors.

The London Conference on Afghanistan was held on January 31, 2006 and it became famous as the Afghanistan Compact. It was held at such a time when the deadline for implementing the Bonn Agreement was over and the major decisions taken at Bonn had been fulfilled. . Most of the major powers across the world took part in the Afghanistan

Compact and it provided Afghanistan the road map for the next five years. The road map concentrated on three important areas, namely security, governance and economic development.

In terms of security, besides stressing on disbanding illegal armed groups and countering narcotics, the London Conference also recommended ceiling the number of members in the Afghan National Army and the National Police to 62,000 and 70,000 respectively till the end of 2010.

Concerning governance, rule of law and human rights, it stressed on reforming public administration, taking anti-corruption initiatives, initiating judicial reforms and operationalizing the judicial system in all provinces. Regarding economic and social development, the 2006 Afghanistan Compact stressed on energy, mining, natural resources, water resource management and urban development. It further emphasized on road construction, completion of the national ring roads, air transport and upgrading the airports in the big cities across Afghanistan.

The Conference also set a target for education on the lines of Afghanistan's Millennium Development Goal (MDG); net enrolment of boys and girls at the primary school level had to be at least 75% and 60%, respectively in the next five years. As far as health and nutrition were concerned, Afghanistan was required to provide 90% of its people the Basic Package of Health Services, reduce maternal mortality to 15% and child mortality to 20% by the end of 2010 (London Conference 2006).

To review and assess the Afghanistan commitments made in the 2006 London Conference, the international community held another conference in London in January 2010. Through a communique, the participants welcomed the Afghan efforts in all the three areas outlined in the 2006 London Conference. In the realm of security, the progress made by the Afghan military forces in gaining the capability to plan and implement military operations was welcomed. It was agreed that the National Army and National Police had to expand further to reach strength of 171,600 and 134,000 respectively by the end of 2011. In terms of development and governance, the international community

welcomed Afghanistan's efforts in different areas and renewed its commitment to stand with it till the country could stand on its own feet.

In another international conference held in Bonn on December 5, 2011, the international community welcomed and commended the determination of the Afghan people to combat terrorism and take the responsibility for their own security. In terms of governance, the international community reaffirmed that the Afghan people would continue to build a stable and democratic society based on human rights, freedom of individuals and the rule of law. In terms of economic and social development, the international community shared Afghanistan's aim of achieving self-reliance and welcomed Afghan Government's Economic Transition Strategy that stressed the need to move Toward a Self-Sustaining Afghanistan (Bonn Declaration 2011).

During the 2004-2014 period Afghanistan's major problem was the security issue which also undermined other sectors in the country. According to UNAMA's 2014 annual report, around 47,745 civilian casualties had been documented between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2014 in which 17,774 were killed and 29,971 injured (UNAMA 2014).

Had the trend been similar to the period between 2004 and 2009, then the estimate of civilian casualties for the 2004-2014 periods would have been near 100,000. The exact number of combatants has not been disclosed due to secrecy surrounding the issue, but the casualties among Afghan armed forces and the Taliban were not less than that of the civilians during the administration of the Hamid Karzai (2002-2014).

However, despite this, Afghanistan witnessed certain achievements between 2001 and 2014. The data from the Afghan Central Statistics Organization (ACSO) for the year 2014 reveals these achievements. The number of schools in the country (private and government) exceeded 14,578 of which 13,912 were governmental and 666 private. The number of students enrolled in these schools were 87,60,986 of which the majority, 83,57,010, were in government schools and the rest 2,19,287 were in private schools (Government of Afghanistan 2014).

There are 75 teachers training institutions across the country in which 73,191 students were undergoing training to become teachers. The numbers of higher education

institutions have been put at 110 of which 31 are governmental and 65 private. In the same period the number of students enrolled in these universities has reached 20,4875, and the percentage of adult literacy (15 years and above) stood at 26.2%. In terms of culture and public media ACSO has recorded 82 public libraries, 1,172 newspapers, magazines and periodicals (ibid).

In terms of health, the number of doctors in the country stood at 9,184 and the number of government and private hospitals, excluding clinics and health centers, stood at 401. The child and maternal mortality rates have come down extensively and epidemics such as cholera and polio have been controlled to a satisfactory level. In the trade sector Afghanistan's trade figures touched \$515 million in exports and \$8,724 billion in imports, with a trade deficit of \$8,209 billion. Concerning Roads construction as of 2013-14, Afghanistan has 28,245 km of asphalted roads across the country (Government of Afghanistan 2014).

The data provided above by the government of Afghanistan might not be highly accurate but the changes in education, health, governance, rule of law and civil society are enormous post 2001.

5.3.2.2 Human and women rights

The history of human and women's rights in Afghanistan is a history of blatant violation. Religion, local traditions and customs have been used to justify these violations. Half the population of Afghanistan has always been women; however, their political, economic and civic rights have always been violated.

Lack of access to education, dropping out of schools early in life, child marriages, less enrolment in higher education institutions, were and still are the major hurdles preventing the progress of Afghan women. The Taliban period was the darkest era for Afghan women. Taliban banned girls attending schools and going to work. Women were not allowed to go to the market alone, and even visiting male doctors during emergency situations was prohibited.

However, post 2001 and after the elite settlement in Bonn Conference, women's positions in the society changed greatly. For the first time, the Afghan Interim Administration was asked to establish a broad based and gender sensitive government in Afghanistan. In section III (3) of the Bonn Agreement, the importance of women participating in the Interim Administration was emphasized. The same agreement ensured participation of women in the Emergency Loya Jirga in 2002, and the Constitutional Loya Jirga in 2003.

The percentage of women who attended the Emergency Loya Jirga was 12; and it was 20% in the Constitutional Loya Jirga. In the presidential and parliamentary elections, 40% of the voters were women. Article 22 of the Afghan Constitution affirmed women's equality under the law and ensured a 25% quota, or 68 out of the 249 seats, for women in the Lower House *Wolsi Jirga*, and 20%, or one-sixth of the seats in the Upper House *Meshrano Jirga* are reserved for women (Johnson 2006).

In addition to this, a Ministry of Women was established in 2001 to look after women's affairs, to initiate capacity building programs for empowering women and to prevent violence against them. Dr. Sima Samar says: "The Ministry was established bowing to pressure from the international community and the Afghan women's lobby, as well as taking into account the history of violence against women in the country" (Samar 2018).

In another positive move to ensure that violators would not go scot-free, the Afghan President issued a decree, Prohibition of Violence against Women (POVAW) in 2009. Though parliamentarians voted against it in 2013 but "the decree shall be observed as a law in the judicial system of Afghanistan" (Government of Afghanistan 2017).

Sima Samar believes that "some members in parliament were using religion as a tool to argue that POVAW is against Islam, which it is not". She adds: "Elements such as the age of marriage, remarriage with the consent of the first wife, and registration of violence against women are the main issues that make it difficult for POVAW to get the parliament approval" (Samar 2018).

Article 4 of POVAW considers violence as crime and applies certain punishments for the act of this crime. In Article 5 of POVAW, 22 types of violence, such as rape, forcing into prostitution, burning, injuring, etc have been pointed out. In the section III of POVAW,

certain punishments have been notified and they vary from imprisonment for a short period to capital punishment depending on the level of the crime. Accordingly, High Commission for Violation against Women was established in Kabul and five other provinces across the country to supervise and register complaints of violations against women (Government of Afghanistan 2008).

On May, 18, 2008, the cabinet approved a ten-year National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan (NAPWA). The main aims of NAPWA are to empower women and to ensure gender equality in the Afghan society, particularly in government institutions. NAPWA ensured the presence of women across the governmental sectors and enhanced women leadership.

Accordingly, gender department was established in all ministries and governmental institutions to supervise gender equality and to incorporate more women staff. Now the share of women in the judicial system is 10%; in the high decision making body it is 9%, in the security sector it is 5%, and 24% in the health sector (Government of Afghanistan 2018).

Moreover, 19% of the university students, 15% of the university professors, 38% of the students in schools and 30% of the school teachers are women. More importantly, the literacy rate of women has increased to 16%; it was less than 5% in the period before 2001(ibid). However, Afghan women still suffer from violence and discrimination though they have made great strides after 2000.

5.4 Elite consensus and post 2001 foreign policy

Like in domestic politics, the consensus among the political elite greatly influenced Afghanistan's foreign policy also. Based on the new environment, the new rulers of Afghanistan adopted an inclusive and vibrant foreign policy. Building warm relations with neighboring countries, approaching the regional and international powers, cooperating with international organizations and signing strategic agreements with major powers were considered the priorities for the new establishment in Kabul.

To make the arguments smooth and easy, this section has been divided into different sub sections. At the outset, the major foreign policy objectives of the new establishment would be outlined, and then it would be discussed how the foreign policy of Afghanistan got transformed post 2001. Thereafter, the country's foreign policy viz-a-viz its neighbors, great powers and international organizations would be examined.

5.4.1 Major Foreign policy objectives and transformation of foreign policy

It is necessary to clarify certain issues before examining the objectives, and the role of the political elite on transformation of the foreign policy after 2001. Legitimacy and sovereignty/independence are the two major factors that many believe Afghanistan lacks and hence they argue that the country does not have a foreign policy at all. Probably the role of the US and the presence of international troops in the country are the reasons why they have come to such a conclusion.

But as far as legitimacy is concerned, it should be asserted that the post 2001 Interim Authority was the outcome of the Bonn Conference in which the major Afghan groups had participated; and the convener of the Conference was the UN. And the 18-month Transitional Authority established thereafter had the consent of the Emergency Loya Jirga and therefore had legitimacy in the eyes of Afghan people and the international community. The first government (2004-2009) and the second government (2009-2014) under Hamid Karzai's leadership were the result of general elections held separately, in 2004 and 2009.

On independence and sovereignty, it should be said here that neither Afghanistan nor many other countries in the world are independent and sovereign according to the classical definitions of the term. In the present world, countries are interdependent and interlinked to such an extent that it would be difficult to consider them as fully independent and sovereign. Thus according to the new definition of independence and sovereignty, Afghanistan is as independent as many other nations in the world. The independency of its foreign policy was revealed further when Afghanistan managed to build strong relations with two adversaries, the US and Iran.

Having clarified the doubts on legitimacy and sovereignty, the Afghan foreign policy determinants would be taken up now, and its objectives would be looked into thereafter.

There are certain determinants that have affected Afghanistan's foreign policy in the past and continue to affect it even now. Among these determinants, its geographical location, the domestic situation and the international environment are the dominant ones. In terms of geography, Afghanistan's physical position in the heart of Asia and on the crossroads of the region has made it an important country in terms of geo-politics, geo-strategic, geo-economic and geo-cultural for the countries in the region and beyond. For these reasons Afghanistan has remained a hot issue in the great game era, and a buffer zone between Czarist Russia and Great Britain in the 18th and the 19th century.

Afghanistan's location between the socialist Russia and the rest of the world made it a battle ground between the US and the USSR in the 20th century. In terms of domestic situation, the presence of international terrorist organizations on Afghan soil and the hesitancy of the Taliban to hand over the wanted terrorist Osama Bin Laden made the US mount pressure on the Taliban and isolate Afghanistan internationally.

In terms of international environment, the 9/11 and the adamancy of the Taliban in not handing over Osama Bin Laden made the US mobilize the international environment against the Taliban regime and to declare the war on terror in October 2001. Therefore it can be said that its geographic location, the domestic situation and the international environment not only affected Afghanistan's foreign policy but also brought about a transformation in both its domestic and foreign policies post 2001 as well.

The above mentioned determinants helped Afghanistan's foreign policy makers to engage constructively with countries in the region as well as global powers post 2001. The country's geographic location allowed its political elite to work closely with countries as well as organizations in the region such as SAARC and SCO, and to cooperate with them across all sectors.

Afghanistan's domestic situation such as, the relative political stability, the reconstruction process and the requirement for financial assistance led the foreign policy decision

makers to reconnect the country to the world and to restart cooperation and engagement with foreign nations.

Finally, the international environment and the world consensus on Afghanistan provided the country an opportunity to deal and engage with the world freely and openly. Therefore these three factors enabled Afghanistan to enter the new world after long years of isolation.

Here it should also be noted that there are certain factors that influenced and limited the process of decision making in Afghanistan's foreign policy post 2001:

First, the Afghan society remained fragmented on ethnic and tribal lines, affecting the Afghan political culture. Therefore, the border between national interests and ethnic interests was quite blurred, and in this process the former was sacrificed for the benefit of the latter. This factor was responsible for the failure in defining nationhood and national interest after 2001.

Second, the new democratic establishment was the outcome of the Bonn Agreement that was greatly influenced by the international community and the UN. Therefore, the new regime had to cooperate closely with the international community and give in to much of the demands made by the donor countries. The post 2001 establishment also had to consider the interests of the friendly countries while formulating its foreign policy.

Third, the economic and political situations of Afghanistan greatly affected its foreign policy. Long years of civil wars had destroyed most of its infrastructure and for the reconstruction process, Afghanistan required foreign financial assistance.

Fourth, the international structure and the demands of regional and global powers had great influence on the country's foreign policy. In this the US had a greater share than any other player. To make it short, the fragmentation of the Afghan society, the demands made by donor countries, its economic and political necessities and the international structure influenced Afghanistan's foreign policy after 2001.

Taking into considering the above factors, Afghanistan's new political elite outlined certain objectives in the country's foreign policy after 2001. Rahmani and Husseini (2012:80) summarized these objectives as bellow:

First: Afghanistan image had been tarnished in the last 30 years of civil war and the country's name was being equated with conflict, drugs, destruction and as a sanctuary for wanted global terrorists. Hence the first objective was to reconstruct Afghanistan's image in the eyes of international community and to present Afghanistan as peace loving nation.

Second: Afghanistan had remained in isolation for long years and to get over its backwardness it was decided to broaden its relation with foreign nations and international institutions as much as possible.

Third: for the process of nation building and rebuilding the country's infrastructures, Afghanistan required financial assistance, therefore attracting the attention of the international actors and investors became the third foreign policy priority for the country.

Fourth: Since Afghanistan had suffered enormously in the past due to conflict of interests among the countries in the region and beyond, restoring the balance of interest among the regional countries and beyond became another priority for Afghan foreign policy after 2001 (Rahmani and Husseini 2012:80). To make it short, image reconstruction, overcoming international isolation, attracting funds for reconstruction, and finally, maintaining the balance in foreign policy was considered the objectives of the foreign policy of the Karzai administration from 2002 to 2014.

On the priorities in the foreign policy after 2002, Faramarz Tamanna, the Director of Strategic Studies in Foreign Ministry of Afghanistan, says:

The foreign ministry at first concentrated on capacity building. Second, it concentrated on management. Third, Afghanistan tried to open diplomatic missions across the world. Fourth, the new establishment focused on managing the affairs of the Afghan immigrants. Fifth, the foreign policy establishment tried to find a balance among the interests of the domestic players (Tamanna 2018).

A look at the determinants and the objectives would show that the foreign policy of Afghanistan was transformed and restructured after 2001. Holsti defines foreign policy

transformation/restructuring as “the dramatic, whole sale alteration of a nation’s pattern of external relations” (Holsti 1982: ix). According to him, “such transformation happens quickly by expressing an intention for fundamental changes”. He argues that factors such as dependency, vulnerability, perception of weakness and massive external penetration make a country transform its foreign policy (Holsti 1982: IX, 199).

Charles Hermann (1990) introduces four levels of foreign policy changes. By *adjustment changes* he means changes in the level and scope of recipients; by *program changes* he means change in quality of method and means; *problem and goal change* happens when the problems and goal are replaced; through *international orientation changes* he means the redirection of the entire country’s relations toward international environments.

At the same time, Herman writes that four agents drive changes to the foreign policy. According to him, *leader-driven* changes “result from the determined efforts of the authoritative policy maker”. *Bureaucratic advocacy* will bring changes in the foreign policy when a group or organization inside the government has full access to the highest officials. *Domestic restructuring* agent of change comes from outside the government, from the politically relevant part of the society on which the government depends to keep functioning. *External shock* is the result of international events which would have quick impact and cannot be ignored.

In the case of Afghanistan, the political elite, the restructuring of domestic politics and the external shocks were the most important factors that led to the transformation of its foreign policy. Post 2001, the structure of the political elite got drastically restructured with the dogmatist Taliban being replaced with moderate Islamists and western educated technocrats. Domestically, Afghanistan witnessed structural changes, and for the first time all the ethnic groups were incorporated into the power sharing arrangement in Bonn, and thereafter were consulted while making decisions on domestic and foreign policies.

As cited before in this chapter, consensus among the political elite emerged in Bonn conference, and from 2005 onwards a political elite network with Hamid Karzai at the centre surfaced, and from then on the government was fully dependent on the national political elite and vice versa.

Of course the 9/11 international shock provided an opportunity for the Afghans to get rid of the Taliban, and that greatly transformed Afghanistan's foreign policy. A comparative study of Afghanistan's foreign policy post 2001 and its foreign policy during the Taliban period would show that there was drastic difference in the program, goals and international orientation between the two patterns. The new establishment tried to adjust itself to the international norms and regulations and formulated its plans and programs accordingly. The goal and objectives were drawn up in such a way that it would safeguard the interests of the country. The international orientation of the country got transformed and Afghanistan opened different channels to engage with the world and the international community.

Afghanistan's foreign policy witnessed ups and downs after 2001. Afghanistan was not able to formulate its foreign policy right after the Bonn Conference and the establishment of the Interim Authority. According to the Bonn Agreement, the jobs of the Interim and the Transitional Authority were confined more to nation building, security and stability rather than working on its foreign policy.

Article 3 of the Bonn Agreement clarifies: "Throughout the period of the Interim Authority, it shall represent Afghanistan in the international arena and shall occupy the seat of Afghanistan in the UN and major international institutions". But Afghanistan's presence in the international arena was more symbolic, and the country did not have a clear policy on how to represent itself.

According to Article 4 of the Agreement, the main duty of the Interim Authority was to convene the Emergency Loya Jirga and to decide on the composition of the Transitional Authority. Like the Interim Administration, the agreement had limited the duration of the Transitional Authority (TA) also. The tenure of the TA was set for 18 months and its powers were confined to convening the Constitutional Loya Jirga as per Article 6 of the Bonn Agreement. The Transitional Authority was required to establish the Constitutional Commission within two months of assuming power.

During these two periods (2002-2004), the major concerns for Afghanistan and the international community were stability, reconstruction, fighting against terrorism and security.

To fulfill these obligations, Chairman Hamid Karzai visited many countries and shared the security concerns with world leaders. In his first visits to China and the US in January 2002, he urged the US President to help him in setting up an Afghan army and security forces (US government 2002). Counter terrorism operations and financial assistance were the major issues he discussed with the Chinese President (China.org 2002). The same process was continued during all his visits to various foreign capitals during the periods of both the Interim Administration and the Transitional Authority.

During these two periods, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah was the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, and instead of working on foreign policy strategy, he spent his energy investing in rebuilding institution and staff recruitment. His opponents have accused him of nepotism for recruiting Tajiks, particularly Panjsheris, in the Ministry of External Affairs.

Jawid Ludin, former Chief of Staff of the President and former Deputy to MEA in Political Affairs, believes that the framework of the Afghan foreign policy was drawn up right after 2002. He says: "I must correct you here. Afghanistan's foreign relations framework was established in the years 2001 to 2004. It however got legitimacy only in 2004 with Mr Karzai getting elected (Ludin 2018).

However, after 2004, the foreign policy of Afghanistan acquired a new shape. The new constitution that was passed in January 2004 defined the framework of the country's foreign policy. It also clarified which institutions were responsible for setting the agendas and supervising the decision making process on foreign policy. Article 7 of the constitution obliges the state to observe the United Nations Charter, International Treaties and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights while making decisions. The same Article also asks the state to prevent all kinds of terrorist activities on its soil. It prohibits the state from cultivating and smuggling narcotics as well as production and use of intoxicants.

Article 8 of the Constitution outlines the framework by which the foreign policy of Afghanistan would be conducted. According to this Article, the state of Afghanistan “shall regulate its foreign policy on the basis of preserving the independence, national interests and territorial integrity”. Further it mentions that Afghanistan’s foreign policy shall be conducted on the basis of “non-interference, good neighborliness, mutual respect and equality of rights”. In other words Article 8 laid the foundation and objectives of the foreign policy of Afghanistan after 2004 (Government of Afghanistan 2004).

On the question of which body is responsible for the foreign policy of Afghanistan, Article 64 of the Constitution has the answer. Clauses 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 14, 15 and 17 give special privileges to the President in this matter. According to these clauses, the President shall “determine the fundamental lines of the foreign policy with the approval of the National Assembly”.

The President shall declare war and peace with the endorsement of the National Assembly and appoint ministers, including those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is the President who appoints the heads of political representatives of Afghanistan in foreign missions and accepts the credentials of foreign political representatives in Afghanistan.

The constitution also gives some privileges to the National Assembly in controlling and influencing the foreign policy, but the major share has been bestowed on the President. Article 90, 91 and 93 give the National Assembly the right to ratify or abrogate the membership of Afghanistan in international treaties and agreements. These Articles give the National Assembly the right to question a minister and if not convinced by his answer, the right to abrogate the vote of confidence and thereby dismiss him from the ministry. The minister who is being questioned or inquired into has to provide oral or written response (Ibid).

The new constitution provided an opportunity for the first elected government (2004-2009) to frame its foreign policy objectives. Hamid Karzai introduced an academic and a PhD holder, Rangin Dadfar Spanta, as his Foreign Minister to Parliament on April 13, 2006. Though he was dismissed as Foreign Minister by the Lower House a year later,

President Karzai retained him in the Cabinet after seeking advice from the Attorney General's Office. Spanta initiated reforms in the Ministry. He introduced a formal examination for recruitment, recalled from foreign mission diplomats whose tenure had expired, resisted nepotism and pressure from powerful persons. More importantly, Spanta introduced an 11-point doctrine to guide the foreign policy but it remained only on paper.

It was a comprehensive doctrine that covered extensively the major areas. It clearly outlined the foreign policy guidelines towards neighbors, the Islamic world, regional countries, regional powers and finally world powers such as the US. This doctrine was the individual initiative of Spanta himself and was not shared with other ministries, academics or parliamentarians for further enrichment. Therefore, the moment Spanta left the Foreign Ministry in 2009, the doctrine was discarded and forgotten forever.

In Karzai's second tenure (2009-14), two persons, Zalmi Rasool and Zerar Ahmad Osmani, occupied the post of the Foreign Minister, but none of them worked on the doctrine, and the Foreign Ministry indulged mostly in day to day activities. Spanta himself has a different version about his doctrine, He says:

I must say that the draft was not comprehensive. It was put together in 2006, and Afghanistan did not have enough experts on foreign policy then for one to consult. There weren't many people around with a university degree who knew about politics and foreign policy and could be consulted. Moreover, through the draft document I only wanted to open a window for discussion on the issue. It was not a doctrine to be implemented, but rather a lecture with particular factors to say that doctrines can be drafted this way too. I agree that to have a comprehensive foreign policy doctrine, the draft document has to be circulated among different sections of the society, particularly the academics and the political elite (Spanta 2018).

According to Spanta, most of his initiatives as foreign minister blocked because of the rivalry between the technocrats and the Islamists among the political elite. They were responsible for his dismissal as Foreign Minister as well. He accuses the President's close circle such as Head of Administrative Office of President Farooq Wardak, Head of Presidential Office Omar Dawoodzai and First Vice President Ahmadzia Masoud of working against him (Spanta 2017:140). Spanta said Farooq Wardak was the main culprit behind his dismissal by parliament. The first two belong to Islamist/radical Hizb-I-Islami and the third was associated with Islamist Jamiat-i- Islami party.

According to Spanta his official visit to Iran in 2007 as well as his opposition to the National Reconciliation Charter (NRC) on January 31, 2007 made the Islamists to take confrontational move against him. In Tehran visit, he asked from Iranian official state to state relation by curbing the relations with political groups in Afghanistan. The NRC was passed as a law by MPs stated that no one had the right to prosecute the Mujahidin and all their past crimes were to be forgiven (Ibid: 143). Then they pressurized the President to sign and enact it as a law (Ibid: 143).

Faramarza Tamanna however has a different version on why Spanta's doctrine failed. He says:

There were two reasons: one: while writing it, Spanta did not consult others in the cabinet nor his colleagues in the foreign ministry. Second: Spanta was summoned and impeached by parliament and hence could not concentrate further on the doctrine. Ideological differences or problems among the political elite were not the reasons for the failure of the doctrine that he initiated (Tamanna 2018).

The issue of rivalry takes us to the foreign policy establishment post 2001. The aim is to find which institutions had the major role in taking decisions on the foreign policy during the Karzai administration. As per the current constitution Parliament has certain rights even though the President has the major role in taking decisions. However, this research has found the President's Office monopolizing the decision making process on foreign policy even marginalizing others including Parliament in the process.

The executive branch of the government, that is the triangle of Foreign Ministry, National Security Council and the Office of the President, was deciding each and every issue in the foreign policy of Afghanistan during the Karzai administration from 2002 to 2014. And from among the three, it was the President himself who had the last word in foreign policy.

Therefore it can be rightly said that Mr. Karzai was the king, masked by the democratic establishment of course, as far as foreign policy was concerned. Contrary to the monarchy, in a democratic establishment, political parties, parliament, academics and think tanks are expected to be consulted in formulating the foreign policy, but in

Afghanistan from 2002 to 2014, it was Mr. Karzai who had the last word on the country's foreign policy.

The former Foreign Minister and National Security Advisor of Afghanistan, Rangin.D. Spanta, admits the finality of Karzai's word in the country's foreign policy, and justifies it by saying that the Foreign Ministry and Parliament of Afghanistan didn't have the capacity to take decisions on the country's foreign policy. He says:

Look, Afghanistan was not a post-conflict country, but an in-conflict country. In a country that lacks institutions and where the existing institutions are not capable of doing their duty, it is natural for an individual in his capacity as the President to take decisions. Of course, if you do not have enough capable people in the Ministry of External Affairs to formulate the policy, then the roles of the Minister and the President become enhanced. In the absence of active political parties and a capable Parliament, it was natural that in the presidential system that Afghanistan follows, the President would have the last word (Spanta 2018).

On the decision-making triangle on foreign policy and the role of the President, Jawid Ludin, the former Chief of Staff of the President and Deputy to the Ministry of External Affairs, argues that despite the other two, it was the President who could lead any foreign policy initiative. He says:

There is no doubt that the President had great influence on the foreign policy. He was the one who would say the last word on foreign policy. Even though there were the National Security Council and the Foreign Ministry, who had great influence over the President, it was always the President who had the last word on foreign policy matters (Ludin 2018).

On the structure of foreign policy decision making, Karim Khurram, who was the former Chief of Staff of the President as well as the Minister of Culture and Information in the Karzai administration, says:

The National Security Council and the Office of the President had greater role in formulating the foreign policy. They were the institutions closest to the President. Then came the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But the President himself had the most important role. He always shot the last bullet in this matter (Khurram 2018).

On the foreign policy decision making body, Sadiq Modabber also says: "The Foreign Ministry, the National Security Council, the Deputy to Political Affairs of the Foreign Ministry and the Office of the President had the most say in foreign policy matters. The

President consulted them on matters of foreign affairs, but took the decisions himself. From 2007 onwards, the President took decisions on foreign policy almost on his own as his perceptions about the US had changed considerably. In 2013, despite the Loya Jirga approving the signing of the BSA, he rejected it” (Modabber 2018).

Faramarz Tamanna believes that the role of each institution differed according to the person heading it. He says: “The President’s Office, the National Security Council, the Foreign Ministry, Parliament, the media and the international players had a great say on the foreign policy. The academic circle had the least influence”.

According to him “the influence of institutions would change when the leadership of those institutions changed. For example, at the time of Dr. Abdullah the ratio of influence on foreign policy was 55:45 between the President and the Foreign Ministry. In some issues the role of the Ministry could go up to even 75%. Of course, the National Security Council had the role of consultant to the President” (Tamanna 2018).

There are different reasons why the roles of Parliament and political parties got undermined on foreign policy matters during the Karzai administration. Lack of capacity of the Members of Parliament (MP), problems among the MPs and the tribal structure that Karzai hails from may be listed as reasons for this.

Abdul Qayoom Sajjadi, an MP and member of the Foreign Policy Committee, says: “Everything was in the hands of Karzai and he was influenced by tribal values” (Sajjadi 2018). Hafiz Mansoor, an MP and member of Jamiat-i-Islami says: “Foreign policy was in the hands of President Karzai and the role of Parliament in it was the minimum while the role of political parties in matters of foreign policy was zero” (Mansoor 2018).

Jawad Salehi, an academic, says: “Parliament did not have the capacity to deal with foreign policy. Moreover it was not an area of interest to a majority of the MPs, most of whom were looking to build private contacts with officials” (Salehi 2018). Mohyeddin Mahdi, an MP and member of Jamiat-i-Islami, also believes “everything was in the hands of Karzai who believed that on any issue the first and the last word should be said by a Pashtun”. Mahdi added: “Parliament was not consulted when major foreign policy decisions were made” (Mahdi 2018).

Mohammad Nateqi, the former ambassador and member of Hizbe-i-Wahdat Islami says: “Karzai suppressed and nearly destroyed all political parties in order to concentrate the power in his hands” (Nateqi 2018). Ali Akbar Kazemi, an MP and member of Foreign Policy Committee argues: “The government and Karzai cannot be blamed for everything, especially for the minimum role that Parliament played in taking decisions on foreign policy matters. Parliament had its own problems as most of the MPs were busy attending to their own private businesses and not attending sessions most of the time”. He added: “however Karzai interfered in the affairs of Parliament by distributing money among certain MPs to support the policies of the government” (Kazemi 2018).

On the reasons for marginalization of political parties during the Karzai administration, Jafar Mahdavi, an MP and member of Foreign Policy Committee says:

Karzai is from a tribal background. He did not believe in political parties or political activities. He played politics by investing in traditional leaders and heads of tribes. He not only excluded political parties from major decision making process but also marginalized them as much as he could (Mahdavi 2018).

Mahdavi also lists certain factors that led to the concentration of power in the hand of the President and the marginalization of others, particularly Parliament and political parties while taking decisions on foreign policy matters. They are:

the presidential system enshrined in the Constitution; lack of experience of the Afghans in the democratic system and about learning from mistakes; absence of some particular institution to deal with foreign policy; lack of academic capacity of institutions that deal with foreign policy, and the internal problems that parliament and political parties faced (Mahdavi 2018).

Having said about the foreign policy decision making body now we move to categorization of foreign policy of Afghanistan after 2001. The foreign policy of Afghanistan after 2002 can be divided into three phases. The first period is between 2002 and 2004 and Afghanistan government was mostly focusing on state building and busy with domestic issues therefore less concerned on foreign policy.

The second period is between 2004 and 2007 that Afghanistan government decided to invest on foreign policy. Till this time Afghanistan had democratic constitution elaborated the framework of foreign policy and identified the foreign policy decision

making body. Moreover the legitimacy of the government enhanced when the 2004 presidential election brought the new elected government.

The third period is between 2007 and 2014. In this period and particularly from 2009 onwards the unilateralism of President Karzai enhanced dramatically in foreign policy decision making. Because of certain perceptions formulated in the mind of President towards the west and particularly the US, Afghanistan relations with the US jeopardized further.

According to Spanta, “It was on account of the years of turmoil and civil war that Afghanistan’s political elite tried to establish a political system with the help of the international community. As a result, in the initial years, particularly from 2001 to 2004, the focus was on establishing the political system and state institutions. Hence the influence of the US and the international community in formulating both the foreign policy and the domestic policy was vital” (Spanta 2018).

According to him “from 2004 onwards, however, the Afghans started, though weakly at first, to assert themselves in the matters of foreign policy by saying we are also a country with particular traditions and legacy in foreign policy. This move created tension between Afghanistan and its international partners, particularly the United States”. Spanta believes that “from 2007 to 2014, Afghanistan tried to free itself from the control of the US in its foreign policy. The country tried to formulate a balanced foreign policy” (Spanta 2018).

In short, the consensus among Afghan political elite not only brought about a relative stability in the country, but it also resulted in the country formulating an inclusive foreign policy. It was after taking into consideration the foreign policy determinants that the new establishment formulated its foreign policy objectives and aims. Keeping in mind the objectives, Afghanistan built and maintained its relations with its neighbors, great powers and international institutions. We will now examine Afghanistan’s foreign policy post 2001 vis-a-vis its neighbors, great powers and international organization.

5.4.2 Afghanistan foreign policy vis-à-vis its neighbours: Iran and Pakistan

Neighbors have had a special place in the country's foreign policy after 2001. That is why in the initial years of new establishment and in 2002, Kabul signed the 'Good Neighborly Agreement' with its neighbors. Sadiq Modabber, believes that "The country's neighbors had a special place in Karzai's mind. He believed that the US would not be successful in Afghanistan without the cooperation of its neighbors. He has always said that the stability in Afghanistan from 2002 to 2006 was due to the good and healthy relations we had with our neighbors and the countries in the region" (Modabber 2018).

According to Modabber Karzai wanted a balanced foreign policy. He wanted permanent peace in Afghanistan and the only way to achieve that was to engage with our neighbors. He believed that the countries in the region if not taken on board could prove to be a threat to the US-led peace efforts" (ibid).

5.4.2.1 Afghanistan relations with Iran after 2001

In post 2001, the Iranian foreign policy objectives vis-à-vis Afghanistan had focused on water sharing arrangements, maintaining its influence in Afghan politics, competing with the US and NATO, countering narcotics and counter terrorism, economic projects and trade transits (Monadi 2014:125).

In the other side the new political elite in Afghanistan initiated the inclusive foreign policy after 2001. Afghanistan wanted to reshape the country's image in the eyes of international community and its neighbors after long years of instability and civil war. Kabul's priority was to attract aid and investment to rebuild its infrastructures destroyed in the past. The new administration tried its best to maintain the balance in foreign policy by managing the conflict of interests of those countries engaging with Afghanistan (ibid).

Afghanistan's foreign policy stand toward Iran was based on non-interference, mutual respect, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Afghanistan wanted to attract the Iranian funds and aids for the infrastructural rebuilding.

Since Iran was rival to Saudis and Americans therefore balancing between the interests of Iran-Saudi Arabia and Iran-US had to be maintained by Afghanistan and Afghans did well in this matter. Kabul's request from the mentioned countries to keep their conflict in

bilateral level relatively worked therefore allowed Afghanistan to have friendly relations with Tehran, Washington and Riyadh coincidentally.

However managing its water particularly the Hilmand and Harirod Rivers that goes to Iran and provide enough water for the Afghan farmers in the western part of the country was another priority in foreign policy and in dealing with Iran. The construction of Salma dam in Herat and on Harirod River critiqued and protested by Iran but however Kabul and Tehran managed their disagreement for not reaching it to the conflict level.

Security of the western border was another issue that Afghans kept in their mind while dealing with Iranians. The 925 km long borders have been used in the past by criminals for drug trafficking, illegal arms trading and the human trafficking. To curb these activities, Kabul cooperated closely with Tehran and for that reason both the countries created the common commission for security on June 20, 2011 (Monadi 2014:101).

Looking to the welfare of Afghan refugees in Iran was another objective of Afghanistan's foreign policy in dealing with Iran. Civil war and instability in Afghanistan forced millions to leave the country and to settle in neighboring countries particularly Iran. Issues relating to their stay in Iran and the education for their children considered important for Kabul.

Afghanistan is a landlocked country and therefore dependent to the ports of the neighbors particularly Pakistan and Iran for import and exports. The dependency of Afghanistan to Pakistan and the port of Karachi allowed Islamabad to use it as pressure against Kabul while needed. However to find the alternative route for transnational movement of goods and trade considered another priority in foreign policy after 2001. To fulfill this wishes, Afghanistan focused on Chabahar port in south eastern Iran.

Having said about the foreign policy objectives of Iran and Afghanistan towards each other, now the relation of both countries under different presidents of Iran including President Mohammad Khatami (1997-2005), President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005-2013) and President Hassan Rouhani (2013-Now) shall be examined.

First: By calling for a ‘dialogue among civilizations’ after 9/11, President Mohammad Khatami (1997-2005) initiated the open foreign policy. Khatami wanted to normalize Iran’s relations with the West and to open a channel for discussions with the US. Accordingly, Iran provided intelligence and logistic support to the US during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Besides building trust with the West and the US, Iran’s cooperation during the War on Terror could help it get rid of its sworn enemies, the Taliban and Al Qaeda from its eastern borders. After Taliban’s collapse, Iran played a great role in the Bonn Conference and in the conclusion of Bonn agreement. According to the US envoy to the Bonn Conference, Zalmi Khalilzad, Iranian delegates helped generously in minimizing the differences among the Afghan participants (Khalilzad 2016:123).

Iranian diplomats were influential in convincing the Northern Alliance to accept the leadership of a Pashtun, Hamid Karzai. They also assisted in persuading Burhanuddin Rabbani to give up the seat of the presidency and transfer it to the new administration (ibid: 123).

Although President Bush had dubbed Iran as part of the ‘Axis of Evil’ but to show its honest and sincere intentions, Iran continued to engage with the new Afghan administration. The embassy of Iran was reopened right after the Taliban ousted on December 20, 2001. In the ceremony, Afghanistan Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah Abdullah thanked the Iranian cooperation with people and government of Afghanistan and hoped the relations get extended further (Jam-e-Jam 2001). To assert its positive intentions further Tehran expelled Gulbuddin Hikmatyar from Iran in 2002. In the same year and in the 2002 Tokyo Conference, Iran pledged \$560 million in aid for the reconstruction projects in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan also tried to maintain friendly and cordial relation with Tehran. In December 22, 2002 Afghanistan signed ‘good neighborly’ agreement with its six neighbors including Iran. It was kind of polite request from neighbors to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan. In his visit to Tehran on February 2002, Chairman

Karzai tried to balance the relations between Iran and the US by praising Iran's contributions in reconstructing his country (Tehran Times 2002).

He also refuted the baseless allegations in the Western media which had accused Iran of assisting Afghanistan's armed oppositions. Five MOUs were signed between the two countries to boost economic, political and cultural relations. Both the countries agreed to cooperate on counter terrorism, improving transit and trade relations, and to work on water sharing management (ibid).

During Mohammad Khatami's visit from Kabul in August 2002, Karzai thanked Iran for its support in rebuilding Afghanistan. Karzai further said: "Iranian not only helped us in fighting against terrorism and in our Jihad but heavily cooperated with us in accepting Afghan refugees and provides the education for their children" (CNN 2002). During this period the relations of Iran and Afghanistan not only boosted but the two leaders Khatami and Karzai became friends.

Two: Following the 2005 general elections in Iran, hardliners *mohafizakaran enghelabi* came to power and Mahmood Ahmadinejad was elected the president. Although the relations between the US and Iran turned tepid, the hardliners in Iran continued to engage with Afghanistan positively.

On May 27, 2006 President Hamid Karzai visited Tehran and met with President Ahmadinejad. This visit supposed to be happened months before but it seems the American pressure to persuade Hamid Karzai for cancelling the trip delayed it. This visit conducted in the times that Iran and the West tensions were high accusing each other over Iranian nuclear issues. It has been said that Karzai paid this visit to mediate between Iran and United States but later the officials of both refuted it as allegation. It seems that President Karzai was worry about the spillover of Iran-West tension on Afghanistan and the visit was to balance the foreign policy (Abtahi 2006).

Despite the tension with the West and the US, Iran under leadership of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad continued its support for stable central government in Afghanistan for the following reasons: It could secure its eastern border; prevent Taliban takeover; it being in power was beneficial for the Iranian economy in terms of exports. Moreover, the stable

regime in Kabul allowed Iran to repatriate the Afghan refugees and to initiate joint action against production and trafficking of narcotics.

Ahmadinejad visited Afghanistan on August 14, 2007 and welcomed by Hamid Karzai. Both the countries signed six agreements called “the comprehensive cooperation agreement” related to agriculture, mining and reconstruction. In press conference Ahmadinejad mentioned “Iran never wants the instability in Afghanistan and support the current process and ruling government”. President Hamid Karzai confirmed the statement of Iranian president and added: “Iran and Afghanistan has common religion and language and a history of long friendly relations particularly after the conclusion of Bonn agreement” (Deutsche Welle 2007). To warm up the relations between the two countries further Ahmadinejad and Karzai once more visited the capital of each other in the next years.

In this period Iran and Afghanistan not only maintained their bilateral relations friendly but also cooperated in trilateral and multilateral forums. Iran attended the ‘Heart of Asia Ministerial Summit’ in 2013, took part in all UN conferences on Afghanistan, and supported Afghans in the Economic Cooperation Conference (ECO) (Koepke 2013:13).

Afghanistan welcomed Iranian initiatives in celebration of *Nawrooz*. *Nawrooz* as the first day of the Persian calendar was recognized as international day by UN on February 24, 2010 and Iran hosted the first celebration of this day in Tehran on March 27, 2010.

It was decided that three main countries including Iran, Tajikistan and Afghanistan would host circularly the celebration of *Nawrooz* (*Jashn Nawrooz*) each year. Afghanistan hosted *Jashn Nawrooz* on March 27, 2014 and the leaders of countries in the region including president of Iran Hassan Rouhani attended. Such cooperation had a positive outcome on cultural and political relations of the both countries as well as the countries in the region.

During Ahmadinejad tenure certain difficulties emerged in the relation between Afghanistan and Iran but Kabul managed it well. In July 2013, Iranian hosted the Taliban delegates in Tehran and the news leaked but Kabul did not react to the Iranian policy. In

different occasion the government of Afghanistan and through different capacity refuted the US allegation that Iran supports the Taliban (Naji 2013).

Moreover, Kabul did not jeopardize its relation with Iran when Tehran deported the Afghan immigrants in mass numbers in 2006 and led to the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan summoned by parliament and met with non-confidence vote. In 2011, hundreds of Afghan fuel tanker stopped by Iranian authority for weeks accusing them transporting the oil for American but again Afghan government maintained calm. The non-reactionary approach of Afghanistan can be justified because Kabul did not want to leave the balanced foreign policy and to provoke Iranians (ibid).

Three: during the tenure of President Hassan Rouhani, both countries continued their friendly relations. Hamid Karzai visited Iran on December 8, 2013 and met with Iranian President. The trip was coincided with the possibility of signing the Bilateral Security Agreement between Kabul and Washington. The Loya Jirga summoned for the same purpose urged unanimously Hamid Karzai to sign the agreement. Asking the solid guarantees from the US in bringing security to Afghanistan, Karzai delayed the signing intentionally. On March 27, 2014, Hassan Rouhani visited Kabul and attended the *Jashn Nawrooz*. It shows that despite great pressure Afghanistan remained committed in balanced foreign policy.

On the relations between Afghanistan and Iran, Afghans have different interpretations. Rangin D. Spanta, the former Foreign Minister and former National Security Advisor, believes that “during the period of the Karzai Administration, Iran and Afghanistan had much in common to work on and that if taken forward properly, it could have further enhanced the relations between the two countries” (Spanta 2018).

According to Spanta “though there are certain issues existed between the two countries, Kabul and Tehran made sure that they did not cross certain barriers” (ibid). However Mr. Spanta critiques Iran foreign policy being religious and ideological based and therefore certain section of Afghan political elite could view Tehran as foe and alien rather than friend and partner.

On Iran-Afghanistan relations under the Karzai Administration, Mohammad Mohaqiq, the former MP, says: “Karzai had very friendly relations with Iran. In the history of Afghanistan, the two countries have not had such close and friendly relations ever before. According to him in the period when Mohammad Khatami was Iran’s president particularl, both were very friendly” (Mohaqiq 2018). Mohammad Nateqi, the former Ambassador, also agrees that “There were no problems with Iran, during the Karzai Administration rather the major problems were with Pakistan” (Nateqi 2018).

5.4.2.2 Afghanistan foreign policy towards Pakistan

Pakistan was the only country that assisted and supported the Taliban till the end. However, following the US ultimatum of ‘with us or against us’ the Pakistan government snapped its ties with the Taliban and was joined the US campaign against terrorism. It allowed its territory to be used for transiting US military equipment and, allocated certain air bases for deploying US jets and shared intelligence with the US military on the activities of the Taliban.

In return, the US lifted the sanctions related to Pakistan’s 1998 nuclear test and amused Pakistanis with large amounts of military and economic aid. Though the Pakistanis were not happy with the power sharing arrangement drawn up at the Bonn Conference, they attended the conference and apparently accepted its outcome.

Following the establishment of the Interim Authority in Kabul, Afghanistan announced the policy of ‘good neighborliness’. Accordingly Afghanistan signed the Declaration of Good Neighborliness with China, Iran, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Pakistan in 2002. The major points in the declaration were: desisting from interfering in each other’s business, and the observance of the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Pakistan reopened its diplomatic mission in Kabul on January 14, 2002 and Afghanistan made a similar gesture in February of the same year. While signing the Declaration of Good Neighborliness with Foreign Minister of Pakistan Khurshid Kasuri on December 22, 2002, Chairman Karzai said: “We need to strengthen our bonds of brotherhood and friendship and work closely to free our region from terrorism, extremism and poverty”.

He continued: “Afghanistan will not allow its territory to be used against any other country, particularly its neighbors” (Kasuri 2015:405).

The declaration came after the first round of visits to each other’s capitals by leaders of both the countries. Chairman Karzai visited Pakistan on February 8, 2002 and he was received personally by President Musharraf at the Chaklala airport. Although the visit was very short, both the leaders emphasized on a relationship based on non-interference. At the same meeting Musharraf ordered the immediate release of \$10 million of the \$100 million aid that Pakistan had pledged at the Tokyo Conference (News 2002). On April 2, 2002, Musharraf paid his first visit to Kabul and both the countries agreed to cooperate in wiping out the terrorist sanctuaries in the region.

In the joint press conference, Musharraf expressed his sadness at the destruction of Kabul and promised to “assist Karzai in rebuilding Afghanistan in whichever way he thought it best” (News 2002). However, the friendly relation between the two countries was short-lived and ended with the border firing in April 2003. From then on both indulged in accusations and counter accusations and the bitterness continued till the end of Karzai’s rule.

On his second visit to Pakistan, Karzai handed over a list of wanted Taliban members to Pakistan authorities to be arrested, and the other side expressed its dissatisfaction over the activities of the Indian consulates in the border cities of Jalalabad and Kandahar (News2003). Khorshid Kasuri faults the Afghans for the deterioration of relations between the two countries for the following reasons:

First: there was a firm belief among the Afghans that Taliban received support from Pakistan and had sanctuaries in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA); Second: Afghans believed that Taliban were recruited and trained by Pakistanis in this region; Third: Afghans believed that Pakistan authorities were playing a double game of supporting the Americans and funding and training the Taliban at the same time (Kasuri 2015:408). Kasuri considers these allegations to be baseless and the main reason for the lack of trust between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

There are also other reasons that increased the trust deficit between the two countries: historical legacy, Pakistan accommodating the Taliban, and the activities of Indian consulates in Afghanistan. Historical legacy can be divided into four periods: pre-1979, 1979-1992, 1992-1996, and 1996-2001. In the pre-1979 era and after Pakistan's independence, Afghanistan considered Pakistan to be an artificial and colonial state and opposed it being given a UN membership.

In the following years, both the countries used proxies against each other; Afghanistan used Baluch insurgents and Pakistan created the Afghanistan cell and later established contacts with Islamists like Rabbani and Hikmatyar and engineered the failed 1974 uprising in Kabul.

From 1979 to 1992, Pakistan channelized the militants and money from the West for the Afghan Jihad. In 1992-1996, the Mujahidin factions fought among themselves and Pakistanis sided with Hikmatyar as he supported a Pakistan-Afghanistan confederation. In 1996-2001 the Taliban was created and assisted by Islamabad. Taliban was fully dependent on Pakistan for its foreign relations. In this period, Pakistan had actually occupied Afghanistan through the Taliban. This is their historical legacy and it stands in the way of the two countries prohibiting trusting each other.

After 2001, Pakistan continued to accommodate the Taliban leadership in its big cities and that undermined the relations between the two countries. On Pakistan's policy towards Afghanistan post 2001, former Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar says: "Pakistan adopted the 'Yes-But' approach towards Afghanistan after 2001" (Nadiri 2016:25).

It means it stood with the US in eliminating the terrorists but allowed the Taliban to live in its urban areas. They were allowed to live Peshawar and Baluchistan and permitted to establish operational bases in Pakistan's FATA that shares borders with Paktia, Kunar, Khost and Paktika provinces of Afghanistan. This was very much true for the Jalaluddin Haqqani network. Pakistan's dual policy was revealed much more when Pakistan army initiated an operation in 2004 against *Tahrik Taliban Pakistan* (TTP) in Swat and South Waziristan, but left free the Afghan Taliban in that area (ibid:25).

India's activities in Afghanistan can be considered the most important factor that influenced the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Post 2001, India pledged more than \$2 billion to Afghanistan. This was invested in agriculture, education, health, social development, infrastructures and communication. India helped Afghans in the education sector, provided scholarships to Afghans and trained Afghan civil servants. Afghanistan and India signed the Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2011 according to which India was allowed to train, equip and to develop the capacity building of Afghan security forces.

The opening of the Indian consulate in Kandahar, Jalalabad and Herat further created problems for Pakistan. Pakistan accused India of providing facilities to the Baluch insurgents. The attacks on Indian embassy in 2008 and 2009, bombing of Indian guest house in Kabul in 2010, attacks on Indian consulate in Jalalabad and Herat in 2013 and 2014 prove that Afghanistan had turned into a battleground between proxies of India and Pakistan.

The Indian presence in Afghanistan made Pakistanis to consider Afghanistan as its own strategic depth and to fight against India in Afghanistan; Pakistan maintains contacts with the Taliban. Thus the main priority for Pakistan was to reduce activities of Indians in Afghanistan in general and in the border areas in particular. In short, the historical legacy, Pakistan's dual policy and the Indian presence in Afghanistan greatly influenced the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan from 2002 to 2014.

It is good to examine the relations of Pakistan and Afghanistan under three different Pakistani regimes including Musharraf regime (2002-2008), the Zardari government (2008-2013), and the Nawaz Sharif administration.

Except during the first one year, the relations remained tense followed by allegation and accusations in the Musharraf period. In February 15-17, 2006, Karzai visited Pakistan and met with General Musharraf. The Afghan delegation gave the Pakistani authorities lists of hundreds of suspected Taliban cadres with their addresses and telephone numbers. Subsequently Pakistan's ISI produced intercepts and copies of some letters that were

exchanged between Afghan authorities and the Indian intelligence agency regarding the visit of RAW agents to territories near Pakistani FATA region.

The discussion turned sour when Musharraf shouted at the Afghan delegation saying: “Is Pakistan a banana republic which does not know what is happening inside its country and should learn that from the Afghan Intelligence chief”. At the meeting, the Chief of Afghan intelligence agency *amniat milli* (National Directorate Security) Amrullah Saleh briefed Parvez Musharraf about the presence of Al Qaeda and Taliban in Pakistan.

Afghanistan also assured the Pakistanis that it would not let its territory be used against Pakistan. Musharraf then displayed photos of Brahmadagh, the son of legendary Baluch leader Akbar Bugti, and asked the Afghan chief of intelligence, “How can I believe the Afghan assurance that it would not let its territory be used by India against Pakistan” (Spanta 2017:636).

In the photos, the Baluch leader was shown to be present in Kabul and travelling between India and Afghanistan. During the Musharraf regime, the relations between the two countries were so tense that in 2006, President Bush invited both Karzai and Musharraf to Washington for a dialogue, but the US failed to convince the two to normalize their relations.

During the time of the Zardari government, Pakistan Prime Minister Yosaf Raza Gilani visited Afghanistan on different occasions and Karzai responded by visiting Islamabad, but the topics of discussion always remained the same, and accusations continued to be traded back and forth. In this period Pakistan’s major concern was about concluding the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) with Afghanistan. Efforts in this direction intensified in 2011 when Afghanistan signed SPA with India.

Before Karzai’s visit to Pakistan on February 16, 2012, Pakistanis forwarded the text of the agreement to the Afghan government through Afghan ambassador in Pakistan Omar Dawoodzai. The text had various proposals like security and intelligence cooperation, cooperation among the commanders on the border, counter secessionism, training Afghan armed forces cadets in Pakistan, and having a common stand in international summits. But as Afghanistan proposed counter terrorism as a precondition for concluding the

agreement, the SPA could not be concluded, and Zardari's tenure got over without any meaningful turn around in the relations between the two countries.

In the Pakistani election conducted on May 11, 2013 the Muslim League (N) won and Nawaz Sharif was appointed the Prime Minister. President Karzai attended his swearing in ceremony expecting that the new regime would follow a different path in its foreign policy vis-à-vis Afghanistan.

Karzai again paid a visit, his 20th, to Pakistan on August 26, 2013, and met with the Pakistan Army Chief and the head of the ISI. At the meeting it was agreed that both the countries would work on a road map in order to reach a stage that would enable the signing of the Strategic Security Agreement. In Article 4 of the road map, it was agreed that "both countries would prevent any form of terrorism activities, eliminate the terrorists' sanctuaries in their territories, bringing the Taliban to the negotiation table and root out the Quetta Shura, the Haqqani network and the TTP" (Spanta 2017:699).

It was also mentioned that if the above conditions were fulfilled then both the countries would initiate security and intelligence cooperation. But till the end of the Karzai Administration neither the Taliban were brought to the negotiation table nor did violence abate in Afghanistan.

On the country's relations with Pakistan, the Afghan political elite were divided. The Islamist Northern Alliance and certain western technocrats kept encouraging President Karzai to stand firm against Pakistan but, the Islamist Pashtuns were for normalizing relations with Pakistan. Panjsheri Amrullah Saleh and technocrat Rangin Dadfar Spanta were cautious about signing any security agreement with Pakistan, but Omar Dawoodzai and Omar Zakhilwal lobbied for the agreements between the two countries.

Even in such a difficult situation, Afghanistan stood firm in its demand that terrorist sanctuaries in Pakistan should be wiped out. Jannan Musazai says: "Despite the problems, there was certain consensus among the political elite on foreign policy and it was Karzai who took the final decision" (Musazai 2018).

On the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, Spanta considers the Durand Line and India as important factors, but argues that “if Kabul accepts the Durand Line and limits Indian activities in Afghanistan, Pakistan would still continue to interfere in Afghanistan’s affair”. He highlights the importance of ideology in Pakistan’s foreign policy and believes that “Pakistanis consider themselves as the inheritors of the Mughal Empire that spanned from Delhi to Central Asian republics”. According to him that is “why Pakistan has an expansionist policy toward Afghanistan” (Spanta 2018).

Karim Khurram says that “the best way would be to have a relation like that of the European Union but that is not the intention of the Pakistanis. We had to deal with Pakistan through the position of power but the US did not want that” (Khurram 2018).

Sadiq Modabber says: “Karzai was too flexible and had optimist views about the relationship with Pakistan, but it did not go according to his wishes”. Modabber says:

During Karzai’s first tenure, there was opposition within his cabinet about getting close to Pakistan. Mr. Abdullah and Mr. Saleh were the Foreign Minister and Head of Intelligence Agency, respectively, and both were from the Northern Alliance and against Pakistani interference. In spite of all these hurdles, Karzai approached Pakistan many times but the Pakistanis were not honest in their dealings with Afghanistan and that disappointed Mr. Karzai. When in 2011 and 2012 Pakistan offered Afghan students scholarships, Mr Karzai was not interested in sending students to Pakistan (Modabber 2018).

Mohammad Mohaqiq believes that “in the case of the Durand Line, Mr. Karzai was very strict with Pakistan. He was against recognition of the line and considered the Pashtuns on the other side as Afghans”. Mohaqiq says that “once I discussed this with him and told him that we shouldn’t have confrontation with Pakistan on this issue, and that we should be happy with the current political map. I said that by insisting on Pashtunistan and the Durand Line, Pakistanis might attach Afghanistan to Pakistan, but he was not ready to accept that” (Mohaqiq 2018).

Janan Mosazai, the former Ambassador to Pakistan and China, says: “The Afghan demands from Islamabad were clear. Kabul wanted that its territorial integrity and sovereignty be respected and that the Pakistanis must refrain from interfering in Afghanistan’s affairs. Afghans have always conveyed to the Pakistanis that if they

stopped unnecessary interventions, Kabul would be Pakistan's best and all-weather friend" (Musazai 2018).

However some people like Mohammad Nateqi, who used to serve as ambassador of Afghanistan in Libya, believes that "Afghanistan's foreign policy toward Islamabad was not stable; therefore Pakistanis understood that Kabul would not be a friend to them and hence they started supporting the Taliban" (Nateqi 2018). Of course there are differences among the elite on conducting the foreign policy and Afghanistan was not the exception. But despite of all the differences, Afghanistan had unified foreign policy toward Pakistan and it was announced by the government of Afghanistan.

5.4.3 Afghan Foreign policy toward great powers: Russia and the US

5.4.3.1 Russia and Afghanistan after 2001

The Taliban regime and its support to Central Asian radical groups created great concerns for Russians from 1996 to 2001. This concern further intensified when the Taliban recognized Chechnya as an independent state. And it was fortified when the Taliban established diplomatic relations with Chechnya by allowing Chechens to open an embassy in Kabul. It was this hostile behavior of the Taliban that made the Russians support the anti-Taliban armed oppositions along with Iran and India.

When 9/11 happened, the Russian President was the first foreign leader to pick up the phone and call President Bush to show his solidarity and to offer condolences. President Putin then expressed his full support to the US in whatever action it might take to avenge the act. When it was clear that the US administration would go ahead and punish the actors behind the act, President Putin announced, on September 24, 2001, a five-point plan to support the US in its war against terrorism.

The Russians agreed to share intelligence with the American government; to allow its airspace for US flights for humanitarian assistance; to encourage Central Asian allies to provide similar access to their airspace; to participate in the search and rescue operations and to increase its humanitarian and military assistance to the Northern Alliance and Rabbani in Afghanistan (Mcfaul, 2001). The major point here is the Russian agreement

with the US to have security cooperation with the Central Asian Republics, particularly Uzbekistan. It was considered a transformational shift in Russian foreign policy since Russia had, across history, assumed Central Asia to be under its sphere of influence.

Afghanistan's major foreign policy initiatives toward Russia after 2001 were influenced by political, economic and military factors. Politically, Afghanistan wanted to reconstruct its image before Russia, and therefore had fostered political relations and facilitated the reopening of the Russian diplomatic mission in Kabul on December 28, 2001. Accordingly, Chairman Hamid Karzai visited the Russian capital on March 12 and then on June 4, 2002.

From the economic perspective, it must be noted that the majority of the infrastructure in Afghanistan were built by the Russians and therefore Afghanistan's new political elite wanted to attract Russian attention in rebuilding its infrastructure destroyed in war. Moreover, to stabilize the country and to expand its security system, Afghanistan needed to revive its military forces. Since the major chunk of Afghan military hardware was Russian and since the Afghans were familiar with Russian military products, seeking the help of Russia in this sector was a natural choice.

Accordingly, the Afghan Minister of Defense, Qasim Fahim, and the Afghan Ministry of Home Affairs visited Russia separately on February 12 and February 28, 2002, respectively. Afghanistan had continued the import of military hardware from Russia, but Russian engagement with Afghanistan was very low in the period between 2002 and 2006.

The reason was the inability of Russia to compete with the US and Western countries in this field. In this period, the US and European countries had engaged heavily with Afghanistan economically and militarily. However the cabinet reshuffling by Hamid Karzai in 2004 replacing the Northern Alliance cabinet members with western technocrats had also had its impact on this matter. The Northern Alliance was supported by Russia against the Taliban in 1990s and early 2000s (Menkiszak 2011).

In the Almaty meeting between Karzai and Putin in June 2006, Putin openly expressed his unhappiness about the marginalization of the Northern Alliance, particularly General

Rashid Dostum (Spanta 2017: 219). Another issue that had undermined the relations between the two countries in this period was the debt of Soviet era which Afghanistan was not ready to recognize. Russia wanted Afghanistan to first accept it and then they were ready to write it off as Russia's donation to Afghanistan's reconstruction efforts (German 2016).

After the Taliban attack intensified in 2006, and Karzai blamed the US and NATO for their inability to tackle terrorism and violence, Russia stepped in and started extending its support for the reconciliation process between the government of Afghanistan and the Taliban. Russia also agreed to cancel 90% of the Soviet era debt in 2007 which was worth \$10 billion, and this move brought the two countries closer. The cooperation between the two countries expanded further after the 2009 Afghan presidential election. The US had accused Karzai of fraudulent election and Karzai hit back saying the US was indulging in a dual policy.

The former Afghan Foreign Minister, Rangin D. Spanta says that from 2006 to 2013 certain positive changes emerged in the Russian policy toward Afghanistan. For example, in 2006 at Almaty, Mr. Putin had told Mr. Karzai that "Russians are worried about the diminishing role of Russia's friends in the government". On another occasion in 2011, Mr. Medvedev signaled his concern about the US bases in Afghanistan to his Afghan counterparts (Spanta 2017:808,820).

On September 13, 2013 on the sidelines of the SCO summit, Karzai asked Putin: "At the meeting in Beijing, you had positive views regarding US presence in Afghanistan, do you still hold the same view?" Putin responded: "Contrary to the Soviet policy, Russia is not looking at international issues ideologically. We want a secure and peaceful Afghanistan where there are no terrorist sanctuaries which are a threat to our security" (ibid: 825).

On the Afghan-US Bilateral Security Agreement, Putin said: "Afghanistan is a sovereign country and has the right to have bilateral relations with any country they want. Afghanistan cannot have security without having this security agreement. We believe Afghanistan would not allow their territory to be used against others" (ibid: 826).

After 2008 and the Russian invasion of Georgia, Russian foreign policy towards the West and the US became confrontational, but it seems Russia preferred engagement rather confrontation with the US in the case of Afghanistan. About Afghanistan, Russia's prime concern was the security and stability of that country. Russia wanted to prevent terrorists and Islamic fundamentalists of Central Asia like Chechens fighters and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan taking refuge in Afghanistan.

Russia was also concerned about the ongoing poppy cultivation and drug trafficking, as well as organized crimes and influx of refugees. Deterioration of security in Afghanistan was therefore always a worrying factor for the Russians as that posed a direct threat to their country's security.

After 2001, there were three schools of thought prevalent in the Afghanistan society on Russia, namely Islamic, Communist and Western Technocrat, and each of these schools had certain political elites in it. The Islamic school and its followers viewed Russia as the enemy who had bombed Afghan houses, killed innocents and injured thousands in the past. The Communist school looked to Russia as a Disney Land and a brand that Afghanistan must copy and follow. Western Technocrats saw Russia as an authoritarian regime and an enemy of democracy who wanted to strike a balance against the US by making Afghanistan a battleground for its proxies.

These three schools, particularly the Islamic and Western Technocrats, shaped the relation of Russia and Afghanistan in post 2001, especially during the Karzai Administration. Former Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Dr. Spanta believes that even the Islamists had a feeling of nostalgia when looking to the past Afghan-Russian relations. It was only the Western Technocrats who were against deepening of the Russian-Afghan relations.

Spanta argues that by inviting Russia to cooperate with Afghanistan, Karzai wanted to have an alternative against the US and the West. According to Spanta, till the end of the Karzai Administration no further development was witnessed in the relations between Russia and Afghanistan, and for that, he blames the Western Technocrats in the cabinet and their destructive role in the matter.

In an interview Mohammad Nateqi says: “The relations between Russia and Afghanistan were influenced by historical and strategic factors. Russia had once invaded Afghanistan and was defeated badly, therefore they found it difficult to engage with Afghanistan again. Strategically, the presence of NATO and the US forces in Afghanistan also made it difficult for Moscow to get close to Kabul” (Nateqi 2018).

On the Afghanistan-Russia relations, Karim Khurram says: “Afghanistan’s main problem started when the bipolar world order collapsed and the Soviet Union disintegrated. Now if Russia emerges as a great power it will be good for us. I advised President Karzai to engage Russia also in the peace process in Afghanistan” (Khurram 2018). Khurram himself is an Islamist.

Jawid Ludin argues: “The Russians are pragmatic in their foreign policy. Russia’s foreign policy in the region has been greatly influenced by its rivalry with the US. We have tried to maintain a balance in our foreign policy and we have communicated to Russia and Iran that they should not bring their problems with the US into Afghanistan” (Ludin 2018).

However, Spanta has a different argument concerning Russia’s lack of interest in Afghanistan. He says: “Today Russia is an emerging power but it is faced with a structural paradox. This has been the situation as far back as the Tsarist era and the Soviet era. Russia has always been a great power militarily, but economically it has always been weak. We had many expectations from Russia in investing in Afghanistan like during the Soviet era, but Russia didn’t because of its economic backwardness (Spanta 2018).

5.4.3.2 The United States and Afghanistan

The 9/11 forced Bush Administration to move swiftly. In his speech to the nation on September 24, 2001, President Bush promised to bring the culprits to justice. Following that, the US declared that Osama Bin Laden was the prime suspect and those who provided him sanctuary were told to surrender him unconditionally. The US statement said: “If you are not with us, you are against us”. The US also identified three important sources of threat to the US national security: terrorist organizations with global networks, weak states that provide support to these terrorists, and the rogue states. Based on this perception of threat, Afghanistan was a prime target, because a weak state like the

Taliban Administration had provided shelter to terrorist organizations with global reach such as Al Qaeda and its chief Osama Bin Laden.

But despite the US warning, Taliban did not comply with the demand to hand over Bin Laden to the US. The US invaded Afghanistan on October 7, 2001 and deposed the Taliban regime in less than two months. From 2002 to 2005, the US policy towards Afghanistan was focused on security, reconstruction and development. Accordingly, the US supported and assisted the Bonn Conference and facilitated the Bonn Agreement.

The US government, particularly the US Special Envoy and later Ambassador to Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, played a great role in implementing the Bonn Agreement. In convening the Emergency Loya Jirga for establishing the Transitional Authority, in convening the Constitutional Loya Jirga to pass the new constitution and in conducting the first democratic elections, the USA and its agents played an enormous role from 2002 to 2005. Throughout this period no agreement had been signed between the US and Afghanistan. Of course embassies were opened in the capitals of each country and ambassadors were appointed.

The United States and Afghanistan signed a Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership (JDSP) on May 23, 2005. In the declaration, Afghanistan expressed the challenges ahead for its security and nation building, and proposed that the US remain engaged with Afghanistan to assist the country in these areas. Afghans wanted the United States to continue helping it on the political, economic and the security fronts. The US said it was committed to continuing its fight against terrorism and extremism and promoting stability and prosperity in the region.

In terms of strengthening democracy and governance the US promised to foster the relations between the Afghan central government and the civil society. To stabilize the new Afghan establishment further, the US agreed to deter Afghanistan's neighbors from meddling in its affairs. In terms of prosperity, the US also agreed to help Afghanistan to get integrated with the regional and international economies and markets.

Concerning security, the US, agreed to support, organize, train, equip and sustain the Afghan military forces. The most important aspect of the 2005 Declaration was the

extending of rights to the US to access to the Bagram Air Base and the freedom to undertake military operations whenever the need arose (US government 2005).

It has been reported that Karzai made several demands on the sidelines of the JDSP and in the private meeting with US President George W. Bush, but they were not reflected in the JDSP. The demands included the Afghan desire for more control over the US military forces in Afghanistan, return of Afghan detainees from US detention camps, and an end to ill-treatment of Afghans in US military custody (Tully 2005). During this period the majority of Afghan political elite were pro US and welcomed the long and enduring relationships between Afghanistan and the United States.

For example, before the departure of Afghan delegates to the US to sign the 2005 JDSP, Hamid Karzai invited 1,500 people from different walks of political life to Kabul for a meeting to consult with them. At the meeting all except of one person, encouraged President Karzai to sign the declaration (Spanta 2017:122).

And on the American side, to show its good intentions, the US government sent a special aircraft to Kabul for the Afghan delegates, and accommodated them in the presidential guest house while they were in the US capital. The US presidential guest house, called the Blair House, is reserved only for honored foreign dignitaries (Spanta 2017:227).

In dealing with the US, Afghanistan's only look out was security and economic assistance. At a meeting with President Bush in Camp David while on another visit to the US, on August 4-6, 2007, President Karzai raised the issue of Taliban sanctuaries in Pakistan and the threat they posed to Afghan national security. The Afghan delegation then requested US assistance for their country's agricultural production and rural development, infrastructure development, highway construction, and electricity and power supply, as well as support for Afghan military forces.

However, towards the end of the Bush Administration the US-Afghan relations hit a low key. The problem started after signing of the 2005 JDSP. Reasons like US bombardments, night operations and the scant attention the US paid to terrorist sanctuaries inside Pakistan played a part in the relationship between the two countries deteriorating further. The US government neither stopped the bombardment operations

nor consulted the Afghans before undertaking such operations, and this angered the Afghan authorities.

According to Spanta (2017:217,218) once Karzai at a meeting with the US Ambassador to Afghanistan (2005-2007) Ronald E. Neumann, said: “Mr. Ambassador, you believe Afghanistan to be a banana republic that the US behave inappropriately with its officials. This country has a history of 5,000 years and has been the graveyard of great empires. If you do not want to help Afghanistan, then tell your leadership to leave the country”.

Till August 2008 the US and Afghan authorities had hidden their differences from the media, but the US bombardment of a wedding ceremony in Shindand district in Herat changed the scenario. Afghanistan conveyed to the US that it would condemn the act by issuing a statement. The US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called Afghans and sought restraint.

But despite her threat about reconsidering US assistance, Afghanistan openly condemned the act on August 25, 2008. The deterioration of security in the Western and Southern parts of Afghanistan, and the lack of US pressure on Pakistan increased further the gap between the US and Afghanistan. And all these factors led President Karzai to believe in the conspiracy theory that the US was not present in Afghanistan to stabilize the situation but to tame the influence of China and Russia in the region. He even started accusing the US of planting and supporting terrorism in the region.

It was in these circumstances that Obama was elected the US President, and the Afghan presidential election was due. It was obvious that Mr. Karzai was not the Democrats' favorite and they therefore did not want him to win the election. The first interaction between US Vice President Joe Biden and President Karzai on January 10, 2008 in Kabul did not go well.

President Karzai asked the US delegation to put an end to the night raids in Afghan villages and to focus on terrorist sanctuaries in Pakistan. Biden reacted by saying: “We help you, give you money and sacrifice our soldier for you, but you do not take that into consideration. For us Pakistan is fifty times more important than Afghanistan”. Following

the incident, ignoring the cuisine prepared in his honor, Joe Biden left the presidential palace (Spanta 2017:264).

On the following day, Karzai expressed his anger to his close circle saying “These imperialists think we are their servants. I will not forget Joe Biden’s behavior. If they want to be our ally then they will have to respect our culture, and if they do not, then it is better they leave our country”. Karzai continued: “Finally they will kill me, but death is better than living in this condition. I will not bend my head before them”(Ibid: 265).

In the Afghan presidential election held on August 20, 2009, none of the four leading candidates won the 50+1 majority. Karzai scored 49.67, Abdullah Abdullah 30.59, and Ramazan Bashardost and Ashraf Ghani, took the third and fourth positions. America did not want Karzai to become the president, therefore Senator John Kerry visited Kabul to persuade the candidates to form a coalition government, but Karzai refused to comply. Finally the first two candidates agreed to go for a runoff election. However, Abdullah Abdullah withdrew from the runoff and Karzai was declared the elected president for a second term on November 19, 2009.

To warm the relations between Kabul and Washington, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton attended Karzai’s swearing in ceremony, but that could not break the ice. In the video conference with US President Barak Obama on March 15, 2010, Karzai demanded that the US stop bombardment of Afghan villages, pay compensation to the Afghan victims, empower Afghan military forces and set up an Afghan Air Force. But on the opposite end, President Obama insisted on countering corruption in the Karzai Administration.

Peace and reconciliation with the Taliban, corruption charges against the Karzai Administration, transferring the Bagram detention center to the Afghans and the differences over countering terrorism undermined the relations between the Obama Administration and the Karzai government. Afghanistan got close to Pakistan in an effort to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table in 2010 and 2011, but at the same time the US started secret negotiations with the Taliban and even allowed them to open a political office in Qatar.

Americans were now accusing the Karzai family of corruption and even went to the extent of accusing President Karzai of drug addiction. It was in this atmosphere that the Afghan President travelled to the US on May 9, 2010. The Afghan delegates were accommodated in one of the hotels in Washington unlike during the Bush era when Afghans were housed in the Presidential Guest House. The Afghans were humiliated further by denying the delegation special aircraft to return to Kabul.

On March 28, 2010 when Obama visited the Presidential Palace in Kabul, he did not accept Karzai's invitation for dinner and headed to Bagram Air Base. On May 3, 2012 and at the time of signing the Strategic Partnership Agreement between Afghanistan and the United States of America in Kabul, President Obama did not even take a glass of water from the Afghan side. This angered President Karzai, and on the following day he said: "What kind of strategic partnership is it when the Americans do not even value our drinking water?" He continued: "I will not forget this insulting behavior of the infidels" (Ibid: 377).

On his last visit to Afghanistan on May 25, 2014, President Obama did not visit the Afghan Presidential Palace to meet Karzai; he concluded his trip by meeting the US soldiers in the Bagram Air Base in Kabul. When the US authority contacted the Afghan Presidential Office to inquire whether President Karzai would like to meet the US President in the Bagram Base, Karzai responded by saying: "We Afghans would be happy to welcome our guest in the Presidential Palace. Meeting at mid-night and in an air base is not appropriate for the Afghans, if Mr. Obama comes to the Palace and be our guest over tea and food, we would welcome him" (Ibid: 374). The uneasiness relation between two countries made President Karzai not to sign the Bilateral Security Agreement with the US in 2014 despite consent of the Loya Jjrga.

The former Foreign Minister in Karzai administration Dr. Spanta criticizes both the US and President Karzai for the relationship between the two countries deteriorating. According to him, the differences over Pakistan, the way the warlords were handled, and the US bombardment were the issues that undermined the relations between the two countries (Spanta 2018). According to Khurram, the relation between the US and the Karzai Administration deteriorated right after 2005. He says: "In 2005, certain factors

sowed the seeds of doubt in President Karzai's mind about the real intentions of the US and the West. Activities of the Taliban had increased, the country was more instable, US was interfering more in Afghanistan's domestic affairs and Washington was now not so keen on investing in infrastructural projects"(Khurram 2018).

Faramarz Tamanna also argues in a similar manner: "The US- Afghanistan relations can be studied in two phases: from 2002 to 2009, when it was very good, and from 2009 till 2013 turned low and finally Karzai refused to sign the BSA with USA" (Tamanna 2018). Dr. Jafar Mahdavi criticizes Mr. Karzai and says, "The United States is the most powerful country in the world, and the bulk of the expenditure of the Afghan government is being borne by them. Hence Mr. Karzai's view that the US should treat us as an equal is not logical" (Mahdavi 2018).

It was found that certain elites were not happy with Karzai's stand concerning the US but it does not mean there was lack of consensus among the political elites. The foreign policy decision making body including the Foreign Ministry, the office of National Security Council and the Office of President had full consensus on foreign policy and in dealing with the US and supported president Karzai's move. They were considering the US responsible for the security deterioration in Afghanistan and they were critical of US policy toward Pakistan.

5.4.4 Afghanistan's relations with international institutions: the UN

Reconstructing Afghanistan's image, compensating for the long years of isolation, attracting foreign donations for reconstruction and balancing the interests of the rival states were accepted as the foreign policy objectives of Afghanistan after 2001. Accordingly, the new establishment strengthened its relations with regional and international organizations.

Regionally, Afghanistan's contact with regional organizations like South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) increased. Internationally, Afghanistan began cooperating more with European Union, North Atlantic Organization (NATO) and the United Nations. As the UN is responsible for nurturing new

establishments and since it got involved deeply in Afghanistan after 2001, in this section the role of the UN and its relation with Afghanistan after 2001 would be examined.

Afghanistan's engagement with the UN goes back to November 9, 1946 when the country received membership of that organization. Afterwards the UN maintained its humanitarian, political and mediatory role in Afghanistan. The UN began seriously involving itself in Afghanistan in the 1980s after the Soviets invaded and occupied the country.

The UN passed a few resolutions condemning the invasion without naming the USSR. Later in 1988, the UN mediated the negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan that led to withdrawal of the Soviet forces. In the 1990s, the United Nations appointed Special Representatives in Afghanistan to monitor the situation in the country. However these Special Representatives failed in their missions as they were not successful in bringing conflicts in the country to a halt during the civil war.

Mahmoud Mestiri (1994-96), Norbert Holl (1996-97), Lakhdar Brahimi (1997-2000) and Francisc Vendrell (2000-2002) were the Special Representatives of the UN Secretary-General and the Heads of UN Special Mission for Afghanistan (UNSM) in the decade of 1990s and early 2000s.

The period post 9/11 saw increased UN involvement in Afghanistan. In response to the terrorist attack on US territory, the UN Security Council held an emergency meeting on September 12, 2001 and adopted Resolution 1368. The resolution called upon all states to cooperate in bringing the perpetrators of 9/11 to justice. It stressed that those individuals and states that aided, supported and harbored these terrorists would be held accountable.

The resolution also recognized the inherent right of an individual or collective self-defense to retaliate in accordance with the UN Charter (UN Security Council Resolution 1368 2001). The US used this statement as justification to invade Afghanistan on October 7, 2001 and called it self-defense against armed attack on US territory.

On November 11, 2001, the UN Special Representative, Lakhdar Brahimi, shared his plan for the future of Afghanistan at the meeting of the Six + Two in New York. His Five

Process Plan concentrated on convening a conference of all Afghan factions; establishing an interim government, convening Loya Jirgas for transitional authority and for adopting the new constitution; deployment of peace keeping forces, and finally conducting national and general elections.

The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1378 on November 14, 2001, endorsed and welcomed the Brahimi's Plan. It called upon all Afghan factions to accept the UN invitation to attend the UN-initiated conference in good faith and without preconditions (UN Security Council Resolution 1378 2001).

Accordingly, the Bonn Conference was held in Germany and it came up with the Bonn Agreement on December 5, 2001. It opened the path for establishment of a democratic political system in Afghanistan. Annex II of the Bonn Agreement provided the UN Special Representative full right to monitor and to implement the Bonn Agreement. The agreement also gave the UN special rights to investigate human right violations and to recommend corrective actions.

After the conclusion of the Bonn Agreement, the UN Security Council immediately adopted Resolution 1383 on December 6, 2001 and endorsed the Bonn Agreement to establish a broad based, gender sensitive, multi ethnic and fully representative government in Afghanistan.

It called upon all Afghans to fully cooperate to implement the agreement (UN Security Council Resolution 1383 2001). Before establishing the Interim Authority in Kabul, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1386 on December 20, 2001 and authorized the deployment of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan for six months in order to assist the Afghan Interim Authority to maintain security in Kabul and surrounding areas (Resolution 1386).

To allow the UN to undertake this task smoothly, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1401 and in paragraph 1 endorsed the establishment of United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for an initial period of 12 months, and asked Afghans and ISAF to work closely with UNAMA.

The United Nation, through UNAMA, was greatly influential in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2005. With the help and assistance of UNAMA, the Bonn Agreement was implemented successfully. The Emergency and Constitutional Loya Jirga were convened on time, and the 2004 and 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections were conducted smoothly and supervised efficiently.

However, from 2005 onwards the role of UNAMA got diminished and limited in Afghanistan. This limitation was further enhanced when the demand of the government of Afghanistan was accepted by the UN Security Council in 2011. Afghanistan had requested the UN to limit the role of UNAMA and to redefine its mission and mandate.

Initially the UNAMA mandate was outlined as follows: Strengthening cooperation with ISAF; supporting its efforts for better governance; ensuring coordination among donors in terms of financial assistance; protection and supervision of human rights; support the electoral process by offering technical advice; support regional cooperation and peace initiatives. After redesigning UNAMA's tasks and duties, its mandate now is to "work with and support the Afghan government; support the peace and reconciliation process; monitor and promote human rights, protect civilians in armed conflicts; promote good governance; and encourage regional cooperation" (UNAMA 2018).

5.5 Conclusion

After the Taliban failed to comply with the US demand to surrender Osama Bin Laden, the US invaded Afghanistan on October 2001. Measures like mobilization of anti-Taliban Pashtun forces, providing assistance to Non-Pashtun Northern Alliance, working with dissatisfied factions inside the Taliban, and using US Air Force to bomb Taliban positions played an important role in defeating the Taliban quickly.

Immediately after Kabul fell into the hands of anti-Taliban forces, the UN convened the Bonn Conference in Germany and invited all Afghan factions except the Taliban. There was largescale consensus and compromises among the Afghan political elite in the Bonn Conference, all for the future of Afghanistan.

That is why this research considers the Bonn Conference and the Bonn Agreement as an elite settlement of the highest order and the reflection of consensus being reached among the political elite. Throughout this research it has been shown how elite consensus greatly influenced domestic politics and political stability after 2001. The unity exhibited by the political elite in the Bonn Conference had led to the Bonn Agreement.

It was also because of the cooperation among the political elite that the successful implementation of the Bonn Agreement (convening Emergency and Constitutional Loya Jirga, conducting presidential and parliamentary elections in 2004 and 2005) was possible. The consensus among the political elite also assisted the process of nation building, social welfare, and establishment of the rule of law, political and economic reconstruction and enhanced human and women's rights.

This research also found that the period from 2002 to 2004 witnessed fierce competition between two groups of political elites. They were the Islamists and the western educated technocrats. But this problem began to ebb from 2005 onwards after the Patron-Client network of political elites with President Karzai emerged in the center. This network helped halt the competition among the political elite and helped sustain the relative political stability in the country and maintain engagement with the international community.

In terms of structure and composition of the political elite this study found that an 'elite restructuring' took place after 2001. According to Maley (2002:197) elite restructuring takes place when employment of forces results in changing of the composition of the national political elite either through elimination of the old power elite or through some fundamental change in the nature of their power.

In the case of Afghanistan, the employment of international forces, particularly the US, eliminated the Taliban regime and the Taliban political elite. Thereafter, through the new arrangement in Bonn, a new structure (of national political elite) emerged. In this new structure, there were two kinds of political elites, the Islamists and the western educated technocrats.

The research also found that the consensus among the elite not only affected domestic politics but also influenced the foreign policy of Afghanistan. Accordingly Afghanistan's foreign policy underwent great transformation after 2001. Taking into account the new world environment, the new Afghan political elite adopted an inclusive and vibrant foreign policy. Building warm relations with neighbors, approaching regional countries, cooperating with international organizations and signing strategic agreements with great powers, etc were the priorities for the new establishment in Kabul.

Chapter VI: Summary and Conclusion

Chapter one was more as introductory and the outline of research produced there. In Chapter two and in order to find which theory of IR is accommodative to foreign policy analysis, the author examined the mainstream IR theories including realism, liberalism and constructivism.

First: it has been argued that *realism* with all its brands, including neoclassical realism, considers security as the main goal of the foreign policy of any state. Since it considers the state as a unitary and rational actor, it prescribes a similar pattern of foreign policy for all states irrespective of the differences in culture, identity, history and the type of political system. Under the ‘primacy of foreign policy’ argument, realists talk about foreign policy but they give more weight to the international system and international economy as pull and pushes factors on foreign policy. Moreover, realists argue that countries conduct foreign policy for strategic reasons, and are influenced by international elements rather than domestic pressures or international necessities.

Second: On *liberalism*, it is argued that it stands for individual rights, human progress, international regime and international institutions. Contesting realism and power politics liberalism argues about the possibility of international cooperation through iteration games. It gives more roles to non-governmental actors and other domestic players in setting a state’s preferences and agendas. Liberals consider domestic players as determinants of foreign policy, but they give the major role to systemic factors such as international institutions and international organizations. Therefore it makes liberalism similar to realism and not a good candidate in accommodating foreign policy in its domain.

Third: *Constructivism* believes that actors make their own world, and in this case, foreign policy is what a state makes of it (Smith 2001:38). The constructivism argument is similar to foreign policy analysis assumption that agents make the structure and both are mutually constituted. Accordingly, foreign policy is a matter of choice and it is the actor who interprets, decides and implements it. Contrary to mainstream IR that considers the international system as a cause for a state’s behavior, both constructivism and FPA focus

on a state's attributes by opening the black box of states. This research found the constructivism more accommodative to foreign policy analysis rather than realism and liberalism.

Since the current research focuses on foreign policy therefore in the same chapter, *foreign policy, its determinants and objectives*, the concept of foreign policy analysis, and changes in foreign policy have also been discussed. Foreign policy has been defined as a set of guidelines of choices that a country considers in its relationship with other nations. Foreign policy analysis is referred to a complex process consisting of government's objectives and the means it takes to achieve those objectives.

On the *objectives of foreign policy*, it has been argued that it contains not only security and economic issues but also the environment, human rights, population, migration and terrorism. The foreign policy determinants were divided into internal and external determinants. The geography of a country, its history, culture, economic development, national character, national morale, ideology, and political and social structure are considered as internal determinants; and the international regime, international institutions and foreign policy of other states are counted as external determinants.

In chapter one the types of *foreign policy strategy* have been discussed. It has been mentioned that countries, on the basis of their geopolitical locations, domestic needs and the structure of international politics, would choose to be either neutral, isolationist, committed or strategic in their foreign policy.

The *concept of changes (transformation) in foreign policy* has also been discussed in chapter two. Changes are made in a country's foreign policy when a sudden and wholesale alteration happens in a nation's external relations. The process generally takes place very quickly, and reflects the nation's desire for making fundamental changes. The changes brought about can be adjustment changes, program changes, problem and goal changes, or international orientation changes.

In chapter two, *elite studies and the political elite* have been also discussed. The elite have been defined as a highly qualified distinguished group with the ability and willingness to achieve the highest goals. Political elite have been defined as people in the

high positions whose decisions would have deep consequences. The study has traced elite literature to the works of Le Bon, Mosca, Pareto and Mitchel. In *The Ruling Class* Mosca argues that in any society there exists a powerful minority group and a less powerful majority. He calls the former the elite and the later the mass.

Pareto in *The Mind and Society* speaks about ‘circulation of elites’ and argues that elites keep changing in the courses of time. He continues that if the circulation takes place smoothly then the society would function normally, but if the old elite block the entry of the newcomers, then the society would experience instability and violence.

To emphasize the role of the political elite, the concepts of elite factions and elite settlement were also examined in chapter one. It was argued that *elite factionalism* emerges among the elite when they disagree on power sharing and on governmental positions. In such situations, disputes and subsequently armed conflicts arise.

Elite settlement comes about when dueling factions compromise over vital issues putting aside their hostility and open the path for cooperation. Though they continue to keep their allegiance to their own factions, they would have arrived at a consensus on power-sharing with other factions and would obey the lawful code of conduct in interacting with them.

While examining the role of political elite in foreign policy, the concept of *ultimate decision units* was highlighted further. The members of these units not only take decisions regarding foreign policy but also prevent any move to reverse those decisions. The ultimate decision units can be divided into three units: ultimate leaders, single group and multiple autonomous actors.

In Chapter three, it has been tried to study the complexity of Afghan society and see what factors are influential in creating solidarity and factionalism among the citizens. This study found that factors such as *clan*, *tribe* and *ethnicity* can bring about schism in a society as well as build solidarity among the citizens. These factors are highly influential not only in day to day contacts among citizens of a country but they also define factionalism and unity among the political elite.

In the same chapter and in the case of Afghanistan an attempt was made to categorize and define the Afghan political elite. Historically, the political elite of Afghanistan have been of three types. The traditional political elite, who date back to pre-1979; they comprise religious, tribal, feudal and royal elites with certain aristocratic background. The revolutionary political elite emerged in the 1960s and came to power in the 1980s and 1990s. They are the Communists and the Islamists. The third group of political elite is the technocrats who generally emerged after 2001.

In this study, the *political elite in Afghanistan* have been defined on the lines of Guy Rocher (1992:153) as individuals and groups that have great influence in the society on account of their power, influence and the capability to make decisions. In Afghanistan they are people like the head of state, ministers, governors, members of parliament and leaders of political parties.

This research also found that in Afghanistan, *ethnicity, tribal affiliations* and *religion* are highly influential in creating factionalism and disunity among the political elite. Historically, tribal rivalry and the competition among the political elite for acquiring power have been responsible for dynastic takeover in Afghanistan. Ethnicity and religion have created tension between even the so called revolutionary political elite such as the Communists and the Islamists. If we look at the current clashes and instability in Afghanistan, we can see that similar forces are responsible for creating factions and disunity among the political elite of the country.

In Chapter four, it has been tried to examine the role of elite factionalism and its effect on domestic as well as foreign policy during the Taliban administration. This study found that disunity among the Mujahidin political elite was the major reason for the domestic instability and the chaotic foreign policy that prevailed in the country during the Mujahidin period, and this was the main reason for the emergence of the Taliban. In order to find out the other reasons for the emergence of the Taliban, this research adopted a three-pronged approach Military, Politico-economic and Homogenous.

To find out the strange behaviour of the Taliban in domestic and international arena, the author used from *constructivism*. In constructivism, the idea and belief, the process of

structuration and mutual constitution of agents and structure have special meaning. This research therefore has concentrated on religious education and Pashtunwali, the Taliban background and their socialization process as essential factors in order to examine the role of the Taliban political elite on foreign policy.

This study has tried to follow the constructivist line of argument particularly when examining the domestic and foreign policy of Taliban. Constructivists argue for social construction of international relations, that the actor's behaviour can cause changes in domestic and international politics, that state's interest and identity are not permanent and are subject to change; that domestic forces such as nationalism and the political elite can change the definition of state identity and interests.

On the *composition of the Taliban* political elite and the fragmentation in their administration, it has been argued that the emergence of the new political elite not only transformed the structure of the political elite but also deeply fragmented them. The Taliban as new political elite were more radical in their ideology and policies and considered the former political elite, particularly the Mujahidin, as corrupt and redundant. Applying the same logic, the Taliban also accused Afghan intellectuals and technocrats as agents of the West and excluded them from the process of decision making.

It has been argued that the Taliban were not a monolithic force and that their political leaders were not just madrasa educated youth or simple villagers from remote areas of the country, but that they hailed from a different and complex mixture of social and political context.

Among the Taliban political elite there were Mujahidin, clerics, communists, common Pashtuns and foreign fighters who had joined them as their influence widened and more territories came under their control. It was argued that the Taliban political elite were not only fragmented politically and ideologically, but factors like ethnicity, religion and tribe played an important role in the discord among them. The factionalism among the Taliban greatly influenced their domestic as well as foreign policy.

While examining the domestic and foreign policy of the Taliban It was found that the *religious and political socialization* that the Taliban political elite had undergone had a

profound effect on the way they designed their domestic politics and gave shape to their relations with the international community. In domestic policy and in dealing with human rights and women rights, engaging with religious minorities and harbouring the international terrorist organizations, the Taliban was blamed by international community. The repressive domestic policy greatly influenced the Taliban relations with neighbours, great powers, international organizations and international community.

In the chapter five belongs to the post Bonn scenario it was argued that noncompliance to the US demand by the Taliban to surrender Osama Bin Laden, allowed the US to invade Afghanistan in October 2001. Mobilization of the anti-Taliban Pashtun forces, providing assistance to the Non-Pashtun Northern Alliance, working with the factions inside the Taliban which were dissatisfied with it, and using the US Air Force to bomb Taliban positions played an important role in defeating the Taliban quickly.

After Kabul had fallen into the hands of the anti-Taliban forces, the UN convened the Bonn Conference in Germany by inviting different Afghan factions except the Taliban leadership. There was great consensus among the Afghan political elite at the Bonn Conference and they largely sacrificed their factional interests for the future of Afghanistan. That is why this research considers the Bonn Conference and the Bonn Agreement as an elite settlement and the reflection of the consensus that the political elite arrived at.

Throughout this chapter it was revealed that the *consensus among the elite* greatly influenced Afghanistan's domestic politics, leading to relative political stability after 2001. And further cooperation by the political elite led to the successful implementation of the Bonn Agreement, such as convening the Emergency and Constitutional Loya Jirga and conducting the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2004 and 2005. This consensus also assisted the process of nation building, social welfare, establishment of the rule of law, political and economic reconstruction, and enhanced human rights, particularly women's rights.

While discussing the foreign policy of Afghanistan after 2001 it was found that *the elite consensus* not only affected Afghanistan's domestic politics but influenced its foreign

policy as well. Accordingly, Afghanistan's foreign policy underwent great changes and transformation after 2001. Looking to the new world environment, the new Afghan political elite adopted an inclusive and vibrant foreign policy. Building warm relations with neighbors, approaching the regional countries, cooperating with international organizations and signing strategic agreements with great powers were considered the priorities by the new establishment in Kabul.

This study found that the post 2011 elite consensus brought the unified foreign policy objectives: First, the first objective was made to reconstruct the negative image of Afghanistan in international arena and to represent Afghanistan as a peace loving nation. The country's name was being equated with conflicts, drugs, destruction and as a sanctuary for wanted global terrorists during the long civil war.

Second, As Afghanistan had remained in isolation for long years it was backward to the core. To get out of this rut it was decided to broaden its relations with foreign nations and international institutions as much as possible.

Third, for the purpose of nation building, and to rebuild the country's infrastructures, Afghanistan needed assistance, therefore attracting the attention of the international actors and investors became the third priority for the country.

Fourth, since Afghanistan has suffered enormously in the past due to conflict of interests among countries in the region and beyond, restoring the balance of interest among the regional countries and beyond became another priority for Afghanistan's foreign policy after 2001.

While looking to the objectives of foreign policy, this research found that Afghanistan's foreign policy had undergone a great transformation after 2001. Holsti (1982: ix) defines foreign policy transformation/restructuring as "the dramatic, whole sale alteration of a nation's pattern of external relations".

This transformation would become more visible if one were to compare the new foreign policy with the one that was in place during the Taliban days. It would show that the programs, goals and international orientation in Afghanistan's foreign policy had

changed much after 2001. The new establishment tried to adjust itself to the international norms and regulations and set its plan and programs accordingly.

Its goals and objectives were formulated in such a manner as to safeguard the country's national interests. The country's international orientation transformed greatly and Afghanistan opened different channels to engage with the world and the international community.

This research found that an elite faction across history of Afghanistan and particularly from 1996 to 2001 was responsible for the long civil war, domestic instability and lack of foreign policy. However through this research it was also revealed that elite consensus reflected in Bonn Conference was led to relative domestic stability and inclusive foreign policy from 2001 to 2014.

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