

# *America's war in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014*

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**Abstract:** However, the war between the United States and Afghanistan started in 1979 in the first place, the aim of this research is to give an understandable image of the actions from 2001 to 2009. During this period, not only one but two US presidents have taken his part. Firstly George W. Bush declared war against the Taliban after they denied the extradition of Osama Bin Laden, who was responsible for the September 11 attacks and the leader of Al-Qaeda. In 2003, NATO was also involved in the warfare as an ally and have taken over the direction of ISAF. Then, in 2008, Barack Obama won the elections with the oaths, that he will end this war until the end of his presidency. Moreover, this study makes an attempt at describing the social, political situations in Afghanistan and at collecting all the significant actions, which is determined the outcome of the war, for instance, Jellyfish, Anaconda, Fury and Achilles.

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, Taliban, military intervention, terrorism

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## **1. Introduction**

“The war of Afghanistan has been the longest war in the history of the United States. It started in 1980 and has continued ever since. It was started by the Democrat Jimmy Carter and has been continued by every US government.” (Pataky and Morvay, 2010) The country is officially known as the Islamic State of Afghanistan and is a geographically, historically and linguistically diverse country. It is quite disadvantaged geographically but the barren, inaccessible areas situated in the middle of the country have always helped the governors, ethnic or religious groups in preserving their independence and autonomy. The tribalism and

religion are closely interlinked, however, the role of the tribes are still stronger than Islam. Traditions, such as tribal common law have been present in the society for centuries. Associations and armed conflicts have become basic elements of the community over the years. The first phase of the Afghan war began in 1979, when the United States with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have jointly tried to maintain the country's resistance to the Russians. At that time the US turned had its interests not in Afghanistan, but to the Soviet forces because they wanted to prevent a possible future struggle when they would not be able to use the country as a base. The second phase took place between 1989 and 2001, when obtaining full control over country has become a goal for the United States and its allies by using a stronger Muslim guerrilla group. In the following years armed conflicts were followed by one another in the country, almost 40,000 people died in Kabul between 1992 and 1995, for which, ultimately, the radical Islam advertisers, Taliban promised a solution. Taliban were raised and educated in religious schools located in the lands of Pashtuns brought up by area. They learnt their fanatic, common and religious law, the Pashtun in these schools, parallel to the acquisition of martial arts were thought by the Pakistani Secret Service. Their goal is to unite and cleanse the country from the mujahedeen, a group (people fighting for Islam, men of action) aided by the West and other anti-Islamic activities in the country. By the end of 2000 they were controlling 95% of the country. During the seven years of their governance, strict measures have been taken regarding the interpretation of Islamic law, such as banning women from earning a salary and education. They also gave shelter to jihadists, like the Al-Qaeda. There was a change at 9/11 when terrorist attacks were committed against the United States by Al-Qaeda lead by Osama Bin Laden. In response, the US launched an armed campaign to destroy Al-Qaeda, moreover they forced the Taliban to extradite Bin Laden, which they resisted. Supported by the United States, Karzai was elected as interim president on the 22nd of December, 2001. Parallel to this, the Taliban system collapsed. (Pataky and Morvay, 2010)

## **2. "The day that changed the world." (9/11 Attacks, 2010)**

The Al-Qaeda is a terrorist organisation that was set up in 1988 under the leadership of the rich Saudi Arabian entrepreneur, Osama bin Laden. Its members fought in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union's veterans. It is assumed to have so-called "sleeping-agents" in more than 60 countries. The main danger of the organisation is the loose connection within the groups that it is formed out of and the fact that these are hard to detect and are extremely

secure financially. On 11 September 2001 four planes were hijacked by the organisation, two crashing into the World Trade Center, one in the building of the Pentagon, while the passengers of the fourth one managed to take back control, making the plane miss the targeted White House and crashing in Pennsylvania instead. The US policy has turned against Afghanistan, in addition to the Taliban government that not only was closely connected with Al-Qaeda, but also cooperated in the act to get Osama bin Laden hidden. In December 2001, the US launched an air attack against the Tora Bora cave system where it was located a hidden terrorist organisation and the Taliban militants. Initially, the military operation is believed to be successful, then turned out to that the most likely targets already have left the hiding place well before the bombing. As a result, it was decided by the US Armed Forces Central Command chief, General Frank that further allied Afghan forces to come up against them. (Harmat, 2012)

### **3. 2001–2003**

On 20 December 2001, ISAF was created (Security Assistance Force International), whose role is to ensure the functioning of the transitional Afghan government and for the operation of the subsequent military governments, and social security benefits. Later, on 11 August 2003, NATO took over political control of the organisation. Initially, the attacks and the war with great success has been achieved, there were facilities, which have even been abolished in full. On 17 September, 2002 was released the Bush doctrine, which is a non-mental protection guidelines collective name. Three main objective of respect for political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other nations and human dignity. Also in March 2002, it entered into force the Operation Anaconda, with the aim of hiding in the city of Gardez neighbour sulphur-lying areas of Taliban and Al-Qaeda terrorists have to be bypassed. The operation has been successful, so even Britain has sent further 1,700 troops to help the Allied forces. A deployment to some 2,500 land-based troops took part, including Australians, Canadians, New Zealanders, French, Germans and Americans. In addition to the TSI Rika Air Force B-52, M-15 and AC-130 combat aircraft and helicopters, it has also been made. This is not only our soldiers of the enemy armed forces, but the terrain and weather-volume affair also had to contend with. The operation took place over 2500-3000m asl, 5-10 degrees cold. In contrast, they enjoyed a big advantage for Al-Qaeda militants who know the terrain and have already stained the snow were accustomed to rocky terrain, which are an excellent

opportunity firing and provided shelter for them. Most of siege weapons 82 mm mortars handheld RPG-7 anti-tank guns and 57-mm guns recoilless filled out. (Witte, 2015) The victory for the Americans bomb blows on them by the air force, while the Allied forces conclusive phase helicopters have been deployed. The eight months war-method finally managed to achieve just that weakened the terrorists and the Taliban militants, but were driven out of the valley they have not succeeded. By 2002, the Taliban government also lost his position as commissioners. His replacement in the US and allied forces together a new government was appointed, headed by Hamid Karzai was then an attempt was made to reinstate the country's international legal system. The Taliban was defeated and forced to retreat south of Afghanistan. The United States for the sake of the subsistence of the new government incarcerated the survivals of the Afghan movement in the compound of Guantanamo Bay. In 2003, a turning point occurred in the Afghan war since the outbreak of another war between Iraq and the United States. With the United States have not given as much attention to the area as previously, the Taliban have strengthened again. The eastern and southern provinces were divided into four military districts and the recruitment of young people to Taliban's new army has begun again. In Pakistan the recruitment is supported by Pakistan fundamentalist Islamic parties, for instance, Jaish-e-Mohammed, the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and the Laskar-e-Taiba. The reorganised Taliban groups have opened a so-called "jihad", which refers to the holy war that was announced against the foreign occupiers and the puppet regime in Afghanistan. Mullah Dadullah has been directing the operation, which have become a more actively resistance since February 2003. (Witte, 2015) The Taliban groups carried out several surprise missile and bomb attacks against the American and allied forces who were stationed there. Furthermore the Taliban still enjoy the help of the local population and an extremist organisation which was led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, since they are also considered the American soldiers as intruders. These attacks rein in the United States and the allies of the following countermeasures scale in the course of the year 2003. In March the US has launched another attack on the 20th in the US against terrorists "brave blow" as the south of Afghanistan, perhaps, one of which was the Taliban's main headquarters. Then, on March 29 came to life in "Desert Lion", code-named Operation of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment coating underpinning them. It has been proved to be effective on the first day, since succeeded in discovering two places where guns were hidden, which was filled with rockets and mortars. It was the so-called "Avalanche" action sequence between December 2 and 30, which aims to prevent the onset of the Constitution against the seating large tribal council (loya jirga) any acts of violence. President Karzai in his speech on 10 April 2003 stated that

until security and stability shortages caused by Taliban guerrilla wars and the rise of warlords does not disappear, the reconstruction of the country is threatened. (Kőszegvári, 2004)

#### **4. 2004–2007**

Under the Bonn Conference in 2004, firstly there was held a presidential than in 2005 the parliamentary elections were held in Afghanistan elections, moreover a new form-invention was adopted in 2004. Nevertheless, Karzai's government and the ANA (Afghan National Army) is still poor and still undermines the development of growth and stability in the presence of warlords and corruption, as well as to groups of leaking a gradually increasing number of new Taliban as well. (Tharoor, Ishaan, 2011)

##### **4.1. The country's unstable assist**

The country's unstable situation in the northern part of the country is still can be said as a relatively stable block, but in the south every day are packed clashes between the Taliban and ISAF soldiers. Both of them, in spite of the European community is still not left her line of "failed states" occupying eighth place in the country. Such aid organisations are involved in supporting the country like the United Nations programs of UNICEF, UNHCR, PRTs, which were created thanks to the operation of military forces and the collaboration of civils. Nowadays 25 PRTs are operating in Afghanistan, only with 13 countries are supporting of their aim to maintain security and assist the Afghans in the reconstruction and economic development. Even Hungary also participated in the funding, in the autumn of 2006, the country took over the management of the Baghlan provincial PRT. In addition, notable financial support provided by the World Bank, 1.56 billion dollars spent on reconstruction projects in Afghanistan, and 28 donor countries have helped ARTF (Common Fund for Reconstruction of Afghanistan) under the World Bank's work. (ISAF's mission of Afghanistan, 2015)

## 4.2 The Afghan opium trade

The opium trade in Afghanistan is not new, but even more production began after the fall of the Taliban government, mainly in the southern part of the country. By 2006 the country's poppy-growing the 82% of the world's cultivation, namely 165,000 hectares, which is 59% more than the 2005 results, which was reported to 104,000 hectares. Nevertheless, the black market generated the decrease of the country's economic development distorts relationships in society. The opium trade is not only bad for the personal health but also for the security situation in the country as well. In respect of in the country's peripheral regions numerous drug laboratories are in operation, which continues to flow into the Tajikistan through Turkmenistan to Russia and Europe. (William, 2011)

## 4.3. The 2005 election and its effects

On 18 September 2005 legislative elections, 6,000 candidates pitted against the 420 provincial council seats and for the 249 seats in the lower house. There is no accurate census defined during the elections, which leaves room for manipulation, instead of the provincial division, it was decided by the population ratio. This election is considered to be the world's most-handed response pouches. However, President Karzai, taking advantage of the presidential veto, he imposed an electoral system in which political parties election performance were restrained, so finally there were 76 registered and 19 registered parties. But the expected twists, turns and peace after the elections were still lagging behind and a never-before experienced wave of violence swept the country. In addition, it resulted the use of remote-controlled bombs, suicide bombings, shooting down US helicopters and land-air rockets. One reason is that the government forces in the capital was outside of Kabul and they could not reach them, so there the local warlords and drug barons could vindicate their will. In October, a new organisation has been established between the hostile forces, they entered an alliance between Jaish al-Muslimin's influential commanders and their troops were united. From the resistance point of view, it is all happened in the perfect time, because then they were free to use the tribal band on the border betwixt the two countries without any punishment, as the Pakistani army was occupied with the damage, which was caused by the Kashmir earthquake. After that, they changed their tactics, avoided large offensives, used installed roadside bombs (the number of bombs increased by about 60% compared to the previous year), and committed kidnappings. Civilians, police stations and patrols were attacked. The Taliban

seemed determined not only of the military and security aspects of the basics but also an entirely new point as well. (Afghanistan, 2010) During the years of the expulsion of the Soviet Union, between Karzai and co-operative warlords were able to manage an increase in material possessions. So after the Russians the withdrawal, the new ruling elite became rich, meanwhile the Taliban and Marxists, remained poor. As the history proved it so many times, the poor do not like the rich elite, while the Taliban do not pose a potential problem in the ex-communist candidates, but they threatened the wealthy mujahedeen. With this, new kinds of Taliban group were born with class consciousness. In the rest of the year of 2005 about 10 priests loyal to the government, more government members, such as the President and hundreds of civilians were killed in Helmand province Ulema council. Suicide attack committed on 28 September, when waiting in front of the Afghan army soldiers training centre, a bomb was exploded. Similar attacks occurred on October 4th, 5th, 8th, 9th and 11th. From the attacks almost at the same time NATO decided to extend the engagement of Britain, so they take over the leadership of ISAF from May 2006. From 15 to 17 June 2006, they launched a new offensive against Taliban fighters in a range of 4, which showed a particularly high activity. In the offensive “Mountain Attack” 10 thousand American, British, Canadian and Afghan soldiers took part. As the “Jellyfish” is another large-scale military operations took between 2–17 September to the beginning of southern Afghanistan, where Canadian soldiers and the Afghan army and police, a total of about 2,000 people came out against the Taliban. At the same time he was known as the “Mountain Fury” is running on action in eastern Afghanistan, where 4,000 Afghan police and border guards and 3,000 coalition soldiers played a role. This year, the Taliban groups are once again gained power, produced numerous uprising and on the Afghan-Pakistan border they started to recruit their forces again. Most of the fighters repeatedly were enlisted and imported from religious schools. The number of attacks, the number of terrorist attacks against civilians and guerrilla attacks also were getting higher. (MTI, PLT, 2010)

#### **4.4. International cooperation against the Afghan threat**

In 2006, while in the south, ISAF has established a new PRT's, while the Italians and Spaniards occupied their places west of the country, ISAF and NATO forces are trying to suppress guerrilla wars taking place in the northern part of the country. The more southern areas, the British took over the leadership and established a PRT are most hit by the

insurgency in Helmand province seat. This will be the country's largest facility of 1,000 people, which is responsible for disseminating and drug trafficking in the basic seed crops prevention. Earlier this year, 2,000 British troops will arrive in Afghanistan thus increasing the number of troops stationed there on 4,800. According to the decision of the British Parliament on November 14 they wanted to create Britain's anti-coalition insurgency, preventing guerrilla attacks, in view of the long-term role that the British are talking in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the United States was processing the withdrawal of their forces from the war to commandeer them to war of Iraq. To help to manage it, the British sent 5-800-strong British force which controlled the central command of NATO and with this, America could conduct nearly 20,000 people to another war scene. Besides Britain, the Netherlands has sought to take his part of the aid, as they increased their forces from 950 to 1,300. Al-Qaeda takes possession of the same in Britain as did it with Spain, Mullah Dadullah Taliban leader acknowledged that they are responsible for the terrorist attacks in London, the threatening of the British Queen Elisabeth II. and the Helmand assassinations. They intended these attacks as an open message to represent the fates of ISAF forces in the southern parts of the country, and that even in Kabul they could not feel themselves in safe, since the hands of Al-Qaeda could reach so far as well. The fact that the Taliban's second leader announced all the things, which was mentioned above, this was an open declaration of war indoors, which is now not only one of the previous target, but also posed a threat to the international forces. (Afghanistan, 2010)

#### **4.5. 2007**

On 6 March 2007, a military operation was launched by NATO and the Afghan military forces that was called "Achilles" and was against the Taliban who were staying in Hilمند range. In the offensive about 5,000 soldiers took part, from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) ranks Canadians, Britons, Americans and Dutch and Afghan army soldiers. Their strategy was to try to encircle the conflict zones as a "belt" to prevent the arrival of the new generation. In the months after November, the insurgents again declared jihad against NATO-ISAF forces. Moreover, the training camps started to actuate once again, the rebels returned back to their former strongholds and the Taliban regiment showed up repeatedly in several provinces over again. They started to close the schools for girls, public executions were back and religious courts operated with extreme interpretations were

established. As a consequence, President Musharraf for the first time proclaimed a state of war emergency and then suspended the constitution on 3 November 2007. The new elections were printed out only by pressure from the international forces on 8 January 2008. (Kitekintő, 2007)

## 5. 2008–2010

In 2008, with Barack Obama won the elections of U.S. presidency, not only in the direction of American foreign policy, but also a new political journey began in Afghanistan at the same time. Obama is not only as a president, but during his election campaign, also preached that terrorism counting only would be possible to defeat with the pull down of the Afghan war. The main objective of the new President was to put an end to the Iraq war as quickly as possible, so he could devote full attention to the Afghan situation, and its way to win. So soon after 27 March 2009, the first real Afghanistan strategy was announced, which is included immediate basis, plus 4,000 people sent to the theatre of war, and the number of soldiers stationed there also increased 17,000 persons. Based on 2008 assumptions Pakistan involved in the war and the spirit of this strategy AFPAK were called out, and Afghanistan-Pakistan special envoy posts were being created, and for its leadership post the routinely acting Richard Holbrooke was appointed. As well as to ensure effective involvement of Pakistan \$ 1.5 billion aid was spent on local schools, roads, hospitals and the rebuilding of the Al-Qaeda expulsion. (Péczeli, 2015) President Barack Obama on 1 December 2009 announced the new strategy on West Point Academy, the so-called McChrystal, which considered the Afghanistan purposes as available if they increasing the number of combat troops and put more emphasis on protecting the population. The affected areas can be divided into three parts: the provinces of Helmand, Kandahar city and its environs and Paktika, Paktia and Khost provinces. Although the security situation seemed to improve, but the allied forces had to realise within a short period of time that radical Islamic terrorists were also present in the trained Afghan army. In 2009, the US-seeding costs were 23% of the costs of war, and the war in Afghanistan was nearly US \$ 336 billion between 2001 and September 2010. (Pataky and Morvay, 2010)

## **6. The capture of Osama Bin Laden**

Osama bin Laden, or on its full name Osama bin Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden, a Saudi Arabian militant Islamist who was supposed to be the founder of the Al-Qaeda terrorist organisation. Al-Qaeda was founded at the end of the war of Afghanistan with his 15 partner, in the Pakistan Peshawar. This organisation became the first in the world which were not interested in any boundaries and regulations. A member of a terrorist organisation could be anyone, if he undertook to represent and support for their cause. Osama bin Laden's head after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, a \$ 25 million bounty has been set, and then only in rare sound recordings has made his voice heard in which he continued to exhorted his comrades to fight terrorism against the Western world. The first news was leaked out to the public on May 2, 2011 regarding to the capture, that the White House and the Pentagon have been made Bin Laden's arrest in March 2011. Then arose that perhaps the terrorists hiding in a certain town of Abbottabad. On Sunday night at half-past two, three types of Apache attack helicopters set sail which were stationed in the Arabian Sea on an aircraft carrier mother ship, called Carl Vinson. The villa's argument, which was surrounded by a 4-6 meters fence, the terrorist immediately opened fire on the commandos, but still could not restrain them, goes from stairs to stairs they bought the house. The firefight lasted forty minutes, in which a fatal headshot killed the most wanted criminals of all time, furthermore one of his wife and his eldest son were killed as well that night. To confirm whether indeed Bin Laden was carried out at night, the American commandos took the dead body with themselves, and after a successful DNA's investigations, they buried Bin Laden in accordance with the ordinary Islamic traditions: wrapped in white fabric and buried in the waters of the Arabian Sea. After that, President Obama personally called his earlier predecessor, George W. Bush, who proclaimed in the war against terrorism almost 10 years ago. (Harmat, 2012)

## **7. The withdrawal**

The Afghan and the Western governments decided upon the withdrawal process in January 2010 at the London Conference. In July 2010, half a year after that, President Hamid Karzai announced the program on the start of the summit held in Kabul. The process is not reversible, which land was handed over once, there the control will not be able to take back by ISAF. The pull-out process will proceed slowly and will take place every six months to a transfer area. (Thompson, 2014) The first withdrawal was performed in the summer of 2011

and until the summer of next year, the President must call back the 33,000 soldiers he sent in December of 2009. Obama argued with the reason to the extraction of the troops, that America is managed a successful and a severe blow to Al-Qaeda and inflicted a serious loss on the Taliban as well. “With regard to our position to these talks is clear: they must be managed by the Afghan government, which must step up its ability to defend his people, and those who want to be a peaceful Afghanistan part, must break with Al-Qaeda, abandon violence, and adhere to the Afghan constitution” – these words were announced by the US president. In addition, Obama also is expressed his intention that the U.S. intends to continue to pursue the fight against terrorism in cooperation with Pakistan. (MTI, 2011) In 2013, the exodus of attacks was further disturbed, since the past 12 months, 2730 civilians died in Afghanistan. The US president urged the Afghan President, Karzai to sign a bilateral security agreement in which he promises that western soldiers will remain in the country after 2014. All this was necessary because people feared that once the withdrawal will be completed, than violence and civil war will break out in the country again, “This is the year when we will complete our military mission in Afghanistan” – sound were made in the words of US President in the White House Rose Garden. The US left 9,800 troops at the end of 2014 in Afghanistan, but by the end of 2015, this number of staff will be reduced by half, while in 2016, it is going to be like zero. In addition, the president also said that in 2014 they will managed to close this transitional phase and Afghan forces will take over the security tasks entrusted to take care of the security duties. The United States in 2015, Bagram and Kabul withdraw its military one, and until 2016, they will reduce their power and military power to a normal functioning embassy in Kabul. Regarding the ISAF forces, they can only keep in the country if the bilateral security agreement between Washington and Kabul will be signed. The development of Afghanistan entirely on the “half empty, glass half full” type. There are areas which are succeeded in development over the years, but other areas are still in need of development. These include the situation of women, perhaps they were the most painfully affected victims during the events of the past two decades. First, the Soviet invasion, then the civil war and finally the Taliban regime. The raising in connection with the international outrage of the status of women is understandable, because women and girls were absolutely suppressed during the Taliban regime. Women in Afghanistan were suffered from racial discrimination: they were not allowed to work and learn, they could leave the house only with their male member of their family, moreover they had to wear burqa, which covered everything of their faces excepting of the eyes. Those women who may have violated any rule, had to expect for serious punishment. For example, if an ankle was flashed, it meant a

leg fracture, while prostitution accused suspension. The beating, stoning and hanging up of a women is become a common punishment in the country. Although the situation has eased since the fall of the Taliban regime, the situation is even today cannot be said unproblematic. High domestic violence continued and many young women is still forced into an arranged marriage, which is connected between the father and her future husband's family, some girl as early as 12 years of age can become wife as well. Thus, the stabilisation of Afghanistan is extremely important not only for its security role, but its "intangible value" as well. In the point of the country's past, it can be said that only with fortunate developments in the external and internal conditions will only be able to exceed its current state. "Afghanistan is a failed state, but it is still the best we have ever had" – echoed one of the Afghan NGO leader, Aziz Rafiee. (WL, 2013)

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