

International Security Assistance Force Drawdown from Afghanistan: Challenges and Opportunities

Syed Akhtar Ali Shah

Chairman provincial Inspection Team

Ayaz

University of Hazara

The NATO led International Security Assistance Force completed its drawdown by end 2014 and arguably a new era in the history of Afghanistan has now begun. The drawdown not only affects Afghanistan but is also a cause of concern for Pakistan as different scenarios can result in different repercussions for Pakistan. Of the three possible scenarios the most favourable one is a stable and peaceful Afghanistan as it would not only enable Pakistan focus upon its own domestic issues but also be helpful in forging trade links with Central Asia via Afghanistan. A possible second scenario is a protracted civil war while in the worst case scenario Taliban may seize Kabul which would result in further aggravation in terrorist activities in Pakistan. Some recent developments, however, like significant improvement in Pak-Afghan relations and resumption of Pakistan and China mediated peace talks between Afghan government and Taliban. Give some cause for optimism for durable peace in the region.

Key words: Security, drawdown, terrorist, Civil war, Taliban, peace.

A decade after authorisation of military action in Afghanistan by the Bonn Agreement under the auspices of the United Nations, the United States announced drawdown of its troops in 2011 with completion by end 2014. (Security Council Resolution, 2013) "Operation Enduring Freedom" in military terms and "Obama's war" in journalistic circles, the Afghan war has now officially been concluded by the U.S strategists. Despite being the longest war the endgame has been downplayed by the US administration and media as other domestic issues and new foreign affairs challenges like Ukraine and ISIS grabbed the headlines. (The Huffington Post, n.d) The development however cannot be downplayed by Pakistan as it is a watershed in the history of the region. Though about 9,800 U.S. troops will remain in Afghanistan to support a non-combat "train, advise, and assist mission," the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) will be mainly responsible for defending the country against any insurgency. In this paper a critical analysis of the post drawdown situation has been made with a focus upon the likely impact upon Pakistan.

Military intervention in Afghanistan

After 9/11 terrorist incident in 2001 the U.S led NATO forces entered Afghanistan to flush out Al-Qaeda friendly Taliban government and hence dismantle the headquarters of a deadly international terrorist movement which allegedly had masterminded the attack. The officially stated key priorities of NATO led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan were:

- To protect the Afghan people;
- To build the capacity of the Afghan security forces so they can take lead responsibility for security in their own country;
- To counter the insurgency; and
- To enable the delivery of stronger governance and development. (ISAF, 2014)

Since NATO took command of ISAF in August 2003, the Alliance gradually expanded the reach of its mission, originally limited to Kabul, to cover all of the Afghanistan's territory. Accordingly, the number of ISAF troops grew from the initial 5,000 to more than 130,000 troops from 48 countries, including all 28 NATO member nations. The strategic aims of the U.S were later spelled out in different policy statements. Unveiled on June 29, 2011 President

Barack Obama's counterterrorism strategy is significant for both what it says or is silent on. (Lodhi 2011) Presenting a 19-page strategy document, Obama's top anti-terrorism adviser, John Brennan declared that America's "best offense won't always be deploying large armies abroad but delivering targeted, surgical pressure" against groups that threaten" the US. This affirmed a shift in the US policy from large-scale military interventions to clandestine campaigns (Lodhi, 2011).

A reluctant Pakistan that had hitherto invested heavily in a friendly Taliban government also joined the international coalition by offering physical and intelligence assistance to the U.S. The Taliban who were written off after their defeat by the Northern Alliance forces staged a surprise comeback in the Afghan spring offensive 2006. (Reidal, 2011) A fact finding 66-page report by the then Commander of U.S forces in Afghanistan General McChrystal painted a very grim picture and concluded "While the situation is serious, success is still achievable". (Woodwar, 2010) Despite the morale boosting killing of Osama Bin Laden in a covert operation in May 2011 situation on ground remained less optimistic from the U.S perspective. The surge in activities of Afghan anti-government insurgents as evidenced by shooting down of a U.S chopper killing 30 SEAL commandoes and a daredevil attack on British Council building demonstrated that Taliban fighters were not short on motivation. This raised many questions about future of Afghanistan after departure of all foreign troops in accordance with the Lisbon meeting announcement. This analysis reviews the situation in Afghanistan and focuses on post withdrawal implications on Pakistan.

A summit of NATO leaders in Lisbon was held in November 2010 which was also attended by Hamid Karzai, the then Afghan president, and Ban Ki-moon, the UN secretary general. The summit agreed on a "transition strategy" for Afghanistan which envisaged phase wise handover of the country's provinces to ANSF from 2011 to 2014. Some of the NATO leaders were however guarded in declaring 2014 as a clear deadline (Guardian, 2014). Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the NATO secretary general expressed NATO's resolve to stay till completion of the job and declared that the process must be conditions-based, not calendar-based. Similarly the U.N Secretary General also added that reality and not schedules should guide the Afghan policy. In the summit the NATO leaders emphasised that Afghan army and police forces were to grow to more than 300,000 by October 2011 and that the international forces would be able to gradually pull out, leaving behind training missions which would not engage in combat.

The commitment of the members of the NATO alliance not to abandon Afghanistan to chaos was however widely questioned because of waning domestic support for massive defence spending on a foreign venture while no concrete gains could be achieved. The process of withdrawal began with the Dutch and the Canadians forces pulling out in 2010 and 2011 respectively. William Hague the British Foreign Secretary also emphasised the finality of 2015 being an absolute deadline for withdrawal, irrespective of ground realities in Afghanistan (Motlagh, 2014). Both Britain and France have now already vacated Afghanistan leaving the U.S to deal with the post withdrawal uncertainties (CBC News, 2011).

President Barack Obama championed the cause of Afghan war in the first year of his first presidency, approving more than 40,000 additional forces for Afghanistan. He also pledged to begin withdrawing the U.S. troops in July 2011. The then Foreign Secretary and now the Presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton had stressed the need for caution by telling the NATO foreign ministers in Berlin that the alliance had "to underscore that we are transitioning, not leaving." She reaffirmed support for the Afghan government's desire to accommodate the Taliban fighters back into society as long as they expressed their support for a reconciliation process. Advocating a carrot and stick policy she added that "Those who choose violence must face relentless pressure," she said. "The Taliban need to know that they cannot wait us out" (Zimbardo, n.d).

A Critical Analysis of Post Withdrawal Scenarios

Many analysts have discussed the situation in Afghanistan after NATO's drawdown of troops from Afghanistan by end 2014. Most of them are aware of the dangers posed to security situation in future. Even the U.S does not fool itself by painting a rosy picture. For instance Hillary Clinton in a clear message said "We have to steel ourselves and our publics for the possibility that the Taliban will resort to the most destructive and sensational attacks we have seen and that we have to send a clear message that we remain united, and we have to offer the Taliban a clear choice". The BBC editor in Kabul contrasts two likely scenarios ; a hopeful one in which Taliban join

the negotiations and become part of the political process and second a pessimistic one in which Taliban take over Kabul after a civil war. Unfortunately less attention has been paid by our analysts in the popular media to carry out a detailed analysis of likely impact of various scenarios in Afghanistan upon social, political and economic life in Pakistan. It is only after a detailed and impassionate analysis that we can judge what would be best from Pakistani perspective.

There is a difference of opinion within Pakistan over what a post-drawdown Afghanistan will look like. Some envisage it as a threat for Pakistan's security, while others perceive it as a chance for the country to solve its own domestic security problem and regain influence in Afghanistan. Most of our analysts focus upon Afghanistan to comment upon geostrategic dynamics in the post withdrawal situation. Very few extend this analysis to socio-economic impact on Pakistan, as already observed. Some exceptions are however there. For instance, a Khaled Ahmed, a noted analyst contends that: "The Americans and the NATO allies are going to start withdrawing from Afghanistan but Pakistan is tempted to repeat the blunders of 1989-90 banking on conquest by the Taliban and the Punjabi Taliban on both sides of the Durand Line"(Ahmed, 2011). The writer raises his concerns about Pakistan's ability to cope with surging terrorism if it does not change its Afghan policy in future. Similarly, another analysts Hasan Askari views the situation and identifies the joint cooperation of the U.S, Afghanistan and Pakistan as a key to stability in the region (Daily Times, 2010). In a two piece analysis, Dr. Haider Shah, a public policy expert, identifies three likely scenarios which might affect Pakistan after NATO's drawdown of troops is completed. He extends the analysis to socio-economic level and identifies economic dividends that would accrue to Pakistan if a stable and peaceful Afghanistan survives (Daily Times, 2011).

There are various dynamics of the Afghan puzzle which makes it difficult to predict one likely outcome. Taking cue from Dr. Haider Shah's analysis the post drawdown situation can best be analysed in terms of various possible scenarios. There are three such scenarios which are discussed next.

Stable Afghanistan under ANSF and Afghan Police

In January 2010, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, the formal decision-making body for Afghan and international coordination, endorsed an increase of the Afghan National Army (ANA) growth target to 134,000 by October 2010 and 171,600 by October 2011; and for the Afghan National Police (ANP) to 109,000 by October 2010 and 134,000 by October 2011. The Afghan army has now about 195,000 troops mostly financed by the U.S. (Huffington Post, 2014) But the Afghan defence experts argue that Afghanistan needed much greater strength between 600,000 to 700,000 troops as per the U.S. military's own counterinsurgency manual. Including police and other security units, Afghanistan currently has about 350,000 Western-funded security forces. A U.S. report says funding the Afghan Army costs \$4.1 billion a year, with only \$500 million coming from the Afghan government (Huffington Post, 2014).

In Regional Command-Capital, since 28 August 2008, the ANSF gradually took over the lead responsibility for security in Kabul province. The Afghan Ministry of Interior (MoI) and Ministry of Defence (MoD) lead this effort with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The best case scenario primarily rests on the ability of ANSF to withstand any onslaught of anti-government insurgents, the Taliban. Additional determinant which would work towards a stable Afghanistan is the absence factor of foreign troops in Afghanistan, a primary motive for garnering popular support among Afghan villagers. The moderate Taliban will be persuaded by this enabling environment to join mainstream politics and hence contribute to long term peace and stability.

Pakistan can benefit enormously from this situation. It can boost regional trade by becoming a hub for trade between India, Afghanistan and Central Asian states. Presently there exists a negative perception about Pakistan due to its long association with Taliban. The fact that Osama Bin Laden was found in a posh cantonment of Pakistan also did not help our international image. If we help in establishing a stable Afghanistan Pakistan will be seen as a responsible member of the international community. We would then also be able to focus our anti-terrorism effort more on domestic issues such as sectarianism, trouble in Baluchistan and law and order in Karachi.

Protracted civil war in Afghanistan

The second possible scenario can be a protracted civil war between the Taliban forces and the internationally recognised Afghan government. Many national and international analysts fear that the departure of

foreign troops may result in a steady expansion in the attacks of Taliban forces. But we are also not neglectful of the fact that the Afghan government will also not be without friends. In fact not only the NATO has maintained its presence in the region by 10,000 US and 5000 other NATO member troops, many regional players will also be keen on not seeing Taliban make any headway. Neighbouring countries like Iran and Central Asian states support the present Afghan power structure due to shared historical ties. India also has a stake in the present Afghan government as it invested significantly in many economic development projects inside Afghanistan and would therefore not be happy with an abrupt change. (Daily Times, 2011) Russia, a major military power in the region also is fearful of the instability in Afghanistan as it could spill over into some of the Central Asian republics along its borders. Russia therefore willingly signed an agreement with the NATO coalition to expand the use of supply routes through Russia to Afghanistan. It also expressed its willingness to supply trainers besides military hardware like helicopters and guns to boost the Afghan military. China, another emerging military and economic giant, also does not want any militant jihadi regime in Afghanistan as this does not augur well for the troubled Muslims majority Sinkiang region.

Local insurgents like Taliban and international terrorist networks like Al Qaeda and ISIS are also aware of the situation and are determined to take full advantage of the situation and would sabotage any effort towards a peaceful settlement. The collision of these opposing interests will result in a long drawn war between Taliban forces and the internationally recognised Afghan government. Pakistan is still grappling with two million Afghan refugees who despite many repatriation schemes have shown little interest in returning to their country. The anarchy in Afghanistan would force other refugees from Afghanistan to Pakistan that would further make the prospects of existing millions of refugees going back home bleak. Pakistan pays heavily for its refugees' problems in the form of environmental degradation, a heavy strain on its energy sources, and a steep rise in crime. (Janjua, 2008) In fact there is a nexus between organized crime and lawlessness in Afghanistan and criminal activities in the adjoining Pakistani territories. One criminal activity that has risen appreciably is kidnapping for ransom with the involvement of militants.

Actions of Afghan warlords to take local control encouraged local clerics of Pakistani tribal areas to follow suit. Even the adjoining areas of Peshawar experienced lawlessness due to this trend which ultimately had to be dealt with sternly by Pakistani law enforcement agencies. In Swat which was known as a tourist paradise, Maulvi Fazal-Ullah, now Taliban's head, became so powerful that he controlled an autonomous local regime after terrorizing local population. (Almeida, 2008) If encouraged, the clerics and criminal gangs will again try to run such fiefdoms of their own.

Fall of Kabul to Taliban

The third possible scenario can be the ultimate fall of Kabul to the militants. This will be a re-enactment of what happened in 1992 when Dr. Najib's government was toppled by Mujahideen's speedy advancement. This is not an unimaginable scenario as the economic and military aid providers to the Afghan government are experiencing a very troubled economic situation at home themselves. The US is increasingly finding it difficult to fix the gaping hole in its fiscal budget and as Afghan war is a major drain on the U.S economy it is possible that sooner or later Afghanistan finds itself left on its own. Many European members also have acute economic issues at home and hence their continued monetary support for Afghanistan cannot be taken for granted. Besides the possibility of discontinuation of fiscal support, the quality of the military strength of Afghanistan is also questionable. If history is to be used as a guide, if the going gets tough the probability of mass desertions by military personnel cannot be ruled out. There is a growing unease among the donors over wide spread corruption and nepotism in the official circles of Afghanistan. It can therefore be concluded that if foreign funding comes to an end and the Afghan forces melt down a takeover by militants is not a remote reality. While sympathisers of jihadi cause can find happiness in this eventuality it should not be forgotten that state failure in Afghanistan would result in weak governance and lawlessness. This in turn would lead to ineffective counter insurgency and organized crime/drug trafficking which would spill over into Pakistan and hence this scenario would pose a clear and imminent danger to Pakistan's security and stability as well. The domino effect will be stronger in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan and FATA which are already beset with serious security challenges like insurgency, drug proliferation, and religiously inspired militant extremism.

The success of a radical militant Islamist movement in Afghanistan will inspire the strategists in Pakistan who are imbued with a spirit of international jihad. They will use the event as a propaganda weapon to brainwash young recruits in Pakistan who will be told that after defeating one superpower, Soviet Union, they had defeated the collective power of all western powers. If our government extends support to such a regime, our relations with the international community would be further strained. In the late 1980s 'access to the newly liberated Central Asian states' was the motivational driver for our strategists and Taliban were used as a means towards that goal. We are aware that this remained an exercise in daydreaming only. Foreign investment cannot be wooed if a country is infested with terrorism. Moreover the strong ties between anti-Taliban forces and Central Asian states will be an impediment against any trade aspirations at our end.

The socio religious consequences of a Taliban government upon Pakistan need to be carefully factored in. Being faith brothers, the Taliban government will support the Pakistani Taliban movement both militarily and with indoctrination. The severe backlash on law and order situation, especially in FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa cannot be over emphasised. To make situation worse, a sectarian warfare would also erupt as Al-Qaeda and ISIS related sectarian groups would feel emboldened by Taliban's victory in Afghanistan. The logical consequence would be that Pakistan, like Afghanistan, would also end up becoming a pariah state. Perhaps the U.S Vice President Joe Biden's comment made in 2008 that "If Afghanistan fails, Pakistan could follow, because extremists will set their sights on the bigger prize to the east" will become a reality.

Afghanistan has remained a major determinant in the US-Pakistan relations which have seen many ups and down in the recent years. In the event of Taliban takeover with Pakistan's complicity our relations with the international community will hit the rock bottom. It is a known fact that Pakistanis travelling abroad are considered as high risk visitors. One natural consequence will be that in the event of a disturbed South Asian region all developed countries will raise the visa barrier even higher for Pakistanis travelling to these countries. The most adversely affected will therefore be thousands of students who plan to go to western countries for higher studies. On economic side investment in Pakistan will be negatively affected as no investor will be interested in risking flow of funds to a high risk country like Pakistan.

We need to understand the paradigm of Taliban ideologues who aspire to extend their control across the border through one Caliph (Ameerul Momineen) as Taliban do not believe in national states but in one caliphate. All radical campaigners, like Hizbul Tehreer will be further emboldened to promote their propaganda against democracy in Pakistan and consequently there is a likelihood of merger of Afghan Taliban & TTP into a unified force. Whether the Afghan Taliban government will acknowledge ISIS caliph or will compete for global leadership is hard to guess in that scenario. But in any scenario with regards to the relationship between Middle East based ISIS insurgency and Taliban the tribal belt of Pakistan will be infested with the pro-Caliphate insurgency militancy.

The emerging situation and Pakistan

There are two important developments which might prove instrumental in determining the course of history. The first one is Pakistan's paradigm shift in dealing with jihadi elements by waging an all-out war against terrorists, code named Zarab e Azb, and announcement of a national anti-terrorism plan (NAP) to root out extremists as a national policy. Election of Ashraf Ghani, a cool headed administrator and negotiator, as the President of Afghanistan also encouraged this shift in Pakistan's Afghan policy. In regional disputes, personalities at the helm of affairs play an important role despite the fact that the inertia of the past remains a potent determinant. In the given scenario, Ashraf Ghani can be seen as the right person at the right time. Recent happenings indicate that both Pakistan and Afghanistan have finally realised that their economic development is dependent upon regional peace and mutual cooperation. (Shah, 2014) Pakistan's military engagement on its Western border in the backdrop of India's increasing role in Afghan's security infrastructure was a source of concern for Pakistan's security establishment. However the new Afghan government has dispelled this perception by forging relations with Pakistan on a friendlier basis thus lessening the burden of geography and history. (Lodhi, 2014) Making a break with a history of hostilities and mutual mistrust a very high level exchange of visits has taken place in the recent past between Pakistan and Afghanistan. In this regard, Sartaj Aziz, Pakistan's Foreign Affairs Advisor, Raheel Sharif Chief of Army Staff and Lieutenant General Rizwan Akhtar, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief met their counterparts in Pakistan and Afghanistan in reciprocal visits of mutual goodwill and trust building. To further amplify the signals of a new beginning in Pak-Afghan relations President Ashraf Ghani visited Pakistan

where he expressed his desire to leave hostilities behind. A clear indicator of significant progress in this regard is the completion of military training of six Afghan army cadets in Pakistan's military academy where Afghan Army chief was the chief guest at the time of passing out ceremony (BBC Report).

The second important development is the resumption of peace negotiations between the Afghan government and Taliban. This latest peace initiative is considered more promising than the past doomed efforts because of Pakistani and Chinese mediation (Reuters Report, 2015). Greater hopes of success are also on account of Pakistani threat to arrest or expel Taliban leaders if they do not negotiate with Kabul. The TTP's massacre of 132 students in December at Army Public School in Peshawar gave impetus to Pakistan's interest in an early resolution of the Afghan conflict so it can deal with the terrorists without any cross border support. Despite this new glimmer of hope difficulties still plague the peace process. The Afghan Taliban have both pro and anti-peace initiative factions, led by Akhtar Mohammad Mansour and Abdul Qayum Zakir respectively. Efforts to resolve their differences have not been successful so far. The demands for complete departure of NATO troops and sharia implementation may also kill the peace negotiations in the bud. There are opponents of peace negotiations in the Afghan political mainstream as well. For instance Chairman of the Meshrano Jirga, (Senate), Fazl Hadi Muslimyar criticized the secretive hasty decision of peace talks with the Taliban, stressing that the Taliban would never renounce violence and would continue their insurgency under the name of ISIS. In view of such polarised views finding a middle ground acceptable to both sides, though highly desirable, may prove actually difficult to achieve.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Pakistan must be watching the post drawdown period with both a mixed sense of optimism and anxiety. The unpredictable future holds both promise and problems for Pakistan depending on how the situation in Afghanistan takes its course. Using scenario analysis it can be concluded that one possible emerging scenario may see Afghanistan finally making progress and living in harmony with its neighbours and the world. A second scenario may see Afghanistan plunging again into a long civil war between the government and Taliban while in the third scenario Taliban may again seize Kabul and establish its rule in a significant part of Afghanistan. Due to important developments like paradigmatic changes in Afghan policy of Pakistan and a Pakistan friendly administration in Kabul and resumption of Pakistan-China mediated peace talks between Afghan government and Taliban there is however now a greater room for optimism.

Pakistan is faced with many domestic problems that require an urgent and sustained attention. While it is grappling with the worsening energy crisis many proposed megaprojects with the association of Central Asian states, e.g a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan via Afghanistan, would not be possible if the security situation in Afghanistan remains poor. Without a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, Pakistan would also fail to achieve its imagined geographical pivot of Eurasia linking it with West Asia (Friedman, 2014). The economic effects of drug proliferation in Afghanistan would also tax Pakistan heavily in future. The number of drug addicts is increasing by 7% annually, leading to a rise in crime. It is a known fact that 60% of drug supply depends on Pak-Afghan routes which in turn gives rise to crime syndicates and drug smugglers in both countries (Janjua, 2009). The drug money has not only financed criminal gangs but also contributes to the activities of sectarian and ethnic miscreants (Rashid, 2008). The impact of militants' activities near Pakistan's border would aggravate the drugs trafficking problem, as the UNODC's report regarding cultivation of 70% of Afghanistan's opium in five Afghan provinces bordering Pakistan clearly establishes (Afghan Opium Trade, 2010). The losses to business, tourism, and industrial activity in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular and in Pakistan in general are phenomenal. The foreign exchange earnings from tourism and related economic activities have also been showing a continued downward trend (Asia Pulse, 2008). The economic cost to Pakistan due to backlash of terrorism is therefore also quite considerable.

The following recommendations are made in the wake of drawdown of troops from Afghanistan.

1. Pakistan needs to play its facilitator role more effectively so that it can focus on its own domestic problem with various deadly variants of extremism.

2. Respect for mutual sovereignty and relation on the basis of mutual goodwill and addressing each other's concerns of security
3. Adopt a policy with emphasis on trade and economic development and establishing trade links with Central Asia
4. Pakistan must also explore the possibility of forging friendly relations with all the countries of the region to complete the paradigm shift

References

- Afghanistan Opium Survey (2007), *Report by United Nations Office On drugs and Crime* <https://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan-Opium-Survey-2007.pdf> (seen 25-08-12)
- Almeida, C. (2008). *Wanted men not boys*, *Daily Dawn*, 9 July.
- BBC report <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-31164119>
- CBC News (2011), *France to follow U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan*, 23 June <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/2011/06/23/afghanistan-allies-withdrawal.html>(Seen 25-08-11)
- CBC News, 2011 (<http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/story/2011/06/23/afghanistan-allies-withdrawal.html>)
- Daily Times Saturday, August 27, 2011 ; *India's Policy towards Afghanistan* pdf - Chatham House http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/public/Research/Asia/0813pp_indiaafghanistan.pdf
- Friday Times. (2011), *Pakistan's post-withdrawal pathology*, July 22-28, 2011 - Vol. XXIII, No. 23 <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/beta2/tft/article.php?issue=20110722&page=423> Jul 2011 (Seen 25-08-11)
- Friedman, G. (2004), *America's Secret Wars*, Doubleday
- Guardian. (2010). NATO maps out Afghanistan withdrawal by 2014 at Lisbon summit, 20 November <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/nov/20/nato-afghanistan-2014-withdrawal-lisbon>(Seen 25-08-11)
- Hakim, F. (2008) "*Terrorism and National Economy*", *Pakistan Observer*. http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011%5C08%5C20%5Cstory_20-8-2011_pg3_4(Seen 25-08-11)
- Huff Post World (2011). Clinton: NATO Afghanistan Withdrawal Can't Be Rushed , 14 April http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/04/14/clinton-nato-afghanistan-taliban_n_849210.html(Seen 25-08-11)
- International Security Assistance Force (ISAF): Key Facts and Figures", December 2014 <http://www.nato.int/natostaticf12014assets/pdf/pdf201412/20141201141201-ISAF-Placemat-final.pdf>
- Janjua, R.W. (2008). (*STATE FAILURE IN AFGHANISTAN AND SECURITY CHALLENGES FOR PAKISTAN*, (http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_12/iss_1/CAJ_Vol12.1_05_e.pdf) Cyril Almeida, 2008 "*Wanted men not boys*" Dawn.
- Khaled, A. (2011). Friday Times, TFT CURRENT ISSUE, - Vol. XXIII, No. 23 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/03/afghan-army-deaths_n_5925548.html

- Komissina, I. (2005), Afghanistan: Drug trafficking and Regional Security, Department of Asia and APR Affairs, *Russian Institute for Strategic Studies(Moscow)*: http://www.ca-c.online/2005/journal_eng/cac-06/09.komeng.shtm;internet (seen 25-08-11)
- Lodhi, M. (2011). *Fog of covert war*, *The News International*. www.guardian.co.uk/.../nato-afghanistan-2014-withdrawal-lisbon
- Maleeha Lodhi. 2014. *The News*, *Burden-of-geography*, <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-282204-Burden-of-geography#sthash.B1VcLoQH.dpuf> Reuters report, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/12/us-afghanistan-taliban-talks-idUSKBN0M81A720150312>
- Motlagh, J., Ghazni, (2014). "Afghans: Divided Over NATO's New 2014 Target" (*Time World*) <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2032511,00.html#ixzz1WFrZkMpE>
- NATO website , (2011),http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_8189.htm(seen 26-08-11)
- Pulse, A.(2008). *Political Uncertainty Takes Toll on Pakistan's Tourism*, 30 September.
- Rashid, A. (2008), *Descent Into Chaos:How the War Against Islamic Extremism is Being Lost in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia*, Allen Lane. [www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan OpiumTrade2009web.pdf?ref=enews171109](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Afghanistan/Afghan%20OpiumTrade2009web.pdf?ref=enews171109) 12th March 2010
- Riedel, B. (2011), *Deadly Embrace: Pakistan, America, and the Future of the Global Jihad*, Brookings Institution Press, New York.
- Rizvi.H.A. (2010). *Daily Times*, *ANALYSIS:Withdrawal from Afghanistan* http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\11\28\story_28-11-2010_pg3_2(Seen 25-08-11)
- Security Council Extends Authorization for International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, Adopting Resolution 2120 (2013) <http://www.un.org/press/en/2013/sc11143.doc.htm>
- Shah. H. (2011). *Daily Times*, *OVER A COFFEE: What if NATO fails in Afghanistan? — I —*
- Shah. H.(2014). *Daily Times*, *Incomplete Paradigm Shift*.<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/29-Nov-2014/incomplete-paradigm-shift>
- The Huffington Post, Slinking out of Afghanistan, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dorian-de-wind/slinking-out-of-afghanist_b_6094212.html
- Time Magazine, 2010, <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2032511,00.html> (seen on 25-08-11)
- UNHCR country operations profile – Pakistan <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e487016.html> (seen 01-02-2015)
- Woodwards, B. (2010). *Obama's Wars*, New York : Simon & Schuster.
- Zimbio, Clinton cautions against rush to exit in Afghanistan, <http://www.zimbio.com/President+Hamid+Karzai/articles/kUITleNzPPv/Clinton+cautions+against+rush+exit+Afghanistan>