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Editorial

Conflicts, drought behind increasing displacements in Afghanistan

As the conflict and violence continues undiminished, the consequent troubling situation has rendered many local people to be displaced. With the wave of displacement and civilian casualties, many humanitarian and human rights bodies have been deeply concerned and worried about more and more displacement if the conflict continues unabated.
Government figures show that 3,000 families were displaced in Baghlan in the last three weeks, leaving many of them stranded on the streets of the northern city of Pul-e-Khaimi while others live in close quarters with dozens in a single home.
Meanwhile thousands of others displaced from Kanduz, Faryab, Balkh and Takhar provinces due to increasing Taliban violence. Some families have been accommodated in Kabul, however thousands others are yet to receive aid.
The Afghan government blames Taliban for waging war, saying the group has been destroying public infrastructure, looting public properties as well as using civilian houses while fighting the security forces. The international human rights organizations have accused Taliban of violating the humanitarian rights with their attacks on dozens of districts across the country.
Indeed, there is dire need for adopting mechanisms to minimize the number of civilian casualties and displacement through putting leverage pressure on all parties to the conflict to avoid unwanted complexity in the strategies that bring about disaster for the local community and cause civilian casualties.
Each year, instability and insecurity compel many people throughout Afghanistan to leave their homes and search for refuge somewhere where their survival can be guaranteed. Unfortunately, they always do not find what they leave for and have to go through myriads of problems even in the new place or on the way to the new place. In most of the cases, many people do not even choose their destinations. Driven away by insecurity and poverty, they do not have anything in mind except running away from death and misery.
Besides insecurity, recent drought has largely affected people's living condition too in some more than 20 provinces. As per the government figures, thousands of agricultural lands, farmers and their livestock are under various threats of drought. Meanwhile the government has said that Afghanistan to witness lower agricultural products this year due to drought.
Considering such threats and increasing number of displacements in the country which would turn as the biggest challenge if ignored, the government in close coordination with aid agencies should do more to ease accommodation and food items for the displaced people.
Meanwhile, the government authorities must make sure that the displaced families get proper food, shelter, clothing and other needs like education and health facilities. Coupled with that, the authorities should also have a long-term strategy in place that should clearly highlight the steps to restore peace and tranquility in different parts of the country so that the IDPs return to their own houses, which they deserve.
Besides to this, Taliban should know that they have brought nothing to the nation, but misery and misfortunes. Due to their bloodshed campaign thousands of people are being martyred, injured, disabled or displaced across the country.
If they truly believe for a peaceful approach to the Afghanistan issues, so should their violence, join peace process and ease safe and sound environment to the weary Afghan nation.

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After US withdrawal from Afghanistan, what role will Kazakhstan play?

By Wilder Alejandro Sanchez



The greater Central Asia region is preparing for the departure of U.S. troops from Afghanistan by September. While Washington's official position is to not directly deny it as an option, though the official that I am here to announce anything or to an end, regional governments are concerned about a possible spillover of the violence that is being waged in Afghanistan. One of those nations, Kazakhstan, has several initiatives, including promoting the education of Afghan women and cooperation with Afghan forces, to help Afghanistan with the tough situation ahead.
Washington and Nur-Sultan discussed the future of Afghanistan in a meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan, in May. The U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Affairs, Kristian G. Bradford, visited in the Kazakhstan capital. During a June 13 press conference, Bradford stated that Washington and Nur-Sultan would continue working together to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan, and in the same time to work together to provide for better economic future and to help the people of Afghanistan.
Khalid was asked about ongoing negotiations regarding potential U.S. military bases in Central Asia, which could conduct counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan. Such bases are not without precedent, he did not directly deny it as an option, though the official that I am here to announce anything or to an end, regional governments are concerned about a possible spillover of the violence that is being waged in Afghanistan. One of those nations, Kazakhstan, has several initiatives, including promoting the education of Afghan women and cooperation with Afghan forces, to help Afghanistan with the tough situation ahead.

Some agreement should not be exaggerated. While Kazakhstan is currently participating in U.S., NATO, UN, and other international operations, it is highly unlikely that Nur-Sultan would undertake troops to be deployed in a high-risk conflict area like Afghanistan to participate in combat operations. Training and supporting Afghan forces, more likely scenario.
Kazakhstan and Afghanistan have forged close ties since the fall of the Taliban in 2001 and the rise of a somewhat democratic government in Kabul. Prior to the signing of the abandonment of defense cooperation agreement, former President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani had a telephone conversation. The chat addressed issues like "the Afghan peace process (and) regional issues. Both sides also discussed the [the] immediate solution to the problem of Afghan refugees in Kazakhstan."
It is unclear what exactly the problem Kazakhstan has to solve here is to do with presence of their nation or issues with the nation themselves.
For the past two decades, much has been discussed about the role of Central Asian nations in Afghanistan. However, with U.S. military presence coming to an end, but still the Taliban gaining one again territory, regional nations will become more important to support the Afghan government and the peace process. Within a steady Kazakhstan and other regional states cannot replace the U.S. military presence, particularly in military affairs. However, any support for Afghanistan, the government, and the peace process, are support for Afghan women staying in Kazakhstan, a significant effort.
Wilder Alejandro Sanchez is an analyst who focuses on geopolitics, military and risk issues in the Western Hemisphere and post-Soviet region. The views presented in this article are the author's own and not published in The Diplomat Magazine.



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