President Ghani's Speech at the Special Meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board

(Part II)

The implementation of the strategy requires hard choices and constant attention to elimination of corruption and cronyism. Our dialogue, particularly the first vice-president has been with me, the rank and file resent both cronyism and corruption. Their demand for effective utilization, transparent utilization of both promotions and appointments and use of resources is critical. Bravery and initiative will be recognized, celebrated and rewarded.

Let me turn very briefly, because we are going to have a discussion on the economy, drought, and governance.

What are some of the Global Trends?

First, there is consensus that Radical uncertainty is the condition of humanity for the next decade. We know how to cope with radical uncertainty and now I think is the time for the whole world. Models assuming stability, particularly in the sphere of economy and finance, are going to be of very limited value. The Washington consensus on development is becoming obsolete. The new narrative of development is a very different narrative. Collective wisdom through the articulation of reference narratives is going to be critical to overcoming the 3rd wave of global distrust, harnessing the power of the 4th Industrial Revolution for the benefit of the people, dealing with climate change and containing and hopefully overcoming the 5th wave of terrorism.

The level of inequalities within countries and between countries has never been greater. It is a challenge to the stability. Millions of youth unemployed cannot be asked to wait. The waiting generations need addressing.

The 4th Industrial Revolution through technological convergence is accelerating change in a speed that the world of 2030 could be radically different from today. Please avoided giving us earlier technologies: one generation or two generation or out of date advice. We need to be current and we need to understand. Technical assistance particularly needs revisiting. What is its relevance in the light of this fast changing trends

The reset caused by COVID-19 has accelerated the digitalization of economy and society, by judgment of Professor Klaus Schwarz, at least ten years.

The future delivery of services is going to be digital. Already the leading companies of the world are delivering 60% of their technical assistance without stepping foot in a country. The choice of economic models, again to quote Professor Schwarz and others, is between state capitalism and stakeholder capitalism.

State functions are expanding because of market failures and demands for distinctive protective functions to be performed in the face of inequality and rapid technological change.

The state is back in, please do not ignore it. Experience has shown that state functions can be shared, but it cannot be delegated.

While the middle classes and urban populations are expanding, a tale of two middle classes might emerge; dynamic middle classes in Asia and Africa and stagnant middle classes in the OECD countries.

Asia's transformation into a continental economy and Africa's development are likely to be world transformative events of this decade, resulting in strong regional patterns.

Let me turn to our immediate challenge and the key symbols for me are Collaborative Governance.

During the past 20 years, we have had to deal with the co-existence of parallel ecosystems with their distinctive rules and resources: the military-contractor, economic governance and cultural ecosystem. This was the largest actor in Afghanistan without coordination with the government and having its own decisions and distinctive patterns.

Second, the non-profit ecosystem.

Third, the foreign aid systems with off-budget expenditure as the dominant pattern and reliance on layers of contractors as the dominant mechanism of delivery. Usually contracts went through five layers. Process-based on-budget assistance, with weak ownership of government organizations and overemphasis on process rather than outcomes.

Dealing with this level of complexity has required rethinking of governance from a purely hierarchal system to a collaborative enterprise.

Comparative analysis, however, demonstrates that collaborative governance, particularly delegation of state functions to the market and non-profit sectors, requires more capacity in the government than less. There is no substitution; it is just the government must have a different capacity to collaborate.

The division of the Afghan economy into formal, informal and criminal economies with distinctive institutional arrangement makes the task of focusing on market building and on equity and equality even more urgent.

What are my proposals?

First, I am proposing a compact with the non-profit sector. Given the urgency of humanitarian crisis, the nonprofit sector, the government and our distinguished developmental partners must come together. First, through general observation but we want to go against the trend.

Romantic notions of the non-profit sector as representative of virtue in the 1990s have been replaced by self-examination, public and scholarly scrutiny, government regulations, and demands for accountability by stakeholders.

In Europe and the United States, outsourcing of social services to the non-profit has forced the non-profit sector to choose between what Professor Salamon describe as the survival imperative and distinctiveness imperative, with the former constituting the dominant trend.

The level of scrutiny for receiving a contract for performing social services in European countries is the highest in the world and has chosen a lot of nonprofits to cut salaries and benefits.

Equally, the regulations particularly at the state level in the United States are becoming a general trend.

We propose a strategy of collaborative governance with the non-profit sector and the developmental community based on two-part component.

Part I is to reach a compact for one year between the government, development partners and the non-profit sector based on. First, adoption of the voluntary standards of international NGOs or revising of the national standards. These standards have been reviewed; we are comfortable with them.

Second, agreement on mechanisms of accountability and transparency, using either the One World Trust framework that is all the indicators, the relevant indicators and measurements or another agreed framework.

Third, disclosure of information to all stakeholders based on United Nation's Department of Statistics, National Account Standards that have very clear on what constitutes the non-profit sector.

And fourth, agreed enforcement mechanism in cases of non-compliance, this could be done like in Pakistan through a third party or other mechanism that are credible ultimately by the government.

Part II is to reach agreement on a law to provide the enabling environment on the basis of national, regional and global experience, with the help of global foundations and national stakeholders. The law must be consultative; our previous attempts have failed. We cannot impose a hierarchal modal; it does not suit the conditions of today. I am really asking for a true collaboration in this regard.

Let me take a moment to acknowledge some of the outstanding work that has been done by the organizations like the Swedish Committee that have stayed with us for decades.

The Emergency Hospital that again I have had the misfortune of visiting very frequently, dozens of others, national and international.

There are equally bad examples and the issue is to avoid putting everybody in the same basket and to make sure that the enabling environment is created.

Our second proposal is on market building

The market needs to be approached as an ecosystem, not to be reduced to the private sector. We have come with a framework and I will just highlight couple of points about it. The enablers for a market formation strategy fall in three categories:

Government enablers, which is enabling environment particularly through laws, property rights and infrastructure.

Joint enablers; risk management strategies; human capital; digitalization and technology strategies; banking and finance.

And then Private sector enablers: firms and clusters; value chains; supply chains.

Let me take a moment to thank form the bottom of my heart the efforts of the Afghan private sector. Yesterday, again I had a two and half hour meeting with them. They are ensuring the stability of food prices and supplies.

They have leaned backward to ensure that their fellow citizen are fed, clothed or provided with essential goods.

They have only one request; reform of the bureaucracy, overcoming of the obstacles that either personal greed or institutional failure puts in their way. This is an extremely important group and our efforts and their views on the evolving situation are extremely important.

Lastly, The urgency of state-building:

The state performs functions that the society requires of it. We are not coming at a theoretical perspective from the state that the state should do this or that. It is what our people ask us. COVID-19 was a clear example. Within weeks, we delineated the first wave and the focus of the people was for urgent action for relief and recovery. We must be guided in moments of radical uncertainty by the collective wisdom of our people. And I am extraordinarily proud of our collective judgements, the sense of collective judgement. The question is effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, and accountability, not dogmatic beliefs regarding the essential nature of the state. The state does not have an essence. It is what people require of it.

We propose eight national programs as a platform of our partnership and as the key pillars linking society, the budget and our international partners.

A balanced scorecard designed for these national programs is shared. You know the balance scorecard was really made for the private sector, but we have adapted it to this and we are willing.

To ensure predictable flow of resources, we propose conditions-based disbursement, like the EU's state-building contract or the incentive program of international development organizations, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the ARTF.

Like you, Ambassador Lyons, we would like to see a shift from process-based projects to outcome-based programs. Four billion dollars is stuck, while eighteen million in the country are suffering.

Today with the digitalization and six million IDs, we are in a position to deliver directly cash to the bank accounts of individuals. We can and must revisit and from our side, four of the national programs are again being reorganized and prioritized to deal with the drought, displacement and COVID-19 negative impacts.

Let me conclude; I hope it has come clear that have sense of urgency to deal within existential crisis regarding the wellbeing of our people, regarding the future of our children and regarding our rights to have opinions and to have rights.

I hope that this meeting will become mechanism for sharing our sense of urgency and transforming our cooperation into a mutually urgent set of actions that will serve the immediate and as well as the medium term interests of the Afghan people.

A stable Afghanistan, let me repeat again, is in every body's interest.

Your diplomatic engagement to persuade those powers and actors that see chaos has been official and war as ground for projection of hegemony are essential.

Your voice is required. 20 years of our collaboration where use of force was a dominant feature of our daily lives is over; we will not be returning to it.

Afghans forever have defended this homeland. We are very grateful for the support in our very difficult hours of need but now it is a different environment, a different context and together we must shape those areas that are falling within the new chapter of our relationship.

Thank you

Long live Afghanistan

RSF asks international community to ensure safety for Afghan journalists

By: Lailuma Noori

Amid increasing insecurities and surge in Taliban attacks as well as increasing threats to journalists and media organizations in Afghanistan, Reporter Without Borders (RSF) says more media organizations will face suspension in case war increases in the country.

Reza Moini, the head of RSF desk for Afghanistan and Zia Bomia, the deputy head for the joint committee of government and media in a joint news conference in Kabul the other day asked the international community to ensure safety for journalists in Afghanistan.

"It's not the RSF's policy to evacuate journalists from various countries including Afghanistan, but it is calling on the international community to ensure security for journalists in Afghanistan. It is propagating outside Afghanistan that local Afghan journalists have lost their morale and do not want to resist," Moini said.

He further said that RSF has shared a protocol considered as a step towards maintaining security of journalists with the joint committee of the government and media, adding that in the protocol, creation of a structure that could identify threats against journalists and media has been suggested.

Moini stressed that the protocol should be implemented but saying that the joint committee of government and media would be authorized to review it prior to it was implemented.

his comes amid increasing insecurities and surge in Taliban attacks as journalists are facing with various security challenges in the country.

The first challenge facing journalists is security and presence of anti-media and freedom of expression groups in the country. Terrorists have conducted lots of steps to suppress freedom of expression and killing of journalists. Journalists as the main carriers of freedom of expression have been always targeted by terrorist groups, which has recently changed to one of cold goals of terrorists.

Despite all challenges facing journalists, this part is considered as the font line soldiers of freedom of expression and protection of the country's democratic values. Unfortunately, most of Afghan local journalists have lost their lives in the past one year as they have been in front line of freedom of expression.

Second Vice President Sarwar Danesh on the occasion of World Press Day had considered freedom of media as symbol of freedom of expression.

Afghan officials believe that reduction in distance between the people and government, pavement of delivering people's message to officials, reflecting government's activities to the people, awareness and reporting are good characteristics of the country's journalists.

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Women are not the spoils of war: Activists

By: Suraya Raiszada

A number of Afghan women activists and political experts have asked the Taliban group not to consider Afghan women as spoil of war. They have also asked all sides to the ongoing conflict to urgently accept ceasefire and end civilian casualties and targeted killings in the country.

Afghan women have also asked the Taliban group to prevent from war crimes, desecration of dead bodies, destruction of public infrastructures and forces displacement of Afghan families.

In a statement released by a group of Afghan women said the Taliban group should cut their ties with other terrorist groups including al Qaeda, Daesh, Lashkar-e-Tyeba, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Jundullah.

"The United Nations, international human rights organization and Amnesty International should seriously monitor the deteriorating situation of war in Afghanistan," the statement said, adding that regional and world countries involved in Afghanistan issues and UN should urgently address internally displaced families displaced due to increasing surge in Taliban attacks across the country.

Meanwhile, Afghan women have asked the world countries particularly the United Nations to continually monitor Afghanistan peace process and post peace agreement with the Taliban group.

"Afghan women have had considerable achievements in the past 20 years; therefore, they have now lots of enemies and friends," said Fawzia Kofi, former member of parliament and current member of peace negotiating team from Afghanistan government.

Kofi stressed that Afghan elite women should stay beside the people and not think of migration to foreign countries, adding that women and children as the most vulnerable part of the Afghan society were the main victim of ongoing war in the country.

Shinkay Karokhil, another member of Afghanistan parliament says the current war in Afghanistan has no winner as taking over the power by force won't last and will have no popularity in the world.

Afghan women have also asked the Taliban group to make use of opportunity paved for maintaining peace and stability in the country, stressing that there is no excuse for prolonging the current war in the country.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA) has also stressed on vital role and presence of Afghan women in peace negotiation with the Taliban group, saying that presence and participation of Afghan women in the process is key.

"The people of Afghanistan particularly women and children have the right to live in a peaceful and secure environment, therefore, no process will get succeed without presence of Afghan women in the country," UNAMA said. Amnesty International by expressing concern over the two decades of Afghan women achievements in Afghanistan says with US and NATO troop withdrawal from Afghanistan the outlook destiny of Afghan women and girls at critical juncture and 20-year achievements of women are at risk.

The organization further said that with the impasse in peace talks violence took dozens of lives in Afghanistan on daily basis and the two decades achievements of the people particularly Afghan women were at risk of losing.

According to the Amnesty International, Afghan women were in total restriction during the Taliban regime and not allowed to get education and work.

This comes amid increasing insecurities and surge in Taliban attacks as dozens of districts have fallen to the Taliban.

Suraya Raiszada

Afghanistan: Mounting Taliban revenge killings

KABUL: Taliban forces in Afghanistan are targeting known critics for attack despite claiming that they have ordered their fighters to act with restraint, Human Rights Watch said yesterday. In Kandahar, the Taliban have been detaining and executing suspected members of the provincial government and security forces, and in some cases their relatives.

Among recent cases, the Taliban executed a popular Kandahari comedian, Nazar Mohammad, known as Khasha Zwan, who posted routines that included songs and jokes on TikTok. He had reportedly also worked with the local police. On July 22, 2021, Taliban fighters abducted Khasha Zwan from his home in southern Kandahar, beat him, and then shot him multiple times.

After a video of two men slapping and abusing Khasha Zwan appeared on social media, the Taliban admitted that two of their fighters had killed him.

"Taliban forces apparently executed Khasha Zwan because he poked fun at Taliban leaders," said Patricia Gossman, associate Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "His murder and other recent abuses demonstrate the willingness of Taliban commanders to violently crush even the tamest criticism or objection."

Activists in Kandahar said that in villages surrounding the provincial capital, Taliban commanders have detained scores of people associated with the government or police. In one case, on July 16, Taliban fighters abducted two men whose brothers had worked with NDS 03, a CIA-backed strike force that has been responsible for summary executions and other abuses, from their homes in the Qasam Pol area, Dand district. Their relatives say that have not heard from the two men since.

Also in mid-July, a media report said, Taliban fighters detained Ahmadullah, a former police officer, in Spin Boldak. His family has not heard from him since. His uncle said that the Taliban had sent letters saying that anyone who had worked with the government or foreign forces would not be harmed so long as they reported to the Taliban leadership and "admitted their 'crime.'"

International humanitarian law prohibits summary executions, enforced disappearances, and other mistreatment of anyone in custody, which are war crimes. It is unlawful to detain civilians unless absolutely necessary for imperative security reasons.