



“Afghanistan’s Future” A Strategic Dialogue on Peace and Geopolitics

The Paris Academy of Geopolitics and the Geopragma Institute

Keynote Remarks by Amrullah Saleh – Chairman and Leader of AGT¹

| 22 April 2025

¹ The Afghanistan Green Trend - AGT

From Betrayal to Resilience: Afghanistan's Struggle Post-9/11 and the Collapse of Western Moral Authority

The issue of Afghanistan is massive. I was navigating myself which topic to choose in order to be relevant to the interest of the participants in Paris, to our Western audience, and also to the greater general public of Afghanistan. I have been a practitioner, I have been a policymaker, and also, I have been almost at the top of the pyramid of power for a while. I have been at the bottom of the pyramid and in the middle too. I do not want to take you back to the start of the turbulence, which was 1979 and the 1980s. So, I would like to focus specifically on the most interesting period, which is the post-Masoud era, the Western intervention, 9/11, and the experience of us working with the Western alliance led by the United States of America. So, my focus will be on the period post-9/11, post the killing of our leader, great Ahmad Shah Massoud, to August 2021, and how I see the situation now and how is our diagnosis and perspective of the future.

First, the August 15th, 2021, was not only about the collapse of Afghanistan's republic system only; it also marked the date signifying the collapse of the moral of the Western alliance. On August 15th, 2021, whatever moral standing the United States had in Afghanistan and in the region, it collapsed. It collapsed in front of the eyes of the world. In that day, the West, led by the United States of America, smashed every commodity named morality and values and pushed the good majority of the Afghan people into the cage of wolves, zombies, and under the bus. Since that day, 8 million Afghans have lost their homes. They are either internally displaced because they are chased by the Taliban, or they have left the country. They have primarily gone to the neighboring countries, largely the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Türkiye, Central Asia, Russia, in the Middle East, and a very small number of them have been evacuated to the Western countries.

The mainstream American media, since August 2021, has been trying to blame the Afghan people, the Afghan politicians, the Afghan culture, anything associated with Afghanistan, for this colossal failure. This media is like a flood, and at times washes away everything on its way, perhaps sometimes sparing

lonely trees which have deep roots, and maybe I am one of them, and they have not been able to silence me.

August 15 is when the United States of America said no to morality, said no to values, said no to human relations, said no to emotions, said no to human sentiments, and preferred to take it as naked, largely anti-human interest. Let us say it as it is: since 2020, no American media has ever mentioned that there was a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) with Afghanistan. No American media or politician is saying that there was a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) with the legal, legitimate state of Afghanistan. No American media or politician is mentioning the number of bodies Afghanistan lost in that cause. What they are repeating is 2,000 to 2,500 American servicemen and women who lost their lives while serving in Afghanistan.

There are two types of deaths: the Afghan deaths, which are not counted, and the golden souls, which are the Western souls who have died in that cause. They have names, they have faces, they have ranks, they have families, they have memories. And tens of thousands of my countrymen, who believed in the promise and who trusted the word of the Western powers, specifically the words of the sole superpower of our time, they don't exist. What we have inherited is tens of thousands of graves and hundreds of thousands of orphans and widows.

The lesson one that I'm going to pass to the future generation of Afghanistan, and also to those who are still in the scene who have not given up, my number one takeaway from my very direct work with the CIA, with the Pentagon, with the State Department, with USAID, with the US diplomatic mission in Afghanistan, with almost every Western intelligence service that rushed to Afghanistan post-9/11, is this: they come there, they exploit your poverty, they exploit your naivety, they exploit your sincerity, and then they switch off their contact numbers and go. It may not be an applicable lesson for all our foreign relations, but certainly this was the second time the United States backstabbed the Afghan people. They backstabbed us in the '90s after the fall of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. They abandoned us, they stopped assisting us, they gave us ruins. They gave us distraction. And all of a sudden, the alliance we had with them in the '80s was forgotten. They came back in 2001. They said, "We will stay. We will assist you. We will not make the mistake of the past. We

are ashamed of our past. This time, this is a long haul. We will not allow Afghanistan to become a black hole again.” What happened? They abandoned us again. Not only did they abandon us again, after abandoning the Afghan people, to this very moment that I am talking to you, they are providing tens of millions of dollars to the Taliban. They have provided over \$18 billion to the Taliban since 2021. A noble American soul by the name of **Lisa Curtis**² was yesterday quoted. She was a member of the Doha negotiating team. She was a senior staffer in the National Security Council of the United States. She said, “*We presented Afghanistan to the Taliban like a birthday cake.*” And let me make another quote from a person who I know very closely and I have featured in his book, **Henry Crumpton**³, a very senior CIA officer who has written a book called *Art of Intelligence*: “*We went to Afghanistan not to defeat the Taliban or ask them to surrender. We went to Afghanistan to secretly recruit the Taliban to help us.*”

The public narrative which was given to us from 2001 to August 2021, based on these testimonies, based on these papers that we get now, was deception. It is very easy to say Afghans were corrupt. It’s very easy to say Afghanistan is not fixable. It is very easy to say that we are a country of multiple tribes, etc. But all these excuses, may they be true or untrue, do not wash the stinking black mark on the forehead of NATO in my country. They have created the biggest human catastrophe in the past three years in Afghanistan, and they are trying, by sponsoring media, to belittle it.

Lesson two: values and principles which were supposedly the foundation of the Western civilization, particularly the United States’ civilization, evaporated overnight in the event when immediately they saw no immediate material interest in Afghanistan. The Biden administration injected 17 billion dollars to the Taliban to assist them consolidate the worst, most cruel, and

² Lisa Curtis is a senior fellow and director of the Indo-Pacific Security Program at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS). She is a foreign policy and national security expert with over 20 years of service in the U.S. government, including at the National Security Council (NSC), CIA, State Department, and Capitol Hill.

³ Henry A. "Hank" Crumpton, a former CIA Clandestine Service officer who served 24 years, notably leading the post-9/11 Afghanistan campaign against al Qaeda and the Taliban with innovative tactics like armed Predator drones, as detailed in his 2012 memoir, *The Art of Intelligence: Lessons from a Life in the CIA's Clandestine Service*. From his early travels and recruitment in Africa to his role as deputy chief of counterterrorism and U.S. Coordinator for Counterterrorism (2005–2007).

inhumane political dictatorship Afghanistan has ever experienced. Why? Because a system based on values had become more expensive and more difficult to sustain, and thus it was killed. It was sold. I may sound angry. Trust me, I am not. I am not a conformist to the frames of legacy media. I don't want to be politically correct, and I don't want to be in line with politically correct politicians as well. And I have no fear to express what is boiling in my chest.

You saw post 2021, statements from **Blinken**⁴, from **Tom West**⁵, and from **Karen Decker**⁶. All they were trying to do was to shield themselves behind this excuse that they were doing everything good, and only a man in his late 70s by the name of Ashraf Ghani was guilty. Ashraf Ghani was not guilty. His only guilt was over-trusting the United States. He should not have trusted the United States. He should have received with open heart and welcomed the offer of the regional countries. We paid a massive price for our alliance with NATO, and what is now the fate of **Ashraf Ghani**⁷?

There are no values, there are no principles; what exists is a very naked interest. That naked interest can sometimes be secured through an alliance that aligns with terrorists, it can be secured through an alliance that aligns with dictatorships, it can be secured through an alliance that aligns with religious fanatics. So, my advice to the Afghan people, particularly those who are fighting the Taliban, is we should also search for our own interests, and we should not believe blindly in such promises and slogans.

Lesson three: none of our neighbors are bad. They are our neighbors. They exist here. They existed. They didn't leave. For over 20 years, we were lectured on how our neighbors were bad. And then what happened? When the United States of America left, tens of thousands of American-trained Afghan forces found refuge where? In the very soil of our neighbors. Some of these neighbors smile at us, jokingly. It's a tragedy-comedy. They say, "*Where is the*

⁴ Antony John Blinken is an American lawyer and diplomat who served as the 71st United States secretary of state from 2021 to 2025.

⁵ Tom West, Former Special Representative for Afghanistan (2021–2024), currently Acting Head of the Office of Sanctions Coordination at the U.S. Department of State.

⁶ Karen Decker, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires to Afghanistan and Chief of Mission, U.S. Mission to Afghanistan, based in Doha (2022–present).

⁷ Mohammad Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai is an Afghan former politician, academic, and economist who served as the president of Afghanistan from September 2014 until August 2021, when his government was overthrown by the Taliban.

West?” The West has gone thousands and thousands of miles away from its promises, both physically, morally, and politically. Every single word that Russian political commentators and experts have been saying about Afghanistan, especially post-2011, proved true. President Putin has been saying that *“these people will backstab you. They will not stay. And when they leave, they will not say we are leaving. They will blame you for leaving.”* He was right. Our other neighbors were right too. They were saying the same, but we said no. How can the mightiest military alliance defending the living civilization of our time lie to a poor nation called Afghanistan? And they did.

Lesson four: as far as this specific interest of the anti-Taliban block or the anti-Taliban constituency is concerned, we should not have given up our arms to the DDR (Demobilize, Disarm, Reintegrate). We were demobilized, we were disarmed, we were never reintegrated. We were not reintegrated because it was not in the interest of the corporations, particularly the private security companies, particularly the private maintenance companies, particularly the private construction companies, to reintegrate us. They work with people of their own image.

I give you an example, there was a company in Afghanistan operating by the name of **No-Lemon**⁸. They were charging the system up to \$3 billion for maintenance of the vehicle fleet of the Afghan Security Forces. In 2021, before the collapse of the republic, they came to us, they said, *“We can do the same contract with you for less than \$300 million.”* We approached the Americans, we said, *“This company which you were paying \$3 billion a year is ready to do the same amount of work for us for \$300 million.”* They said, *“We are not going to pay you the \$300 million.”* We asked No Lemon why they are refusing to pay one-tenth of what they were paying to you directly. And the reply was very simple: if they financed this contract for \$300 million, then the question will be, where was the \$2.7 billion going in the last 20 years or less? So why are they blaming us for corruption? There is a very famous quote from Senator **John McCain**⁹, a distinguished American. He met our ambassador **Said Tayeb**

⁸ <https://www.no-lemon.com>

⁹ was an American statesman and naval officer who represented the state of Arizona in Congress for over 35 years, first as a Representative from 1983 to 1987, and then as a U.S. senator from 1987 until his death in 2018. He was the Republican Party's nominee in the 2008 U.S. presidential election.

Jawad¹⁰. Said Tayeb Jawad told him, « *Honorable senator, or congressman, from each dollar you gave to Afghanistan, \$0.80 come back to Washington.* » He says, « *What's wrong with that? It's our own dollars.* » Exactly, it was United States dollars. They have every right what to do with it. I'm requesting them to respect us as a nation, do not call us corrupt.

We were not corrupt. What we have inherited, the largest legacy we have, is graves of our dear ones. It hurts. The backstabbing is one thing, but this poison of tongue is another thing which is hurting. Some of you may say, “Was it all about the United States? And where were the Afghan leaders? What were they doing?” It was a colossal failure. I am going to come to the responsibilities of the Afghan leaders, including myself. The Doha agreement was, in fact, a contract between Washington and the Taliban to recruit the Taliban as an instrument of foreign policy, regardless of the cruelty or the cost, to pursue geopolitical aims with non-democratic, non-transparent tools and instruments. This weekly cash shipment, despite the rhetoric of the Trump White House, is continuing. I have evidence it is continuing. There is a simple question: why are they giving between 45 to \$60 million to the Taliban? We all know that such cash assessment does not alleviate the suffering of the Afghan people. It hasn't stopped migration. It hasn't created jobs. It has consolidated the religious-tribal dictatorship of the Taliban.

What is happening now? A myth is being created. A myth has been created that there is no alternative to the Taliban rule. This is a very harsh insult to the human soul. Let me repeat it again: this is the harshest insult to the human soul. It is the most racist insult the legacy media, policymakers, commentators, diplomats, especially from the Western countries, are throwing at the people of Afghanistan. It's like degrading Afghans and Afghanistan to a human zoo. When you are saying there is no alternative to the Taliban, you are literally telling us that your destiny, after 20 years of our intervention, is reduced to a human zoo. That's what's happening in Afghanistan in 2025. I quoted Lisa Curtis: “*We did not fail.*” The largest military alliance in the face of Earth presented my country like a

¹⁰ an Afghan politician, businessman, academic, and diplomat. He is the Chief Executive officer of Capitalize LLC, Global Political Strategist and Senior Counselor at APCO Worldwide, and the Chairman of the American University of Afghanistan, a prominent private, liberal arts, not-for-profit, co-education University.

“*birthday cake*” to the Taliban. So, that is the testimony of the American officials themselves. Doha was not a peace process. It was a conspiracy.

In 2021, to the date of the collapse, the American military did not assist us to do operations in the north because the conspiracy was to allow the entire country to fall at the hands of the Taliban. When we defied the code of partnership with them, and we sent our commandos to the province unilaterally, 38 of our commandos were killed in less than one hour because **General Miller**¹¹ refused to provide them air support.

It was a month before the collapse of the republic, accompanying President Ashraf Ghani to the White House. Every single word that Biden said proved a lie. Every single word the CIA director said was a lie. Every single word Louis Austin told us was a lie. I asked him three questions.

One, “*why is every single logistical contract coming to an end on September 1st, 2001, and you are not renewing?*” They said, “*We will answer this at the technical level, maybe back when you are in Afghanistan.*”

Two: “*Mr. President, every sign we see, the Doha Process is more of a process for regime change. It doesn’t seem like a peace process.*” He said, “*We are with you. We stand with you. Should the Taliban disregard their commitment that they have signed and not go ahead with intra-Afghan negotiations, we will defend the Afghan republic, and we make sure there’s peace, not unilateral takeover of the Taliban.*” This was a lie.

I also asked Austin, when I was accompanying Dr. Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani to the Pentagon, we said, “*This is what the Taliban are doing. It doesn’t mean you have fees supporting the Afghan forces, and actually, you are assisting them in a steam.*” He said, “*No, we are going to send a technical mission to Kabul, and this technical mission will work with you the details and nuances to make sure the capital region is defended until an intra-Afghan settlement is reached.*” This was a lie because, in the secret annexes of the Doha agreement, actually, the United States has committed that they will not assist the Afghan forces, they will not assist the ANDSF (Afghan National Defense and Security Forces), and they

¹¹ Austin Scott Miller is a retired four-star general in the United States Army and former Delta Force commander who served as the final commander of NATO's Resolute Support Mission and United States Forces – Afghanistan from 2 September 2018 to 12 July 2021.

have also refused to say “ANDSF”: it is written “the forces of the other side.” That is the magnitude of the betrayal and backstabbing.

What is the situation right now? The situation right now is a strategic ambiguity. It is a calculated strategic ambiguity. Lack of clearance. Major international stakeholders are deliberately reinforcing this ambiguity because the clarity is frightening. The clarity is what I am telling you, and it’s frightening. It’s dangerous. It involves risk. They know there is a snake in the kitchen, but they hope it will go away by itself. We own that kitchen, and they have left the snake in our kitchen. Hope is not a plan. Hope is not a dream. Hope is not a strategy. That is why, despite the odds, despite the risks, despite the risk of even talking, we have not given up because we own the country, and we believe the Doha Conspiracy was designed to take it away from us for very maligned geopolitical aims.

If those geopolitical aims are not maligned, my question is repeated again: the Taliban receive up to \$60 million a week for what? UNAMA (*United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan*) has spent \$700 million since August 2021 to achieve what? To reinforce the strategic ambiguity, to reinforce the clouds, to reinforce the lack of clearance. It’s not to bring clarity. What is the meaning of the clarity? The meaning of the clarity and the removal of the ambiguity will be the following:

First, Afghanistan cannot be dominated either by an outside power covertly or overtly, or it cannot be dominated by any single ethnic group in Afghanistan. Pashtuns are not Taliban. The overwhelming majority of the Pashtuns are not the Taliban. But the Taliban are Pashtuns, particularly from the south. And 93% of the Taliban structure, regardless of where they are, is from one tribal group in Afghanistan. The United States doesn’t want you to know this. The architects of the Doha deal do not want you to know this. They never mention the name of Hibatullah in their statements. Why? If they have a problem with North Korea, they say, “Regime of Kim Jong-un,” whatever. Or if they have a problem with another country, they refer to that person in order to tell a society we have a problem with this person. Why is Washington refraining from naming Hibatullah as the super evil of our time in Afghanistan? Why? Has Washington put in place any mechanism to make sure that part of these tens of millions of

dollars do not reach Hibatullah every week? No, it hasn't. Let's remember, if ICC (International Criminal Court) has chased Hibatullah, at least on papers: ICC is a European entity. It doesn't have the backing of Washington, and it has no teeth, even. So, clarity number one is: my country is dominated through a NATO-backed conspiracy by a religious-tribal group, and it's going to collapse. The US is funding it right now, and we hope it will stop. It has not stopped to this date.

Second, the Taliban's religious-tribal power structure relies on two facts: madrassa affiliation and rural tribal codes. Both of these codes are alien to the absolute majority of the Afghan people. It is unsustainable. UNAMA, despite spending \$700 million, despite having 51 foreign expatriates in its structure, has zero impact on the behavior of the Taliban. Remember, after the conference in Doha, the Taliban brought about the PVPV law (Prevention of Vice and Promotion of Virtue) exactly a day after Doha III. This was to tell UNAMA, "You are irrelevant. You are a show." And when members of the Security Council extend the mandate of UNAMA, it's a waste of resources, of every effort. It has no relevance in Afghanistan today. Every ingredient of a massive civil war is in there. Our advice for foreign powers will be not to invest in the cheap Taliban crypto. I want to repeat: do not fall for this cheap Taliban crypto. It will collapse because it is alien to the very fabric of Afghanistan. It does not represent the ethnic groups. It does not represent the political diversity; it has not come through a process. It has come through a conspiracy and a deal. Every ingredient is there for this entity to collapse, and if it doesn't go by itself, a civil war is on the way, whether you like it or not. Give the Afghan people a face. Do not reduce our cause to women's education only. I appreciate your sentiments, but the issue in Afghanistan is not education of women only. It is a massive human suffering, regardless of the gender.

Now, as far as the region is concerned, the region must have the strategic courage to come up with its own formula and to get rid of this strategic ambiguity. The region should not wait for NATO version 2.0 to have a prescription. NATO has no prescription. The prescription of NATO is what we are seeing: ambiguity. It's an ambiguity which is costing the Afghans dearly and massively and which is costing to the region in a lot of ways which I do not want to articulate. Some of our neighbors, despite our evidence, despite our requests, despite our decades-long plea not to assist with the Taliban, assisted the Taliban, gave them bases,

gave them snipers, gave them bombs, gave them training. And you know what? The Taliban are now getting more assistance from Washington. They should ask themselves, “What has changed?” And still, a few countries believe that the solution is with the Taliban. The solution is not with the Taliban.

As far as various regions of Afghanistan are concerned, today there is a notion that the fighting spirit has died in Afghanistan, and the spirit for fighting is only alive with the Taliban. That is a myth that was reinforced by the injection of billions of dollars and the deliberate handover of Afghanistan, in the words of Lisa Curtis, as a birthday cake by NATO through the deal to this group. This is very unnatural, and it is going to end.

Question and Answers Session

Geopolitical Implications of the TAPI Gas Pipeline: Taliban Revenue, Regional Power Dynamics, and China's Role

Question: *“Since 1996, Turkmenistan’s involvement extended last September. Should Afghanistan follow this timeline, akin to Palestine’s, India and Pakistan would purchase gas, generating \$2 billion or \$8 million annually for the Taliban regime. This could indirectly bolster the regime, with China’s support, despite India’s losses compared to Pakistan, empowering the Taliban with additional revenue to sustain its political actions. What are your thoughts on this?” - Eugène BERG¹²*

Afghanistan was offered a chance. It was offered a hand of assistance, and the hand of assistance was called the “Strategic Partnership Agreement.” The United States told us, “This agreement is not against your neighbors. It’s a legal framework which allows us to assist you.” We didn’t know that legal framework was actually a paper for deception. Nobody talks about it. In that document, there is a clause that if the United States wants to withdraw from Afghanistan, they should negotiate with the Afghan government. They negotiated with our enemies. Not only did they negotiate with our enemies, but they directly threatened us not to hold elections. Remember the election? They directly threatened us not to hold elections. And when we did hold elections, they bribed our election commission not to count the votes. And when the votes were counted, they bribed the political class of Afghanistan to be fragmented in order not to create a unified negotiating team. If the USAID papers from Afghanistan are inspected today, you will find out that they have spent hundreds of millions of dollars for creating a fake, superficial political class. They bypassed the Afghan government. Afghanistan was poor, is poor. And they used this money not to help us, but to divide us. So, therefore, the fact that the republic did not have a strong negotiating table was

¹² Eugène Berg, is a French essayist and diplomat specializing in Russia, Ukraine, and the Pacific. he is fluent in English, Russian, German, Spanish, and Italian. Berg holds a law degree (1968), graduated from Sciences Po Paris (1967), and attended the École Nationale d'Administration (1971–1973). His diplomatic career included roles as Consul General in Leipzig, Ambassador to Namibia and Botswana (1998–2003), and Pacific nations (2004–2006), and representative for Total in Mourmansk (2008–2013). He has authored books like non-alignment et nouvel ordre mondial (1980), La Russie pour les Nuls (2016), and Ukraine - février 2023 (2023), and regularly contributes to geopolitical journals such as Politique International and Revue Défense Nationale.

because the United States did not want us to have a strong negotiating team. Every time Khalilzad would come to Kabul, he would meet 4-5 politicians before coming to meet the president. And he would send his message indirectly through media, what he would like.

It is an oversimplification to say that this enterprise, which started in 2001 after 9/11, was actually spoiled by Ashraf Ghani. If this is the judgment of the strategists, I am afraid to say, this is the most stupid judgment. This is the most foolish judgment to say that Ashraf Ghani spoiled the effort of NATO in Afghanistan and brought about the collapse. That's a simplification. That's for the masses, so that they digest a simple story. In fact, from 2018 onwards, effectively, Khalilzad was negotiating with the Taliban to recruit them and hand Afghanistan over to this group for geopolitical purposes.

What are those geopolitical purposes? I'm not interested in speculating, but I have evidence it was for geopolitical purposes. If it is not for geopolitical purposes, if Afghanistan has no regime, no government, no law, no regulation, no judiciary, no parliament, no election, nothing, why are they giving it \$60 million a week? Why do they come out publicly almost twice a month saying, "We do not want to support the opposition of the Taliban"? Why? Why are they telling people there is no alternative to the Taliban rule, and they want to imply that this human zoo they have created in Afghanistan is an acceptable new normal?

So, neutrality was and is a good thing. The neutrality was not violated by Afghanistan, again. We trusted this offer. We signed the Strategic Partnership Agreement almost with every single Western nation. Where are those papers? Okay, we are weak. We cannot take you to any court. We are not loud enough to fly that back in the face of the Western nations, but is that how a leading civilization wants to get credibility? Of course not.

Now, on the issue of TAPI, Khalilzad was a lobbyist for the Taliban in the '90s. Khalilzad was a lobbyist for the Taliban post-9/11. Khalilzad remains a Taliban loyalist today. Was his appointment as chief negotiator a coincidence or part of a design? Or maybe both. But he never represented the United States the way it should have been represented. If we had a one-hour meeting with him, 20 minutes he would be a Pashtun internationalist, 20 minutes he would be a US ambassador,

20 minutes he would be an international mediator, etc., etc. He carried multiple hats. So, that is the reality.

As to what should be the future of Afghanistan, we have a score to settle with the Taliban. It's too early now to say, "What should be our future?" We have to, first of all, get rid of them and free our land, free our people. If you look at the composition of the Taliban and if you look at how many massacres they have done, if you look at how many people they have killed, if you look at what they do in cities and areas where they are not welcome, none of that is reflected in the Western media.

Envisioning Afghanistan's Future: Strategies to Overcome the Taliban Regime

***Question:** "What is the next step to challenge the Taliban regime? How can we initiate change to bring it down? Should it start internally or externally? Are the Taliban divided? What is the first move, and do you have a strategy?" - M. Brice LALONDE¹³*

It is not a matter of bitterness or sweetness. It's a matter of conformity with a lie or of non-conformity with the prevalent narrative. The prevalent narrative is based on deception. It's based on lies. It's based on a Doha deal conspiracy. So, somebody has to break it up. Somebody has to open this body and expose it. And I'm glad that I'm exposing it.

Now, as to the strategy of what should be done to get rid of this situation, let us split our tasks so that we understand who should do what, at least what I should do and what our expectations are from the Western civilization.

¹³ Brice Lalonde, is a prominent French environmentalist and politician. A law graduate from the University Paris-Sorbonne, he entered politics as campaign director for ecologist presidential candidate René Dumont in 1974 and ran as the green candidate in the 1981 French presidential election, securing nearly 4% of the vote. He co-founded the centrist green party Génération Écologie in 1990.

Lalonde served as France's Secretary of State and later Minister of the Environment from 1988 to 1992 under Prime Minister Michel Rocard. He was mayor of Saint-Briac-sur-Mer (1995–2008) and a regional counselor in Brittany. Internationally, he was France's Ambassador for Climate Change Negotiations (2007–2010) and UN Assistant Secretary-General, coordinating the Rio+20 Conference (2011–2012). Later, he advised the UN Global Compact on sustainable development and founded the Business & Climate Summit in 2015. He currently leads Équilibre des Énergies and the Académie de l'eau, advocating for decarbonization and water resource management.

- We request the Western civilization, the Western press, the Western consciousness, to not put unnecessary blame on the Afghans, to stop it. That's a big contribution to our cause.
- What is terrorism? Is terrorism a guy, an angry person, killing two Americans in the streets of New York or—God forbid—in the streets of Paris? It's too bad. It shouldn't happen. But do you know that we are now ruled by terrorists? Why are you not mentioning it? I'm not talking to you as a person. So, the West is now dividing human life into several categories. And if I want to quote, you know, there is this golden billion and the non-golden, the dirt remains. So, it has become a norm that if we die, we are not counted, and our sacrifices are not counted, and our commitment was not counted. Our wisdom is not counted. Our dedication is not counted. What is counted is if you go to most of these meetings, and they say, "What is the threat from Afghanistan against us?" Nobody says we had a commitment there. We had agreements with the Afghan people. We have lifted, okay? We do not go there, but at least we should have the dignity of saying, "It's our fault." That helps.
- Don't whitewash the Taliban. Every time a Norwegian diplomat comes out and talks positively about the Taliban, I sweat. I sweat. I tell you, if Norway takes 20 Taliban to a hotel in their capital and leaves them there for six months, there will be protests. Do not whitewash the Taliban. Explain them as they are. And this whitewashing is sponsored whitewashing. It's not genuine. It's not authentic.
- Do not say you do not support the anti-Taliban. At least remain neutral. Give us the right to express ourselves in whatever form and way that is effective to liberate our country. When the largest military, political, and economic block in the world comes out and says there is no alternative to the Taliban rule, do you know the psychological impact of that on the minds and lives of 20 million Afghan women? No. You cannot even imagine. So, that's number four you should do.
- Use the United Nations as the most effective platform to mobilize world opinion against this situation. Don't be conformist.

- Give us political support. What you are doing today is political support. Give us more space. Conditionalize your humanitarian assistance. Do not go there and provide assistance without having access to the society. Western NGOs have no access to the society. They are injecting aid into the darkness. Why are you doing it? Stop it. You think you are alleviating the suffering of the Afghan people? No, you are not. You are NGOs, but, you know, calculatedly or uncalculatedly, those NGOs are assisting the Taliban. Stop it! The human tragedy has already happened.

What will bring us back to your attention? Another tragedy? Another non-formal strike? Another bad behavior? Again, I am appealing to you as the West is still the most dominant block in the world. It is not taking its responsibility seriously. It's bypassing its responsibility. And that bypassing of your responsibility is not only a disservice to the Western civilization, it is also a disservice to the rest of humanity. You dominate the global institutions, and you are not using those institutions to raise awareness about the Afghan plight.

That's what you can do. Leave the rest to us. There is enough domestic motivation to topple the Taliban. They are not natural to our life. They are not natural to our social fabric. They are not natural to our being. We will topple them. We want the West to remain neutral, not to side in one way or another with the Taliban.

***Question:** "If you want to win a war, you need a peace strategy. If not, you lose a war. What is your peace strategy?" - Karel Vereycken¹⁴*

Fighting and killing women, exactly, that's not our choice. Let me simplify it. We want to study what is good for us as people. There is one man with his militia. He thinks he knows more than any of us, and he decides what we should start. We would like to choose the color for our dress. He thinks we are incapable of choosing the color of our dress, and he has to choose it. We think on March 21 every year we should go to nature and eat some dry fruits, and he thinks that's

¹⁴ Karel Vereycken (b. 1957, Antwerp, Belgium) is a French painter, engraver, historian, and political activist. He studied art in Brussels and Paris, specializing in engraving and creating works inspired by Renaissance themes. A self-taught historian, he collaborates with the Schiller Institute, publishing on art and history at Artkarel.com. Politically active with Solidarité & Progrès, he directs Nouvelle Solidarité and ran in the 2012 French elections. He advocates for economic development and financial regulation, living in Greater Paris.

against the Quran. We would like our daughters to be doctors, engineers, nurses, lawyers, economists, etc., etc., and he thinks that he is in communication with God, and he thinks our daughters and sisters are a quarter of a human being, and they lack 75% dignity of a human being. So, we would like to live like normal human beings, and this man and his militia believe that the rest of the world is abnormal, and what he is doing is normal.

We think Afghanistan is a multiethnic country, and they should have a say in their destiny. He believes, except for his tribe and from his tribe few people, the rest of the Afghans lack the wisdom to have a say in their destiny. Brother, the list goes on, and on, and on. Can you put yourself in our shoes and find a way to negotiate with this man? And if he asks, “Through which way?” He has left us no option. And he has left us no option because he believes the West has consolidated his power and is still consolidating his power.

When Western diplomats come out and say, “There is no alternative to this cruelty, and it is the best new normal for Afghanistan,” can you imagine the impact of that on Afghan society and on the spirit of the Taliban? Of course not. It is not the Afghan people heading towards the civil war. They are being pushed to go towards the civil war. There is already a civil war going on, but it’s not intense. The intensity is very low, but there is a civil war going on. Ask the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross), a noble Western agency, to report to you who are these 14,000 and plus detainees in the Taliban jails. Who are they? Why, in 2025, does a young Afghan man get four years of jail time just because he liked an anti-Haibatullah Facebook post?

Life under the Taliban has lost meaning for the bulk of the Afghan people. They’re exploding, and that explosion is inevitably called the civil war. What is left for us as an option, as a peaceful option? Not much. Because the peaceful option was the implementation of the peace process which had started in Doha, and it turned out that it was not a peace process. It was a scheme, a map for regime change backed by the United States militarily, diplomatically, financially.

Navigating Decision-Making in Crisis: Reflections on Afghanistan's Challenges

Question: *“how do you manage to make a decision?”* - **Ismaël PAIENDA¹⁵**

The answer evolves around human dignity and the meaning of life. If you are deprived of the very basics of life, the very basics, like choosing the color of your choice, like choosing the field of your education, like creating a calendar of activity for yourself, like taking your wife for a walk in the street, like dreaming a future for your children, like simply being a human being and having a normal life. If that dream is taken away from you, then you ask a question to yourself, “What is the purpose of life?” You see, it is not us choosing to fight. We are left with no option.

The notion that the Taliban cannot be challenged militarily is a myth. It’s part of the Doha deal conspiracy. And you say they were not defeated initially. They were not. Americans did not come to Afghanistan to defeat them. This is not my word. Right on YouTube, Henry Crompton, CIA official, spoke to the war commission and the conducts. He said, “We were not there to defeat the Taliban.” It’s there. You read all the memoirs of other people. Obama said, “We want to defeat the Taliban, but if we can’t defeat them in one year, we go.” With all due respect for the wisdom of President Obama, for his intellect, militarily, that is the most incorrect. And I’m sorry to say, that is the most foolish statement for a military strategy: “They are all my enemy. I’m only here for a year. If I cannot find you in that year, I will go.” And then his military commander on the ground, General McChrystal, what did he do? He amassed 20,000 troops to attack Marjah. What was in Marjah? Nothing. I told McChrystal, I said, “There is nothing in Marjah. You are going into the desert town with a few 1000 people, there will be no Taliban.” The Taliban were not effectively challenged militarily. That is a myth. And if the world doesn’t want the Afghan people to rise up and fight, they should stand with the Afghan people and help them gain their rights, very basic rights, through peaceful means.

¹⁵ Co-founder and member of the leadership committee of the Assembly of Specialists and Experts of Afghanistan, consultant in Tourism, Sustainable Development, Investment and International Relations

We are not demanding Jeffersonian democracy. We are not demanding a liberal order. We are demanding the right to education. We are demanding the right to be able to walk into nature. We are demanding the right to choose the education fit for our children. That's taken from us.

Envisioning Peace and Civilization in Afghanistan: A Strategy Beyond Taliban Conflict

Question:

- *The question is about the income of Taliban before coming to power.*
- *what is the future? S.E.M. Azizullah OMAR¹⁶*

The most recognizable, easily understandable peace plan is a national constitution. A national process for a constitutional order must be started, and the West should back it. And they should mandate the UN (United Nations) to consult the Afghans on a constitutional process. The word constitution is universally accepted. The constitutional process is a universally recognized legitimate process. And it can lead us to stability, it can lead Afghanistan to domestic legitimacy, national legitimacy, and reintegration of Afghanistan into the global fabric of order and governance.

I think we do not need a factionalist process; we do not need factional formulas. We need a national process to lead us to accepting each other, to respecting each other, to living under one umbrella, one ceiling. And the only ceiling which can bring us together is a constitution. Afghanistan has no constitution today. When I refer to the constitution, I do not necessarily ask for reinstitution of the republic constitution, although it was a very good constitution. We need a constitution.

¹⁶ Azizullah Omar is a Senior Afghan diplomat who served as Chargé d'Affaires and Acting Ambassador in Kazakhstan and in Switzerland. He was Acting Ambassador in the Afghan government's collapse in 2021 and the first person who responded to international media for Afghanistan legitimacy after Taliban took over. He held key roles in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including Director General of Economic Cooperation and Policy & Strategy. Mr. Omar studied at Berkley, Michigan and got his Master's degree in 2008, He engaged in regional diplomacy, notably on countering extremism and securing humanitarian aid, and was involved in TAPI pipeline negotiations and other regional economic cooperation. Mr. Omar highlighted the Taliban's pre-power income from opium, weapons, and human smuggling, and discussed ideological conflicts between Eastern and Western values in Afghanistan's context. His career focused on promoting peace, stability, and international cooperation.

And those who claim that the Taliban have majority acceptance, those who think the ethnic group of the Taliban are the majority, then fine. Why not have a constitution? When you ask the Taliban for a constitution, they defer to you to the Sharia law. Sharia law is not a book. Go to the special intelligence, Google: there is no book called Sharia law. Sharia law is a series of references, of multiple sources, of an enormous number of books. It depends on what each person's understanding of Sharia law is. For example, you recently heard that the Taliban believe that the Salafi Sharia law, which has a big following in Eastern Afghanistan, is devious, is invalid. The Taliban believe that the Shia Sharia law is not Islam. And the Taliban believe that the Ismailis are nonbelievers. So, they worship the same Allah, they all accept the same prophet as the prophet, but in the eyes of the Taliban, they are nonbelievers. They have to be taxed more.

When it comes to the issue of minority vis-à-vis the majority, I think that, in 2025, subjecting a minority to the tribal code of a supposedly majority is not the way, although, in Afghanistan, the statistics are not known. Who is the majority? Who is the minority? We don't know. The last time Afghanistan had a scientific census was 1974 or 1975. I was probably 2-3 years old. Since then, we didn't have a census.

If the Taliban hold elections tomorrow in Jalalabad, they will lose. They will lose in Herat. Herat is a mixed Pashtun and non-Pashtun city, they will lose. They will lose in districts of Herat. And trust me, they will lose in Kandahar. If not in rural Kandahar and urban Kandahar, they will lose in the greater Paktia region. That is why they are anti-elections, why they are anti-constitution.

Let's not turn the situation into an accepted new normal for Afghanistan. It is a situation, but it is not accepted. As I said, why did 8 million persons leave their homes? Why do people risk their lives? Technocrats, educated Afghans, who have paid their life's earnings to cross the Mediterranean to reach the shores of Europe, why? Because there is no hope. Hope has been taken away from them. There is no prospect. It has been taken away from them.

The engagement with the Taliban is a dead-end engagement. Biden paid them \$17 billion. Has that stopped migration? Has that stopped the mass exodus of Afghan people? No. Has that brought any stability to the situation? No. Has that created any clarity? No. The more money you pump into Afghanistan... There is

a great American saying: “Whenever you cut your loss, it’s good. Cut your losses.” The injection of money into the Taliban system, hoping that it will reform, hoping that it will improve, hoping that it will see women as human beings, it will not happen. It has not happened so far.

I am deliberately not concentrating on terrorism. Terrorism is mostly a Western interest, agenda. We did integrate our agenda into counter-terrorism, and what happened at the end? The United States literally bribed the biggest terrorist group, delisted them from the blacklist. It’s easy to say Russians removed the Taliban from the list of terrorists. The United States removed them from the list of terrorists in 2011, practically. In 2011, Barnett Rubin reached out to the Taliban, immediately after the killing of Bin Laden, and they started negotiating in the back of the Afghan government. And let’s remember that the Taliban have headquarters in Quetta, Karachi, Waziristan, Peshawar. And yet, the United States was paying billions of dollars to Pakistanis. For what? For passing through their territory to reach Afghanistan for logistics. They never tackled the issue of sanctuaries in Pakistan. It’s easy to magnify the mistake of others and not be self-reflected and not to stand in front of the mirror. I can give you concrete examples of how European countries, in order to avoid terrorist attacks, used to pay bribes to the Taliban command. Pay them bribes. Governor Azizi is there. He’s now an ambassador there. He knows exactly in the Shindand area which European country was paying which commander of the Taliban just to avoid getting attacked. You know, these security companies were spending more than the Afghan Security Forces, and they were paying part of that for the Taliban to pass through their territory safely. Those who say, “We fought the Taliban, but at the end, military victory was not feasible,” this is nonsense. The Taliban were not fought, as far as the Afghan Army is concerned, until 2009. An Afghan army did not exist. Some battalions existed. The Afghan Army did not exist because it was not in the interest of these private security companies to allow an Afghan army to come up and assume responsibility. The counter-argument will be, “It was our money; it was our decision.” Fine, but let’s put the facts as they are.

And as far as the access of the NGOs to the situation, the NGOs do not have access; they are going through the filter of the Taliban, and that is a massive violation of the principles of being an NGO. The NGOs employ up to 80,000 Afghans. All of them have been vetted by the Taliban. The independent Afghans

cannot find employment in these NGOs. So, the money you are sending in the name of humanitarian assistance is consolidating the Taliban.

Now, some countries were hopeful that this new enterprise, the Taliban, will bring them benefits, security benefits, strategic benefits, economic benefits. Some have been disappointed, others have gained certain leverages. But anyway, the peace plan we are advocating is very simple: a constitutional process. All ethnic groups must be given a choice to have a say in what type of constitution they want.

Do we want a Talibanized constitution? If it comes through the vote of the people, why not? Do we want a certain type of state structure? If it comes through the voice of the people, why not? But if you say the Afghans lack the wisdom to start the constitutional process, that's another issue. Afghans have a tradition of having constitutions. In the past 100 years, we had constitutions. We had constitutions in the '20s, '30s, '40s, '50s, '60s, '70s... '80s, although turbulent. Twice in our history, we had no constitution: the first Taliban and the second Taliban period. Why isn't the world asking for a constitution? Why try to zigzag in this way to appease the Taliban instead of mentioning the word constitution? Because major powers are not interested in a constitution. The victimization of Afghans for malign geopolitical purposes is still a game. That is what we want to end, right away.

Is the Taliban a popular movement? Where? Where are they popular? Wherever they are popular, they should win the war. I'm not advocating for killing all the Taliban. I have never advocated for killing every Taliban. Find a single interview of me asking that every Taliban should be eliminated. I am saying if they are part of the Afghan society, then they should be part of the Afghan society, not the owner of the Afghan society. We should not be condemned as the subjects of the Taliban, which we will never accept, and we have not accepted it.

Now, about strength, if it is judged that we are not able to bomb civilians, and we are not able to bomb hotels, and we are not able to kidnap tourists, we are not able to kidnap NGOs, that is why people think we are weak, well, this is a different way, a different criterion of judging strength. Is the West rewarding a group which can only kill tourists, NGOs, aid workers, doctors, civilians? Would

you like us to choose that path in order to become relevant and the recipient of more money? I hope not.

Therefore, we appeal that, you know, France is a member of the Security Council. We should say, “Constitution.” Europe has massive political weight. Next time they attend the Doha conference, UNAMA has borrowed a stupid term from Trump called “Mosaic.” It is how to engage civil society and bring NGOs. Why not use a simple word that can hold meaning for every Afghan: Constitution? Why are you just trying to shy away from pronouncing the word “Constitution”? That is the best peace plan.

Question: “What is your message to Europe about Afghanistan?” - Dr. Ali RASTBEEN

My message to the European countries:

- The European countries, for the stabilization of Afghanistan, should use their political, financial, economic, and geopolitical weight to ask for a constitutional process in Afghanistan. That is the best peace plan. The constitutional process doesn’t exclude anyone. It includes everyone. We need a constitution. The Afghan people deserve to have a constitutional order. We need to have a constitution; that is a big plan by its very nature.
- Please stop your NGOs working with the Taliban because your NGOs have no access to the Afghan people. Their money, in the name of humanitarian assistance, is consolidating the Taliban. The money is not reaching the Afghan people. That is my second message.
- Let us give a human face to the people of Afghanistan. The issue is not the education of women only. The issue is a massive human tragedy. And this tragedy is somehow sugar-coated, covered up by the Doha Peace Agreement between the Taliban and the United States. The agreement is now the root of the evil that is going on post-2021. It has to be dismantled, and a new process in which the constitution should be the central word has

to start, and Europe can assist a lot. And I also request the European media not to be conformist. The European media has massive intellect. They should dig into it. The Taliban did not win the war. The Afghan army did not lose. Something happened. What was it? Why are they not talking about it? Why are they not asking Washington? Why did they remove Haqqani from the terrorist list? Why was he on the terrorist list? Why did they arrest Bashir Noorzai and convict him for lifetime imprisonment? And then they released him? Why? Why is every Guantanamo detainee holding a senior position? Was Guantanamo a training center or a jail? I do not see any sign of suffering in these people. They are in good health. What was going on there?

Gratitude Message

Dear Organizers and Participants,

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who contributed to the success of the recent conference hosted by the **Paris Academy of Geopolitics** and the **Geopragma Institute** on April 22, 2025. In an era when global attention to Afghanistan's challenges is often overshadowed, your commitment to fostering critical dialogue on its political, humanitarian, and geopolitical issues is truly commendable.

I would like to express my special thanks to the organizers, particularly Dr. Caroline Galactéros, Madame Patricia Lalonde, Mr. Armen Sarkissian, Mr. Gérard Chesnel, Colonel Alain Corvez, and Mr. Reza Jafari, for their tireless efforts in coordinating this impactful event. Your dedication provided a platform for meaningful discussions and amplified the voices of those advocating for Afghanistan's future.

To all the distinguished speakers and attendees, thank you for your engagement and shared commitment to addressing the pressing issues facing Afghanistan. Your contributions inspire hope and reinforce the importance of collective action in pursuit of justice, dignity, and stability.

With deepest appreciation,

Amrullah Saleh

Chairman

The Afghanistan Green Trend – AGT