

# Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS)

## Herat Security Dialogue-X

“Inclusive Political System: The Way Forward”

29-30 November 2022 - Dushanbe, Tajikistan

### Conference Report



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## About AISS

### **Mission**

Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) was established in October 2012 and has since become a premier research institution in Afghanistan. It aims to create an intellectual space for addressing strategic issues pertaining to Afghanistan in the wider regional and international contexts. AISS seeks to foster timely discussions on Afghanistan by publishing high-quality research reports and promoting dialogue amongst a wide spectrum of stakeholders. All our activities and programs are based on the principles of professionalism, independence, internationalism, and progressive values.

### **Objective and Goals:**

AISS is an independent, not-for-profit research institute dedicated to providing qualitative, non-partisan and policy-oriented research, publication, translation of books/reports, professional training and policy advocacy with a distinct focus on Afghanistan. A cross-cutting priority of AISS is to empower the youth through specific programmatic initiatives, as the youth represent the future of the country.

### **Means and Activities:**

In order to contribute to ongoing efforts in consolidating Afghanistan's fragile achievements and realize the nation's immense human and natural resources, AISS uses a series of instruments, including:

- Conducting independent research
- Entering partnership agreements with respected and like-minded research institutes
- Publication (books and journals)
- Translation of important books/articles from English into Farsi/Pashto and vice versa
- Organizing seminars, conferences, workshops (provincial, national, international) and briefings
- Offering executive-type leadership training programs
- Initiating and sponsoring annual public awards for recognizing outstanding Afghan youth and international personality
- Integrating conventional and modern social media tools/networks in all its activities.

Following the Taliban's occupation of Afghanistan and the forced closure of AISS offices in Afghanistan, AISS resumed its activities from its UK office located within the University of Sussex in the UK in March 2022. Research England has also made available financial contributions to support the running of the AISS-UK Office during its initial phase. AISS-UK focuses on three priorities: continuation of AISS' activities (research, publication/translation, conference, advocacy); supporting Afghan researchers, academia and scholars in the diaspora and engaging with global research and policy communities, particularly UK/EU. AISS-UK has already taken the initial step to acquire legal and corporate status within UK's regulations to function as an independent research organization. All of AISS's activities and programmes are based on the principle of professionalism, independence, internationalism and progressive values.

## **A Short Introduction to the Herat Security Dialogue Series**

The Herat Security Dialogues (HSD) is an annual international event organized by the AISS that brings domestic, regional and international experts and officials together to discuss issues pertaining to Afghanistan's multiple crises. In line with our definition of security as an inclusive and multifaceted concept, the HSD aims to provide a stimulating opportunity for dialogues and the exchange of ideas among key stakeholders and perspectives. The HSD intends to evolve into a recognized and influential gathering in Afghanistan and the region. Previous nine HSDs were held in Herat, Afghanistan.

### **HSD-X**

Due to limitations and Taliban's ban on free speech, HSD 10 was held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on 29-30 November 2022. This year's conference theme focused on "Inclusive Political System: The Way forward". The conference brought together a record-breaking number of more than 120 representatives from 22 regional, key domestic, and global stakeholders. Participants of the conference worked in seven working panels during the two-day conference with a special discussion with Ahmad Masoud, leader of NRF to exchange views on identifying the way forward in addressing Afghanistan's multifaceted conflict in broader contexts. The first day of the conference was held in Tajikistan National Library and the second day of the conference was held at Hyatt Regency Hotel, Dushanbe. The two-day conference was live broadcasted via AISS social media platforms and has been given wide coverage by international and local media.

## Concept Note

The Afghan conflict is becoming one of the world's longest-running conflicts. The 1973 coup heralded five decades of unending political instability, regime change, foreign invasion, civil war, political oppression, and more importantly human suffering. Afghanistan has experienced a spectrum of conflicts and correspondingly conflict-resolution attempts. In a way, there has been a cycle of conflict(s) VS conflict resolution(s) that sustain the war. The 2001 Bonn process was aimed to address Afghanistan's three decades of conflict by creating a constitutional polity, supported by the international community. The February 2020 "Peace Agreement" between the US and Taliban facilitated by Pakistan and hosted in Qatar effectively replaced the Bonn Process with the "Doha Process". However, the new "medicine" has exacerbated Afghanistan's already chronic illnesses. Afghanistan's tragedy is not only the type and number of the diseases, but more importantly, the prescribed remedies by a plethora of self-appointed physicians- local and external have deepened its suffering.

In order to bring together diverse perspectives/prescribers, the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) organized its inaugural event by launching its flagship security forum, Herat Security Dialogue (HSD) in October 2012 and held nine consecutive conferences in Herat's historic citadel till 2020. Due to the recent upheaval, AISS could not organise its planned conference in 2021. The 10th Herat Security Dialogue (HSD) was held on 29-30 November 2022 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan and Tajikistan's Centre for Afghanistan and Regional Studies provided logistical assistance for organising the Conference, for which AISS conveys its appreciation. The conference theme was "Inclusive Political System: The Way forward". As with the previous nine conferences, HSD-10 brought together representatives of Afghanistan's key domestic, regional and global stakeholders to exchange views on identifying the way(s) forward in addressing Afghanistan's multifaceted conflict in broader contexts. AISS is working with the UN to facilitate the participation of Afghanistan-based participants, including representatives of the Taliban movement alongside other key political constituencies. Based on HSD guidelines, all participants attended in their individual/scholarly capacity and were encouraged to exchange views, rather than stating their respective official positions. All sessions were streamed via AISS media platforms as well as national and international media. The Conference did not aim to produce any specific set of recommendations but strived towards

bringing closer and clearer diverse views and analysis on Afghanistan, in the hope of exploring approaches towards an effective, legitimate and sustainable settlement.

## Opening Session

The 10th round of Herat Security Dialogue started with the Recitation the of Hymns of Khaja Abdullah Ansari, followed by the Singing of “Watan Eshgh Tu Eftakharam” by Ms Shura Wakili, and the recitation of poetry by Mr Atiq. The conference was inaugurated with welcoming remarks by Professor Qasim Shah Eskandar, President of the Centre for Afghanistan and Regional Studies of Tajikistan.



Professor Qasim Shah Eskandar delivered a short welcoming speech on behalf of both, AISS and the Centre for Afghanistan and Regional Studies. He welcomed the participants and thanked the President of Tajikistan for his support in holding the Herat Security Dialogue in this complex regional and global situation. He also mentioned that hosting the HSD in the National Library of Tajikistan is a sign of the peaceful policy of Tajikistan’s government in relation to Afghanistan. Professor Qasim Shah emphasized that this conference is not against any system, country or policy, but is a platform for a diverse dialogue regarding the issues of Afghanistan. He also urged national and international media to report and reflect on the realities of the conference.

Mr Farhad Salim, Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan, in his speech, expressed his country’s concern about increased in terrorist activities in Afghanistan. He stressed: "we are concerned about the increase in the activity of terrorist organizations in Afghanistan". Mr Salim asserted that fighters of al-Qaida, ISIS, Jamiat-e-Ansarullah, Tehrik Taliban Pakistan, Harakat Islami Turkistan, and other groups are currently active in Afghanistan. The installation of a security



belt on the Tajikistan border is one of the important security measures for the possible threats that active terrorist groups from inside Afghanistan can pose to Tajikistan. He also pointed out the drug trafficking in Afghanistan. Referring to the UNODC reports, he expressed that Tajikistan government is concerned regarding the increase in drug production and trafficking in Afghanistan since the Taliban took the power. Mr Salim added that the policy of his country is to support peace and stability and the establishment of an inclusive government in Afghanistan because the establishment of an inclusive government can lead to the end of the conflict in Afghanistan and the achievement of social justice.

Mr Salim also raised his government concerns in relation to women's situation in Afghanistan under Taliban and added that Tajikistan condemns the violation of women's and ethnic rights in Afghanistan. Humanitarian assistance, especially in the winter, was the other aspect of his speech. He assured that Tajikistan would extend its food and other humanitarian services to the people of Afghanistan through UN agencies and other organizations.

### **Dr Rangin Dadfar Spanta**

Dr Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Chairperson of the AISS Board of Advisors, thanked Tajikistan's government and academic society for organizing the HSD-X. In his presentation, Dr Spanta briefly talked about several periods of modernization in Afghanistan i.e., Amanullah Khan and the post-Zahir Shah period as the failed experiences of modernization attempts by the state. According to him, the Soviet invasion staged Afghanistan as a battlefield between the US and the Soviets. Post-Soviet Afghanistan inherited thousands of jihadists who were mostly under the control of a neighbouring country. According to him, the first period of the Taliban's rule which began in 1994 marked the civilization disaster in the county.



In post-Taliban Afghanistan in 2001, a new chapter was opened for the Afghanistan people. New hopes grew among the people, and people pictured a better future, however, strategies and plans of this era failed to bring modernization and liberalism in the society. Dr Spanta highlighted that the continuation of the war against terrorism caused many casualties among civilians. The safe havens of terrorism outside Afghanistan were not only ignored but the supporters of terrorism were strengthened.

He asserted that some traditional elites, who returned from the West with some western supporters, instead of formulating a comprehensive democratic belief in Afghanistan, turned to corruption, race, and ethnocentrism, and on the other hand, they polluted elections with fraud which disappointed people and created doubts about democracy and its pillars and, as a result, people of Afghanistan lost their confidence in democracy.

Dr Spanta added, "inclusive government cannot mean the mechanical division of political authorities and rejecting the principle of people's right to choose". According to him, "Afghanistan today has deliberately become a centre of threats to the region and the world. International terrorism havens have been brought to our country from the other side of the Durand line, and this is a serious threat to the peace and stability of the region and the world".

Dr Spanta stressed that the irresponsible withdrawal of the US forces from Afghanistan as a result of the shameful Doha Deal without representation of Afghanistan had a logical result, and that was handing over the power to the Taliban. The strategic priorities of the US and the global war on terror were changed to encountering China. According to him, the US competition with China has extended to the south, east, and other parts of Asia, where

Afghanistan has a marginal role, He added. “The re-emergence of the Taliban to power is something that means an unprecedented disruption of civilization and the re-establishment of an anti-human ideology.” Dr Spanta added. He also called the first round of the Taliban “a symbol of sad horror and the beginning of a civilizational rupture and the beginning of a social vulgarity and anti-civilization”. Taliban belief is a mixture of Islamism, Salafism, and Deobandi beliefs combined with tribalism”. However, this combination should not mean avoiding preparation for peace talks. War is not the choice of the Afghan people. According to him “war is a sinister and subversive phenomenon, and we should put an end to the war and destruction. He emphasized that peace cannot be achieved by mere advocacy and negotiating from a weak stance. He criticized Taliban’s lack of willingness to meaningful peace talks for the last 14 years. According to him, “Taliban wanted the whole power and monopoly of power and they still have the same stance.”

Dr Spanta praised the bravery of the people on the resistance fronts, peaceful protests and struggle of women for their rights, and the political struggles of social forces and added that these are the components of a process that will eventually lead to peace and justice. An inclusive government is not the mechanical division of political positions and rejecting the principle of freedom and justice. Dr Spanta stressed that competition between political systems (US and China) and lack of a comprehensive strategy towards Taliban may spread a “red carpet” under the feet of Taliban leaders and call them "modernist", reformist and a by-product of the Afghan culture”, but this cannot change the Taliban’s ideological and their structural link with international terrorism. "We are not the enemy of any country and do not want to question the territorial integrity of any other country in the region, but this does not mean that we allow proxy wars to continue in our country", Dr Spanta emphasized.

Therefore, Dr Spanta stressed the need for the creation of a new narrative based on the following principles and values. The unquestionable sovereignty of the people, having a constitution based on the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens, unconditional acceptance of equality between women and men, unconditional observance of human rights, acceptance of ethnic and cultural diversity, non-centralization of power, normalization of human rights and reform of legal system with an emphasis on the unity of the people.

## Panel I- Afghanistan's Arduous Struggle for Constitutional State



The first panel titled *Afghanistan's Arduous Struggle for Constitutional State* aimed to discuss the challenges and required efforts to form a constitutional state in Afghanistan. The speakers included Dr Mohammad Amin Ahmadi, former President of Avicenna University and member of the delegation of the Afghan government for Doha Negotiations, Dr Nazif Shahrani, professor at Indiana University, USA, and Dr Dawood Azami, BBC/University of Westminster, London. The session was moderated by Dr Aliye Yilmaz, assistant professor, at Suleyman Demirel University.

### *Understanding the Afghan political challenges*

Dr Aliye Yilmaz briefly explains the purpose of this panel and provided a brief background of the challenges regarding state building in Afghanistan and its relation to the current ongoing tragedy in Afghanistan. Dr Mohammad Amin Ahmadi stated to understand the Afghan conflict and find a solution, we need a theoretical framework. "Because the theoretical framework helps us to see this problem from different angles, prominently and in detail, it gives us the power of analysis and we can also discover the solution through that framework". Dr Ahmadi highlighted four factors that contributed to the long-lasting conflict in Afghanistan. According to him, the conflict in Afghanistan is a long-lasting social conflict and the central factor of conflict is the identity groups, not the governments. Usually, in many theories of conflict, war is considered to be the result of competition between governments. But in this theory, at least civil wars in Afghanistan are related to the government's relations with identity groups. The second factor of this conflict is the deprivation of people from their basic rights which encouraged different groups to get their rights through conflict. Dr Ahmadi added that an

authoritarian regime was established in Afghanistan based on Amir Abdul Rahman Khan's autocratic ideology and he gave his autocratic power a dynastic and ethnic nature. As a result, Afghani nationalism was born during his era. Later, the Taliban followed the same path and the result is cultural and religious elimination to the extent of cultural genocide, discrimination and marginalization of other identity groups, including women. So, according to him, in this process, identity groups, youth, and women are deprived of their basic needs. The third factor that encouraged conflict was the inability of providing basic services and needs for the people. Authoritarian, identity-oriented governments cannot provide public services and basic needs. Therefore, they maximize themselves and their supporters at the cost of others' needs. Dr Ahmadi added.

Dr Shahrani asserted that the history and issues of Afghan's political history are known and have been sufficiently covered. What's required is the analysis and learning from our history. His presentation reflected on the unfortunate situation of Afghan political history. The country suffered inconsistency due to political turmoil, as a result, the civilian governments were unable to get hold of the country. "We have 14 leaders in the last 140 years and 6 of them were killed while in office. Seven of them were violently removed from the power; only one died in his natural death", he reminded.

Since the country was struggling to have a stable and consistent political transition, subsequently, it also had an impact on the making of constitutions. Due to uncertainty in the political climate, the leaders tried to make laws that suited their political ambition. Dr Shahrani explained:

*"In the last 100 years, we have had 9 different constitutions. These constitutions were not made for people. It was made for individual rulers. Everyone wanted to have their own constitution. This reflects that the country has been governed through 'rulers' law not the rule of laws".*

This self-interest affected the country's ethnic interaction and politics. Dr Shahrani suggested that ethnic diversity is something to celebrate. It becomes an issue when the state does not embrace this diversity, instead forms policies that are discriminatory towards different ethnic and religious groups. He also highlighted some of the key issues that have been obstacles to making Afghanistan a strong constitutional state such as a sense of superiority, centralisation of power and creation of dependency.

### *Achieving the achievable: forming a constitutional Afghan state*

Given the political climate and divisions in Afghanistan, the speakers agreed that it's a tough task, however, it's achievable. There are different ways in which it could be achieved. For example, Dr Dawood Azami added that the country has a history of inclusive governments and plurality and it can be replicated in today's politics. He gave the example of Ahmed Shah Durrani's era of inclusivity and why it matters today. For example, Durrani appointed different people from different ethnicities to important positions. A similar approach, Dr Azami argues, can be used today.

Dr Shahrani believed that the first step towards change is, "we need to change the system of governance, we need to shift from person-centred politics to idea-centred politics, value-centred politics". He also outlined some key recommendations:

- He emphasized not to be engaged in *chaana zani* (bargain) for possible future political posts or personal gains. But we should seriously engage in discussing (bahs) possible ways and means of solving our major national predicaments.
- We need to adopt a national referendum as the only means of choice for addressing major national issues (e.g., national constitution, going to war, etc.), instead of the traditionally abused Loyah Jirgah.
- We require the decentralization of government power from Kabul and the adoption of the principles of community self-governance by the local residents (in districts, provinces, municipalities and nationally).
- The creation of an Independent Advanced Islamic Research Centre is required which will be able to provide support and advice to legislators in drafting national laws, rules and regulations and issuing authoritative fatwas.

Dr Ahmadi also added that the basic needs of citizens and identity groups are suppressed, and it cannot be solved without changing the structure. Therefore he suggested, "new political, administrative, economic and cultural structures should be agreed upon and these structures should be created so that all the legitimate demands and basic needs are met".

Dr Ahmadi also echoed Dr Shahrani's emphasis on decentralisation. Dr Ahmadi provided a model on which a new model for Afghanistan can be built. "We need the decentralized parliamentary legal and political structures (parliamentary system instead of the presidential system) similar to Switzerland, proportional or multi-dimensional electoral system and

resolving the conflict of secularism and religion in the form of twin tolerance models, and democratic and pluralistic national identity”.

***Formation of a commission to oversee the progress in Afghanistan***

Dr Shahrani asserted that there is a need for 'The International Peace commission for Afghanistan' to help form a 'National Peace Committee for Afghanistan' (NPCA). He suggested that the commission should include the members of the Security Council, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation representatives, EU, Shanghai Group, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank. The commission will help to follow the next two steps. First, this commission has to find a way to deal with the Taliban. Second, the NPCA's critical function will be to help form a National Transitional Government of Afghanistan (NTGA) for a period of no more than five years.

## Panel II- Geopolitical Blackhole: Afghanistan; Regional Consensus



The second panel of the HSD was on “Geopolitical Blackhole: Afghanistan; Regional Consensus” moderated by Mariam Wardak. This panel brought together ambassador Sayed Tayeb Jawad, Afghanistan’s former ambassador to the US, UK, and Russia, Senator Afrasiab Khattak, senior leader of the National Democratic Movement of Pakistan, Dr Mohammad Ali Bahmani-Qajar, researcher from the Islamic Republic of Iran, and ambassador Omirtai Bitimov, former ambassador of Kazakhstan to Afghanistan.

### *Inclusive Government*

In his speech, ambassador Bitimov touched on several issues. On the inclusive government, he mentioned that Taliban have proved to be committed to their ideology, and it seems unlikely they take a different stance. He said, “I believe that the Afghans themselves should play a decisive role in this process, following their national values, interests, and history of their country”. Ambassador Bitimov added that some regional associations such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia could play a mediating role in this matter. At the same time, he emphasized on international support to Afghanistan, with a central role of the UN.



***Role of Kazakhstan and the UN in strengthening regional cooperation on Afghanistan.***

On the role of Kazakhstan and the UN, he pointed to the involvement of Kazakhstan in several initiatives for Afghanistan. On the diplomatic aspect, the Kazakh embassy in Kabul is operating, and the Afghanistan embassy in Astana and its consulate general in Almaty also operate. On humanitarian services, he emphasized the commitment of Kazakhstan. On education, a 10-year educational programme is still providing free education to the Afghan youth. To intensify regional trade with Afghanistan, it would be possible to consider the project of holding annual (autumn) sales fairs of agricultural products in Kazakhstan where Afghan businesses can establish focal contacts. Ambassador Bitimov added that the president of Kazakhstan spoke to the UN General Assembly in September 2022 about Kazakhstan's initiative to establish a regional *UN Center for Sustainable Development Goals in Central Asia and Afghanistan*, in Almaty.



Ambassador Bitimov raised his concern about the situation in Afghanistan and its effects on regional security. According to him, “the regional countries have concerns about the spread of international terrorism and drug trafficking, religious extremism, risks of a deterioration in the situation with illicit arms trafficking, an increase in illegal migration, and an influx of uncontrolled flows of refugees which may penetrate elements of religious extremism in the regions.” However, he emphasized that in the absence of international recognition of Taliban, it seems appropriate to continue practical cooperation with Afghanistan in the humanitarian, trade, and economic spheres, primarily for the sake of ordinary citizens.

### ***Afghanistan a battlefield for Strategic Competition***

Following Ambassador Bitimov's statement, however, Ambassador Jawad explained international and regional countries' engagement with Taliban beyond the humanitarian purpose. He highlighted a three-fold denominator: First "to prevent a real humanitarian catastrophe in Afghanistan, second, by extending the hand to Taliban to change the behaviours of Taliban, third, by keeping the Taliban feet on the fire they are hoping to make Taliban deliver on their extensive commitments on countering terrorism, inclusive government and human rights issues during the Doha Process."

However, none of these objectives has been achieved so far. "The contacts have mostly led to mutual disappointment between the interlocutors and the Taliban. None of the diplomats, who engaged, was able to reach out to Kandahar and decipher what the decision-making mechanism of the Taliban is", ambassador Jawad added.

Regarding Moscow-Taliban engagement, ambassador Jawad said "shared animosity of Moscow and Taliban with Washington and the objective to have control over Afghanistan after U.S leaving Afghanistan" was one of the reasons for Moscow to engage with Taliban. Also, "Moscow was trying, on one hand, to emphasize that terrorism is a threat to Central Asia, and on the other hand is acting as the biggest terrorist, Taliban, were in Moscow's pocket. Moscow wanted Central Asian countries to look to Moscow as a saviour and master of Taliban." He added that Taliban expected Russia to recognize them, but it did not happen. Also, Taliban did not share credible information with Moscow on regional terrorist groups.

In relation to Uzbekistan-Taliban engagement, ambassador Jawad said, "Uzbekistan, try to preempt Russia by having even closer relations with Taliban to convey the message to Moscow that Tashkent does need Moscow in the region". Ambassador Jawad stated that the Biden administration does not have a clear policy regarding Afghanistan. According to him, the existence of a failed government in Afghanistan may become an important electoral debate in the upcoming US presidential elections. Javad added that Qatar's investment in the Kandahari Taliban has caused fragmentation among the Taliban. He also emphasized that Pakistan's relationship with the Taliban is based on any deal which is in the national interest of Pakistan

### ***Iran and Afghanistan: Mutual interests dependent on sustainable peace***

Dr Bahmani-Qajar mentioned that sustainable security in the region, specifically in Afghanistan, will guarantee the interests of Iran and Afghanistan. Iran has long-lasting security

concerns in Afghanistan. He said, “Iran was on the side of the West during the Cold War because it was worried about the spread of communism in the region.” After the Bonn Accords, Iran played a constructive role and supported the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. He added that Iran's relationship with the Afghan government has deteriorated after the signing of the security agreement with the US, and Ashraf Ghani's "water versus oil" policy has fuelled the tension between Iran and the Afghan government. According to him, the rule of Taliban has not led to the establishment of peace and a stable government, and his country supports the establishment of a cooperative and stable government in Afghanistan.

### ***Democracy in Pakistan, security in Afghanistan***

At the same time, Afrasiab Khattak, the leader of Pakistan's National Awami Party, said that Afghanistan has become a field of strategic competition between great powers. He called the Taliban "extremist and primitive" and emphasized that this group cannot run an inclusive government, therefore it will not last. He said that he supports the international mechanism led by the United Nations to transition from the current crisis and establish a stable and democratic government in Afghanistan. He then extended his analysis on wider security concerns in the region and said that the region is facing a new stage of the great game. According to him, “the region will be a battlefield for China, Russia, the US, and the UK.” ISIS is a new game among the other terrorist groups in the region and the most dangerous one for regional security.

### **Question and Answer**

In response to the question on Pakistan's political situation and its impact on Pakistan relationship with the Taliban, Senator Khattak stressed that the political situation in Pakistan would affect security in Afghanistan. He emphasized that democratic political parties in Pakistan have demonstrated their sympathy with the people of Afghanistan and they do not accept the Taliban regime. According to Mr Khattak, Pakistan's macro and basic policies are determined by the army, and “when Pakistan becomes democratic, peace will be established in Afghanistan”.

Meanwhile, on Taliban relations with Islamabad, ambassador Jawad said that It will be an important relationship, but it will work only if both countries commit to honesty, realism, and realpolitik based on equal and even-handed relations. He added that both sides benefit from a balanced economic-based neighbourly relation, founded on enhancing opportunities for prosperity; an equal, modest, transactional people-to-people-centric diplomatic relation.

Dr Bahmanighajar added that Iran thought that the US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the return of Taliban to power would bring peace in Afghanistan. Also, they expected that an inclusive government might be formed by Taliban, and therefore they have always advocated for that in their talks with Taliban. But the real politics of Taliban proved this expectation wrong, and it was a disappointment for Iran. Contrary to what Dr Qajar stated, ambassador Jawad asserted “Iran’s main reason for engaging and close diplomacy with Taliban was their anti-US policy as to counter Pakistani and Saudi monopolies.”

### **Panel-III- Afghan Women: Betrayal; Apartheid; Resistance**



The third panel titled Afghan Women: Betrayal; Apartheid; Resistance aimed to discuss the violations of fundamental rights of Afghan women, their systematic exclusion from all segments of society, Afghan women’s struggles, and international community responses. The speakers included Ambassador Thomas Niklasson, Special Envoy of the European Union for Afghanistan; Fawzia Koofi, Former Member of Parliament, Afghanistan; Dr Karima Bennoune, Professor of International Law at the University of California; and Adalat Mirza, Editor-in-Chief of Millat Newspaper, Tajikistan. The panel was moderated by Manizha Bakhtari, Afghanistan’s Ambassador to Austria.

Ambassador Bakhari briefly provided background regarding the challenges faced by Afghan women after the Taliban takeover, and the restrictions imposed on Afghan women. She said, “terrorism and the presence of the Taliban have not only demolished the government and the constitution of Afghanistan but have also seriously damaged the fundamental rights of the people. Afghan women have lost their achievements and have been deprived of their fundamental rights such as the right to education and work.

#### ***Inclusivity and Humanitarian Aid to Afghanistan***

Ambassador Niklasson discussed the question often asked by critics regarding the EU's engagement with the Taliban. He said that the EU's political engagement is one element of the EU's policy response and efforts to find a way forward in relation to Afghanistan and that the EU will remain engaged and support the Afghan people. Ambassador Niklasson also discussed

the EU’s response to Afghanistan’s humanitarian needs and economic crisis. He added, “we are also active in the field of humanitarian aid and have donated hundreds of millions of euros through the United Nations to help the humanitarian crisis.”



Ambassador Niklasson stated that despite security and political issues, the EU still has a small number of its diplomats in Afghanistan including a chargé d'affaire and humanitarian staff members in Kabul. He added, “our position regarding the systematic exclusion of women from the public sphere is clear and documentation made by UNAMA and UN Special Rapporteur, Richard Bennett, regarding human rights violations by the Taliban point to a very black development”. He emphasized, “the Taliban have a responsibility to protect and respect women’s rights. “Women rights are not a western issue, but the presence of women is important for the economy, progress, and stability of a country”.

In response to the question on the EU’s response to women’s situation, he said “the sobering reality I find is that change in Afghanistan has to come from within the country”. The EU is to support by being "consistent, tough, principled, and pragmatic". He emphasized that Afghans outside the country, regional players with a genuine interest in Afghanistan also have an important role, however, he reiterated that the driving force must come from within the Afghan people. He added though EU presence in Afghanistan is limited, it has an important role to play in assisting and facilitating the voices of those fighting for the rights of women and girls.

However, Fawzia Koofi, the former MP said that the world should abandon its double-sided policy regarding the status of women. According to her, Afghan women deserve the rights and status that women have in countries like Qatar. Ms Kofi added "today, Hina Rabbani Khar from the neighbouring Muslim countries is visiting Afghanistan and speaking and engaging with Taliban while women in Afghanistan cannot benefit from their basic Islamic fundamental rights. Half of Afghanistan's population was being pushed out of the labour force and of

schools, which will lead to more poverty and hardship." She stressed, "women of Afghanistan are carrying the burden of war and the so-called stability". Ms Kofi praised the courage and resistance of women against the Taliban regime and emphasized that the women's movement has expanded. According to her, "The Taliban consider women to be a serious challenge to their authoritarian regime, while Afghan women demand the restoration and observance of their fundamental human rights, nothing more."

In response to the question on how we can influence Taliban, Ms Koofi said, "it is time for all of us to think of alternatives". There is a strong need for Afghan men to stand with Afghan women and engage in thinking of alternatives, while she also raised her discontent with Afghan men elites and politicians for not joining Afghan women's civic protests. Ms Koofi ended by emphasizing "we do not follow others' narratives; we created our own narrative. Recognize women as stakeholders. Give us the physical space we are struggling for".

Following the discussion, Dr Bennoune who sent her presentation in audio recorded, presented her recent paper on "The International Obligations to Counter Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan".

Dr Bennoune's presentation focused on the following points:

- Find a way to enhance international responses to Taliban violations of the rights of Afghan women.
- Find international responses that are consistent with the international law.
- Ensure that the international community cannot simply walk away from its obligations to Afghan women simply by leaving the country, even the lack of relevant standards on second state responsibility in international human rights law itself.

Dr Bennoune explained the construct of gender apartheid as a means of achieving find a way to enhance the international responses to the Taliban violations. Dr Bennoune's research draws both from the academic literature and a series of 16 interviews conducted remotely with Afghan Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRD) from September 2021 to February 2022.

According to Dr Bennoune, "gender apartheid is a system of governments based on laws and/or policies which imposes systematic segregation of women and men and may also systematically exclude women from public spaces and spheres." Discrimination itself becomes the governance model. Gender apartheid involves systemic oppression of women defining women "As not being human" she added. The second part of her presentation focused on how the

current situation in Taliban's Afghanistan constitutes gender apartheid. As explained by Dr Bennoune, the exclusion of women from most aspects of public life, work, and education in the middle of a terrible humanitarian crisis constitute a gender apartheid regime. She added that a new global commitment to end gender apartheid in Afghanistan would be a way of supporting those who are risking everything to demand their universal human rights. She argued that international law should learn from its own successes because international law already has a robust paradigm for dealing with apartheid, developed primarily between the 1960s and 80s, in response to the situation in southern Africa and spurred by the dynamic commitments of decolonized states. However, it is explicitly drafted to respond only to racial apartheid and has not been formally used to address gender apartheid as she argued it should be. According to her, "such a feminist transformation of international law to use Charlotte Bunch's concept is essential in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and would be the most effective way to respond to Taliban". Dr Bennoune pointed to changes made in South Africa. International political will and local political struggle were essential catalysts for the change and had a dynamic synergy. Newly decolonized states played a leadership role seeing the issue as a vital part of a larger struggle for decolonization and the achievement of self-determination. The African National Congress was even given observer status at the U.N and carried out its own successful foreign policy. Dr Bennoune argued this is precisely the approach that needs to be taken against the Taliban. She added that the most important of the racial apartheid standards was the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid which came into force in 1976. The reason for this convention was to maximize implementation capacity at the international level which is applicable in the case of gender apartheid. The convention defines apartheid as "inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them". As she argued, "if gender is substituted for race, this is an accurate reflection of Taliban policies vis-a-vis women."

She stressed that the convention codified the view of the apartheid regime as an illegal situation to be ended. This is what needs to be done with regard to the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan. The International Law Commission in 2001 recognized anti-apartheid norms as *jus cogens*, the highest-level norms in international law. Thus, according to Dr Bennoune, her paper argues "in favour of employing such a vigorous approach to confronting the equally heinous practice of using discrimination against women as a government's model as in Afghanistan currently". Conversely, the failure to employ this heightened concept and enhanced response to a regime



whose well-known policies are relentlessly anti-women sends a terrible message first to Afghan women and secondly to women all across the region and globe. She stressed.

Dr Bennoune emphasized that recognition of the Taliban's apartheid as a grave international crime could have several direct consequences by shaping and constraining the policy choices of other actors. The group's leadership are already on the U.N Security Council's sanctions lists, and this recognition can help to ensure they remain on the sanction list over time. Dr Bennoune concluded by reiterating that there is no other way to achieve progress on human rights than to concert the efforts of the international community and to do so within the framework of global obligations to combat gender apartheid in Afghanistan.

Ms Adalat Mirza shed light on the achievements of Afghan women during the past two decades. She said after the Taliban occupation of the country, Afghan women have been suffering repression, stoning and imprisonment, and another form of violence. Ms Mirza added that the west and the regional countries are responsible for the current "miserable" situation in Afghanistan and called upon the international community to break its silence regarding Afghan women and stressed that such betrayal cannot be tolerated anymore.

## **Question and Answer**

In response to the question raised by Ambassador Manizha Bakhtari regarding inclusivity, ambassador Niklasson was in view that inclusivity is not individuals at the outset but a process at the outset, which is made up of individuals at the outset. Ambassador Niklasson stressed, "it is a process where every Afghan man and woman, have a say."

Responding to Dr Sahra Karimi who accused the United States of "abandoning" Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover, U.S. Charge D'Affaires to Afghanistan Karen Decker, who works out of the U.S. mission in Doha, said the fact that the U.S. Embassy in Kabul had closed "does not mean the absence of engagement by the US". Ms Decker said that US aid to Afghanistan at \$1.1 billion last year is still the largest and the US was building systems so that aid could go directly to Afghan people rather than the Taliban regime. Meanwhile, Decker said that the United States cannot promise any guarantees at this juncture, but it can guarantee that the United States always supports Afghan women. Ms Decker reiterated that the US government regularly talks about human rights with the Taliban not only because it is a right but also because it is in favour of the Afghan people.

Mohammad Nateqi, the former member of the Afghan negotiating team in Doha, raised his concern regarding the situation of women in Afghanistan adding that women are under repression and detained unlawfully by the Taliban and pleaded that the regional countries and the international community should have a unified stance towards Afghanistan.

In response to the question raised by ambassador Bakhtari “how we can turn the movement of women into an international movement”, Professor Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh pointed to the recent movement of “Women, Life, Freedom” in Iran which initially was being seen as women movement by women, but it transformed and became a political movement in response to Iran’s compulsory Hijab and then it became a chant of “death to the dictator”.

Professor Nazir Shahrani questioned the hypocrisy of Afghan men claiming to be protectors of women while they have failed to do so. He said, "we are ashamed of ourselves for not having been able to stand in the streets in support of our sisters, mothers and daughters". He added that the second major hypocrisy is the international community’s hypocrisy – and this should not be taken lightly. He illustrated that a hypocritical approach does not help build a piece – "it never has, it never will". He said that we need to, in the case of the situation of Afghanistan, overcome these hypocritical stands. He emphasized that the men of Afghanistan, should remove this shame that is upon their shoulders, and he called upon the international community to stop being hypocritical.

Meanwhile, in response to the question raised by Mr Suhail Sanjar regarding an alternative education system, Ms Koofi said though the online education system is an alternative, the priority is to try Afghan girls are granted their right back to regular school as nothing can replace regular education system. Ambassador Niklasson concluded his remarks by emphasizing that if there is a further decision by the Taliban to restrict women’s access to their basic rights, and education, it will further marginalize the Taliban. Ambassador Niklasson added that informal schools and online classes can be alternatives rather than the choice of doing nothing.

## Panel IV- Terrorism: Sacred Violence; State Instrument



The fourth panel titled ‘*Terrorism: Sacred Violence; State Instrument*’ aimed to discuss what is the role of global stakeholders in Afghanistan and how can we find a way forward to an inclusive government. The speakers included General Nikolay Plotnikov, Head of Scientific and Analytical Information Centre, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, General Mohammad Assad Durrani, Former Director of Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI), Pakistan, Rahmatullah Nabil, Former DG of the National Directorate of Security (NDS), Afghanistan, and Colonel John Agoglia, Former Director of the US Army Peace Keeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) and the Counterinsurgency Training Centre-Afghanistan (CTC-A). The session was moderated by Suhasini Haidar, Diplomatic Editor, of The Hindu Newspaper.

The panellists agreed that the way the US withdrew from Afghanistan was a perfect recipe for a disaster. Rahmatullah Nabil added with the final withdrawal of US and NATO forces, which led to the Taliban’s rise to power, the possibility of a peaceful solution to the Afghan crisis was demolished. “Although the people of Afghanistan repeatedly raised their concerns about the consequences of an unilateral peace, unfortunately, these warnings were ignored, or were not paid enough attention”, he added.

Colonel John Agoglia also admitted that the situation in Afghanistan is alarming and refused the idea that the Taliban has brought stability to the country. "There may not be more attacks in Kabul, but it doesn't mean terrorism has ended in Afghanistan. Look at the assault on human rights by the Taliban, it's a form of terrorism” Colonel Agoglia added. Plotnikov also reminded

that “it's one thing to run through the mountains with a machine gun, and it's completely different to run the state”.



The participant of the conference in different sessions shared their disappointment with the US for leaving the Afghans to the mercy of the Taliban. Rahmatullah Nabil used one of Hafez's poems to express the betrayal from the friends of Afghanistan. “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends (Hafez)”. Friends mean here Afghanistan’s strategic allies, he clarified.

However, in response to the criticism that the US has abandoned Afghanistan, Colonel Agoglia added that "there are still many in America who are concerned but there are serious internal issues and this is where the US is occupied right now”.

### ***The global war on terror and contemporary issues within militant organisations***

General Durrani was of the view that this whole façade of the global war on terror needs to be questioned. He claimed that every state had followed its interest and highlighted the fundamental flaws in the so-called war on terror strategy. As a result, "everyone had his own favourite; the global war on terrorism was a big scam. The countries didn't coordinate with each other, and they didn't exchange enough information”, he added.

There were also talks to pressurise the Taliban to uphold some fundamental principles of human rights and inclusion. However, General Durrani cautioned and reminded the vulnerability within the Taliban ranks and the challenges the group currently face. "They (Taliban) are not a monolith entity: they are vulnerable to fissures in their ranks. Hardliners amongst them oppose these steps [inclusivity, women empowerment and human rights], and threaten to part ways or join Daesh if these were taken”.

Rahmatullah Nabil also mentioned the complex nature of power struggle within other militant groups. "After the death of Ayman al-Zawahiri, their fighters have not publicly chosen a new leader, and there are two options for the future leadership of Al-Qaeda, which are individual leadership or collective leadership. For the central leadership, Saif al-Adel is mostly mentioned to be selected, and for the collective/council leadership, Saif al-Adel, Sheikh Hamza, Sheikh Abdul Karim al-Mesri, Abu Ubaidah, Sheikh Abdul Rahman and Sheikh Ikrama are mentioned".

Plotnikov also highlighted that there is a split in the Taliban movement between so-called moderates and radicals. "The struggle between them does not allow the government to fulfil its international obligations to combat international terrorist organizations", he added.

### ***Meddling in Afghanistan's affairs***

Rahmatullah Nabil argues that civilian leadership may not prosper in an environment where the militant groups in Afghanistan continue to get external support. "Unfortunately, some of our neighbours continue to support and promote proxy groups in Afghanistan, in particular, one of Afghanistan's neighbours who has a long history of supporting the most extremist elements in Afghanistan and actively has weakened civilian and civilized groups in Afghanistan".

Pakistan's role in Afghanistan and its support for terror groups are well-documented and evidence of Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan is undeniable. However, General Durrani believed that his country's role is history now and Pakistan can't take more blame. "I had expected that this time crossword will move from Pakistan, ISI to the big brother, the big boss (United States). But it's still "Paki bashing" not yet any "Yankee bashing".

### ***Way forward***

Plotnikov argued that one must recognize the current alarming situation which requires to maintain a dialogue with the current de facto authorities in Afghanistan. However, dialogue doesn't mean recognition, he clarified. He also shared the Moscow Format meeting was held on 16 November 2022 in which "the emphasis was placed on the development of bilateral ties without reference to the official recognition of the current Afghan government".

There is a need to identify and recognise the grass-root movements and indigenous actors who represent the country and its politics. Rahmatullah Nabil claimed:

*“We usually rely too much on copying political systems and governments from abroad, without paying much attention to the organic structures of Afghanistan. Unfortunately, our neighbours, sometimes international friends, rely on a very small group of so-called Afghan elites who are dependent on them and know less about Afghanistan’s problems”.*

Rahmatullah Nabil and General Durrani both emphasised that external imposition may not work in Afghanistan; it has never worked. “We must know that the political structures and leaders imposed on Afghans by foreigners do not work and we must seek to create a platform where the authentic voices of Afghans and those who have roots in the Afghan society decide on the political future of Afghanistan” Rahmatullah Nabil added.

Colonel Agoglia suggested that we need to identify the root cause of today’s Afghanistan. “Terrorism is a symptom. The root cause is the disenfranchisement of different people of different genders of different political groups”. He suggested that to prevent or address disenfranchisement, we will need to move forward and let bygones be bygones. “Let's get past the finger-pointing, let's stop blaming each other, we need to start with a narrative for inclusivity that educates on the negative impacts of terrorism”.

## **Question and Answer**

In response to the questions on how to overcome the ongoing challenges, the participants of the conference took great interest in Colonel Agoglia's comment on building the narrative of inclusivity. For example, one of the participants raised how the speakers define 'inclusivity' or another participant raised a pertinent question, for example, how do you engage with the idea of inclusivity when the potential of violence is there?

In response to the definition of inclusivity, Rahmatullah Nabil added that his idea is when “girls in Daikundi feel comfortable and get the sense of ownership that the government of the country belongs to her”. Whereas Colonel Agoglia’s response was, “to be inclusive means, we have to work with folks who are not our friends”.

Plotnikov also asserted that Taliban need to prove to everyone that they are ready to wage an uncompromising fight against jihadist and criminal structures, and to stop cross-border threats to Afghanistan's neighbours emanating from its territory. In the ongoing humanitarian crisis, he also stressed on the release of \$7 billion Afghan government assets held in the US. He added, “this money does not belong to Taliban, nor to the old government, nor to the Americans. This is the money of the Afghan people and should be returned to them”

## Panel V: Nowruzistan: Shared Heritage; Civic Space and Social Movements



The fifth panel titled “Nowruzistan” mainly focused on culture, addressing Nowruz. This panel was moderated by Dr Sahra Karimi, Film Director and University Lecturer. Speakers include Dr Hossein Dehbashi, Historian & Documentary. Producer, Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr Qasemi Saadi, Professor. of National University, Tajikistan, Dr Ayesha Siddiga, Fellow, Kings’ College London, United Kingdom

Ms Karimi stated that according to UNESCO, the ceremonies and rituals of people in various countries are considered part of their culture, and culture is an important and inseparable part of defining national, regional and regional identity. Dr Qasim Saadi, a National University of Tajikistan professor, thanked the organizers of the Herat Security Dialogue and welcomed the guests. The title of Dr Saadi's statement was "Ajam [non-Arabs] found their identity by celebrating Nowruz" and he described Nowruz as a "unifying factor" among the people of the region. Dr Saadi added that in the present era, if the nation and government want to preserve themselves, they must respect their ancient rituals and practical and historical characters, otherwise they cannot preserve themselves from destruction. He clarified that the ancient "Aryan" religion has two main [unofficial] pillars, one of which is the Persian language and the other is the ancient festival of Nowruz, and whoever wanted to destroy the history of these

people, either banned speaking in Persian language or prevented Nowruz celebration, but no one in history managed to do this.

He also pointed out that some celebrations are tied to the history of the creation of mankind and over the years have gone beyond the circle of cultural values of a nation and a country and has gained a global status, and the global registration of Nowruz celebration by the United Nations shows the special importance and international status of this ancient festival.

Dr Saadi pointed out some common rituals of the people who celebrate Nowruz on the eve of the beginning of the Persian new year, saying that these ancient rituals are common customs and traditions of people in Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asian countries and other regions.

Dr. Siddiqi pointed to the use of cultural capacities by countries to provide a context for dialogue and raised the question of whether culture can be used as an effective factor to reduce tension and violence. She pointed to the visit of Hina Rabbani, the Deputy Foreign Minister of Pakistan, on behalf of the Pakistani government to Afghanistan and the purpose of talking with the officials of the Taliban regime. Dr Ayesha Siddiqi also pointed to the belief of the people of South Asia that Sufism can connect people and insisted that culture should be measured with the real norms of politics. From her point of view, culture should be the main goal of political factions so that it can connect people together.



Meanwhile, Dr Hossein Dehbashi spoke in connection with Nowruz and pointed out that the Persian language, literature and ceremonies are shared values in a mixed, inter-ethnic region crucial for peaceful communication for reconciliation. And in the absence of a conversation, it



will be filled with a highly controversial discourse. According to him, “a discourse based on extreme ethnocentrism, selfish, sectarian and inflexible Salafist view” which according to him manifests itself in harsh rulings such as misogyny, desegregation, closing humanities principals, banning girls' education, censorship of free media, opposition to non-religious education, and finally carrying out terrorist and suicide operations.

Mr Dehbashi stated that our region - which is called "Nowruzistan" in this conference - is constantly under construction and destruction on the three fronts of "cultural heritage, religious beliefs and modernism". These three basic aspects, if accompanied by the continuous study and accurate knowledge of sociologists, guidance of educated people, and the acceptance of all the people of these countries, can lead to civilization. Dr Dehbashi also added that Nowruz is a keyword for all national and regional occasions, ceremonies, and rituals that are common in Nowruzistan. And Nowruzistan means “a new, trans-religious and trans-ethnic demarcation among nearly 300 million people composed of many different ethnic groups and religions”.

### **Question and Answer**

Following the speakers' presentation, participants exchanged ideas and raised their questions. In response to this question, raised by Mohammad Aalam Izdiyar, the former deputy of the Afghan Senate, on how educators can play a role in changing the views of government, Dr Hossein Dehbashi stated that governments prefer their material interests to cultural ties in relations among other things, and regional governments should pay attention to common cultural interests in addition to their economic, political, and military interests. But the "mistrust crisis" in the region has challenged this.

Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta was in view that some people think that Nowruz is only a cultural value for Persian speakers, but in fact, Nowruz is an international value that is celebrated by different countries. Adding to the point raised by Dr Spanta, Mr Faizullah Zaki, former MP, emphasized that in addition to Persian-speaking people, people of Turkic origin and Uzbek language speakers in Afghanistan also celebrate Nowruz widely. Participants insisted on regional unity and the expansion of regional convergence in the area of Nowruz-celebrated countries and the understanding of the concept of "Nowruzistan".

## Panel VI- Afghanistan: Global Responsibility; Synergistic Approach; UN Role



The sixth panel titled “*Afghanistan: Global Responsibility; Synergistic Approach; UN Role*” aimed to discuss the following overarching questions i.e. what is the global responsibility in/for Afghanistan and international leverage towards the Taliban de facto government? Can there be a synergistic approach toward Afghanistan? What could be the role of the UN? The speakers were Dr Narsir A. Andisha, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the UN in Geneva, Karen Decker, US Chargé d'affaires, US Embassy Kabul, Ambassador Tomas Niklasson, Special Envoy of the European Union for Afghanistan, Ambassador Maxim Peshkov, Senior Specialist, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Science, Moscow. The session was moderated by Dr Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, associate professor, at the Paris School of International Affairs, Sciences Po, France.

### ***Is Afghanistan still important for the international community?***

The participants in different sessions continued to raise their concerns that the international community has abandoned Afghanistan. Those who have routinely observed Afghanistan agree that the attention on Afghanistan has been diverted due to some major issues such as the Ukraine war and the subsequent economic crises in the West. Ambassador Maxim Peshkov was among the first ones who agreed to this sad reality. "The attention towards Afghanistan from the international community is decreasing", he added.

However, the EU and US dignitaries were of the view that the international community is still monitoring the situation in Afghanistan through internationally mandated commissions such as UNAMA. Whereas Karen Decker categorically mentioned that the US is still there. She said, “America is not going away. We take our partnership with Afghan people very seriously”.

Decker contended that silence does not mean abandonment. “I was quite dismayed yesterday to hear over and over again about American abandonment and how America has left. The closure of the US embassy is not equal to a lack of engagement. Absence does not mean we are not working on behalf of the Afghan people”.

In fact, Decker added that the US has been quite active. “The focus of the past year has been to replace the tools we used to have with new tools to help the Afghan people and the reality is, that takes time”. She also reminded that the US is still Afghanistan’s leading aid support. “US remain the leading humanitarian aid to Afghanistan with \$1.1B in the past year. We have created with the help of the international community the Afghan fund which is preserving \$3.5B of Afghan money to be used to stabilise the Afghan economy”.

Decker also shared the ongoing efforts to support the Afghan people in need. "We have let the European companies print new Afghan currencies to replace old worn-out notes. There is \$78 million worth of small denominations of Afghanis that were going to be put into circulation into the hands of Afghan women, in particular, who are still in Afghanistan. The old notes will be destroyed”.

However, Decker suggested that we should shift from looking at one country to collective measures to support Afghanistan. “Questions and conversations that what is America doing to help Afghanistan need to be reframed as ‘what are we going to do’ or ‘what can we do to help the Afghan people”.

### ***Engage or not Engage the Taliban?***

The critical question that always remains on the table that either the Taliban should be engaged or not. And what does engagement mean or entail? The participants attempted to address some of these questions. Ambassador Maxim Peshkov said, “of course, we should engage with the Taliban. Countries which have an interest in the region they do engage. However, we must understand what does it mean fully engaged i.e. to recognise officially? No, we are not ready”.

Some participants in the previous sessions strongly emphasised that the engagement with the Taliban should be led by the Afghan people. In response, Dr Andisha argued that “people of

Afghanistan are engaging with Taliban from the day one from the streets of Kabul when our women got out and started protesting for basic rights. We are doing all kinds of engagements from media to university to the mountain of Hindukush”.

Ambassador Tomas Niklasson also shared the EU perspective on the engagement: “Our engagement with the Taliban is neither transactional nor tactical. We are principled”.

## Question and Answer

### *How to hold Taliban accountable?*

Ambassador Tomas Niklasson provided a roadmap to hold the Taliban accountable. “There are three sources of accountability: first of all, it would be the Taliban's commitment to the people of Afghanistan and the legitimate expectations and the rights of the people of Afghanistan. Secondly, Afghanistan's international obligation when it comes to human rights conventions. Thirdly, bilateral commitments. Doha agreement has been referred to repeatedly but it’s not the only agreement between partners, international community and Taliban”.

There has always been a fear that the Taliban would use or exploit humanitarian aid. Decker clarified that the "US government is not providing money to the Taliban. Humanitarian assistance goes to carefully chosen international NGOs". To address this loophole adequately, Dr Andisha shared a newly drafted principle:

*“We have also added the fourth principle; humanitarian assistance cannot be devoid of or isolated from human rights and gender sensitivity. Therefore, we are advocating in Geneva whatever international humanitarian engagement in Afghanistan it has to be gender sensitive and it has to take care of the basic of human rights”.*

In response to the question on how international community should move forward, speakers applauded and agreed that the UN has a role to play and also suggested the convergence of different platforms and formats focusing on Afghanistan into one as it will have a stronger impact on the country's future. “There should be a common narrative and a common set of objectives that can be united into an Afghan platform that the international community responds to” Decker added.

Dr Andisha also reminded that any engagement should not be used as an excuse to give the Taliban leverage or ignore sanctions placed on the Taliban. "Engagement has to be two ways. In one way, we have to engage but on the other way, we have to be very cognizant of the

Security Council sanctions”. For the international community, he added that “the principle of engagement should be independent, impartiality and unimpeded access to the vulnerable communities”.

Dr. Nazif Shahrani, one of the participants, reminded the need for change in leadership. “We have tested the old guard but now we need to look at new and young faces that represent 70 per cent of the Afghan population”.

## Panel VII: The Way Forward: Healing, Realism and Resilience



The seventh panel titled “*The Way Forward: Healing; Realism; Resilience*” aimed to discuss the solutions and practical steps to overcome the current situation and move to an inclusive political system.

Speakers included Mr. Mohsin Dawar, Head of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Parliament of Pakistan, Ambassador Ronald Neumann, President of the American Academy of Diplomacy and Ms. Sayara Dashti, Director of Fahim Dashty Foundation. The session was moderated by Mr Sanjar Sohail, Publisher of Hasht-e Subh Daily Newspaper.

Mr. Sanjar Sohail began the session by raising the question “how could we form an inclusive government in Afghanistan and persuade the Taliban to respect the basic rights of people, in particular, women and build lasting peace with global and regional cooperation?”

Considering his expertise and attention to the affairs relating to Afghanistan, Ambassador Ronald Neumann expressed concerns over the future of this country. He said that due to the performance of Taliban [in the 1990s] when this group thought it had all the power, it did not share power with others, which led to an uprising against the Taliban and eventually forced it to collapse. Mr Neumann said that if the Taliban does not pay attention to the people's interests

history will repeat itself, especially when a large portion of Afghan people believe in equal rights for both men and women, freedom of media, and freedom of speech. Ambassador Neumann reminded that Afghans should not hope that the US will act again to change the situation in Afghanistan and force the Taliban to form an inclusive government, but instead, Afghans themselves should take action and not wait for a foreign role in changing the situation in Afghanistan.

However, Ms Sayara Dashti said that the world has not paid attention to the survivors of the wars in Afghanistan, especially after August 15, 2021. Pointing to the restrictions imposed by the Taliban on Afghan women, Ms Dashti criticized the warm welcome of Ms Hina Rabbani by Taliban leaders. Ms Dashti emphasized that the ongoing struggle in Afghanistan, including the civic movement of women, the resistance on the peaks of the Hindu Kush or the actions of Afghan politicians, complement one another and should not be considered separately because the spirit of struggle and resistance exists in all Afghans, including children, adults, women, and men.

Supporting the points made by Ms Dashti, Mr Mohsin Dawar reminded the irresponsible role of the US in the affairs of Afghanistan. According to him, “the US 2021 withdrawal from Afghanistan caused the Taliban to take the people of Afghanistan in hostage, and this is while the Taliban is unable to provide the minimum services to the people”. Taliban removed women from public spheres, and there is no sign of the Taliban's interest in forming an inclusive government and distribution of power with Afghan politicians. Mr Dawar reiterated that the Taliban does not believe in anything other than itself, and this will aggravate the crisis in Afghan society. However, whether the current situation in Afghanistan affects the region or not, Mr Dawar said that the presence of terrorist groups that cooperate with the Taliban, such as al-Qaeda, or other groups that oppose Taliban, such as ISKP, will certainly threaten the security of the region, and regional countries should be concerned about the situation. Regarding the role of Pakistan's intelligence agencies, Mr Dawar detailed that his absence [and the reason why he joined this programme virtually] is a sign of the Taliban's close relationship with Pakistan's intelligence agencies. It is active, but surely, the close relations with the Taliban will one day affect Pakistan. Mr Dawar appreciated the resistance of women in Afghanistan since August 15, 2021, and highlighted that the international community should support the role of Afghan women and their quest. Women's education should be taken into consideration and highlighted in all international forums. Regarding the future, Mr Dawar stressed that the Afghan forces should unite and form a united resistance because the Taliban are not able to

form a political system. “Taliban is a destructive force, it cannot give a share to the population, and this itself will cause the Taliban government to fall.” However, regarding the role of the regions, he emphasized that regional countries should support the alternative forces, although it is challenging to bring all together, an effort should be made.

## **Question and Answer**

In response to the question about the role of the international community in supporting Afghan civil society activists and what kind of assistance the international community can offer, Ambassador Neumann said that the international community cannot play a role in this regard. Afghans themselves should be able to unite and decide to act. He believes that the international community has a different view and approach toward Afghanistan. For example, the US provides humanitarian support to Afghanistan due to avoid further humanitarian crises, if that support is stopped, the people of Afghanistan will suffer. However, if it continues, the pressure on Taliban will decrease. Now, how to provide help and what kind of support, it is the Afghan people to decide.

Mohsin Dawar, in response to Mr Sanjar's question on what kind of action on both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border is necessary to be taken, said that he and his like-minded people in Pakistan have criticized the role being played by Pakistan in Afghanistan, as well as the role of the United States and the irresponsible withdrawal of the United States of America, but what is important now is the fact that the masses in the society are politically active forces, if the politicians want to do something, both in Pakistan and in Afghanistan, they must have the masses support to affect any political action.



## Special Panel: Conversation with Mr Ahmad Masoud, Leader of the National Resistance Front



Mr Massoud, the leader of the National Resistance Front (NRF), who was speaking on the last day of the HSD in Dushanbe, in a special interview said that the collapse of Afghanistan in mid-August 2021 was expected. He had shared his concern with the authorities and the international community long before. According to him, this situation could be avoided if the authorities and the international community would have listened to these concerns. Mr Massoud said that the release of 5000 Taliban prisoners which was carried out with the guarantee of some countries was a "false optimism" that they would not join the arms groups again, however, Taliban did not comply with the pelage and those returned to the battlefields.

### *Afghanistan has become the centre of terrorism*

Mr Massoud warned that Afghanistan has become a centre of terrorism. He added, "as a result of Taliban, today Afghanistan has become a training and recruiting centre for regional and international terrorist groups and a prison for the people of Afghanistan, which is a direct result of the Taliban's actions". Mr Massoud said, "relocation, training and recruitment of regional and international terrorist groups, production and smuggling of drugs, assassination and

disappearance of former security forces, soldiers and government official, arrests, torture, field trials, forced migration, war crimes, crime against humanity, genocide and insecurity and lack of law in Afghanistan are increasing, all of which are serious threats to the people of Afghanistan, the region and the world."

***Inconclusive talks between the National Resistance Front and the Taliban***



Mr Massoud emphasized that since the beginning of its formation, the NRF has tried to peacefully solve the country's problem and to open the window of dialogue with Taliban through various delegations inside the country and in foreign meetings. However, as Mr Massoud clarified the result of their talks with Taliban was "nothing but disappointment". Mr Massoud stressed that Taliban have not changed and continue with their autocracy. He added that the efforts of the international community to change the Taliban also have not had any results.

Mr Massoud raised his concern regarding the vast violation of human rights, especially women, increase in insecurity, and lawlessness in Afghanistan and said the women's resistance and formation of anti-Taliban movements are the indications of people's dissatisfaction. He emphasized on the importance of diverse political, civil, and military resistance against the Taliban and reiterated that the current situation requires negotiations, reconciliation, and

finding permanent solutions for Afghanistan. He said, “unlike the classical theory of negotiating from a position of strength or weakness, we believe in negotiation based on values, principles, and dignity.”

### ***Talks between countries and the Taliban***

Mr Massoud also pointed to the talks between the countries and Taliban. He said, "individual plan and separate contacts of the regional countries and the world with the Taliban to find a tactical solution is not only a solution for the stability of Afghanistan, but in the long run it leads to the conflict of interests and the continuation of the war". He said, "the solution to the problem of Afghanistan, regional and the world's concerns, requires a regional and international cooperation in supporting the people of Afghanistan and the establishment of a decentralized, legitimate and inclusive political system in Afghanistan". Mr Massoud added, "the countries of the region and the international community know that their persistent efforts to persuade the Taliban to change have not yielded results. The Taliban have imposed their extreme and cruel methods on our people, contrary to Islamic teachings and beliefs and universally accepted values.

### ***Girls' education and women's rights***

Mr Massoud called for the practical and ultimate support of the international community for the women and girls in Afghanistan country. He emphasized, "Afghan people, especially women, have been deprived of their basic rights. Our goal is that all citizens, men, and women, have full and equal rights. Therefore, in addition to focusing on girls' education, we emphasize on restoring the fundamental rights of all Afghan people, of which the right to quality education is a part of it, and we also ask the international community to take serious and practical steps in this regard”.

## **Question and Answer**

Mr Massoud, in response to the question of Hasht-e-Subh Daily about the NRF policy towards women, said, "the resistance of women who stand against the Taliban without any support, is a model for the NRF". Referring to the presence of women in the decision-making and the structure of the resistance front, he emphasized that the armed resistance of the NRF and women's civic protest are both moving with similar objectives. In response to a question about the misuse of people from the name of NRF, Mr Massoud said, "in the most difficult conditions,

efforts have been made to form an honest capacity, however, NRF welcomes all different capacities as the connecting point between different ideas and capacities”.

In response to the question regarding the military response against Taliban and the NRF military capacity and competencies, Mr Massoud asserted that war in Afghanistan has always been imposed on the people and added “the resistance against Taliban is not because we do not accept the Taliban, it is because the Taliban do not accept our values and principles”. Taliban have violated Islamic principles and human dignity. They left no way but resistance. In response to another question about the status and achievements of the NRF, Mr Massoud said that the efforts of the NRF and other forms of resistance, including the protests of women and elites, have prevented countries from recognizing the "authoritarian regime" of the Taliban. According to him, these resistances increased the cohesion and unity of the opposing forces. He said the establishment of a democratic system that provides freedom and justice in Afghanistan is one of the goals and objectives of the NRF. He emphasized on the need for cooperation between local, regional, and international communities for the establishment of a government that represents the will of the people of Afghanistan. If Taliban continues its current stance, it is good for the people of Afghanistan and the regional countries to support any move against the Taliban. In response to the question of Mr Massoud’s dream and the regional cultural role, Mr Massoud answered by pointing out the importance of the cultural territory and the threats that the Taliban impose on this culture. He pointed to the destruction of portraits of Persian poets such as Mawlana, Hafiz, and Ferdowsi, from universities in Afghanistan by Taliban. He said that Taliban are stealing people’s freedom, and thoughts and intend to remove culture and identities. After decades of hardship and efforts, people need a government to provide safety and security and demonstrate their will, he concluded.

## Closing Remarks



At the end of the conference, Dr Davood Moradian, Director General of AISS, delivered his note of thanks. He expressed his gratitude to all participants of the tenth round of Herat Security Dialogue who took a long journey to attend this conference from different parts of the world, countries, and local and international organizations.

Referring to the concepts of Khan [or upper hand] and Jan [common term of endearment in the Persian language], Dr Moradian compared the current political model in Afghanistan and regional countries' relationship with Afghanistan to the application of the concept of Khan and pointed to regional countries have had the Khan-type treatment/relationship with Afghanistan in the past years. Dr Moradian added that as a participant in this conference, he wants to send a message to the regional countries to have a *Jan-type* of relationship with each other.

Dr Moradian expressed his special gratitude to His Excellency Imam Ali Rahman, the President of Tajikistan, for providing the opportunity to hold the HSD-X in Dushanbe and appreciated the cooperation of governmental and non-governmental institutions of Tajikistan in organizing this conference. Pointing to the lack of cooperation and support of some neighbouring countries with former officials and people of Afghanistan after the fall of the Republic of Afghanistan, Dr Moradian expressed his appreciation for the sincere support of the people, the government,

and the president of Tajikistan who stood with the people of Afghanistan in the difficult days after August 2021.

Dr Dawood Moradian also thanked AISS colleagues who worked tirelessly in organizing the HSD-X and appreciated the support and cooperation of the Centre for Afghanistan and Regional Studies in organizing the HSD in Dushanbe Dr. Moradian also expressed his special gratitude to the Research England for its generous support to AISS-UK and the University of Sussex, and National Endowment for Democracy (NED) which financially supported HSD-X.

**\*\*\*The End\*\*\***

## Annex 1: Short Bios of the Presenters and Moderators

### Dr. Rangin dadfar Spanta



Is former Afghanistan's National Security Adviser, former Foreign Minister and the Senior Advisor on International Affairs to President Hamid Karzai. Dr. Spanta fled to Turkey during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan before moving to Germany. There he became assistant professor of political science at RWTH Aachen University. He also served as Spokesperson for the Alliance for Democracy in Afghanistan and was active in the German Green Party. He also briefly taught at Kabul University after the fall of the Taliban.

### Mr. Farhad Salim



Mr. Farhad Salim is the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan. Prior to his current position, he served during the years 2014-2020 as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Tajikistan to the USA, Washington. He previously served during the years 2009-2011 as the Head of the Europe and America Department of the Ministry. Later he was appointed as Counselor of the Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan in WashingtonD.C. during the years 2011-2014.

### Prof. Qasim Shah Eskandar



His

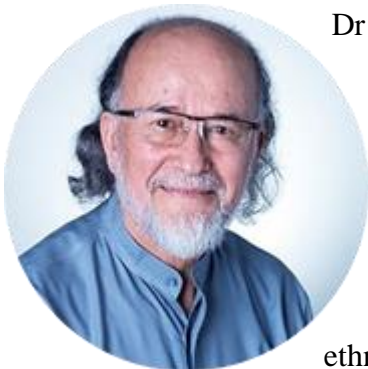
Is the founder and President of the Centre for Afghanistan and Regional Studies of Tajikistan. Meanwhile, he is the Chief Scientific Secretary of the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan. Previously he served as the head of the Department of Iran and Afghanistan at the Institute of Language, Literature, Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan. research focus is on the problems of Afghanistan and regional security.

### **Dr. Aliye Yilmaz**



Is Assistant Professor and a member of the scientific board at the Süleyman Demirel University, where she works on cultural policy. She is a former member of the leadership committee for the high council for national reconciliation (HCNR) and former commissioner of the independent administrative reform and civil service commission (ARCSC). Dr Yılmaz got her PPh.D.in philosophy and religious sciences from Ankara University. In the context of examining the relationship between religion, education and politics in the countries of the region, she chooses Jamaluddin Afghani as an element in her doctoral thesis. She wrote her master's thesis in 2005 on Afghanistan women's education and social status. Dr Yılmaz, who works as a human rights protector, is the head of the Afghanistan Education, Culture and Social Assistance Association in Ankara. In the past years, she has also carried out educational and cultural studies with the Emir Ali Şir Nevai Foundation, of which she is a founding member.

### **Dr. Nazif Shahrani**



Dr Shahrani is a professor of anthropology and Central Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at Indiana University Bloomington. Dr Shahrani's earlier research focused on the cultural ecology of high-altitude agro-pastoralism in the Wakhan and Pamirs of Afghanistan. Since the 1980s, his focus has been on Islamic movements, identity politics, state-society relations in multi-ethnic nation-states, political economy, and international aid and proxy wars "by the West on the Rest."



### **Dr. Dawood Azami**



Dr Azami is working as a Multi-Media Editor at BBC World services in London. Dr Azami is a visiting lecturer at the University of Westminster, London. He is also a Visiting Scholar at the Ohio University, Columbia. He was honoured as a Young Global Leader by the Global Economic Forum. And he is also a Consulting member at the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

### **Ms. Mariam Wardak**



Mariam Wardak is the founder of Her Afghanistan, an organization that supports women in technical fields to advance in their professional careers. Her Afghanistan is among the ten organizations she has helped establish and grow. Wardak has also served in both the president Karzai and Ghani administrations as an adviser to multiple institutions Strategic Communication and International Relations Adviser to Office of the National Security Council, and a Strategic Planning Adviser at the Ministry of Counter Narcotics – Afghanistan. She got her master’s degree in Social Justice and Social Change from The Catholic University of America.

### **Amb. Sayed Tayeb Jawad**



Mr. Said Tayeb Jawad is an Afghan politician and diplomat. He served as the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the Russian Federation, from 2021 to 2022. He was the Chief of Staff of office of President Hamid Karzai. Amb. Jawad was also the CEO of Capitalize LLC, a strategic consulting firm based in Washington, D.C., where he led a dynamic team of international business experts advising governments, international companies and investors on politics, defense, security, market entry, commercial opportunities, and development strategies in Central Asia and the Gulf

regions, including Afghanistan.

**Mr. Afrasiab Khattak**



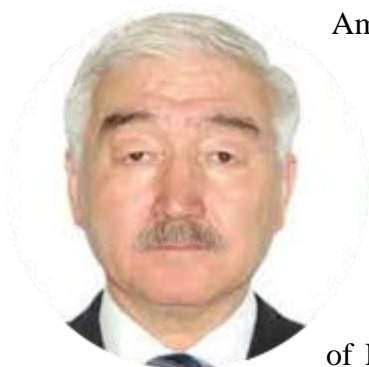
Afrasiab Khattak is a Pashtun nationalist politician and political analyst who is a senior leader of the National Democratic Movement. He has formerly served as the chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, a member of the Senate of Pakistan, and the provincial president of the Awami National Party. He is an activist in the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement.

**Dr. Mohammad Ali Bahmanighajar**



Dr Mohammad Ali Bahmani-Qajar is a Researcher and advocates Lawyer in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Dr Qajar is the author of several books on the history of Iran including *The Territorial Integrity of Iran During the Pahlavi Period*. He is also an international researcher with a focus on regional countries including Afghanistan. He holds a PhD in International Law from Tehran University and a bachelor's degree in human rights from Tehran university.

**Amb. Omirtai Bitimov**



Amb. Omirtai Bitimov is for Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Ambassador Bitimov has also served in several posts since the start of his career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan including Secretary of the Consulate Division, Second Secretary and Consul of the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Turkey, Chief of Near and Middle East, North Africa political division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan. He is the author of numerous articles on Kazakhstan's security challenges.

### **Amb. Manizha Bakhtari**



Manizha Bakhtari is Afghanistan's Ambassador to Austria, of Afghanistan to a diplomat, lecturer, and author. She was former Afghanistan's Ambassador to Nordic Countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, and Finland). Ms. Bakhtari previously served as a Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Ms. Bakhtari, prior to her diplomatic career, was renowned for her work on gender advocacy in the non-profit sector, namely with the Cooperation Center for Afghanistan.

### **Ms. Fawzia Koofi**



Fawzia Koofi is an Afghan politician and an outspoken women's rights activist and former Member of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Peace Negotiation Team to Doha. Ms. Koofi is the founder of the Mawj-i-Tahawal of Afghanistan", a newly formed political alliance. She was the former MP in the Afghan parliament where she was elected as second deputy speaker and was of the parliament's Women Affairs Commission.

### **Amb. Tomas Niklasson**



Ambassador Niklasson is the Special Envoy of the European Union for Afghanistan. Previously, Tomas Niklasson served the Unit for Human and Social Development, within DG Development of the European Commission. In addition to following other dossiers, including policy coordination, tobacco control, and disability and development, he was involved in the follow-up to the "Programme for Action - Accelerated Action on HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis in the Context of Poverty Reduction", which was adopted by the Commission in February 2001. Before joining DG Development, Mr. Niklasson was part of a policy unit in DG Education and Culture (1998-2002) where he contributed to the

development of the Commission's policy dialogue and strategy to promote lifelong learning.

**Dr. Karima Bennoune**



Bennoune is a professor of International Law at the University Of California- Davis School Of Law. She served as an active member of Centre for Women’s Global Leadership delegate to the NGOs Forum at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Her publications have appeared in many leading academic journals, like the American Journal of International Law.

**Ms. Adalat Mirza**



Ms. Adalat Mirza is Chief Editor of Melat Newspaper, Tajikistan

**Dr. Qasemi Saadi**



is PhD candidate of philosophy of sciences, and associate professor of the Department of Theory and History, National University of Tajikistan. He was the first recipient of the presidential scholarship in the post-graduate department of DDOT, and the recipient of "Excellence of the Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan" award.

### **Ms. Suhasini Haidar**



Suhasini Haidar is the Diplomatic Editor of The Hindu where she regularly contributes writing on Foreign policy issues. Prior to this, Suhasini was a Foreign Affairs editor and prime-time anchor for India's leading 24-hr English news channel CNN-IBN (2005-2014) meanwhile, a correspondent for CNN International's New Delhi bureau. In 2015, she was the recipient of the most prestigious Indian print journalism 'Prem Bhatia' award, and has won a series of awards for her works.

### **General Nikolay Plotnikov**



Is Dr. of Political Science, and the Head of the Scientific and Analytical Information Center, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow. Meanwhile, he is a professor at the faculty of World Politics, at Lomonosov Moscow State University.

### **General Mohammad Assad Durrani**



General Asad Ahmed Durrani is a retired 3-star rank general in the Pakistan Army and presently a commentator, speaker, and author. General Durrani is the former Director of the Pakistan Army's Military Intelligence (Inter-service intelligence, ISI). After retiring from the army, he served as Pakistan's ambassador to Germany (1994–97) and Saudi Arabia (2000–2002).

### **Colonel John Agolia**



Academy.

John Agolia, a retired U.S. Army colonel, served as director of the Counterinsurgency Training Center-Afghanistan in Kabul from 2008-2010 and as director of the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute. Mr. John Agolia is Deputy Director for Partnerships at the Global Friend of Afghanistan (GFA) as well as the director of Trinity Planning & Investments LLC. He studied at West Point Military

### **General Rahmatullah Nabil**



Rahmatullah Nabil is an Afghan politician, and former Chief of the National Directorate of Security (NDS), in Afghanistan. Prior to that General Nabil served as Deputy of the National Security Advisor, and founder and Chief of the President Protective Service (PPS). He also served as the Deputy head of interior affairs at the National Security Council (NSC) (2003 - 2010). He was a candidate in the 2019 Presidential election.

### **Dr. Sahra Karimi**



master's and bachelor's degrees from the same university.

Dr. Saahra Karimi is a Visiting Professor at Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia. Italy. women activist, a filmmaker, and the first female Director of Afghan Film. Dr. Karimi has directed 30 short films, 3 documentary films, and one fiction film. Dr. Karimi holds a Ph.D. in Fiction Film Directing & Screenwriting from the Academy of Music and Performing Arts (VŠMU), Film and Television Faculty (FTF), Italy. She got her

**Dr. Hossein Dehbashi**



Hossein Dehbashi is a historian, documentary maker and writer. He previously managed the “Oral History of Iran” project for the National Library of Iran and, in 2015, he started the “Oral History of the Islamic Republic of Iran.” Dehbashi made the propaganda film “Hassan Rouhani” during the 2013 presidential election. Dr. Dehbashi is a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Public Policy Analysis from Georgetown University.

**Dr. Ayesha Siddiq**



Dr Ayesha Siddiq is a senior fellow at the Department of War Studies, King’s College, London. She is the author of two books on Pakistan’s military: Pakistan’s Arms Procurement and Military Build-up, 1979-1999, and Military Inc, Inside Pakistan’s Military Economy. She was a research associate at the Center for International Studies & Diplomacy (CISD) at SOAS, and a fellow at St Antony’s College Oxford. Her area of expertise is military decision-making, defense economics, civil-military relations, and militancy and extremism in South Asia and the Middle East.

**Dr. Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh,**



Is a university professor, researcher, and international consultant specializing in human security, peacebuilding, counter-terrorism, and radicalization, with geographic specialization in Central Asia and Afghanistan. Since 2004, she has been teaching master’s Level courses on Human Security as well as courses on Understanding and Responding to Radicalization within the Paris School of International Affairs (PSIA) at Sciences Po Paris (Institute of Political Studies). Prior to Sciences Po, Tadjbakhsh taught at Columbia University (New York) as an adjunct professor (2003-2005) and has since been a visiting professor or researcher at universities in Tehran, Kabul, New Delhi, Pretoria, Moscow and

Dushanbe. Since 2014, she has been the Academic Advisor to the Afghan Institute of Strategic Studies (AISS).

**Dr. Nasir A. Andisha**



Dr. Andisha Is the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the UN in Geneva. Prior to his appointment as a PR and Ambassador, Dr. Andisha served as the Deputy Foreign Minister for Management and Resources for over three years. He was the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, and the Republic of Fiji, (2011-2015). Upon his appointment in 2011, Dr. Andisha was the youngest Ambassador of Afghanistan’s Foreign Service. Between 2009-2011, Dr. Andisha served as the Director General of the Fifth Political Division (US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand), and from 2006 to 2007 he was the Director of Multilateral Economic Relations and International Financial Institutions.

**Chargé d’Affaires Karen B. Decker**



A career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Karen B. Decker specializes in conflict resolution and crisis management. Currently, she is the Chargé d’Affaires of the U.S. Mission to Afghanistan. Karen previously served as the Director for Afghanistan Operations for the Afghan Relocation Effort (CARE) from September 2021-August 2022 and as Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul from September 2018 to September 2020. Earlier assignments in Afghanistan include two years as Senior Civilian Representative in eastern Afghanistan (2012-2014), and tours in Kandahar and Ghazni in 2006 and 2007. Prior to returning to Afghanistan in 2018, Karen was the Director of the Syria Transition Assistance Response Team, leading interagency teams in Turkey and Syria responsible for humanitarian and stabilization assistance.



**Amb. Maxim Peshkov**



Maxim Peshkov, Senior Specialist, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Science, Moscow and Former Ambassador of Russian Federation to Ireland.

**Mr. Sanjar Sohail**



Publisher/Founder at Hasht-e- Subh Daily Newspaper with a demonstrated history of working in the newspaper industry. Skilled in Reporting & Analysis, Politics, Storytelling, Investigative Reporting, and Publication Development. Strong media and communication professional with a Master's degree focused on Conflict Analysis & Management from Royal Roads University.

**Mr. Mohsin Dawar**



Mr. Mohsin Javed Dawar is a Pakistani politician who is the chairman of the National Democratic Movement (NDM). Mohsin Dawar was elected to lead the national assembly standing committee on foreign affairs in 2022. Mr. Dawar has been a member of the National Assembly since August 2018. He is also the chairperson of the National Democratic Movement (NDM), and the co-founder of a human rights movement – the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM).

**Amb. Ronald E. Neumann**



Is the President of the American Academy of Diplomacy. Formerly a Deputy Assistant Security of State, Ronald E. Neumann served as the US Ambassador to Afghanistan, Algeria, and Bahrain. He also served as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Near East Affairs (1997-2000) with responsibility for North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, and as Ambassador to Algeria (1994 to 1997). He was Director of the Office of Northern Gulf Affairs (Iran and Iraq; 1991 to 1994).

**Ms. Sayyara Dashty**



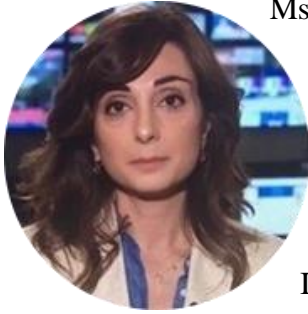
Ms. Sayyara Dashty is a women’s rights activist and Founder and Director of Fahim Dashty Foundation. She founded this foundation to support journalists and families in conflict zones after she was exiled to Toronto, Canada.

**Mr. Ahmad Massoud**



Mr. Ahmad Masoud is the Leader of the National Resistance Front (NRF). He is the successor to continue his late father’s (Ahmad Shah Massoud) legacy – who was the leader of the Northern Alliance or the Resistance Movement which fought against the Soviet forces and the Taliban ahead of 9/11. Ahmad Massoud is a graduate of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He finished his education in War Studies at King's College London. Ahmad has studied both warfare and international relations, taking in Western, Arab, Turkish, and Afghan perspectives.

**Ms. Tanya Goudsouzian**



Ms. Goudsouzian is an international journalist specializing in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kurdish affairs for over fifteen years. She is reporting from the US, Egypt, UAE, Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar, and Turkey. Her work has been Published in RFE/RL, Al Jazeera English, Le Monde Diplomatique, Newsweek, The National Interest, and Washington Post, among others.

## Annex 2: The Agenda

### Tuesday 29 November (National Library of Tajikistan)

08:30-09:00	Participants Registration	
<b>Opening Session</b>		
09:00-10:00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recitation of Hymns of Khaja Abdullah Ansari by Ms. Bahara</li> <li>2. Singing of “Watan Eshgh Tu Eftakharam” by Ms. Shora Wakili</li> <li>3. Declamation of Poetry by Mr. Atiq</li> <li>4. Welcoming Remark by Professor Qasim Shah Eskandar, President of the Centre for Afghanistan and Regional Studies of Tajikistan</li> <li>5. Speech by Mr. Farhad Salim, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan</li> <li>6. Chairperson Presentation, Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Chairperson of AISS Advisory Board/ Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghnaistan</li> </ol>	
<b>Panel I: Afghanistan’s Arduous Struggle for Constitutional State</b>		
<b>Moderator</b>		Dr Aliye Yillmaz: Asst. Professor, Suleyman Demirel University
10:00-11:30	<b>Speakers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Nazif Shahrani, Professor at Indiana University, Indiana, USA</li> <li>• Dr Dawood Azami, BBC/University of Westminster, London</li> <li>• Dr Mohammad Amin Ahmadi, Former President of Avicenna University &amp; Member of the Delegation of Afghan Government for Doha Negotiations</li> </ul>
<b>Discussion</b>		
11:30-12:00	<b>Tea Break</b>	
<b>Panel II: Geopolitical Blackhole: Afghanistan; Regional Consensus</b>		
<b>Moderator</b>		Mrs Mariam Wardak, Senior Journalist/Anchor with WOIN News
12:00-13:30	<b>Speakers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amb. Sayed Tayeb Jawad, Afghanistan’s Former Ambassador to the US, UK &amp; Russia</li> <li>• Senator Afrasiab Khattak, Senior Leader, National Democratic Movement, Islamic Republic of Pakistan</li> <li>• Dr. Mohammad Ali Bahmanighajar, Researcher, Islamic Republic of Iran</li> <li>• Amb. Omirtai Bitimov, Former Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Afghanistan</li> </ul>
<b>Discussion</b>		
13:30-14:30	<b>Lunch</b>	

	<b>Panel III: Afghan Women: Betrayal; Apartheid; Resistance</b>	
	<b>Moderator</b>	Amb. Manizha Bakhtari, Ambassador of Afghanistan to Austria
14:30-16:00	<b>Speakers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Fawzia Koofi, Former Member of Parliament, Afghanistan</li> <li>• Amb. Tomas Niklasson, Special Envoy of the European Union for Afghanistan</li> <li>• Dr Karima Bennoune, Professor of International Law at the University of California</li> <li>• Ms. Adalat Mirza, Chief Editor of Melat Newspaper, Tajikistan</li> </ul>
	<b>Discussion</b>	
16:00-16:30	<b>Tea Break</b>	
	<b>Panel IV: Terrorism: Sacred Violence; State Instrument</b>	
	<b>Moderator</b>	Ms. Suhasini Haidar, Diplomatic Editor, The Hindu Newspaper
16:30-18:00	<b>Speakers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Nikolay Plotnikov, Head of Scientific and Analytical Information Center, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow</li> <li>• General Mohammad Assad Durrani, Former Director of Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI), Pakistan</li> <li>• Mr Rahmatullah Nabil, Former DG of the National Directorate of Security (NDS), Afghanistan</li> <li>• Colonel John Agoglia, Former Director of the US Army Peace Keeping &amp; Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) and The Counterinsurgency Training Center-Afghanistan (CTC-A)</li> </ul>
	<b>Discussion</b>	
19:00-21:00	<b>Official Dinner &amp; Cultural Event</b>	

### Wednesday November 30 (Hyatt Regency Hotel)

08:30-09:00	<b>Traditional Sufi Music (live)</b>	
	<b>Panel V: Nowruzistan: Shared Heritage; Civic Space and Social Movements</b>	
	<b>Moderator</b>	Dr Sahraa Karimi, Film Director and University Lecturer
9:00 – 10:30	<b>Speakers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Hossein Dehbashi, Historian &amp; Documentary Producer, Islamic Republic of Iran</li> <li>• Dr Qasemi Saadi, Professor of National University, Tajikistan</li> <li>• Dr Ayesha Siddiga, Fellow, Kings' College London, United Kingdom</li> </ul>
	<b>Discussion</b>	
10:30-11:00	<b>Tea Break</b>	

	<b>Panel VI: Afghanistan: Global Responsibility; Synergistic Approach; UN Role</b>	
	<b>Moderator</b>	Professor Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, Associate Professor, Paris School of International Studies, Science Po, Paris
11:00-12:30	<b>Speakers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Nasir A. Andisha, Ambassador &amp; Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the UN in Geneva</li> <li>• Amb. Tomas Niklasson, Special Envoy of the European Union for Afghanistan</li> <li>• Ms. Karen Decker, Chargé d'affaires, US Embassy Kabul</li> <li>• Amb. Maxim Peshkov, Senior Specialist, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Science, Moscow</li> </ul>
	<b>Discussion</b>	
	<b>Panel VII: The Way Forward: Healing; Realism; Resilience</b>	
	<b>Moderator</b>	Mr Sanjar Sohail, Publisher, 8am Daily Newspaper
12:30-13:30	<b>Speakers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Mohsin Dawar, Head of Foreign Affairs Committee, Parliament of Pakistan</li> <li>• Ambassador Ronald Neumann, President, American Academy of Diplomacy</li> <li>• Ms. Sayyara Dashti, Director, Fahim Dashty Foundation</li> </ul>
	<b>Open Discussion</b>	
13:30-14:00	<b>Special Panel: Conversation with Mr. Ahmad Masoud, Leader of the National Resistance Front</b>	
	<b>Moderator</b>	Ms. Tanya Goudsouzian: Journalist & Afghanistan Specialist
14:00-14:10	<b>Note of Thanks: Director of AISS</b>	
14:10-15:10	<b>Lunch</b>	

### **Annex 3: List of Participants**

Afghanistan	Republic of Belarus
Arab Republic of Egypt	Republic of India
Canada	Republic of Kazakhstan
Federal Republic of Germany	Republic of Tajikistan
French Republic	Republic of Türkiye
Islamic Republic of Iran	Republic of Uzbekistan
Islamic Republic of Pakistan	Russian Federation
Japan	Switzerland
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Turkmenistan
Kingdom of Sweden	United Kingdom
People's Republic of China	United States of America
Qatar	European Union
Republic of Azerbaijan	United Nations

No	Name	Designation	Organization
<b>Afghanistan</b>			
1	A.Wahab Zafari	Civil Activist	
2	Abdul Basir Dackhah	Director	Community Basic Needs Development Organization
3	Ahmad Wali Massoud	Executive Director	National Resistance Front
4	Ali Ahmad Osmani	Former Minister	Ministry of Power and Energy
5	Dr. Aliye Yilmaz	Assistant Professor at Department of Islamic History and Arts	Suleyman Demirel University
6	Amir Jan Sabori	Afghan Singer	
7	Davood Moradian	Director	Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies
8	Dawood Azami	Associate Professor	University of Westminster
9	Faizullah Zaki	Ambassador	Afghanistan Embassy to Jakarta, Indonesia
10	Farid Fazli		
11	Fawzia Koofi	Former Representative	Afghanistan Parliament
12	Fayazuddin Ghiasi	Former Diplomat	Afghanistan Embassy in Tajikistan
13	Freshhta Karim	Advisor	Malala Fund
12	Habib Rahyab	Program Officer	National Endowment for Democracy
14	Hamid Arsalan	Senior Specialist	International Monetary Fund
15	Hamid Karimi	Cameraman	Afghanistan International Chanel
16	Khandan Danish	External Relations Officer	Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies
17	Manizha Bakhtari	Afghanistan Ambassador	Afghanistan Embassy in Vienna
18	Marhaba Alikhail	Intake Producer	Afghanistan International TV
19	Mariam Wardak	Presenter	WION
20	Mina Gul Ghiasi	Women's rights activist	
21	Mohammad Amin Ahmadi	Former Director	Avicenna University
22	Mohammad Ashraf Haidare	Ambassador	Afghanistan Embassy in Sri Lanka
23	Mohammad Nateqi	Former Member	Peace Negotiations Team
24	Muhammad Alam Ezadyar	Former Deputy	Afghanistan Senate
25	Muhammad GuL Zulmay Younesi	Former Ambassador	Afghanistan Embassy in Dushanbe
26	Mukhtar Wafayee	Civil Activist	
27	Najiba Salam	Journalist	Voice of America
28	Naser Ahmadi	Journalist	Deutsche Welle
29	Dr. Nasir Ahmad Andisha	Permanent Representative of Afghanistan	UN in Geneva
30	Nasir Rasooli	Journalist	Voice of America



31	Nawid Faiz	Former Diplomat	Afghanistan Embassy in Moscow
32	Nazif Shahrani	Professor of Anthropology	Indiana University
33	Qadam Shah Shahim	Former Army Officer	Ministry of Defense
34	Rahela H. Sidiqi	Founding Director	Rahela Trust for Afghan Women's Education
35	Rahmatullah Nabil	Former Director	National Security Directorate
36	Rangin Dadfar Spanta	Chairman	Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies
37	Sahraa Karimi	Professor	Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia
38	Samiuillah Qatra	Former Police Officer	Ministry of Interior Affairs
39	Sanjar Sohail	Publisher	8am Daily Newspaper
40	Sardar Mohammad Rahimi	Lecturer	Kabul University
41	Sayed Jawad Tayeb	Former Ambassador	Afghanistan Embassy in Moscow
42	Sayyara Dashti	Director	Fahim Dashty Foundation
43	Sibghatullah Ahmadi	Spokesperson and Head of Strategic Communications	National Resistance Front
44	Sina Daliri	Former Deputy	Khurshid Higher Educational Center, Kabul
45	Tajuddin Soroush	Presenter	Afghanistan International Chanel
46	Zalmai Nishat	Scholar	Tony Blair Institute for Global Change
47	Zalmai Rasoul	Ambassador	Afghanistan Embassy in London
48	Zamzama Niazaei	Journalist	Deutsche Welle
<b>Arab Republic of Egypt</b>			
49	Mohamed Abdelhalim	First Secretary	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
50	Mohamed Fayeze Farhat	Director	Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies
<b>Canada</b>			
51	Tanya Goudsouzian	Head of Interviews	TRT World
<b>Federal Republic of Germany</b>			
52	Andreas Protmann	Ambassador	German Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>French Republic</b>			
53	Frederic Grare	Nonresident Senior Fellow South Asia Program	Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
54	Michel Tarran	Ambassador	French Embassy in Dushanbe
55	Yves Manville	Deputy Ambassador of France	French Embassy in Islamabad
<b>Islamic Republic of Iran</b>			
56	Hussein Dehbashi	Historian & Documentary Producer	
57	Mandana Tishayar	Lecturer	Allameh Tabataba'i University
58	Mohammad Ali Bahmanighajar	Researcher and First Grade Lawyer	Courthouse

59	Muhammad Taqi Sabiri	Ambassador	Iranian Embassy in Dushanbe
60	Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh	Associate Professor	Paris Institute of Political Studies
<b>Islamic Republic of Pakistan</b>			
61	Afrasiab Khattak	Senior Leader	National Democratic Movement
62	Ayesha Siddiqa	Fellow	King's College
63	Imran Haidar	Ambassador	Pakistan Embassy in Dushanbe
64	Mohammad Asad Durrani	Former Director	Inter Service Intelligence (ISI)
65	Mohsin Dawar	Head of Foreign Affairs Committee	Parliament of Pakistan
<b>Japan</b>			
66	AIKI Toshihiro	Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary	Japan Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</b>			
67	Walid bin Abdul Rahman Al-Reshaidan	Ambassador	Saudi Arabia Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>Kingdom of Sweden</b>			
68	Camilla Riesenfeld	Senior Specialist in Peace Processes	Folke Bernadotte Academy
69	Cecilia Hull Wiklund	Project Manager Afghanistan	Folke Bernadotte Academy
<b>People's Republic of China</b>			
70	Tszi Shumin	Ambassador	China Embassy in Dushanbe
71	Chen Daiwen	Deputy	China Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>Qatar</b>			
72	Khalid Al-Kuvori	Representative	Qatar Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>Republic of Azerbaijan</b>			
73	Alimirzamin Skerov	Ambassador	Azerbaijan Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>Republic of Belarus</b>			
74	Denisenko Victor	Ambassador	Belarus Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>Republic of India</b>			
75	Gautam Mukhopadhaya	Former Ambassador	Indian Embassy in Afghanistan
76	Pramod Kumar	Second Secretary	Indian Embassy in Dushanbe
77	Rajendra Singh Yadav	Distinguished Fellow	United Service Institution of India
78	Suhasini Haidar	National Editor and Diplomatic Affairs Editor	The Hindu
79	Viraj Singh	Ambassador	Indian Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>Republic of Kazakhstan</b>			
80	Alisher K.Nauruzov	Lead Expert	Centre for Analysis and Prognosis, Open World
81	Omirtai Bitimov	Chairman	Kazakh-Afghan Development and Partnership Association

82	Turehanov Valikhan Amirkhanuly	Ambassador	Kazakhstan Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>Republic of Tajikistan</b>			
83	Abdullo Rahnamo		
84	Adolati Mirzo		
85	Amridin Alimov		
86	Alizoda Saidkhuja		
87	Azizov Davlatsho		
88	Bahodur Abdulloev		
89	Bobiev Azam		
90	Eshonov Safar		
91	Farhod Rahimi		
92	Farhod Salim		
93	Firuza Mahmaddullo		
94	Gulrukhsor Safi		
95	Habibullah Safar		
96	Hafizzoda Shodi Khurshed		
97	Iskandarov Kosimsho		
98	Kodirov Dovar		
99	Latifov Jura		
100	Lola Olimova		
101	Mahkfmov Bahodur		
102	Mahmadshoev R.		
103	Mahmadzoda Parviz		
104	Maytdinova Guzel		
105	Mirzoev Niyoz		
106	Muhammad Abdurahmon		
107	Narzuloev Orzu		
108	Nazarov Nosir		
109	Nazarzoda Rustam		
110	Niyози Y.		
111	Olimov Muzafar		
112	Qasemshah Skandarof		
113	Rahimzoda Ramazon Hamro		
114	Rashidov Nazrisha		
115	Rasulov Nazar		
116	Rustam Haidar		
117	Sa'di Gosimi		
118	Safolov M		
119	Said Hamid		

120	Saidjafar Usmonzoda		
121	Saidzoda Rahim Hamro		
122	Saidzoda Shohrukh		
123	Samadi Shohin		
124	Sattorzoda Abdunabi		
125	Sharifov Amriddin		
126	Sherali Mirzo		
127	Sherali Rizayan		
128	Shokirov Shukur		
129	Ubaidullo Nasrullo		
130	Usmonzoda Khayriddin		
131	Vohidzoda Hadidullo Saydullo		
<b>Republic of Türkiye</b>			
132	Emre Zeki Karagyol	Ambassador	Turkish Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>Republic of Uzbekistan</b>			
133	Islomkhon Gafarov	Researcher	Centre for Afghanistan Studies
134	Rustam Makhmudov	Associate Professor	University of World Economy and Diplomacy
135	Shoismatov Ergash	Ambassador	Uzbekistan Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>Russian Federation</b>			
136	Aleksei Marinin	Senior Specialist, Center for Scientific and Analytical Information	Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences
137	Grigorev Semyon Vyacheslavovich	Ambassador	Russian Embassy in Dushanbe
138	Maxim Peshkov	Senior Specialist	Institute of Oriental Studies Russian Academy of Sciences
139	Nikolay Plotnikov	Head of Center Scientific and Analytical Information	Institute of Oriental Studies Russian Academy of Sciences
140	Omar Nessar	Senior Fellow	Institute of Oriental Studies Russian Academy of Sciences
<b>Switzerland</b>			
141	Marc P. George	Senior Diplomatic Adviser	Geneva Centre for Security Policy
<b>Turkmenistan</b>			
142	Togalakov Khemra	Ambassador	Turkmenistan Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>United States of America</b>			
143	Bridgette Walker	Deputy Chief of Mission	U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe
144	John Agoglia	Deputy President	Global Friends of Afghanistan
145	David Sedney	Former President	American University of Afghanistan
146	Jeremy Ventuso	Second Secretary	U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe
147	John Dempsey	Special Advisor	State Department

148	John Mark Pommersheim	Ambassador	U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe
149	Karen Decker	Charge d'affaires	US Embassy in Kabul
150	Kimberly Pantzlaff	Defense attaché office	U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe
151	Ronald Neuman	President	American Academy of Diplomacy
152	Time Wilder	Deputy Director, Afghanistan Desk	State Department
<b>United Kingdom</b>			
153	David Loyn	Senior Fellow	Kings College
154	Sir Nicholas Kay	Former UK Ambassador to Afghanistan	
155	Timothy Marshall Jones	Ambassador	British Embassy in Dushanbe
<b>European Union</b>			
156	Petra Gašpárová	Deputy Head of Delegation, Head of Political, Press and Information Section	Delegation of the European Union to Tajikistan
157	Rene Hansen	Political Advisors	
158	Raimundas Karablis	Head of Delegation and Ambassador	Delegation of the European Union to Tajikistan
159	Tomas Niklasson	EU Special Envoy for Afghanistan	European Union
<b>United Nations</b>			
160	Rasoul Rakhimov	Program Manager	Office on Drugs and Crimes in Tajikistan
<b>Media</b>			
161	8am Daily Newspaper		
162	Afghanistan Etilaat		
163	Afghanistan International TV		
164	Amu TV		
165	Asia plus		
166	Deutsche Welle		
167	Dushanbe Television		
168	Faraj Newspaper		
169	Fars		
170	Independent Persian		
171	Jahonnamo Television		
172	Khovar News Agency of Tajikistan		
173	Media Company		
174	Minbari Khalq Newspaper		
175	Ozodi		
176	Safina Television		
177	Sinamo Television		

178	Sputnik		
179	Tajikistan Radio		
180	Tajikistan Television		
181	Voice of America		
182	BBC		
<b>Staff</b>			
183	Alimardonov Sheryazdon		
184	Davlatov Zokir		
185	Ghiyosiev Mehriddin		
186	Kurbonov Saidahmad		
187	Majidzoda Nurali		
188	Maydonov Mahjubjon		
189	Mirzoev Izatullo		
190	Ne'matova Mosharif		
191	Nurali Murodov		
192	Saidova Amina		
193	Sattorov Bahodur		
194	Shohiyon Shohrukh		
195	Tagdirov Jakhongir		
196	Talbakzoda Yazdoni		

## **Annex 4: Links of the National and International Media Covered the conference**

### **Special live coverage of HSD-X by Afghanistan International TV:**

<https://youtu.be/PV3pBwHcyOc>  
<https://youtu.be/gLqgRRPINKM>  
<https://youtu.be/3ZaT3rh0Vw>  
<https://youtu.be/lwaOprnF3jk>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BjFmRkwkrGo&t=35s>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fP4X6JT03oM>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JyUJJyxgxo>

### **Special Panel by Afghanistan International TV on HSD-X**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BireMru9Io>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fF6Q-K9J6U>

### **Live Report of Amu TV on HSD-X**

[https://youtu.be/OYB\\_kpnzzaI](https://youtu.be/OYB_kpnzzaI)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJu\\_YU4G4es](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJu_YU4G4es)

### **Report by Voice of America on HSD-X**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zMATKpBpgAc>

### **Hasht-e- Sub Daily-English Report**

<https://8am.media/eng/?s=Herat%20Security%20Dialogue>

### **Hasht-e- Sub Daily-Persian Report**

[Click here](#)  
[Click here](#)

### **The Hindu News on HSD-X**

[Click here](#)  
[Click here](#)

### **BBC Persian's Report on HSD-X**

<https://youtu.be/-P8-mw2cyzA>

### **Independent Persian on HSD-X**

[Click here](#)  
<https://cdn.jwplayer.com/previews/0KKCZvpf>

### **Khaama Press on HSD-X**

[Click here](#)

### **Ariana News on HSD-X**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPUwI2rlgSM>

### **Etilaatroz on HSD-X**

[Click here](#)

### **Amu on HSD-X**

<https://amu.tv/en/25438/>

### **Radio Azadi on HSD-X**

[https://youtu.be/uYPc\\_2YzZuQ](https://youtu.be/uYPc_2YzZuQ)

### **Tolo News on HSD-X**

<https://youtu.be/fRhHzfVNT2c>

<https://youtu.be/cxs6dlCzyxs>

**Noor TV on HSD-X**

<https://youtu.be/v1bcyklh27I>

**AfgInternational on HSD-X**

<https://youtu.be/xpS2BBocjac>

**BBC on HSD-X**

<https://www.bbc.com/persian/ar...>

<https://twitter.com/bbcpersian...>

**1TV on HSD-X**

<https://youtu.be/Uccyz0dD3Zc>

**DW**

<https://amp.dw.com/fa-af/%D8%A...>

<https://www.instagram.com/reel...>

**Al Arabiya Farsi**

<https://farsi.alarabiya.net/am...>

**Shafqna Afghanistan**

<https://af.shafaqna.com/FA/544...>

**Anadolu Agency on HSD-X**

[Click here](#)



## Annex 5: HSD-X Photos



First Day of the Conference 29 November 2022



First Day of the Conference 29 November 2022



First Day of the Conference 29 November 2022



First Day of the Conference 29 November 2022



First Day of the Conference 29 November 2022



First Day of the Conference 29 November 2022



Second Day of the Conference 30 November 2022



Second Day of the Conference 30 November 2022



Second Day of the Conference 30 November 2022



First Day of the Conference 29 November 2022



Second Day of the Conference 30 November 2022



Cultural Event 29 November 2022



Cultural Event 29 November 2022



Cultural Event 29 November 2022



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