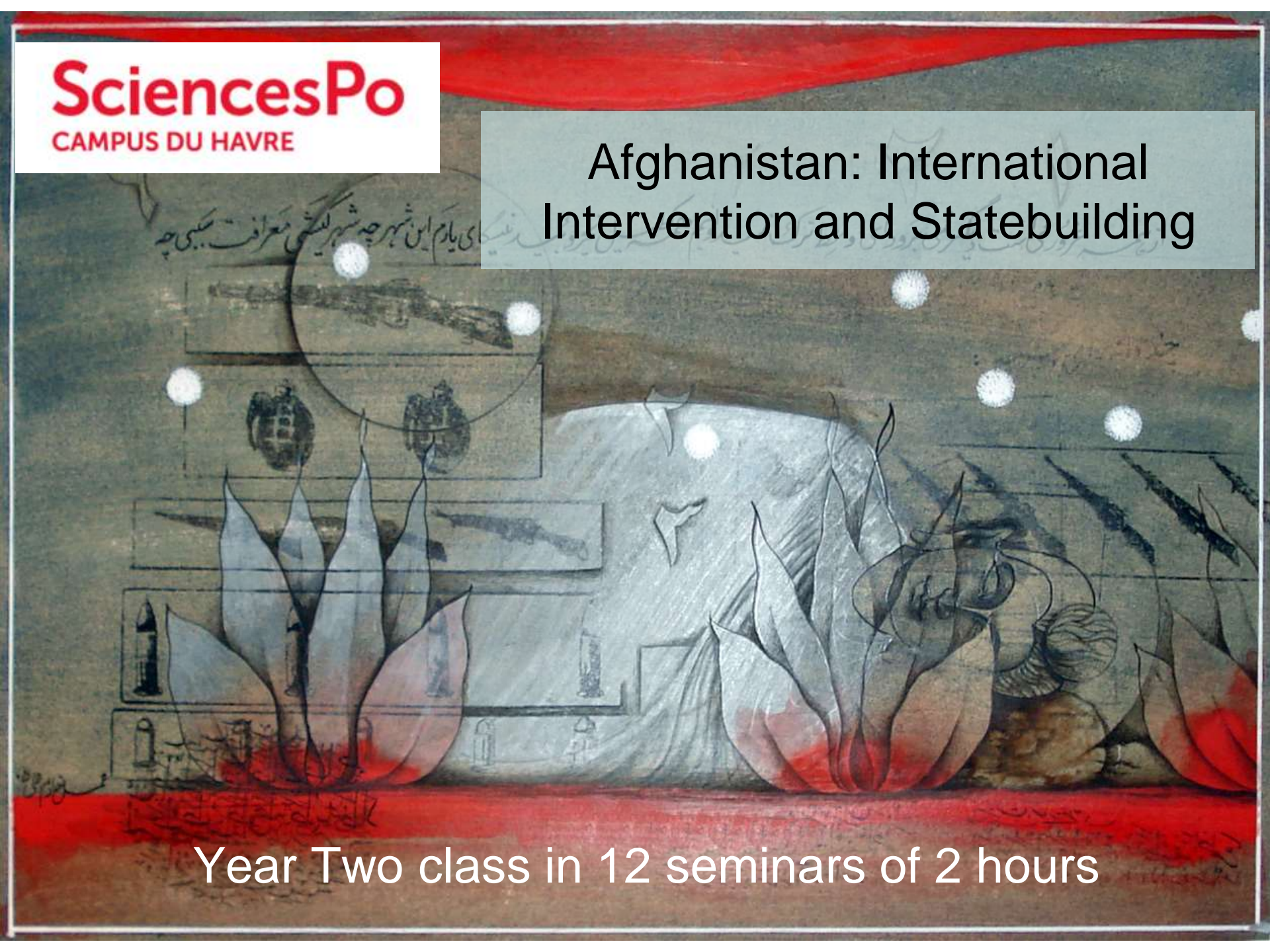SciencesPo
CAMPUS DU HAVRE

Afghanistan: International Intervention and Statebuilding

Year Two class in 12 seminars of 2 hours

AFGHANISTAN

INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION AND STATE-BUILDING

BY ROBERT KLUIJVER

Year 2020/2021 Spring Semester

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The intervention in Afghanistan that started twenty years ago incorporates many of the major themes that characterize relations between the West and the developing world today: the global war on terror; gender, minority and human rights discourses; humanitarian imperatives; and how to achieve socioeconomic development.

In this course we examine why the international community is intervening in Afghanistan, and how this affects – and is affected by – the political evolution of the country. After surveying military/security and humanitarian/development aspects of the intervention, the focus is put on the state-building project. Why is the international community investing so much in state-building? Why is it so difficult? Is it a failure? The current inclusion of an insurgent Islamist group in an internationally-mediated political settlement is a novel development.

The lecturer draws on more than twenty years of field practice to comment, through this case study, state-building initiatives by international organizations elsewhere in the world.
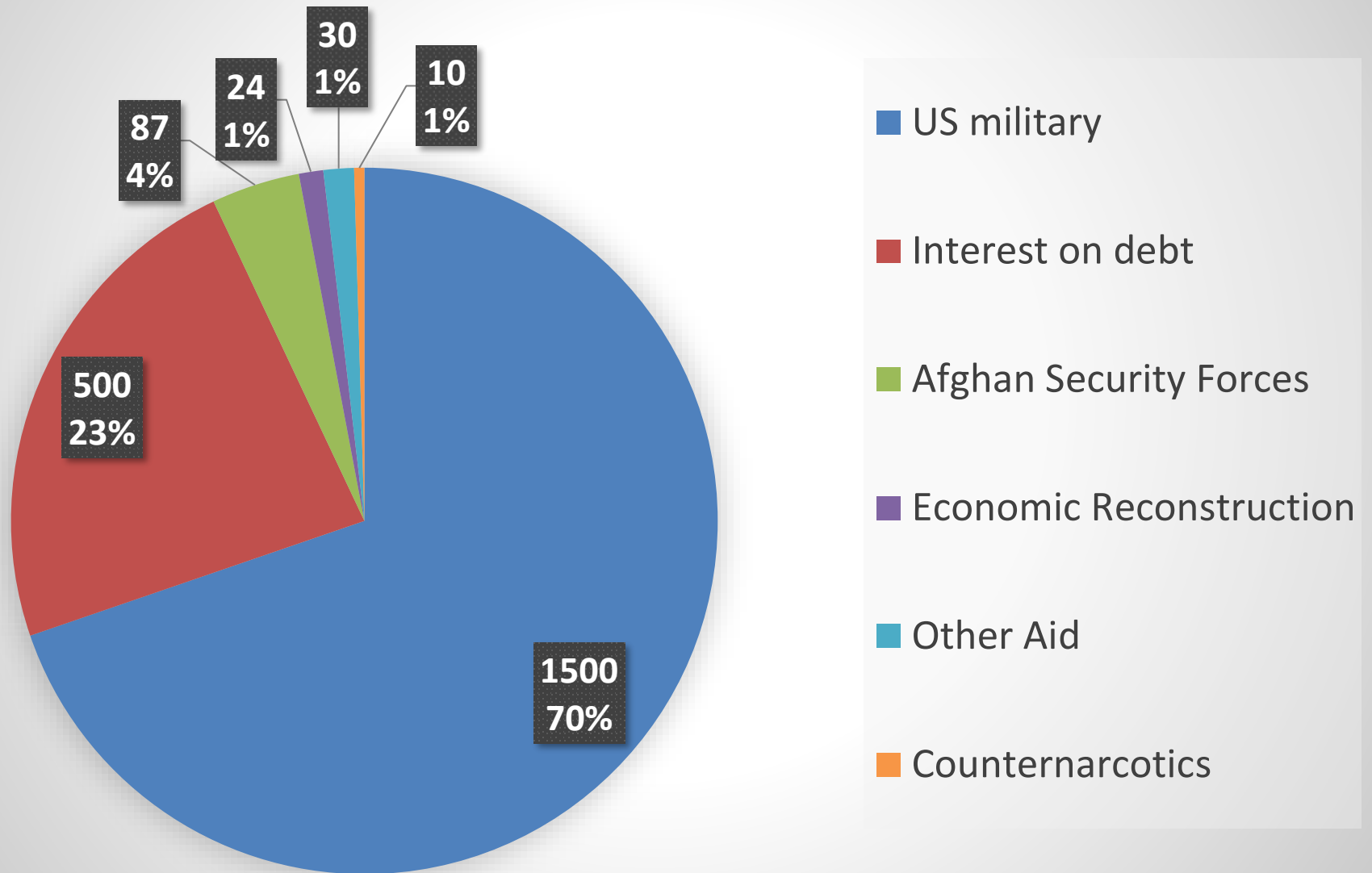
Structure of the course

- **Session 1:** Introduction
- **Session 2**: A political history of Afghanistan from ancient times to 1973
- **Session 3**: Afghanistan embroiled in internal and regional conflict 1973-2001
- **Session 4**: The Bonn Agreement and the state-building project
- **Session 5**: Democratic institutions and self-governance in Afghanistan
- **Session 6**: Humanitarian interventions and their limits
- **Session 7**: Youth, women, minorities and modernity
- **Session 8**: Understanding Political Islam in Afghanistan
- **Session 9**: Counterinsurgency, war and negotiations with the Taliban
- **Session 10**: Why statebuilding is important for the international community
- **Session 11**: Afghanistan's place in a liberal global order
- **Session 12**: Role-playing game or other form of structured group discussion

Welcome to Afghanistan
Introduction

Some economic facts about the international intervention in Afghanistan

US$ bn spent on Afghanistan 2001-2020

- US military — 1500, 70%
- Interest on debt — 500, 23%
- Afghan Security Forces — 87, 4%
- Economic Reconstruction — 24, 1%
- Other Aid — 30, 1%
- Counternarcotics — 10, 1%

Source: NYT 9 Dec 2019

Cost of intervention in Afghanistan/2. The UK in Helmand

The UK spent 20 to 37 billion £ on the military intervention (sources RUSI and The Guardian)

2500 $/day

1 $/day

Since 2006, on a conservative estimate, it has cost £15m a day to maintain Britain's military presence in Helmand province.

That is equivalent to £25,000 per capita of Helmand's 1.5 million inhabitants

"By 2020, [Ledwidge] says, Britain will have spent at least £40bn on its Afghan campaign, enough to fund free tuition for all students in British higher education for 10 years."

Disbursements versus pledges by donors, Afghanistan Official Development Assistance, 2002-2009
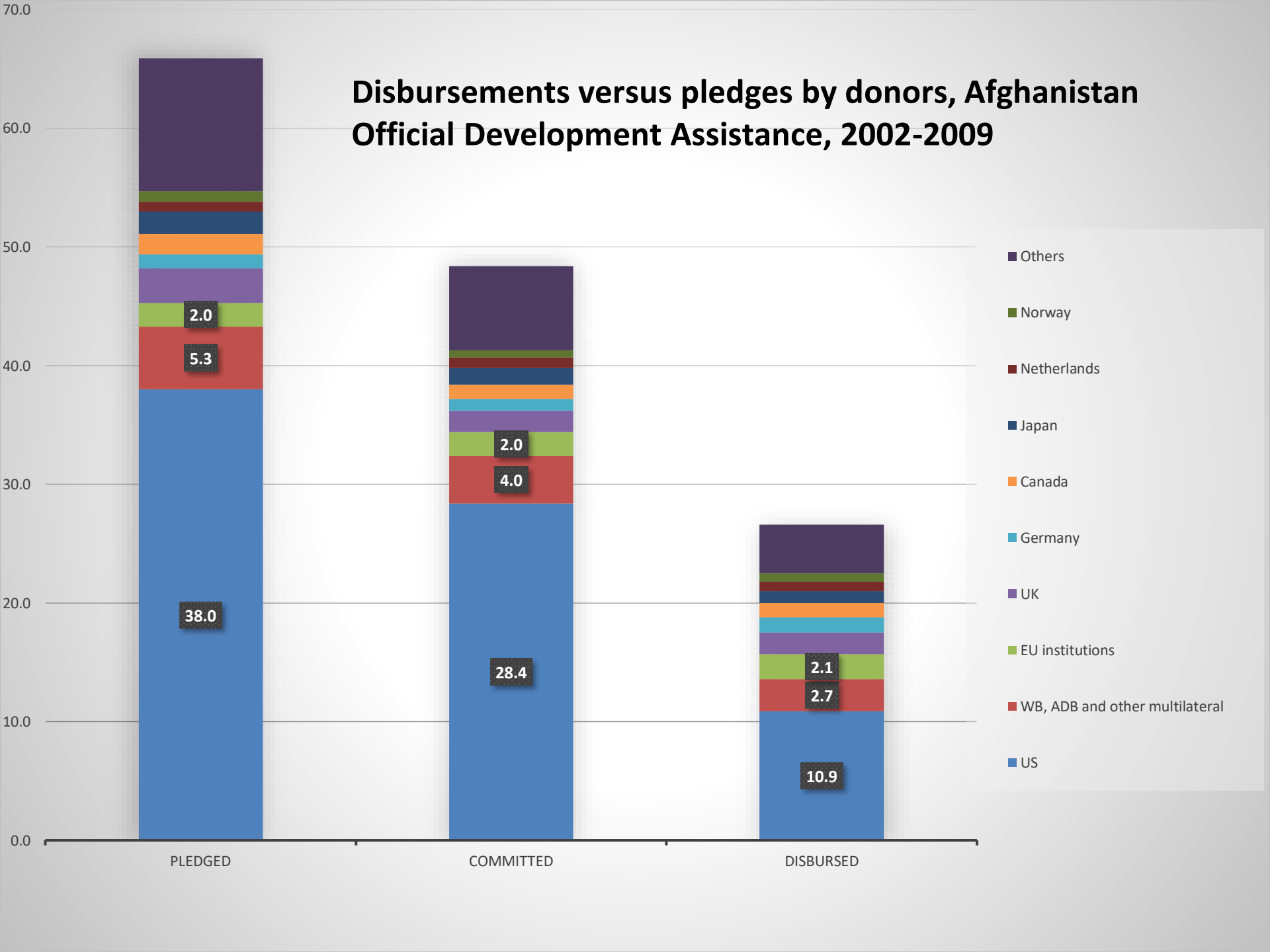
How much aid is channeled through the government?

Distribution of Official Development Aid, 2002-2009

23%

77%

■ Direct aid by donors   ■ Aid channelled through the gvt
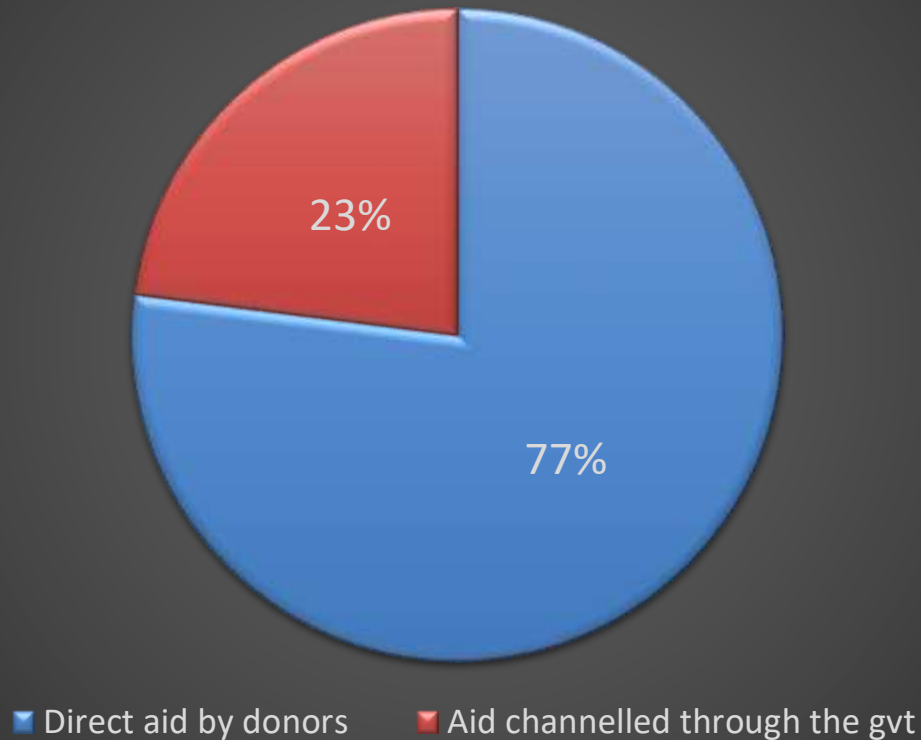
1. Direct aid (approx. 20 billion USD, 2002-2009): about 75% via foreign military actors (PRTs, ANA trust fund); rest through UN, international NGOs, ICRC... and about 1% to local NGOs and Civil Society Organizations
2. Aid through government (approx. 6 billion USD, 2002-2009): about 50% through trust funds where priorities are set by Afghan government, but which are managed by UNDP or The World Bank; other 50% to government programs or agencies

Government revenue vs ODA

FIGURE 25: GENERAL GOVERNMENT REVENUE AND AID FLOWS, 2002–2009
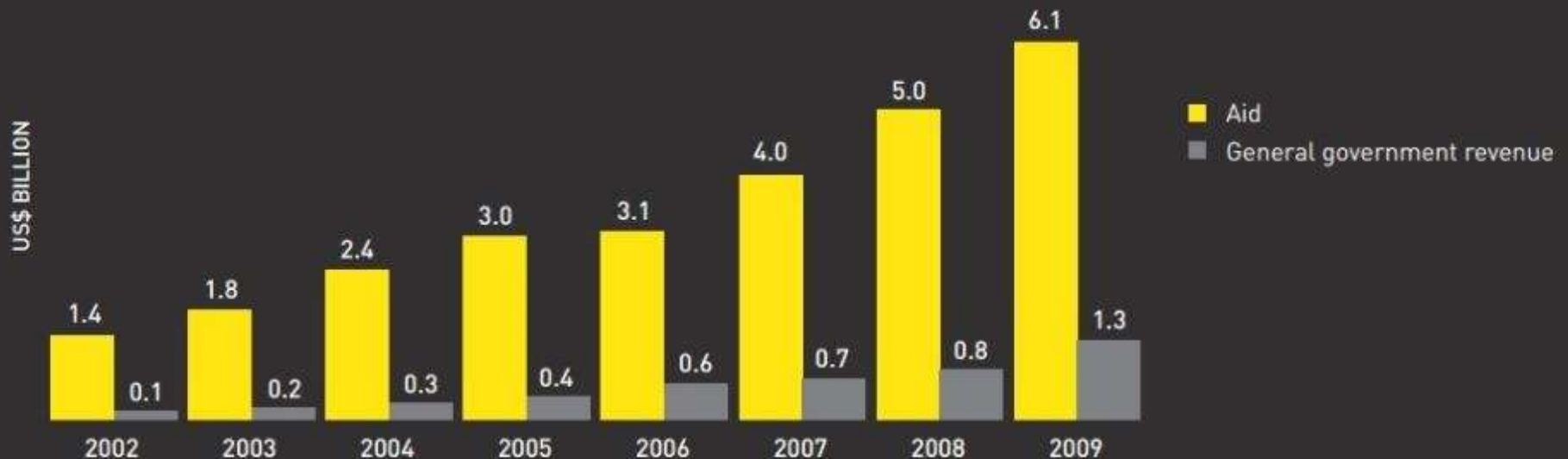
According to Afghanistan Central Bank Chief of Staff, 90% of public expenditure from 2002-2011 came from foreign ODA; today it is still about 75% (of 11 bn$)

Stagnation of economic growth

Afghan GDP in US billions
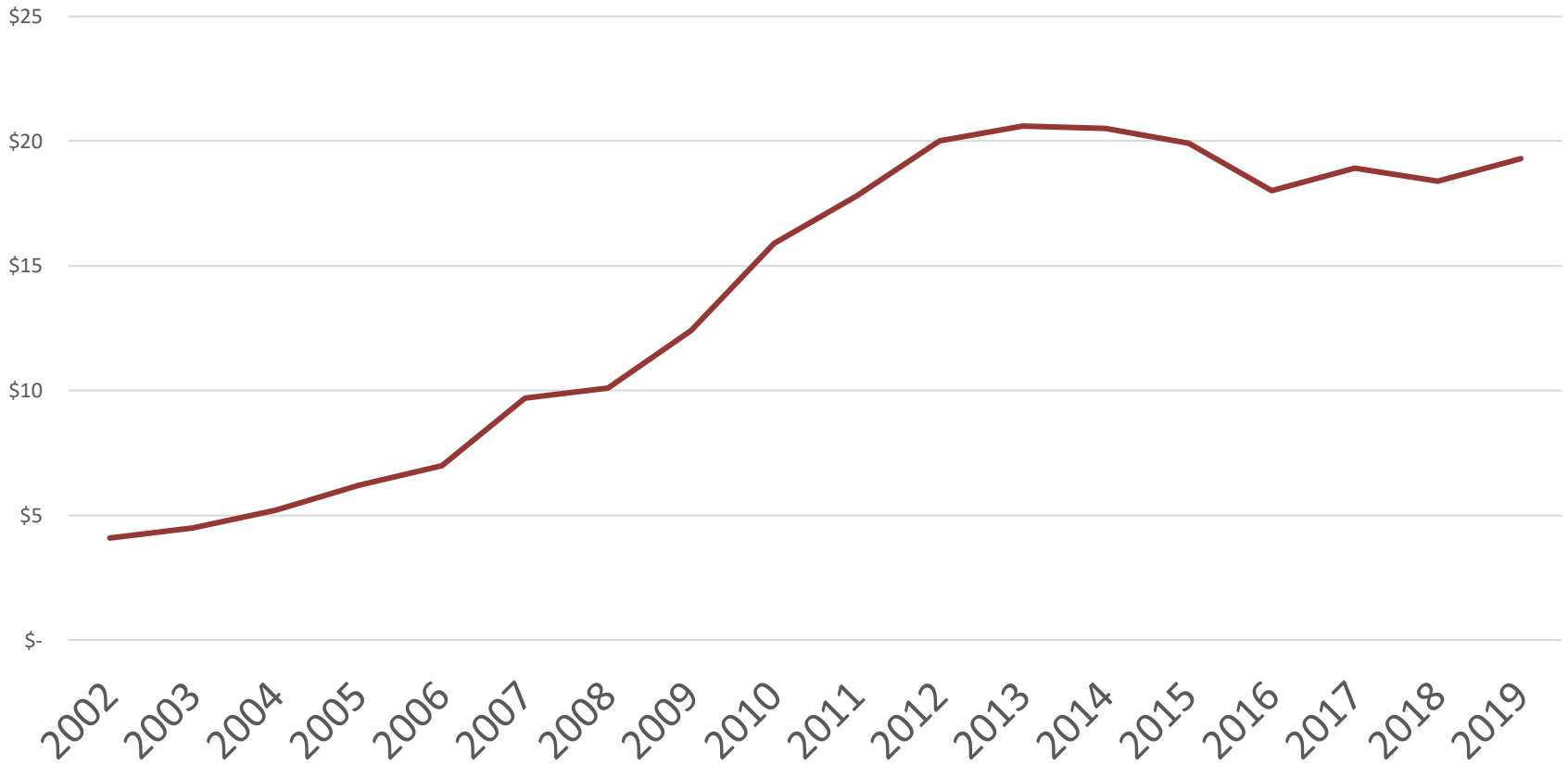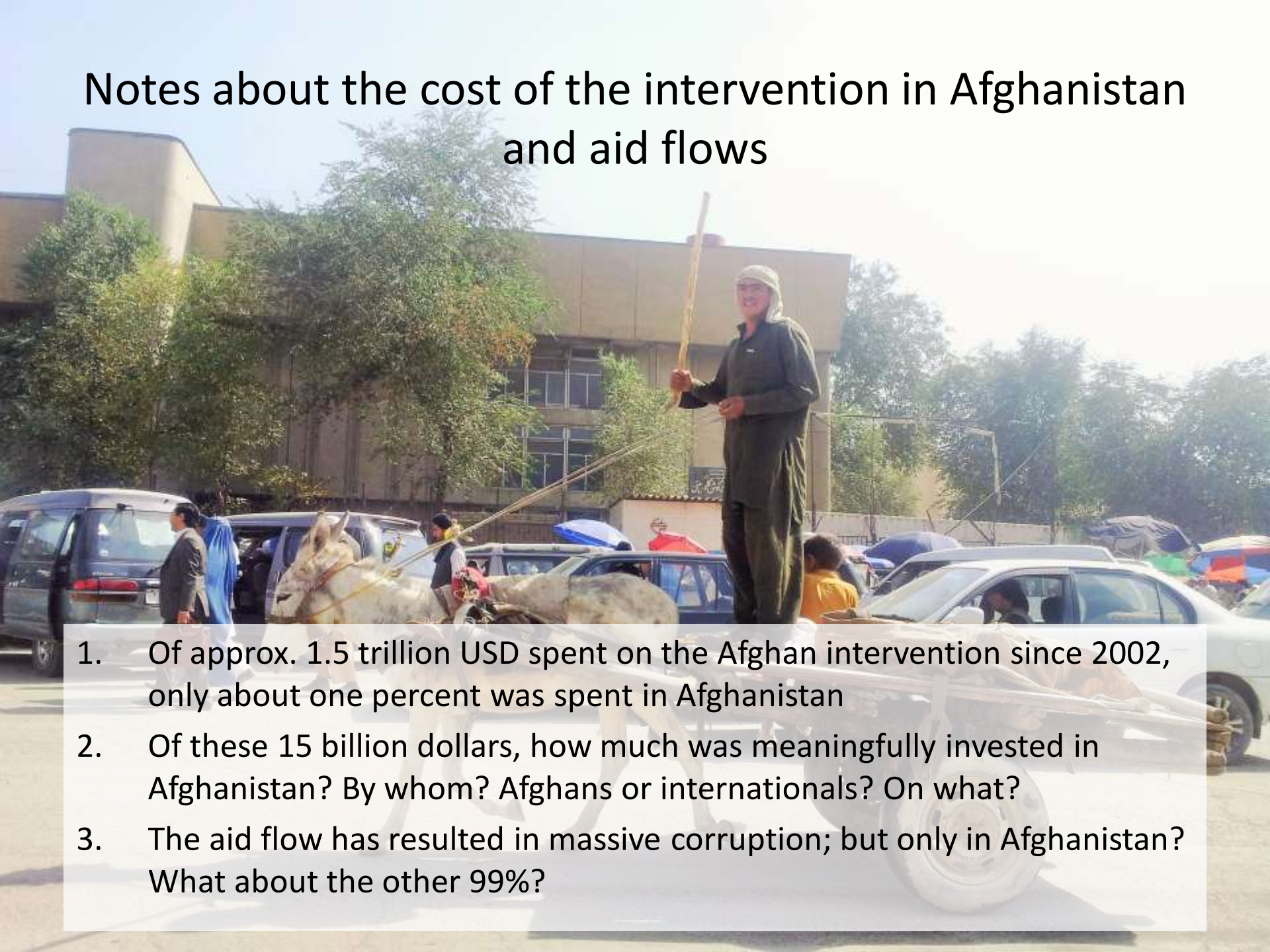
The Failing War on Drugs in Afghanistan

Hectares of Opium Cultivated in Afghanistan

2017: 328,000

300

200

100

2002: 84,000

2005   2010   2015
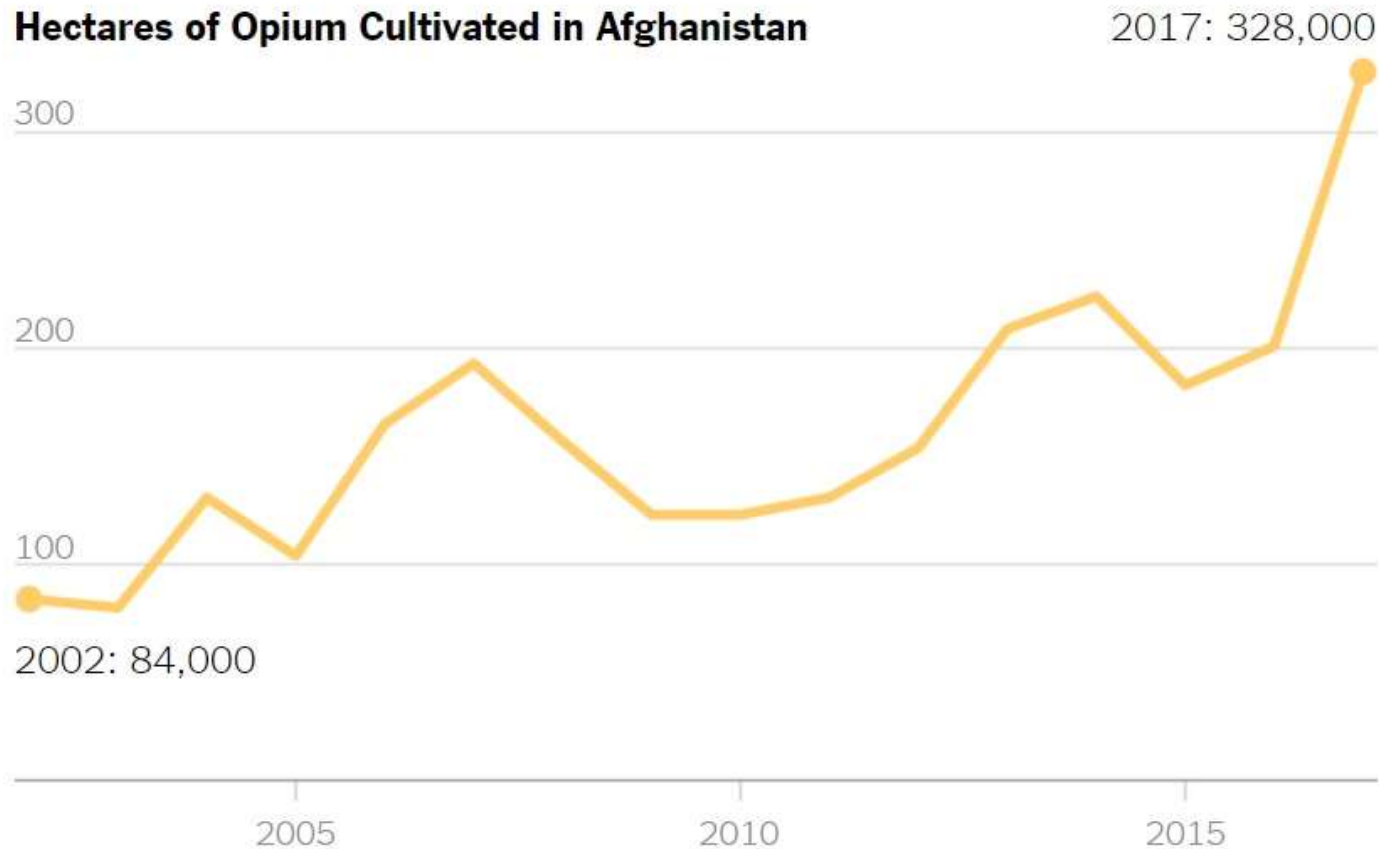
US spent $10bn on Drug Eradication; Afghanistan now supplies 80% of the global production of opium (and a lot of hashish too). Heroin is made from opium.
Value of the opium economy: 4-6 bn USD in 2017, 1-2 bn USD in 2018 (UNODC), equal to or more than government revenue.
Drugs are by far the first export item of Afghanistan

Notes about the cost of the intervention in Afghanistan and aid flows

1. Of approx. 1.5 trillion USD spent on the Afghan intervention since 2002, only about one percent was spent in Afghanistan

2. Of these 15 billion dollars, how much was meaningfully invested in Afghanistan? By whom? Afghans or internationals? On what?

3. The aid flow has resulted in massive corruption; but only in Afghanistan? What about the other 99%?

Afghans are aware of sharing an ancient, illustrious history

Pre-Islamic period: syncretism, tolerance, trade and transmission of culture

- The Aryan ancestors of the Afghans both influenced and were influenced by the many civilizations that succeeded each other

- Religious mix: Monotheistic (Zoroastrian), Polytheistic (Hellenistic, Hindu), animist and Buddhist

Islamic period: centre of regional propagation

- Base for the spread of Islam in South and Central Asia (Sufi brotherhoods). Warrior fame

- Contribution to Islamic arts and sciences

Afghan political culture: lessons from history

The state has never been a strong institution and has insufficient capacity to transform society

Leadership charismatic, personal and permanently contested

Leadership in Pashtun hands; Kandahar spiritual heart of government

Authority based on ability to reward loyalty and punish dissent

State power relies on negotiation with traditional power base (rural chieftains) and channeling of progressive forces

To ensure acquiescence by traditional forces the leadership needs to present itself as defender of the Islam and respect the Pashtun code

Reliance on external sources of power is self-defeating

There is no monopoly of violence. To project its power the state needs to rally armed forces around a 'just Islamic cause' and/or the spoils of war

Ethnic political praxis and use of patronage networks are a prerequisite for power but ethnic political objectives are not acceptable at a national level

Synthesis: Afghan Political Culture

A set of constants

- Pashtun and male rule
- importance of ethnic ties
- tribal culture prevails
- conservative Islam
- reject interference from Western countries.

⇒ Orientalist view
⇒ Isolationist policies

Evolutionary view

- Erosion of the social base of traditional power – including royalty, tribes and clergy
- rise and fall of successive modernist ideologies with expanding popular base
- increasing penetration by global culture of Afghan society: urbanization and emancipation

⇒ Support and manipulation of group which reflects foreign priorities
⇒ Deracination of this group -> backlash

Western policies fluctuate between both approaches

Cycle of Modernization & Backlash
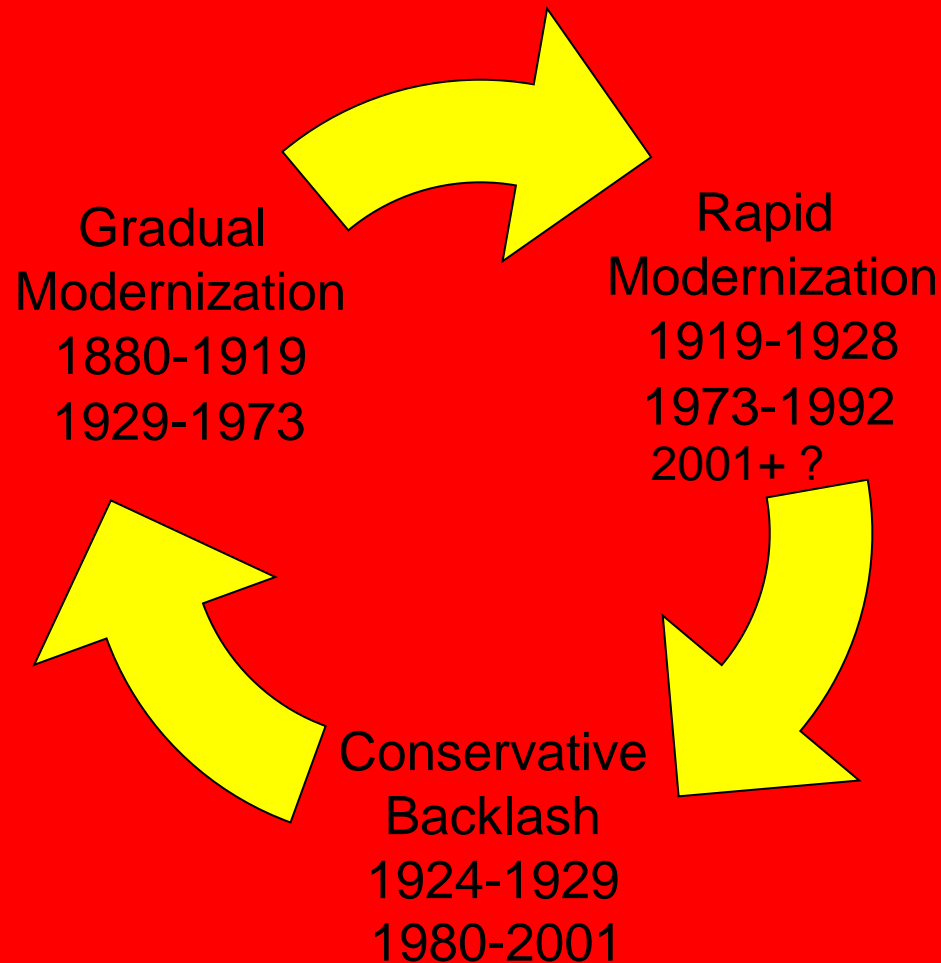
Gradual Modernization
1880-1919
1929-1973

Rapid Modernization
1919-1928
1973-1992
2001+ ?

Conservative Backlash
1924-1929
1980-2001

International Intervention and Statebuilding in Afghanistan
Seminar 4

Examining the Bonn Process
A Possible Fresh Start for Afghanistan

Leading up to the Bonn Agreement (Dec 2001)

- Afghanistan forgotten after the Soviet withdrawal (ended 1989)
- The UN mission in the country remained; Brahimi had been one of the SRSGs
- Taliban never been recognized as legitimate government.
- Low-level negotiations with exiled or opposition groups were leading nowhere
- 9/11 catalyst
- 7 October – early December campaign to oust the Taliban
- Northern Alliance retook power in Kabul on 14 Nov.
- Unpreparedness of the international community, ad hoc diplomacy
- Aug 2000 Brahimi report criticized gap between UN ambitions and capacity, became the basis for this new approach.

Analysis of Bonn Agreement

Features

It was a surprise meeting; the goal of reaching a comprehensive settlement for Afghanistan was not announced (only 'talks')

It was therefore not ideally representative; Northern Alliance, Taliban, communists, Afghan civil society were insufficiently represented vis-à-vis diaspora and pro-West

It provided the beginning of a road map; details to be filled in by the results of the planned consultative processes (Loya Jirga, constitution, elections)

It was the first UN mission based on the Brahimi report, advocating a new approach

What was missing

Many subjects were left out, including a reconstruction plan, a democratization plan, how to provide security, a national reconciliation strategy, how to re-establish the Rule of Law… it was understood these would be addressed through local mechanisms

Little coordination with Operation Enduring Freedom

Operation Enduring Freedom

- **Warlords return to power**
- **Contradictory Objectives between UN and Coalition objectives** fail to bring peace and stability

Observations about the ELJ
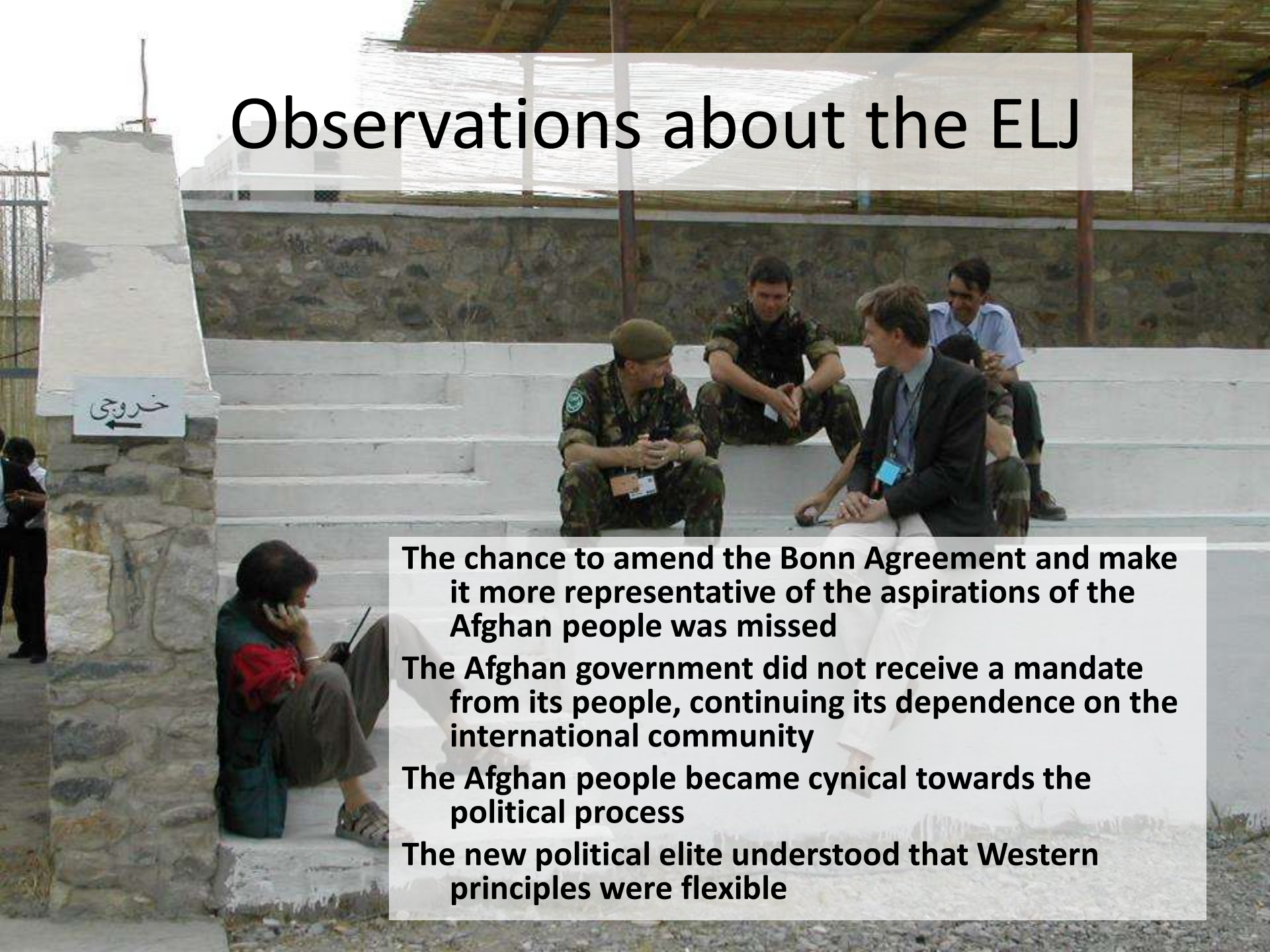
The chance to amend the Bonn Agreement and make it more representative of the aspirations of the Afghan people was missed

The Afghan government did not receive a mandate from its people, continuing its dependence on the international community

The Afghan people became cynical towards the political process

The new political elite understood that Western principles were flexible
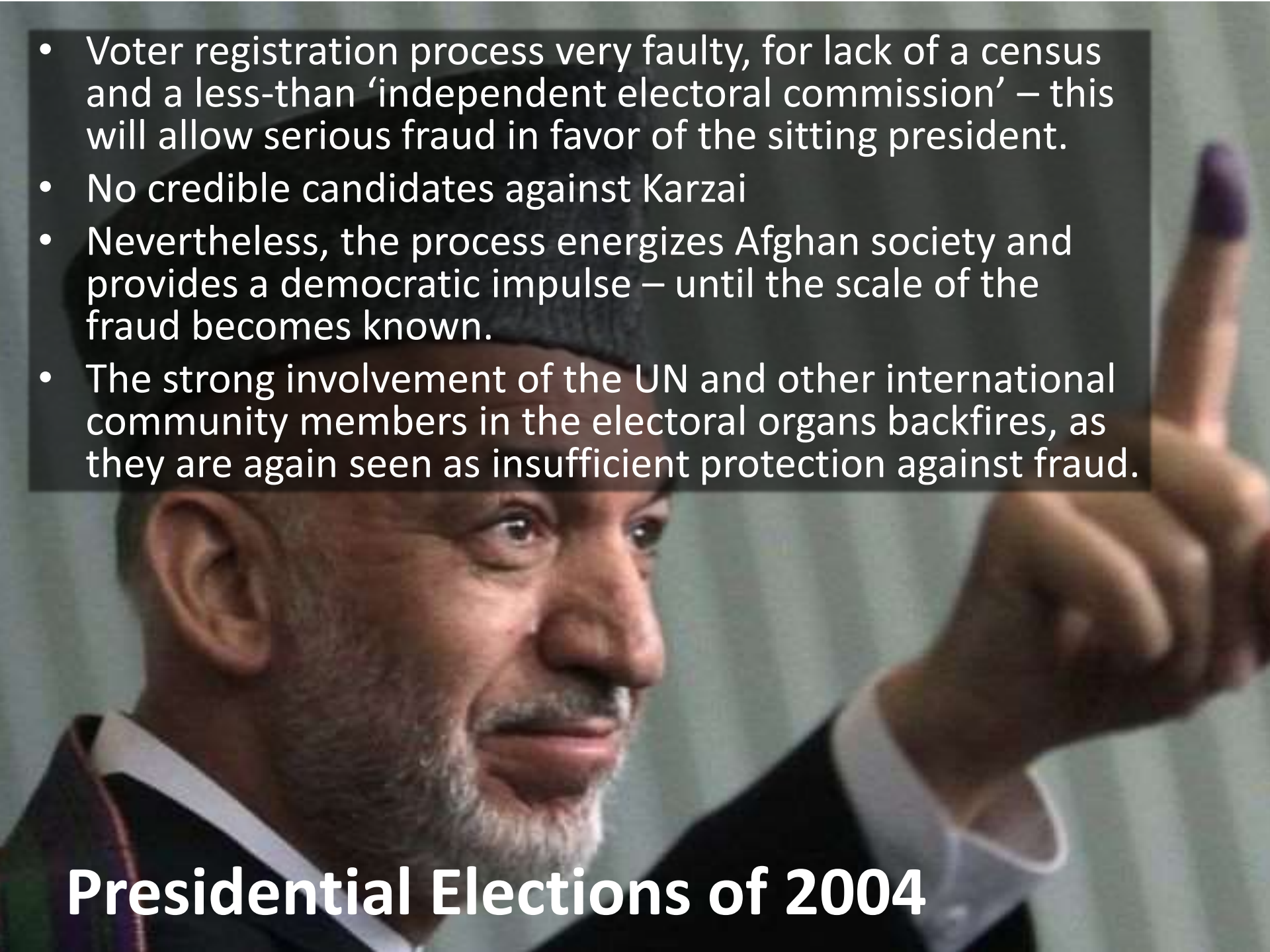
Start of the Iraq War

- **International attention shifts away from Afghanistan**
- **A different, more military, less internationally consensual and more overtly nation-building type of intervention is attempted by the USA and its 'Coalition of the Willing', who invest much more heavily in Iraq than in Afghanistan**
- **The emergence of AQ as a new type of enemy**
- **The end of the UN's aura of neutrality with the bombing of the UN offices in Baghdad**

2003 Constitutional Process

- **Wrangling between French and US constitutional experts, to determine who will have most influence on crafting the Afghan constitution**

- **However, in a lengthy and messy process, the Afghan commission members impose their own kind of constitution: based on sharia but with the guaranteeing of many individual rights; sweeping executive powers with few checks and balances; a parliament and provincial councils elected by SNTV.**

- Voter registration process very faulty, for lack of a census and a less-than 'independent electoral commission' – this will allow serious fraud in favor of the sitting president.
- No credible candidates against Karzai
- Nevertheless, the process energizes Afghan society and provides a democratic impulse – until the scale of the fraud becomes known.
- The strong involvement of the UN and other international community members in the electoral organs backfires, as they are again seen as insufficient protection against fraud.

Presidential Elections of 2004

What is the relation between elections and democracy?

Parliamentary elections 2005

- Popular disillusionment with electoral and democratic processes increases, leading to less participation (< 50% of registered voters).
- The Parliamentary elections hail the definitive return of the warlords and local power brokers, and of patron/client politics.
- And signal the comeback of Taliban, whose insurgency is steadily gaining ground
- The result of the elections: an extremely fragmented Parliament (SNTV)

The Failure of *Airborne* or Top-Down Democracy

A census never took place in Afghanistan.

Without a census, voter registration allowed and even encouraged fraud

The West did not trust the democratic hopes and aspirations of many ordinary Afghans and reduced 'broad-based gvt' to factional participation – called 'ethnic' as if the armed factions represented the democratic will of 'their' particular ethnic groups.

Integration of war criminals and human rights abusers into the new parliamentary system, delegitimizing it from the very beginning.

Real defeat: Afghans have become cynical about democracy.

⇒The developed democratic countries should stop acting as if they have a monopoly on democracy. Democracy must be seen as a universal and truly open concept, needing for its evolution input from other participative traditions

⇒ There should be no imposition of specific democratic forms (institutions) such as parliament and elections; rather a search for participative traditions in the host society.

The Elections Mistake

"Elections have essentially become a means of securing and freezing in place a fragile political settlement, rather than an instrument to expand political representation." (p25)

Democracy = Elections? or: elections without democratization?

The cost of elections and the electoral institutions is too high for Afghanistan. 2009 Presidential elections cost 300 million USD

ELJ delivered very few 'warlords'; parliamentary elections did…

⇒Local elections (for executive and representation) may be held in the population's own style. They need not be an expensive national bureaucratic exercise. Emergency Loya Jirga = 5 million USD. Local electoral processes are much cheaper and may deliver better results.

⇒ Elections are only one tool of democracy; pay more attention to other tools

Transitional Justice and National Reconciliation

1. Establishment of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission in March 2002
2. Failed vetting process of parliamentary candidates in 2005.
3. Transitional Justice action plan developed by the AIHRC with UNAMA and donor input, completed in 2005; after serious stalling by the Presidency, it is finally adopted in December 2006.
4. Amnesty law adopted by Parliament to avoid prosecution for past crimes in January 2007
5. The government sets up the High Peace and Reconciliation Commission in 2010, in an effort to extend the amnesty to Taliban, Hezb-e Islami and other insurgents.

THE CURRENT POLITICAL SET-UP IS THE RESULT OF THE INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION

Afghan state building in the twenty-first century was fatally flawed because it attempted to restore a system designed for autocrats in a land where autocracy was no longer politically sustainable. The international community assumed that such a system would be considered legitimate if validated by elections.

But Afghanistan had its own political traditions, in which elections played no part, and the virtues of majoritarian rule are not obvious to the country's regional and ethnic minorities. Moreover, talk of democracy was difficult to reconcile with just how little power was delegated to any institution not part of the central government. The constitution of 2004 framed a practice for government barely distinguishable from the centralized monarchies and dictatorships that had characterized earlier regimes.

Seminar 7: Youth, women, minorities and modernisation in Afghanistan

Contemporary Culture > Traditional Culture

Youth

68% Afghan population < 25 years

Exposure

- Western-educated elites
- Soviet experience
- 20 to 25% Afghan population returned from exile
- Internet

War

- War is an accelerator of change
- Traditional social structures damaged or destroyed
- Reshuffling of wealth, population, political power

Gender Gap Index, 2019

Gender gap index (Equality = 0.0)

- 0.00 - 0.09
- 0.10 - 0.19
- 0.20 - 0.29
- 0.30 - 0.39
- 0.40 - 0.49
- 0.50 - 0.59
- 0.60 - 0.69
- 0.70 - 0.79
- No data

Data Year: 2019
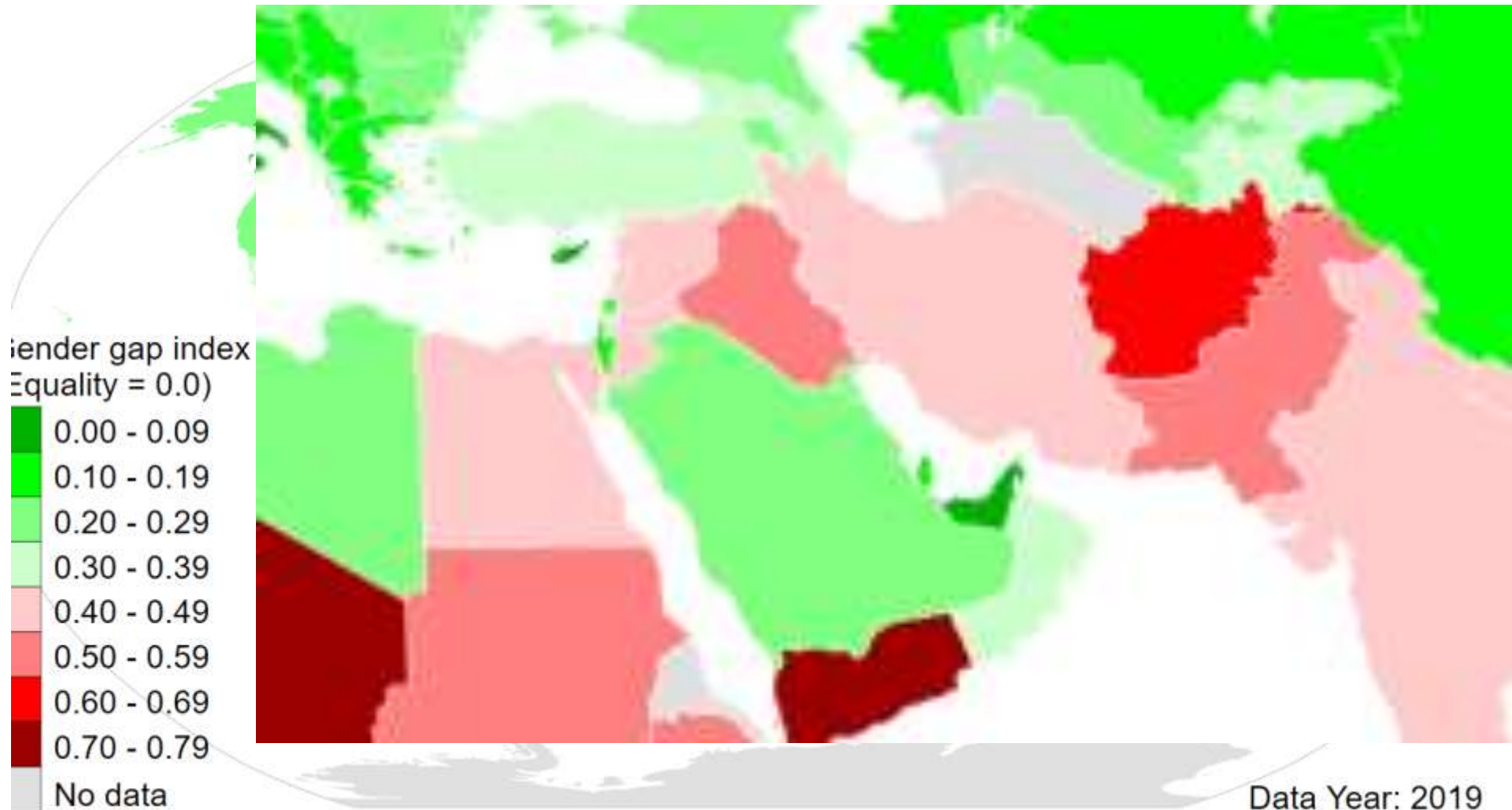
Situation for Women in Afghanistan

- Legal rights and political representation have improved
- Education: less than 50% in primary, less than 6% of >25 have second. educ
- Health: low access to health facilities
- Employment: 16% of labour force, 2014

Threatened by Taliban Return

Minorities: focus on Hazaras (about 15% of population)

There are many other minorities in Afghanistan, but the Hazaras face more discrimination <= looks, history, religion => socio-economic status.

- In the highlands they face yearly predation by Pashtun pastoralists (Kuchis)

- Poor infrastructure and economy in home region. They migrate to cities, Iran and Pakistan in search of jobs. Monsutti: migration as a way of life

- In Kabul they have reached high levels of development, culture and political representation but there remains a glass ceiling. Shia beliefs = major barrier

Still from the Kite Runner: Hassan & Amir

Threatened by Taliban Return

The **subcontracting chain**: how to finance a road in Afghanistan

USAID or ECHO (taxpayer money)	100%
Federal Gov. Contractor: accountants, lawyers, PR firms	80%
International NGO: accountants, monitoring & evaluation	60%
Local NGO: security, offices & cars, bribes/payoffs	40%
Contracting business: security and more bribes	20%
Road built with 5-10% of funds allocated to the project	10%
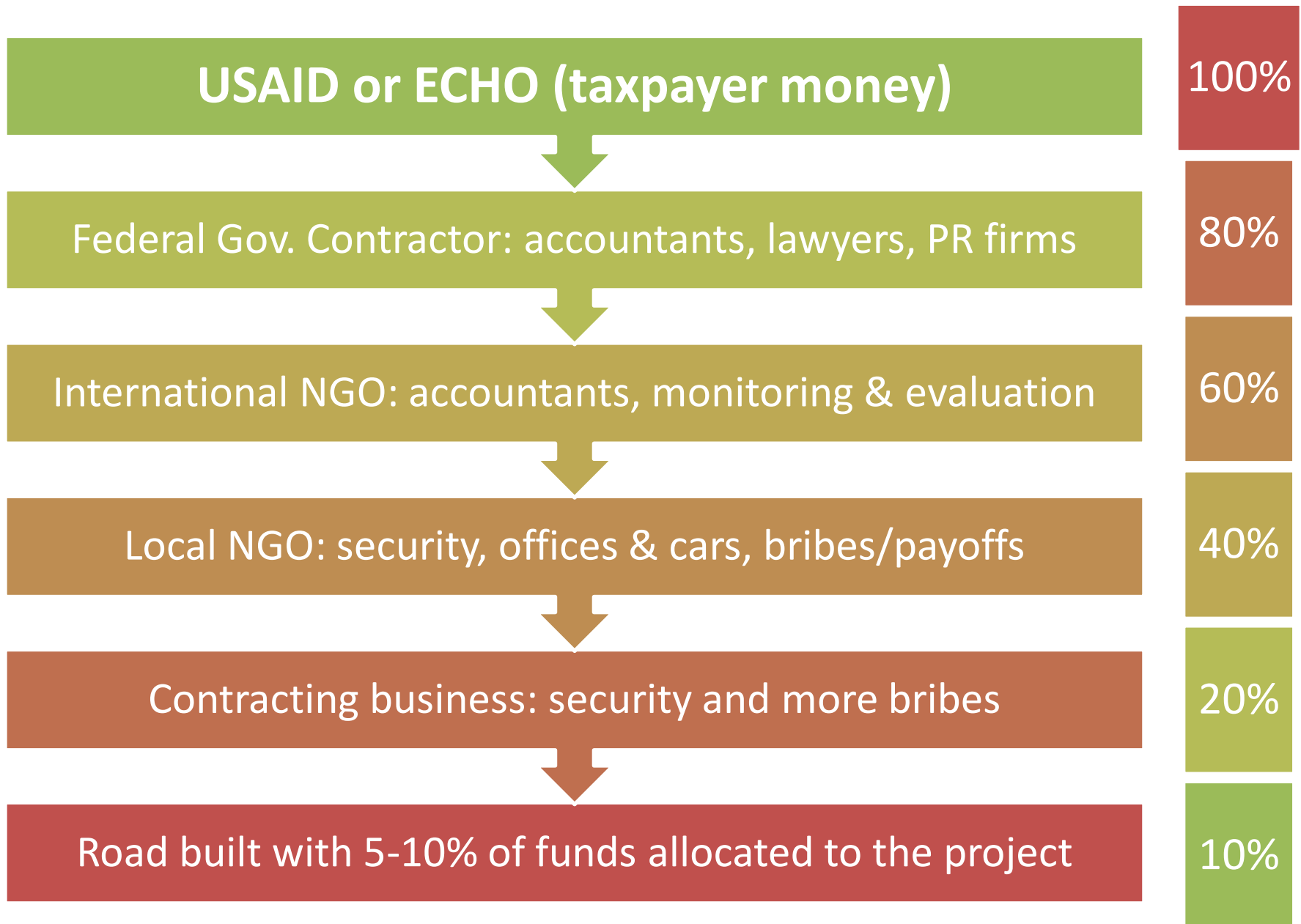
AFGHANISTAN **SPRING DISASTER CONTINGENCY PLAN**

Planned response to potential drought and other emergencies

HRP Key figures (2021)

PEOPLE IN NEED	PLANNED REACH	FUNDING REQUIRED	FUNDING RECEIVED
18.4M	15.7M	$1.3B	4%

Contingency Plan Key figures (Mar-Jun 2021)

PEOPLE IN NEED	PLANNED REACH	FUNDING REQUIRED
13.2M	7.4M	$390M
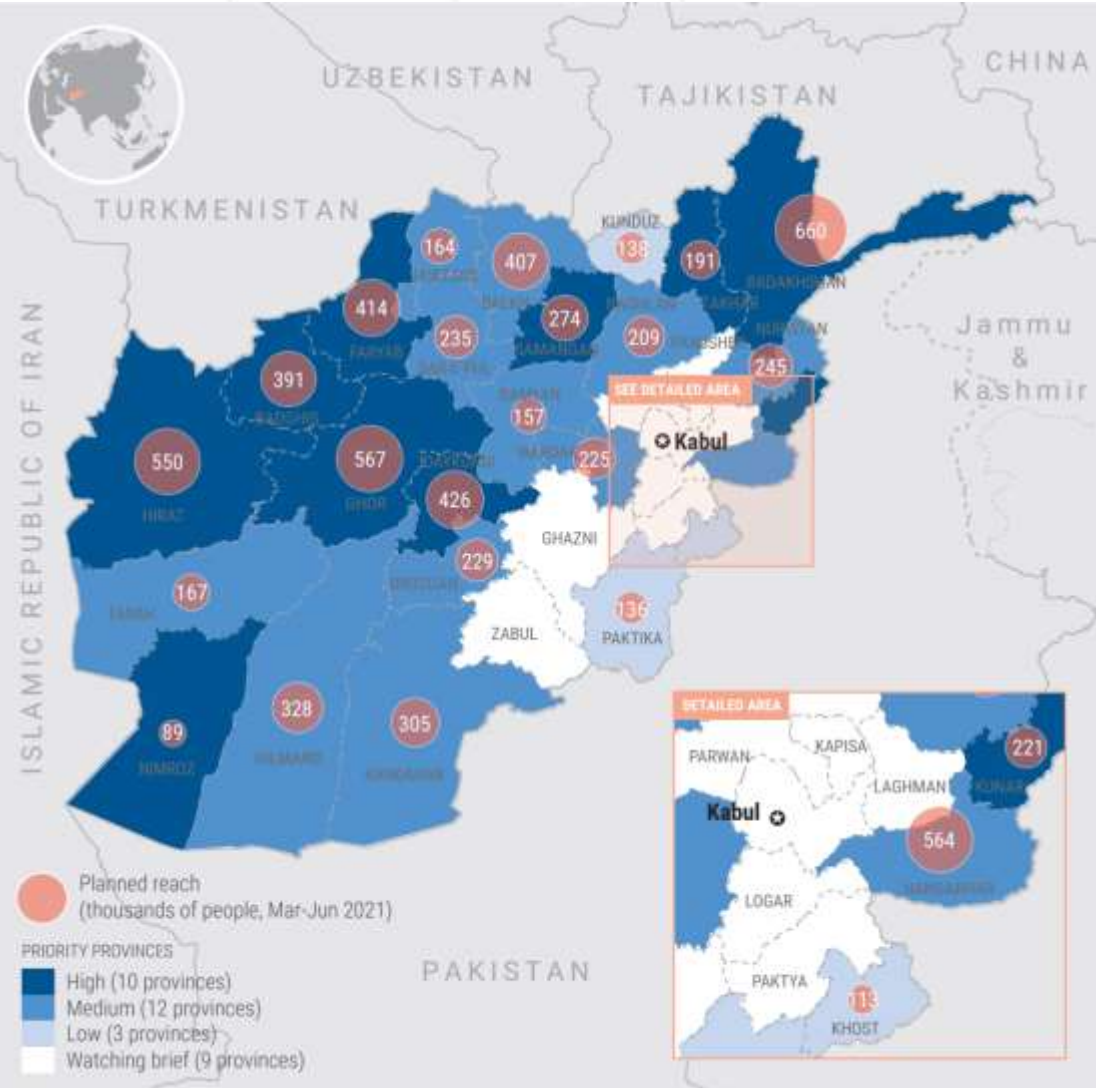
Alarming UN appeals present unverified 'facts' that lead to an aid overkill

- Population figures? (see notes on census)
- Access to areas held by Taliban?
- Economic effects: kills agriculture, bypasses country systems
- Feeds international organisations more effectively than Afghans

The Aid Flow Mistake

The question is not how much aid, but how it is used. Absorption capacity.

The subcontractor chain not only = great waste of money, but also dilutes responsibility. Who's to blame for an expensive road that crumbles after five years?

Which population groups will receive the money, how will it spread through society? These important questions are rarely taken into account.

Aid can be the source of much conflict. Examples from Anand Gopal: Role of contracting business for US base in abetting local rivalries and allowing hegemony of one local group over another in the Pech valley.

$\Rightarrow$ Plan carefully, incrementally and locally, with minimal amounts of funding

$\Rightarrow$ Take into account the social economy and how the aid flows will impact it. Use its channels

$\Rightarrow$ Transparency is needed, from the top of the chain to the bottom. In fact, a full overhaul of the aid system is required

Cultural Dissonances

The case of Security: how prevailing security paradigms force a disconnect between the international and the local communities

Paradigm of Security

Security through isolation (deterrence)

Security can also be achieved through integration (acceptance)

Before 2001 anyone traveling to Afghanistan quickly learnt that one's security was in the hand of one's hosts, and that traveling without a host was not an option – thus relations with the hosts had to be as good as possible => languages learnt, cultural adaptation: **integration**

Psychology: Accept the risk

Rationality: what constitutes a greater threat to your life? A terrorist attack?

Or a car accident?

Afghan perceptions: security of foreigners disrupts public space and endangers Afghan lives

International Security Assistance Force

ISAF 2002: Smile & Wave; International Shopping Around Force

ISAF EXPANSION

STAGE 1 (NORTH) 2004

STAGE 2 (WEST) 2005

STAGE 4 (EAST)
5 October 06

STAGE 3 (SOUTH) 31 Jul 06

⇒ increasingly involved in offensive operations (integration with Operation Enduring Freedom)
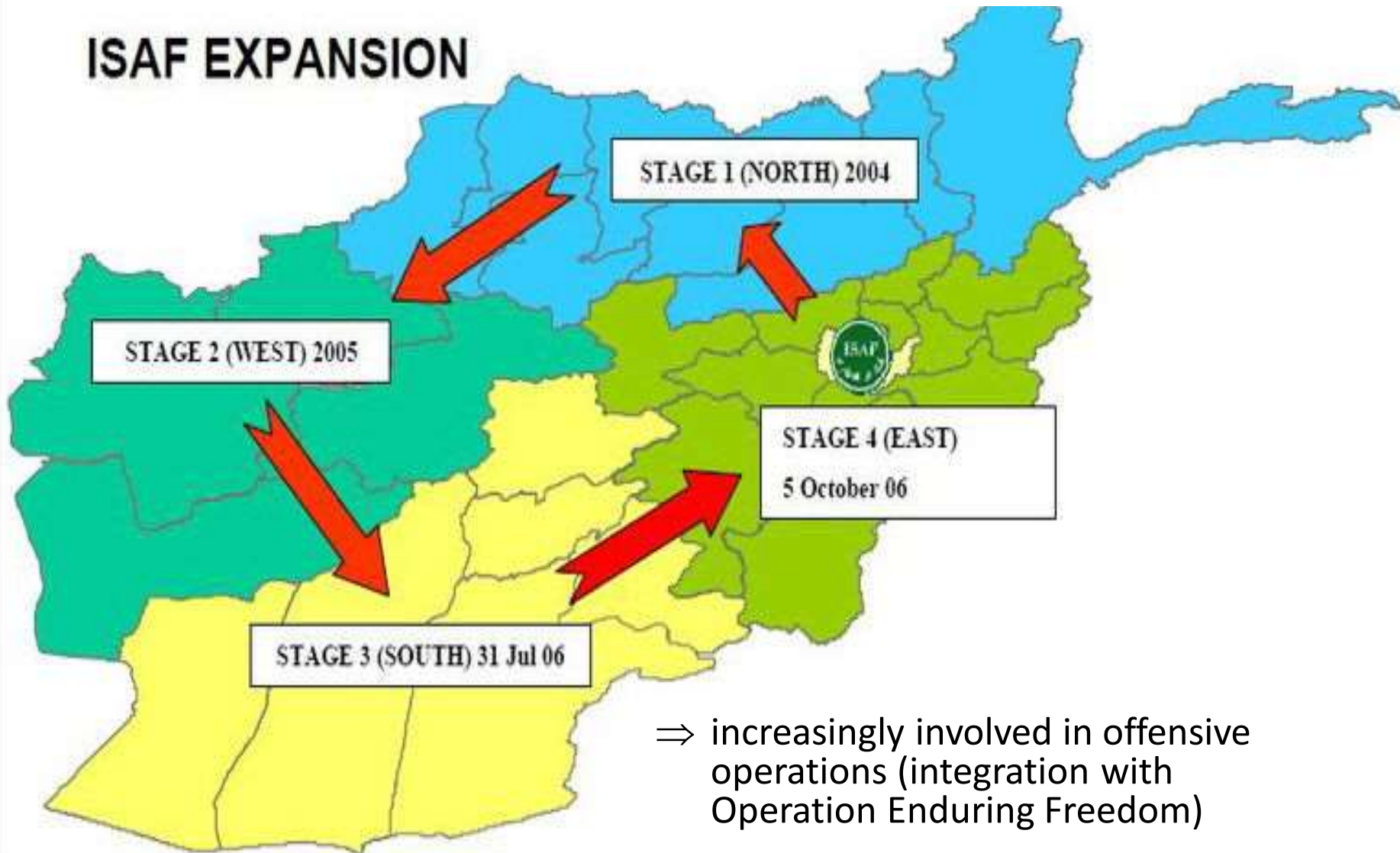
US boots on the ground and casualties

US troops in Afghanistan

US deployment history

100 Thousand

80

US troops killed

60

498

415

A US Marine, Helmand province, August 2017 Photo: Wakil Kohsar

317

310

40

US forces expected to drop to 4,500 in October

155

117

128

20

January

99

98

55

12

49

48

52

22

13

15

14

20

10

2001 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 **20**
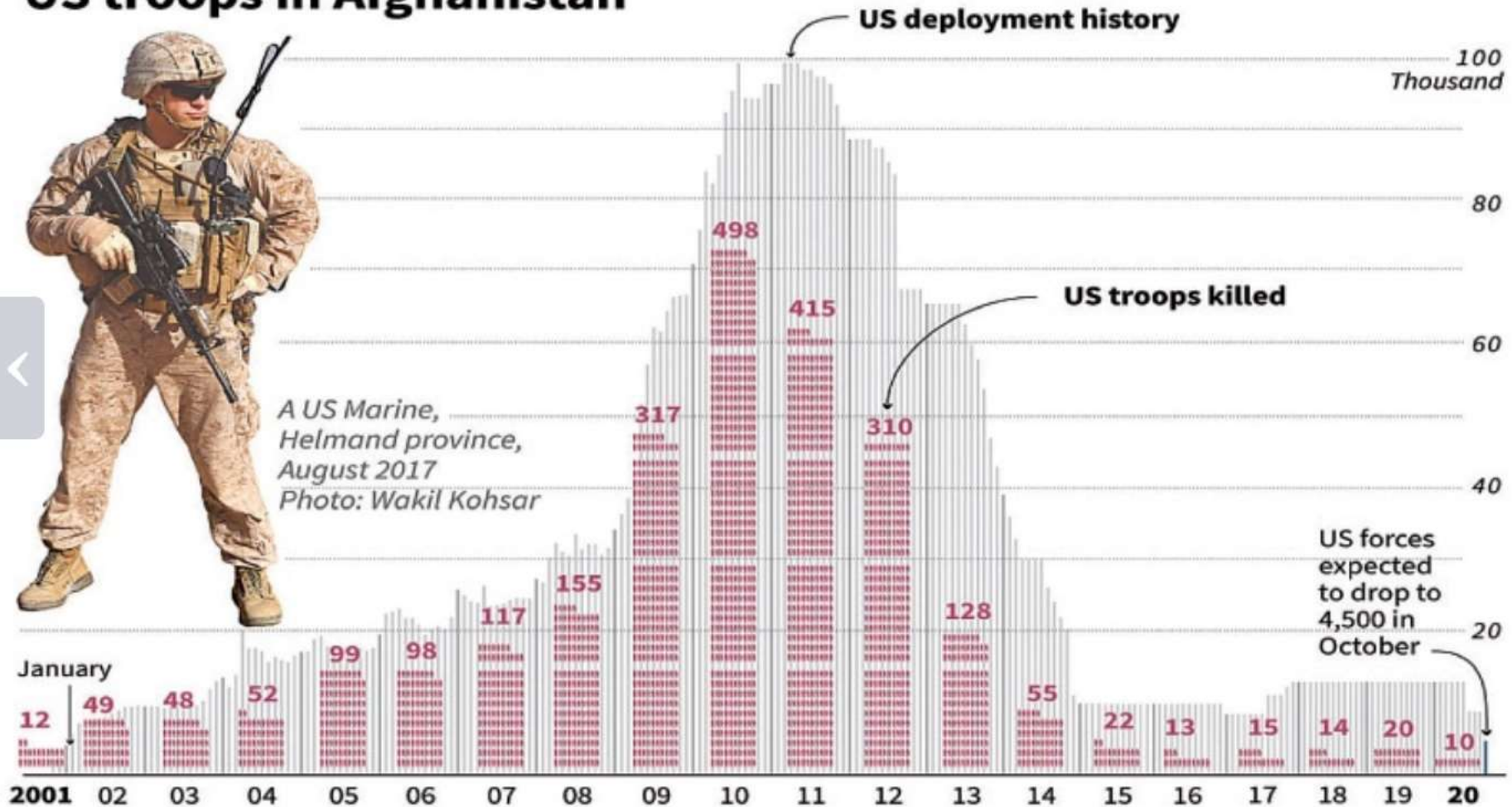
Which Countries Have Troops In Afghanistan?

Around 7,000 U.S. troops might be withdrawn from Afghanistan. Here are the countries that also contribute to NATO's Resolute Support Mission.

Number of troops in Afghanistan under NATO mission:

In total, there are approximately 14,000 U.S. troops and 25,000 private security contractors in Afghanistan.

UNITED STATES 8,475 (NATO)

GERMANY 1,300

ITALY 895

TURKEY 501

CZECH REP. 364

POLAND 315

AUSTRAL. 300

11

GEORGIA 870

12 | 15 | 16 | 17

UNITED KINGDOM 1,100

18 | 21 | 22

13 | 23 | 26 | 27

19 | 24 | 28 | 29

ROMANIA 693

30 | 32

14 | 20 | 25 | 31

RadioFreeEurope RadioLiberty

Kristyna Foltynova | Source: NATO

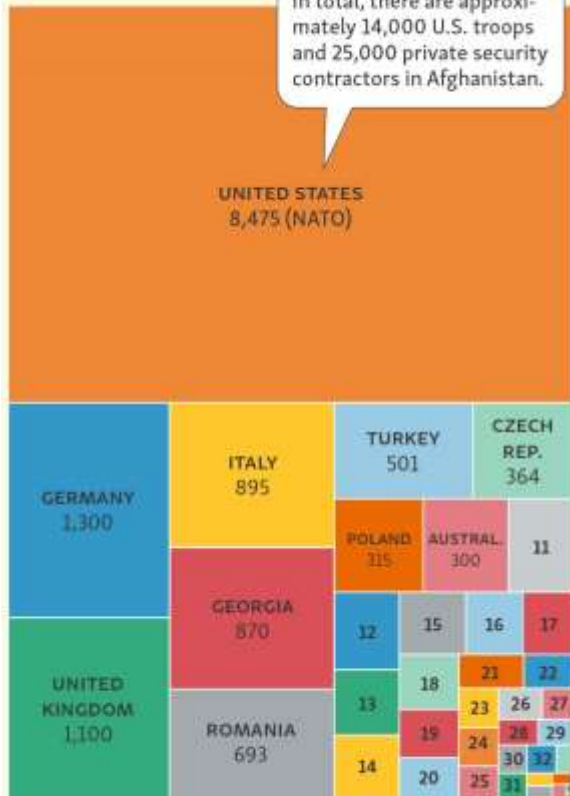| RANK		COUNTRY	TROOPS
1		United States	8,475
2		Germany	1,300
3		United Kingdom	1,100
4		Italy	895
5		Georgia	870
6		Romania	693
7		Turkey	501
8		Czech Republic	364
9		Poland	315
10		Australia	300
11		Mongolia	233
12		Portugal	193
13		Netherlands	160
14		Bulgaria	159
15		Denmark	155
16		Albania	136
17		Armenia	121
18		Azerbaijan	120
19		Croatia	106
20		Hungary	93
21		Belgium	82
22		Bosnia-Herzegovina	63
23		Spain	60
24		Norway	55
25		Lithuania	50
26		Macedonia	50
27		Latvia	40
28		Estonia	39
29		Slovakia	36
30		Finland	29
31		Montenegro	29
32		Sweden	29
33		Austria	18
34		Ukraine	14
35		New Zealand	13
36		Greece	10
37		Slovenia	8
38		Iceland	3
39		Luxembourg	2

2018

The most multinational post-Cold War military intervention

(38 Western countries plus Mongolia)

Norwegian soldier in Afghanistan

Taliban Control In Afghanistan

The Taliban has been battling the Afghan government for control of the country for nearly two decades.

19% of Afghanistan is under full Taliban control

The Islamic State group is confirmed to be present in 5 districts of Kunar Province.

47% of the country's territory is contested

TAJIKISTAN
UZBEKISTAN
TURKMENISTAN
CHINA
IRAN
PAKISTAN

Mazar-e Sharif
Kunduz
KABUL
Jalalabad
Peshawar
Herat
Kandahar
Quetta

	Districts	Population
Taliban control	75	4,551,049
Government control	133	15,157,565
Contested	189	13,254,861
Unconfirmed	1	43,000
Islamic State (presence)	5	

C. Coelho | Source: FDD's Long War Journal. As of May 25, 2020

Interpretations of Islam

Taliban checkpoint in Farah, decorated with music tapes - 2006

Afghan 'Islamic' traditions

Sheikh Mati Shrine, Zabul. Sheikh Mati was born in Qalat in the 12th century. He was a noted religious scholar and Sufi poet. He wrote a book called Da khudai Meena, meaning "God's Love". People carry water with them when they visit his grave, to sanctify it and to use it as medicine.

Mentally ill person chained to the wall in Mia Baba shrine near Jalalabad, where he must survive 40 days on a diet of dry bread and black pepper to chase away the djinns inhabiting him… surrounded by his own trash, urine and faeces.

=> Danger of romanticizing traditional 'Islam'

Meaning of Sufism???

Malang

Sufism is starting to appear like a Western construct to oppose a humanistic, Western-friendly Islam to a perceived 'fundamentalist', hostile Islam. This perspective is almost wholly based on Persian poets (Rumi, Omar Khayyam, Hafiz, Saadi) from long ago.

Historically, however, Sufism meant many different things; generally, an individually assumed spiritual quest – to impose true Islam on an unbelieving or deviated world.

In Afghanistan, three Sufi orders (*tariqas*) played an important historical role: the Naqshbandiyya, the Qadiriyya and the Chistiyya.

In the contemporary world, with internet penetration to the furthest rural districts of Afghanistan, it is hard to hold on to traditional beliefs. Even traditional justice, pronounced by elders, is adapting to current beliefs, for ex. about women's rights.

The relation with tradition makes 'Sufism' – traditional practices ascribed to Islam - unappealing to the new generation of political Islamists, except for those who, following Western ways, see it as an antidote to 'anti-cultural' Islam: neo-Sufism.

Decline in Sufism (but appearance of neo-Sufism)

Contemporary Political Islam in Afghanistan
Borhan Osman

Non-violent anti-government Islamist groups growing among educated Afghan youth

- Hizb-u Tahrir – caliphate, secret infiltration of state, anti nation-state
- Jamiat-e Eslah – Afghan branch of Ikhwan / Jamaat-e Islami
- Hezb-e Islami – new generation of Gulbuddin's 1970s party, similar ideas
- Salafists – varying political objectives, most of them non-violent

Western analysts do not see these political developments because of obsession with security; any group that is not violent is not recognized. Stereotypes of 'educated, pro-democracy Afghan' vs 'backward, fundamentalist Afghan', i.e. democrats vs Taliban, preclude recognition of Islamist currents that may play a big role in the future.

Mobilization through mosques, education and demonstrations; social and trad. media

"None consider the Taliban's previous Islamic Emirate regime as an example of a viable or desirable Islamic state". These groups are being targeted neither by government, nor by the Taliban, allowing them to grow.

Genesis of groups – Hizb-ut Tahrir in the European diaspora (?), Jamiat-e Eslah as a reaction to tanzim failures in Peshawar in the 1990s, HIA to rekindle activism among HI families, and Salafism by Saudi proselytism in Pak and Eastern Afgh in the 1980-90s.

Salafism is gradually gaining legitimacy as Muslim orthodoxy in Afghanistan.

Nangarhar University, Jalalabad

Political ideas of Islamists *(Borhan Osman)*

Afghan Islam suffers both from the historic dominance of local traditions, that warp true Islam, and the 'planned secularization' by the West and its puppet rulers. A recurrent theme is how most Muslims today are *traditional* believers (based on local traditions, rather than faith) and need to become more conscious.

Since all Muslim countries, including Afghanistan, are ruled by *kufri* (un-Islamic) systems, Muslims do not know what an Islamic polity and a true Muslim society would look like

A return to tawhid (unity of all aspects of life in religious faith, or monotheism) is needed

The need for dawa

The Taliban – Then & Now

What do we know about them?
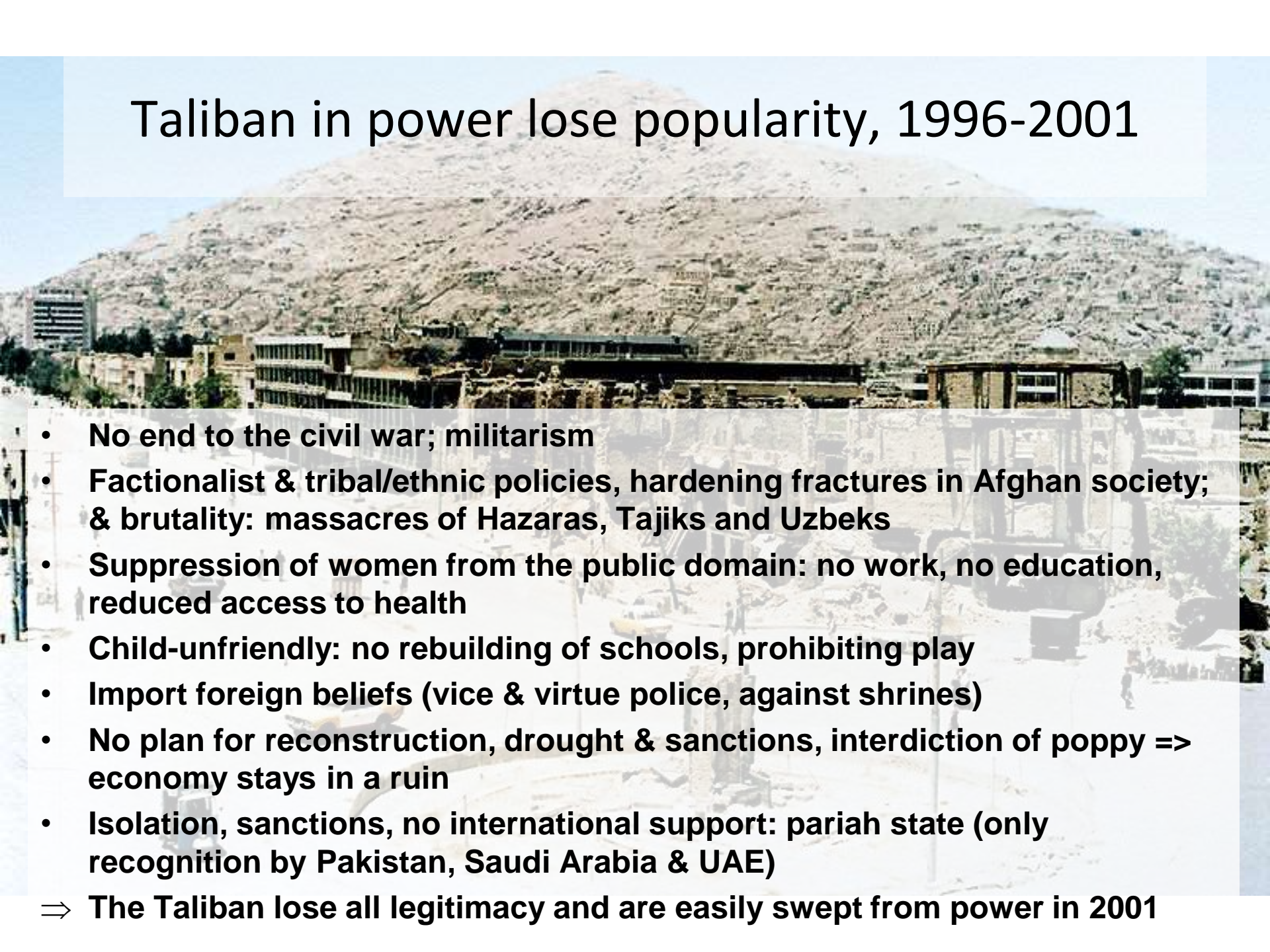
Who are the Taliban?

- Ethnically **Pashtuns**, with very few exceptions
- Background: mujahidin (senior), rural youth and Pak refugee camp madrassa students
- Importance of **Deobandi** clerics, and in particular Dar ul Uloom Haqqania in Akora Khattak, Pakistan. *In this photo: rally of the Jamiat-Ulema Islamiyya (JUI) in Quetta*
- The Taliban follow the **Hanafi** school of Sunni jurisprudence (and are therefore not Salafis) but they are deeply influenced by rural Afghan sufism
- Importance of the **Pashtunwali**, the Tribal Code of the Pashtuns: nang o namoos (honour and the protection of women). Other core values of Pashtunwali are Melmastia (hospitality), Nanawatai (asylum), Nyaw aw Badal (justice and revenge), Turah (bravery) in defending land, property, family (*zan, zar, zamin*), Sabat (loyalty), Khegaṛa/Shegaṛa (righteousness), Groh (faith), Pat, Wyaaṛ aw Meṛaana (respect, pride and courage) and Hewaad (country)

Taliban become popular 1994-96

- Ethical revolt against warlord abuse, disarmament
- Supported by merchants, clerics e.a. to end the Afghan civil war
- 'Strategic Depth' support by Pakistan to bind and stabilize Afghanistan
- Initially supported by the West (UNOCAL/RAND) to end the civil war and unlock post-Soviet Central Asia
- Capture Kandahar in '94, Herat '95, Jalalabad & Kabul '96, Bamiyan & Mazar '97
- Northeast never captured

Taliban in power lose popularity, 1996-2001

- **No end to the civil war; militarism**
- **Factionalist & tribal/ethnic policies, hardening fractures in Afghan society; & brutality: massacres of Hazaras, Tajiks and Uzbeks**
- **Suppression of women from the public domain: no work, no education, reduced access to health**
- **Child-unfriendly: no rebuilding of schools, prohibiting play**
- **Import foreign beliefs (vice & virtue police, against shrines)**
- **No plan for reconstruction, drought & sanctions, interdiction of poppy => economy stays in a ruin**
- **Isolation, sanctions, no international support: pariah state (only recognition by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia & UAE)**
- ⇒ **The Taliban lose all legitimacy and are easily swept from power in 2001**

The neo-Taliban 2003-2021

- Uncompromising insurgency against gvt & its foreign supporters
- Swarm structure to make counterinsurgency difficult
- Governance (justice, security, even education & development) in conquered areas to gain legitimacy > government. → **pragmatism**
- Aspects of Pashto regionalism, Afghan nationalism and international jihad
- Use of media for propaganda & participation
- Economy of the Taliban; agriculture, smuggling, narcotics, local support
- Targeted killings of Taliban leaders by US lead to the emergence of more radical leaders

Gopal & Strick van Linschoten, 2017: **Ideology of the Taliban**

- Return to power of the Taliban in communities that lost out in the new power-share, upset at corruption and the presence of foreign forces; main narrative: crusade against our religion and our culture through a puppet government. **Sovereignty** becomes a main concern of the neo-Taliban

- The 2003 US invasion of Iraq unleashes a new global Islamic resistance, with new jihad discourses and techniques (suicide bombings)

- The exile of Taliban leaders in Pakistan and the Gulf exposes them to new, more sophisticated political Islamic debates; internet penetration through mobile phones brings all Islamic struggles closer (Palestine, Egypt, etc)

- Political allegiance (against the government) has become more important than proper Islamic behaviour, shifting from outward compliance to intent: **takfirism** (declaring unbeliever a Muslim with the wrong political affiliations)

- Nationalism is a key characteristic; also embrace Hazaras and no claim over Pashtun tribal areas in Pakistan

Taliban vs Islamic State
- The Taliban have never conducted an attack outside Afgh/Pakistan
- Islamic State established itself on the Afghan/Pak border in 2014-15: Islamic State in Khorasan Province
- ISKP appeals mostly to radicalized urban Pakistanis and Afghans without prior links to the Taliban
- Ideological divergence between Taliban and IS: Hanafi/nationalist vs Salafi/internationalist; Taliban have eliminated IS presence in Afghanistan
- Last IS enclave in Kunar was overrun by Taliban in spring 2020. US offered support to Taliban.
- IS have turned into a clandestine movement

Taliban shadow government operates quite well

- **Commissions for military, justice, education, taxation, health and other affairs.**

- **Example of education commission in Chahar Dara**

- **Example of collecting electricity bills in Helmand**

- **Example of negotiating humanitarian access and activities in the UAE, with UN and ICRC**

- **Health commissions protect doctors and other government workers; gvt workers in Taliban held areas still receive salaries from the government.**

- **Taxes collected on roads and from urban businesses (protection racket?)**

- **The government has neither improved services nor tried to regain territory and hegemony. Government authorities did not resist the closure of girls' schools and the enforced nightly shutdown of mobile phone networks.**

Sources of income for the Taliban

Taxation of
1. Opium/poppy and other drugs: hash, amphetamines
2. Illegal mining
3. Road transports
4. Commercial activities
5. Farming

The Taliban's fiscal system works much better than that of the government, but Afghans complain that taxes are too high.
Self-sufficiency: external funding is insignificant.

How popular are the Taliban?

- Latest evidence suggests that, during the period while the Taliban's military leverage has increased, its approval in the general population has fallen (...) while the movement's characteristic modus operandi are authoritarian, its officials have proven pragmatic in responding to local community demands to allow delivery of social services such as health and education and infrastructure activities. However, the only sector in which the Taliban can be considered pro-active has been justice

- Taliban governance: shadow government with local responsibilities plus nation-wide commissions. Internal checks and balances focusing on corruption and not alienating civilian support

Taliban's perspectives on peace (ICG 2020)

- ICG **What should be done?** The Taliban should swiftly determine clear negotiating positions and be prepared to debate – and eventually reach compromises – on these as intra-Afghan talks unfold. The U.S. and other donors should leverage prospects of post-transition assistance as encouragement, while the Afghan government and civil society should engage the group and its ideas. GIVE ALL PARTIES TIME to work out negotiating positions among themselves and with each other.

- **Sitting on the fence** (between political and military options) carefully monitoring what their adversaries are doing. The Taliban consists of tens of thousands of Afghans bearing diverse views and interests, and the leadership has balanced the pursuit of potential gains from peace with the need to maintain organisational stability.

- the movement formally surveyed its leadership circles and top commanders to assess their views on intra-Afghan talks and the post-peace order, with the express purpose of developing coherent, consensus positions for intra-Afghan talks (p. 24)

Position of modern and traditional Afghan civil society in current political process

Agent	Basis of influence	Current role	Potential & Caveats
Modern civil society	CSOs tend to be nationally and globally networked, active in publicity and advocacy, tuned into global debates on peace making and flexible in their approaches	Conduct advocacy on issues relating to settlement e.g. transitional justice	Well placed to advocate on neglected issues such as inclusiveness. Key limitation is that many CSOs are urban-focused
Traditional civil society	Tribal elders, former mujahideen and other influential figures conduct mediation and organise their communities	Have facilitated most previous local peace deals and acted as intermediaries between government & Taliban	Has high potential to deliver CBMs and play role in local peace-making
Afghan private sector	Generates revenue, infrastructure and employment, needed by all conflict actors Market networks give it good national coverage	Generally pragmatic, commercial actors survive by paying off all sides and avoiding controversy	Involvement of private sector is important to generate a peace dividend – could link increased investment to peace and security. BUT their current stance of paying off funds the conflict
The ulema	Taliban and other militants depend on clerics for legitimacy, recruitment and facilitation. All political actors fear rebellion inspired by ulema. Social media has extended reach of charismatic, polemic preachers like Ansary in Herat.	Periodic state-led initiatives to issue anti-war fatwas, which effectively counter the Taliban's case for war. There is a risk of Taliban-aligned ulema circulating fatwas endorsing the current conflict. Negotiating team is seeking international ulema backing	Will be expected to deliver more pro-peace/anti-war fatwas and messaging. But key research issue is how to link these with practical actions for enhanced effect
Women / youth / war victims & disabled	Moral power and half the population. It is widely accepted that Afghan women have most at stake in either comprehensive settlement or incremental peace. Their accepting or rejecting any peace move may determine domestic and international legitimacy	Participate in Republican negotiating team. Some advocacy role	Vital to involve Afghan women in strategic decision making on peace – to appraise compromises proposed. Key caveat is that high profile western championing of gender issues could weaken conservative Islamist tolerance for any measure/settlement proposed

Timeline of US engagement in Afghanistan

2001: US invade Afghanistan to expel AQ and Taliban

2014: US winds down presence, transfers security responsibility to the Afghan government

Feb 2020: Agreement between US and Taliban for a complete US withdrawal

2009: US decides on a surge to defeat the Taliban

2018: US decides to engage Taliban in peace talks

March 2021: US announces May 1 deadline must be extended

Perceptions of foreign military personnel by Afghans

Why are they here?
- **Al Qaeda has no significant presence**
- **The Taliban surrendered and wanted to reintegrate society**
- **Why do they support the Afghan government?**
- **Which interest do they serve?**

Evolution of the US standpoint on 'Talking with the Taliban'

- 2002: US refuses the Taliban surrender (forcing Karzai not to accept)
- 2001-2014: US fights the Taliban ('terrorists')
- After 2014, the US agrees in principle to participating in talks with the Taliban only if the Afghan government is a leading partner. But for the Taliban the Islamic Republic is an illegitimate puppet government and they are not willing to talk to it
- Late 2018 the US drops the requirement to involve the Afghan government and initiates direct talks with the Taliban in Doha
  - Original subjects: "counter-terrorism, the pathway to intra-Afghan dialogue, the shape of a future state and their desired relations with the U.S. and the world" later narrowed down to exclusive interest of the USA: counter-terrorism and future relations with US and the world.
  - Strains develop between Afghan and US governments
  - Under pressure, the Taliban agree to talk to Afghan government officials, and relations between US and IRA are partially mended (US involvement in post-Sep 2019 elections fiasco)
  - US negotiated that the Afghan territory no longer be used for attacks on America or its allies, in exchange for complete troop withdrawal.
- Besides the Feb 29 agreement, there's a secret agreement between the US and the Taliban of unknown content

Seminars 10 & 11: State-building as a tool of global governance

Required reading: "State Effects and the Effects of State Building: Institution Building and the Formation of State-Centred Societies" - Stein Sundstøl Eriksen – Third World Quarterly Vol. 38, No. 4, 771–786 – 2017

"Global Governance as State Transformation" – Shahar Hameiri & Lee Jones - *Political Studies* 2016 Vol. 64(4) 793–810 (18 pp)

Recommended reading:

"A Tired Cliché: Why We Should Stop Worrying about Ungoverned Spaces and Embrace Self-Governance" - Jennifer Murtazashvili - Journal of International Afairs 2018 Vol. 71, No. 2, 11-29 (19 pp)

"Intervention and the Ordering of the Modern World" – John Macmillan - *Review of International Studies* 2013 Vol 39 No. 5, 1039-1056 – (18 pp)

"Rethinking the State" – Joel Migdal & Klaus Schlichte – 2005

State and Society

- Eriksen reminds us that state and society cannot be separated. The view that the state can be built as a set of institutions that then governs society is a-historical and unproductive (it doesn't 'work')

- Michael Mann (1993) describes the state as a cage, and society within that cage. The state then defines and limits society

- Bourdieu (1994) reminds us that we do not only live in the state, but the state lives in the individual by structuring his thinking, his expectations and thus his actions – generally unconsciously and often irrationally. Like a superego.

- What lives in our thoughts is the idea of the state, more powerful than its reality; the two must be distinguished. Society is structured by the image/idea of the state at least as much as by its practice (Migdal 2001)

- I have found there is an inverse relationship between the two: the worse the practice of the state, the stronger its idea; and vice-versa. Afghans strongly desire a good, strong state, while the French tend to be critical and dismissive of the state

Overview of state-building theories

- State-building is assumed to be a precondition for development and security

- State-building is framed as a technocratic, not a political exercise. Politics are secondary and define the 'how to', not the 'what'.

- Society is to be modelled by the state, not v-v.

- State-building failure is typically seen as the result of 'entrenched local interests' whose sabotage could be overcome with more resources or better prioritisation.

- The blame for failure is therefore systematically given to local government, with lip-service to 'national sovereignty'.

⇒ state-building is a highly ideological enterprise (Woodward 2017)

Ashraf Ghani, who wrote 'Fixing Failed States' in 2008 (with Clare Lockhart) as a kind of 'how-to' manual with World Bank optimism in technical solutions, is now President of a failed and increasingly failing state.

His failure to reach political settlements with his rival Abdullah Abdullah after two fraudulent elections is evidence of the **technocratic disregard for the political**

Migdal & Schlichte – Rethinking the State (2005)

- Image > Practice. For example, the image (threat) of the monopoly of violence > use of the monopoly of violence
  - this may be why terrorism is so threatening: because it threatens the image of the monopoly of violence; the practice (very few terrorist attacks) is much less important
  - Historically too, the image of the powerful Western state spread well before its practice throughout the rest of the world (Gramsci's 'passive revolution', or Reinhart 'statization')
- The image of the state as separate from other states and as the emanation of the population of a given territory precedes the constitution of society, as mirroring the unity of the state – the 'statization of minds'
  - However, the population could remember that borders and populations have shifted and that there is nothing immanent about the nation-state; the state must reaffirm its intimate bond with society day after day; Foucault 'gouvernementalité' (authors) or Billig's 'banal nationalism?
- The tension between image and practice of the state leads to a dynamic process of continuous readjustment, of both image and practice, which accompanies transformations in society
  - This dynamic process should be the focus of political scientists and others studying the State
- The boundaries of the state are not only territorial, but mainly outline its sphere of influence within society: the law (legal vs illegal), order (institutional vs informal), property (public vs private), morals…?

What Migdal and Schlichte can't account for, is the fact that the image of the state is similar all over the world (*the Weberian 'rational-legal' modern, rule-of-law based, pro-capital, rights-protecting, social safety net providing, developmental state*) – why?

Whatever the local state-society dynamics, there is a convergence of all 'state images' to a single model, the 'TINA' state .

Hameiri & Jones have an explanation for that: they see governance as lifted to the global level, and vested in multilateral institutions' meta-governance; the state has become a conduit for financing and executing governance. The externally-oriented (transnationally networked) institutions >> domestically-oriented state sectors, submitting the latter to a global discipline which is presented as technocratic: expert-based, not political.

- State transformation has become a primary mode of global governance. In the Gramscian tradition, "state transformations should be understood as a political project, driven and resisted by identifiable socio–political forces"

- Since the late 1970s, the purpose of states has changed "from securing a socially functional distribution of the economic surplus through direct economic intervention and service provision, to ensuring competitiveness and pro–market regulation"

The failure of structural adjustment policies in the 1980s convinced donors they had to intervene more deeply, sharing the sovereignty of host governments esp. in areas like finance ministries and monetary policies, and later also security and migration.

"**Sovereignty** was (...) substantially redefined from denoting autonomy from external control to denoting the capacity to govern in line with international expectations" (Chandler, 2006)

Sovereignty is today bestowed not by the population (vertically) but by other states (horizontally)

To be effective, meta-governance implies insulating policy from domestic 'vested interests' or 'spoilers' who contest 'expert solutions', and networking domestic agencies through socialization with their international counterparts

Meta-governance institutions provide capacity-building and policy-making resources for the transformation of target-states. For ex the WHO moved from dealing with international epidemics to coordinating domestic health agencies to adopt globally agreed best practices

Gill, 1992: "**Transnational governance arrangements** frequently involve a twofold move. First, authority is shifted away from institutions that are popularly accountable, like parliaments and political executives, towards agencies that are insulated from democratic control, such as quasi–autonomous non–governmental organisations and independent central banks. Second, these agencies then network with each other transnationally".

Domestic political contestation is thus delegitimised

For example, European border control agencies now are networked together, and as 'Frontex' (the EU's first armed uniformed force) are intervening in Eastern Europe and North Africa to contain migrants, outside the EU where they would enjoy rights.

This then allows domestic institutions to intervene in third countries, to 'improve governance'; according to Woodward (2017) this is what state-building is mostly about

Hameiri & Jones believe that domestic contestation can slow down or scuttle global governance transformation, but are domestic forces capable of operating at that level?

Why does the international community insist on building states, even when they keep failing?

For personal reasons?

- Out of ideological conviction
- Because it's a good business for those involved

For systemic reasons?

- It is the price for maintaining the hegemony of the model and pre-empting counterhegemonic social movements
- To subject the entire world to one system of capitalist exploitation, or to one system of values which ensures the cultural domination of the West

For lack of political imagination and intellectual bravery (inertia or *habitus*, only to be shaken by a major crisis)

Required reading list

« Guerre, Réconstruction de l'Etat et Invention de la Tradition en Afghanistan » – Fariba **Adelkhah** – Études du CERI – Mar 2016

"Bonn Agreement" – United Nations – December 2001

"Dracula or Frankenstein? The Role of the International Community in the 2014 Afghan Presidential Elections" – Scott **Smith** - *Conflict, Security & Development* 2016, 16:6, 501-520

"Intervention and Dreams of Exogenous Statebuilding: the Application of Liberal Peacebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq" – Toby **Dodge** - *Review of International Studies* 2013 Vol 39 No. 5, 1189-1212

"Ideology in the Afghan Taliban" – Anand **Gopal** and Alex Strick van Linschoten – Afghan Analysts Network – June 2017

"Taking Stock of the Taliban's Perspectives on Peace" - International Crisis Group – Aug 2020

"State Effects and the Effects of State Building: Institution Building and the Formation of State-Centred Societies" - Stein Sundstøl **Eriksen** – *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 38, No. 4, 771–786 – 2017

"Global Governance as State Transformation" – Shahar **Hameiri** & Lee Jones - *Political Studies* 2016 Vol. 64(4) 793–810

Recommended reading list

"Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival" – Amin **Saikal** – IB Tauris, 2004

"The Cost of Support to Afghanistan. Considering Inequality, Poverty and Lack of Democracy through the 'Rentier State' Lens" – Kate **Clark** – Afghan Analysts Network, 2020

"Looking like a state: Techniques of persistent failure in state capability for implementation" – Lant **Pritchett**, Michael Woolcock & Matt Andrews – WIDER Working Paper, No. 2012/63

"Afghan Perceptions on Elections and Democracy" – Ahmed Nader **Nadery** & FEFA (the Free and Fair Elections Foundation for Afghanistan) – 2014

"Righting the Course? Humanitarian Intervention, the War on Terror and the Future of Afghanistan" – Fatima **Ayub** & Sari Kuovo - *International Affairs* Vol 84 No.4 July 2008

"The National Solidarity Programme: Assessing the Effects of Community-Driven Development in Afghanistan" – Andrew **Beath**, Fotini Christia and Ruben Enikolopov – *in* Rachel Gisselquist (ed): *Development Assistance for Peacebuilding* – Routledge 2018

"People's Perceptions on the Peace Process" – Salah Foundation & Heinrich Böll Foundation, 2020

"Landscapes of the Jihad" – Faisal **Devji** – IB Tauris 2005

"My Life with the Taliban" – Abdul Salam **Zaeef** – Columbia University Press 2010

"A Tired Cliché: Why We Should Stop Worrying about Ungoverned Spaces and Embrace Self-Governance" - Jennifer **Murtazashvili** - *Journal of International Afairs* 2018 Vol. 71, No. 2, 11-29

"Intervention and the Ordering of the Modern World" – John **Macmillan** - *Review of International Studies* 2013 Vol 39 No. 5, 1039-1056

"Rethinking the State" – Joel **Migdal** & Klaus Schlichte – 2005 (ResearchGate)