

Confrontation of Superpowers in Afghanistan: China Envisages Military Presence in Strategic Wakhan Corridor

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Masud Wadan reporting from Kabul.

To mark the legitimacy of US military in Afghanistan, Washington recently declined participating in a Russia-led peace talks on Afghanistan which had been scheduled for September 4 in Moscow. In a statement, the Russian embassy in Kabul expressed disappointment and described Washington's refusal as based on "unfounded reasons".

The Afghan ministry of external affairs also toed the US line and refused to participate in the meeting citing that the talks are not led by Afghanistan.

Not the first time, the US did turn down Russia's invitation for Afghan peace talks on April 14 last year. The US doesn't want Russia on board. However, there are no reasonable grounds to reject Russia's engagement in Afghanistan's dilemma. At that time, Pakistan was right to concern that the US' involvement is a must because Washington is the "biggest stakeholder" there.

Kabul questions Moscow-led talks for "not including it as a weighty party", but it forgot to point criticism to the recent official talks between the US envoy and Taliban representative in Qatar's Doha that went by without a scrap of Afghan role.

When Moscow saw the distaste of the US and the US-led Afghan government, it announced on August 27 that it will postpone the event to a later date. Russia's summit was then called off and the US thought it had won.

Amidst fragile relations between regional powers, Moscow talks were to include Pakistan, China, Iran and India. The US has called the September 4 gathering as "broad" because it includes the arch-enemy Iran.

Before the announcement of postponement, a Tajikistan's Air Force fighter jet flew into Afghanistan's airspace in northern Takhar province and bombed militants in an eyebrow-raising attack. The targets were reportedly the drug dealers. But for us, the point of concern is not the kind of targets; it is about why it happened at this moment.

Although Russian officials were quick to apparently deny involvement in the attack, it might be our mistake to not see Moscow's fury in the attack. It is clear that Tajikistan had been far

from firing a single shot at us in the past 17 years of the US invasion. It could send a direct message to the US and Afghan allies for their concurrent ignoring of Russia's power.

It has to be admitted that Russia has grown inclined to Afghanistan. It has offered to arm the Afghan army with air power outmatching the status quo, but the government in Afghanistan has been nudged to show apathy.

Russia steps forward as critic of the US-led unipolarization in the world and is moving into action to replace the unipolarity with a multipolar international system to undercut the US's existential threat in the region.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman **Maria Zakharova** said Thursday in Moscow:

"The US has tried to bring Afghanistan to peace on its own, and it didn't work. The International Community now has to take care of this matter collectively".

The Taliban leadership is a nonentity. It is a brainwashed force picking up arms for a loaf of bread under the fake motto of fighting the "infidel" West. All the spokesmen or representatives acting on behalf of Taliban are media fabrications. The term "Taliban" is now used as a pretext by involving various sides to secure their own place in Afghanistan and the region's multidimensional interests.

The armed conflict and military power is not always used for attack on foreign territories, just as is the case of Afghanistan. The war strategists believe that compellence, deterrence and coercion are important factors that bring the enemy to its knees (by grace of military strength and influence).

Afghanistan's battleground is the one where intensity of violence affects decision making in the surrounding region. With this privilege in hand, the primary force - the US - draw on further advantages from the rival states.

We can't hold Russia's existence as solely responsible for the unrest in the South Asian region, nor are China or Iran individual causes behind the fiasco in Afghanistan. With the world engaged in debates over the US's rivalry with Russia or China, an immeasurable amount of Uranium and Rare Earth Elements and narcotics are being flown from southern Helmand province to outside. This is a multifaceted war. If the underground minerals ever come to an end, then policies would undergo major changes.



US soldiers in Afghanistan's poppy fields

It has to be asserted that Afghanistan's prolonged war is largely built around the deterrence and compellence policies that materialize the objective of a hegemonic role over the world.

According to causal theory, nothing has caused the Afghan war to happen but rather the war, in essence, is a necessity that generates a shower of foreseen interests and consequential benefits. This hypothesis can be reinforced with a look to chaos in almost every corner of the world. When the options for instigation of war run out, they resort to doubling of tariffs on imports from China and Europe.

The global disorder is a smooth pathway to global hegemony which is the ultimate goal of the US. In the face of an immense and complex imperial agenda, it would be a grave mistake to expect an end to Afghanistan's conflict.

The Afghan war is a coercive process of armed battle between two fronts: Afghan army and Taliban insurgents. Both forces are designed carefully and driven into a quagmire where they can't escape or at least find a room to question the legitimacy and rightfulness of the deadly conflict.

To grease the wheels of war, the war theorists employ violent doctrines. The terrorist forces trained to fight the Afghan government and destroy infrastructures are made up of children kidnapped from the same territory – Afghanistan – and raised in sanctuaries under violent treatment. To inflict fatalities and damage upon the Afghan nation in full swing, the warmongers recruit heartless alien nationals mostly Arab, Chechens, Pakistanis and others.

The US has no excuse to justify the Afghan war. Typically, the Kabul-based US embassy posted a condolence message on its facebook page about a recent suicide attack on teenagers taking college entry test that killed more than 50 students. The post had just been inundated with offensive comments against the US's war policies in Afghanistan.

It is amazing to know that after Russia, now China is digging for a one-way solution to the

threats from Afghanistan as they found the US uncooperative. In a recent strange move, Beijing has said to be fully funding a base in isolated Wakhan Corridor and may send hundreds of troops there.



Wakhan Corridor



A side valley to the Wakhan Corridor. over the Panshir valley



Once the camp is completed, the People's Liberation Army is likely to send hundreds of military personnel to Afghanistan's secluded Wakhan Corridor. Kabul has not commented on this so far and it is certain that the government would oppose the move because it conflicts with US interests. The Afghan embassy in Beijing refutes the claim that China is building a training camp in the Wakhan corridor (SCMP, Hong Kong, August 28, screenshot above)

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