

US Is Doing No Good in Afghanistan

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As an Afghan woman who was elected to Parliament, I am in the United States to ask President Barack Obama to immediately end the occupation of my country.

Eight years ago, women's rights were used as one of the excuses to start this war. But today, Afghanistan is still facing a women's rights catastrophe. Life for most Afghan women resembles a type of hell that is never reflected in the Western mainstream media.

In 2001, the U.S. helped return to power the worst misogynist criminals, such as the Northern Alliance warlords and druglords. These men ought to be considered a photocopy of the Taliban. The only difference is that the Northern Alliance warlords wear suits and ties and cover their faces with the mask of democracy while they occupy government positions. But they are responsible for much of the disaster today in Afghanistan, thanks to the U.S. support they enjoy.

The U.S. and its allies are getting ready to offer power to the medieval Taliban by creating an imaginary category called the "moderate Taliban" and inviting them to join the government. A man who was near the top of the list of most-wanted terrorists eight years ago, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, has been invited to join the government.

Over the past eight years the U.S. has helped turn my country into the drug capital of the world through its support of drug lords. Today, 93 percent of all opium in the world is produced in Afghanistan. Many members of Parliament and high ranking officials openly benefit from the drug trade. President Karzai's own brother is a well known drug trafficker.

Meanwhile, ordinary Afghans are living in destitution. The latest United Nations Human Development Index ranked Afghanistan 181 out of 182 countries. Eighteen million Afghans live on less than \$2 a day. Mothers in many parts of Afghanistan are ready to sell their children because they cannot feed them.

Afghanistan has received \$36 billion of aid in the past eight years, and the U.S. alone spends \$165 million a day on its war. Yet my country remains in the grip of terrorists and criminals. My people have no interest in the current drama of the presidential election since it will change nothing in Afghanistan. Both Karzai and Dr. Abdullah are hated by Afghans for being U.S. puppets.

The worst casualty of this war is truth. Those who stand up and raise their voice against injustice, insecurity and occupation have their lives threatened and are forced to leave Afghanistan, or simply get killed.

We are sandwiched between three powerful enemies: the occupation forces of the U.S. and

NATO, the Taliban and the corrupt government of Hamid Karzai.

Now President Obama is considering increasing troops to Afghanistan and simply extending former President Bush's wrong policies. In fact, the worst massacres since 9/11 were during Obama's tenure. My native province of Farah was bombed by the U.S. this past May. A hundred and fifty people were killed, most of them women and children. On Sept. 9, the U.S. bombed Kunduz Province, killing 200 civilians.

My people are fed up. That is why we want an immediate end to the U.S. occupation.

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