

Oybek MAKHMUDOV

Senior Lecturer, Chair of international affairs at the Higher School of Business.
Consultant international academic and development projects. Visiting Fellow Centre
for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, Chandigarh, India.
PhD candidate in political science (Uzbekistan)
e-mail: bekpolitics@yahoo.com

Problems and Perspectives in Countering Militant's Threats in Afghanistan and Their Impact to Neighbors

ABSTRACT

In these articles analyzing problems and perspectives in countering religious militants groups in Afghanistan and their scenarios. The mostly regional organizations have different approaches in countering common threats from the militants groups. In global levels exists strong confrontations with Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian regional security organisations as NATO, OSCE, CSTO and SCO in countering security and terrorism issues and targeting information's. The limited transnational military cooperation rendering ineffectual any efforts to pursue fleeing insurgents, or contains the conflict. Therefore only through joint efforts of the regions will be preventing expanded threats from the Afghanistan to neighbor regions and beyond.

Key words: Regional organizations, Afghanistan, countering militant groups, confrontation, cooperation.

The regional organizations operated in Afghanistan have lacking in case to effectively countering international militant activities. Each of regional organizations try to protect of the own national interests. The last CSTO meeting more concentrate on solve of the Russian interests as a safeguard energy resources of the Central Asia, and for reviving presence in the Afghanistan.

In SCO dominated mostly Russian and Chinese interests. SCO still not formed the unified strategies, from the dividing organisation on two groups, one groups follow for socio-economical cooperation and another only for political-military. The Swiss OSCE chairmanship create opportunity for strengthen a new regional strategies of the combinations of the soft and hard security approaches in Central Asia.

Regarding NATO also has main problems in countering terror activities in Afghanistan, they are mostly implement western approaches, without accepting specifics of traditions, history, mentality, geography, culture, in this country and region.

That's why keenly necessary implementing of the 6+3 initiatives of multi regional security organisations, including neighbour countries, in efficiently solving militants conflicts in Afghanistan¹.

In addition regional organisations from 1999 to present years (recently militant activities in Sogd valley) couldn't blockade the penetrations of religious militants groups from Afghanistan to South Kyrgyzstan and Tadjikistan. Therefore the regional security structures failed in adequately preventing to the threats of well organised militants tactics of guerrilla warfare. However the militants armed with light weapons and night vision goggles, which were prepared for longer armed struggle. The spreading of small arms from both Afghanistan has contributed to militants activities in the Central Asian region. The Afghanistan provided a permanently source with a variety of weapons in circulation. The huge quantities of small arms, ranging from assault rifles to hand grenades, were supplied from Afghanistan to the militants in Central Asian countries. After the Soviet retreat from Afghanistan, the Soviet Army left quantities of weapons including AK, that regularly used in confrontation between the Taliban movement and the Northern Alliance and were also exported to Pakistan. The gun is now produced in Pakistan provinces, the prices very low. The small arms could be found in the Grand Trunk Road, at the Khyber Pass Armaments Company, that sells shotguns for 40 usd and AK-47 for 70 usd.

In addition between the years 1986 and 1989, the US channeled around 1,000 Stingers to the mujahedin. The flow of small arms to Afghanistan did not end even after the Soviet forces leaving from the country in 1989. Before the Russian troops left, the US increased its arms supplies to Afghanistan to ensure that the Soviet decision to leave would hold. The US provided to mujahedin, with Stingers and Milan anti-tank missiles, and continued to support the Afghan guerrillas in their fight against the pro-Soviet regime. Besides leaving behind large stockpiles of small arms after its forces had withdrawn, the Soviet Union, in turn, launched an intensive series of arms and ammunition supplies to Kabul. At this stage of the armed conflict, Pakistan continued to act as a conduit for weapons transfers from various supporters of the mujahedin. However, due to severe tensions and disagreements between the main mujahedin groups based in the Pakistani town of Peshawar, by the end of the 1980s, the military and financial aid from mujahedin adherents was regularly directly channeled to tribal leaders and military commanders inside Afghanistan.

It has been estimated that roughly one half of the small arms currently circulating within Afghanistan arrived there during the Cold War years, most of them from countries involved in the Afghan conflict. For example, the United States delivered at least 400,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles to the Afghan guerrillas in cooperation with the Pakistani ISI. In addition, at the beginning of the 1990s, the ISI it still had access to around 3 million Kalashnikov originating from the pipeline operations (Pirseyedi, 2008). The small arms accumulation in Afghanistan came from three main sources: the stocks of foreign governments, small-scale arms manufacturers in the region, and black-market suppliers.

The main threats in Central Asia consist in lack control of uranium resources in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, that could be get by the international

¹ Six plus Three ("6+3") Initiative aimed at peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict with participation of the six neighbouring countries to Afghanistan, plus the United States, the Russian Federation and NATO as main anti-terrorist actor in Afghanistan.

militants groups. The threat of militants groups in getting of radiological materials in the Kyrgyzstan became as serious subjects, especially in case of the illicit smuggling incidents at the Central Asian drug routes (in the south of Kyrgyzstan in Mayлуу-Suu tailings are located) which could be used for smuggling radioactive materials (“Kyrgyzstan’s race to stabilize...”, 2005).

The lack of guards maintained at uranium sites could pose a serious proliferation threat from acquisition by militant groups, depending upon the level of radioactivity in materials that have been abandoned. Many militant groups operate in the territory of the Kyrgyzstan, including Al-Qaeda and others as: IMT, Eastern Turkestan Islamic Movement, and Hizb-ut-Tahrir, has a major threat to regional stabilities. According to analysts’ views to the fact that terrorist groups are being forced from the Afghanistan-Pakistan border areas and are “actively pursuing their agenda in Central Asia following the intensified attacks by the ISAF in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In July 2009, Kyrgyz authorities arrested 18 people accused of assisting international militant groups. Mostly of them detained had been trained in Afghanistan. Hizb ut-Tahrir, which has grown has a significant presence in the Kyrgyzstan, it might be collaborate with Al-Qaeda. According to Ariel Cohen “Hizb ut Tahrir takeover of any Central Asian state could provide the global radical Islamist movement with a geographic base and access to the expertise and technology to manufacture weapons of mass destruction.” (Muzalevsky, 2009)

The primary threat present inside Central Asian countries is the presence of religious militant groups that believed to have links with the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. This fact in the region has particularly activated after military operations against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and in Pakistan (Hayes, Brunner, Rowen, 2007).

Another threat emerges from the lacking air security regarding preventing supplying arms to Afghanistan from illegal flying planes from Belgium, Ukraine, or South Africa traffic weapons originating in Eastern Europe and deliver them to clients from Africa to Afghanistan.

In addition the growing civilian casualties caused by US and ISAF air strikes in Afghanistan and Pakistan poses a major challenge for the international forces and its allies in the terror counter operations. The attack counts and the casualty estimates available to date focus largely on the areas where direct military clashes take place involving US, NATO, ISAF and ANA/ANP countering Taliban and other militant groups. These are also the areas where most air strikes are concentrated (Cordesman, 2009).

The UN maps show that Taliban and other militants’ influence covers a major part of Afghanistan that is the focus of most actual fighting (Stanekzai, 2008).

According to the UN Secretary General noting that approximately 175 of the country’s 400 districts (around half country) at time are outside government control, problematic, or difficult and that the number that are totally inaccessible could rise from 10 to 40 (“Afghanistan, Security Situation”, 2007).

The small arms in Afghanistan are sold for cash; bartered for teak wood, hostages, heroin, or religious artifacts; or countertraded for grain and oil. The deals can be transacted by between who are equally at home in smuggling gold to South Asian countries, trafficking in counterfeit computers to the Russia, or shipping toxic waste to Somalia. The ships with the arms are probably registered in a flag-of-convenience country boasting commercial secrecy, low registration fees, and the opportunity for rapid name and ownership changes. The payments can move through a series of coded western bank accounts in the name of a global network of ghost companies and are protected by the banking and corporate secrecy laws of one or several of the many financial havens around the world.

All these factors led to the following problems:

- Absent own regional security system in Central Asia, that usually rule by the Russia and US

- Lacking of operational motilities in regional military forces failure at the planning and implementations stages to properly coordinate the deployment and operational activities of the armed forces between the various power ministries

- Dominations of the political ambitions in admitting countering strategies

- Lacking of finance local armed forces in region and essentially in Afghanistan, for this we can compare with following real situations with militant groups and with state armed forces in Afghanistan and region.

The Taliban commanders use the finance resources as vital tools in recruitment to their troops. According to analysts’ estimates, the average their soldier is paid between 100-150 usd per month, while cell commanders make considerably more, approximately 350 usd per month. The Taliban fighters are often deployed for only short temporary service. Taliban commanders often use a call-up system by which young men in areas under Taliban control are called on to report for short several day operations. Additionally, the Taliban offered from 10 to 20 usd per day for attacks on Western forces, and 15 usd to launch a single mortar round into nearby coalition military bases, and 1.000 usd for the head of a government worker or a foreigners (Chan, 2009).

The majority of foreign fighters are recruited from Pakistan’s madras’s, refugee camps in Baluchistan, and reportedly as far east as Miram Shah in Pakistan’s FATA. At during ISAF operation in Helmand’s southern Garmser district in spring of 2008 it’s enhancing of the foreign fighter facilitation network. In this operation, mostly was 150 foreign fighters, that killed in just one week’s period. According to reports were more than 500 fighters in the district, most of them foreign. Coalition forces in Helmand have even “syndicates” of militants moving back and forth across the Helmand-Pakistan border, including Pakistanis, and elements of AL Qaeda. The major source of Taliban funding is a zakat collected from villagers in areas under Taliban control. The exact tax assessment varies from area to area, though in some places the ushr, or a ten percent it’s collected. The tax is linked to agricultural production of licit crops, like wheat and fruits, as well as illicit crops like opium, and is often paid once or twice yearly following major harvests. Most Taliban fighters are farmers and Taliban campaigns are timed to allow the Taliban to harvest their opium fields every spring. The Taliban have historically charged opium farmers an ushr on opium at harvest time. Furthermore narcotics traffickers who buy opium directly from farmers must pay the Taliban a tax, as well as truckers who pay a per-kilogram transit tariff. But the Taliban also provide protection for traffickers. In exchange for a fee, Taliban fighters have been known to forcefully defend narcotics processing labs and refineries that manufacture opium into heroin. The donations from supporters in Pakistan and the Gulf States are a further source of revenue for the insurgency activities.

The Taliban benefited from the discontent caused by poppy eradication in Helmand and Kandahar. In Helmand, the Taliban were welcomed into farming communities that were often the target of government-led eradication forces. In last years, the eradication campaigns came under intense attack by Taliban forces, and eradication could not be completed in towns along the Arghandab River, especially because the Canadian military refused to support counter-narcotics units.

In addition local armed forces not so well trained as militant fighters, that’s why couldn’t combat in operations in mountain terrain of Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Also Afghan forces have lack equipment and communication systems in the field. The uniforms and body armor remain widely mismatched and very poorly distributed. Most police personnel are issued at least one uniform that is traded out for warmer/cooler uniforms depending on the season. The composition of this equipment varies between American, Russian and Chinese military grade equipment

to 3rd party equipment that provides its no real protection. If ISAF and NATO forces usually carrying actions in day time, but from 2009, the Taliban fighters began conducting nighttime patrols and raids in some areas of Kandahar City, occasionally engaging ANP units with small arms fire, and Taliban patrols have been known to visit houses at night and forcefully demand food and supplies (Rennie, 2009), (Galloway, 2009). The Taliban's nighttime patrols increase populations fear from the Taliban activities. These facts create fear support from populations, that could be harder to defeat the militants troops. While the Pakistani state has had trouble dealing with insurgents, the Afghan security forces are still considerably weaker than their counterparts across the border. It is entirely plausible that as NATO troop levels come down, militants will find Afghanistan to be the regional weak link. Afghan and Pakistani Taliban factions, along with Baloch separatists, and perhaps other militant groups in the South Asia region, may come to find safe havens within Afghanistan's territory if a power vacuum is left by the withdrawal of foreign troops.

Thus, if the Afghan military is deterred from engaging in extensive cross-border operations by its stronger neighbor, Pakistan will not face similar constraints in violating Afghan territory. If Pakistani militants come to find strongholds in a weak Afghan state, Pakistan may be tempted to strike.

In global levels exists strong confrontations with Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian regional security organisations' as NATO, OSCE, CSTO and SCO in countering security and terrorism issues and targeting information's (Kobrin'skaya, 2008). That's why the limited transnational military cooperation rendering ineffectual any efforts to pursue fleeing insurgents, or contains the conflict. In results for external actors, the unstable situations in Afghanistan create favourable opportunities in controlling energy resources in region by the armed forces.

NATO might also provide security for infrastructure in energy producing states those troubles with stabilities problems. By NATO countries views the mostly energy producers countries are unstable, as in Middle East's. Therefore their make propaganda that Central Asian countries will be need in military assistance for secure their energy supplies to import countries. Although Russia and China are attempting to work together within the SCO to balance their influence in Central Asia, Russia plays a dominant role within the CSTO. The CSTO is mostly a tool to keep the Central Asian states under control. Russia want to prevent the Central Asian states from selling their natural gas to the Europe without going through Russia, since in this case Russia's pipeline monopoly would be threatened and the states in the region would become more independent.

Russia wishes to keep all energy exports from the territory of the former Soviet Union under its control. The current conflict over the closing of Manas Air Force Base in Kyrgyzstan reveals the means by which funds and influence are being struggle over in Central Asia. In this case, Russia pledges paid more than US, but results was ineffective. Because economic presence of westerns it's much more powerful and real than Russians. While the Central Asian leaders enjoy certain advantages in this 'Great Game', there is a lack of outside pressure which is needed to implement important political and economic reforms. Russia's objective is to weaken American influence in the region and to permanently secure its own role as a regional power was failed. Anyway Central Asian countries not interested in having a single dominant actor in the region. However for reviving the dominance in region, Russia tries enhance of the rapid forces of Collective Security Treaty Organizations as military tools for imposing in perspectives on national states at during inter and external tensions in region. The emerging strategic landscape of the region has not only affected the interests of the traditional actors as US and Russia, but also the national interests of neighboring countries, as Afghanistan, China, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, as well as outside like the European Union, India, Japan. The currently in greater game involve more than tens players. The most of them use the combinations of geo-economics with geostrategic tactics. This mixture of changing world politics suggest that in New Great Game for the influence and control of heartland resources is far more complex than was in past in the 19th century competitive colonization of the region by the England and Russia (Amineh, 2003).

Now US and Russia negatively accept of the increasing the Chinese influence on whole Central Asia. China is pursuing the long-term goal of becoming the most important actor in the region. The Russian strategy mostly based on the development of military cooperation with the Central Asian states, China is concentrating on economic cooperation. Russia's resurging military might in the region could also influence decision-makers and producers in the Caspian and Central Asia. In this situation, the United States, Europe and China represent other external players with considerable military capabilities which could shape the security of the region and the energy routes which run through these volatile territories. The existing contradictions between Russia and China (migrations, trade and etc) its not so much impacts regarding main challenges as increasing American presence in region. In these aspects the Russia and China have been cooperating to reduce US influence in the region and, as they accrue more Central Asian energy assets, will have more points with which to prevent US encroachment into their spaces of influence.

For Russia one is major purpose of direct a mitigating of the US and a NATO influences in the region, because these are accept as challenging from the Russia's reviving presences. By the Russian geopolitical assessments, the Central Asian region is valuable in projecting its power status as a competitor with the US and the EU.

China and India's perceived need to secure access to energy supplies will these countries to become more global rather than just regional powers, while Europe and Russia's co-dependency is likely to be strengthened. A growing energy demand will promote geopolitical and energy competition among great powers that, in turn will reinforce their perceived energy insecurity.

One is best solutions in sustainability of Central Asian countries and Afghanistan conclude in following measures as:

The gradually mitigating of raw resources exports countries dependency to developing the alternative sources of energy and intellectual resources, that also one is significant potentials in the world.

In addition, it's preventing privatizations of strategic energy fields by the foreign companies.

Establishing energy security supplies it's necessary measures in the safeguarding of vulnerable land trade routes and infrastructures in region. In this issues China and India must be integrated in securing the global energy supply chain, including from Central Asian routes, as large consumers they are equally interested in stable supplies. In the Central Asia would be gravity significance for old and new players for seize energy resources of region.

Therefore the foreign actors should accept the national specifics and interests of Central Asian countries and Afghanistan before implementing any strategies and mediation. And external actors should to involve Central Asian countries more in meeting on nontraditional security challenges, particularly climate protection, disarmament, energy and raw material supplies, the commercialization of renewable energy resources.

Mid term scenarios in Afghanistan and beyond

The ongoing armed conflicts in Afghanistan could be spread to Pakistan that is destabilizing the neighbor South Asian and Central Asian countries.

Operationally, there is some evidence of AL-Qaeda working with the Afghan Taliban. Al-Qaeda itself doesn't do real operations in Afghanistan; it's not in the position to do so the most it can hope to be is a kind of force multiplier for the other entities that are already there. In that context it has been ready to provide some support and assistance to Afghan Taliban units weapons training, some material assistance. Also, some of the foreign fighters are experienced fighters and know quite a lot about military tactics. So there has been, at the tactical level, certain of amount of

cooperation. In Pakistan al-Qaeda with the Tariki Taliban the Pakistan Taliban there are links, because the al-Qaeda leadership are in the tribal areas and they are don't just come there in 2001 (Barrett, 2009). The al-Qaeda has done gradually and effectively is to create local alliances through intermarriage and business relationships in South Asia and try penetrate to Central Asia.

The major threat, that increase in last the months will be come from al-Qaeda. This group has the enough funds, human resources and experience to be able to conduct terrorist activity in every part of the regions. There is serious concern that al-Qaeda may decide for expand of its activity to Central Asia, and will be able to realize in midterm perspectives.

The following factors provide grounds for concern that al-Qaeda may expand its activity to Central Asia:

The loss, or risk of losing, safe shelters by al-Qaeda in western and north-western Pakistan as a result of intensified activity by Pakistani and US troops in that area, and friction between tribes and individual armed groups. In this context, the black holes emerging in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan could at least partly provide an alternative temporary or permanent shelter to some al-Qaeda militants or their families. A similar situation has already arisen in the past (with the IMT in Tajikistan), and at the recently escalation events in Sughd (Rotar, 2014).

The militants groups in Afghanistan defeat the government of Afghanistan in relatively short order and re-establish the state that hosted al-Qaeda and provided such a useful base for transnational terror groups to train and plot against secular regimes. These international militants groups then turn their attention to incumbent the regime in Pakistan and undermining the stabilities in whole Central Asia.

In addition in during next few months it has a probability in realising of the militant's activities in Central Asia from Afghanistan. These activities would be implementing by the groups located from Afghan territories, they are various international militants move from Afghanistan to Central Asia, who are responsible for implementing specific tasks (participation in battles, organization of terror activities). At this time, also this group, as a specific militant unit, should not be more hidden carrying their activities. This militants group would be the most trained and prepared.

Another groups as "tajiks" would come from Tajikistan territories and their objectives include destabilization in the Sogd Region of Tajikistan for complete loss of control of secular regime over the territory of the whole neighbour region countries.

The suicide bombings in London, Moscow, Madrid, Tajikistan, Kabul and expanded of the insurgency movements in Europe and escalating of religious conflicts in Middle East's should be changing views of foreign actors and global organizations in counter terrorism strategies.

Therefore only through joint efforts of the regions will be mitigating threats from the militants groups. In addition Balkan, Central Asia and South Asian regions posses by the rich geo-cultural and geo-religious potentials that should be implement as one is effectively countering and preventive measures to religious militant's tendencies.

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