

Traditional Conflict Resolution Mechanism and Role of UN missions

Brownbag Meeting hosted by DPET in DPO

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Motive and Appreciation

- 1) Discussion with ASG in DPPA-DPO on the issues of Traditional Conflict Resolution Mechanism (TCRM) and UN field operation in March 2019.
- 2) Sincere appreciation for the preparation for this event since June 2019 by DPET in DPO.

Road Map

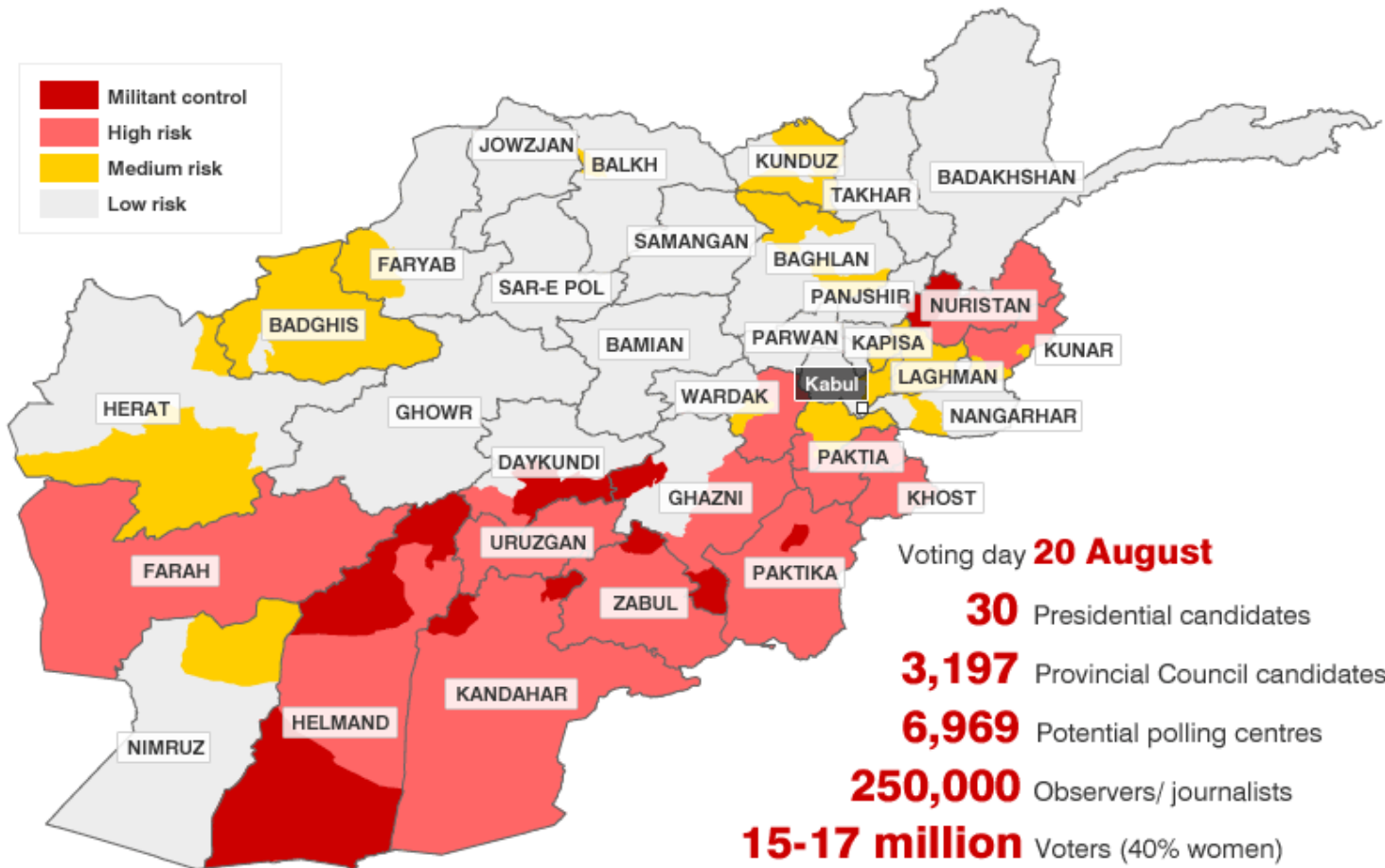
A) Three incidents which caused me to believe that it is vital to understand TCRM.

- 1) My experience in Afghanistan
- 2) Japanese experience after WW II
- 3) My current field research on S. Sudan

B) Conclusion with Recommendations

1) Afghanistan

My research in Afghanistan in 2008



SOURCE: Afghan Interior Ministry/Reuters

Individual Interviews in Kabul

70 interviews with
top leaderships of
the Afghan Gov. and
the UN

Mr. Zia (Minister of
MRRD)

Mr. Ahadi (Minister of
Finance)



Opinion Survey

Kandahar Province: 50

Wardak Province: 102

Kapisa Province: 108

- Group meetings in the centers of the provinces.
- Pashtun and Dari version of questionnaires



Majority of Afghan People Support Reconciliation in 2008

94% Kandahar (Pashtun), 98 % Wardak (Pashtun), 86% Kapisa (Tajik) in 2008 responded that “Reconciliation with Insurgent groups, including Taliban, is the first priority to establish peace.”

98% Kandahar, 98% Wardak, 70% Kapisa support the coalition government between Karzai and the Taliban.

English Reports and Japanese Book in 2008 & 2009

2008 Oct: I published English reports from UN DPKO and a Japanese book, “Peacebuilding”, based on my field researches, and made policy recommendation to support Afghan G to start the reconciliation with the Taliban.

2009 Nov : The Japanese government announced that it would support the reconciliation and reintegration as one of three key strategies for assisting Afghanistan.

UNAMA 2009-2010

- I started working for UNAMA as a team leader for reconciliation and reintegration (political affairs officer) from Dec 2009 to Dec 2010.
- I supported Afghan Gov. to establish reconciliation mechanism to start talking with the Taliban. I did my best to collect information about the Taliban.

A Story by UNAM national staff

- Two villages had a land dispute. They requested the Afghan local Gov. (police, court, provincial Gov.) to solve the conflict. But they were just asked for the bribe and one year was wasted.
- Villagers decided to request the Taliban commanders to come. Next day, the Taliban came, organized “shura” to have intensive debate. Next day, it made a verdict based on “Pashtunwali.” It was implemented next day. The dispute was solved in four days.

Implications

This story would demonstrate that:

- 1) It takes time for the central Gov. to start functioning in war-torn states, including addressing local conflicts.
- 2) Thus, it is important for UN to support and enhance TCRM. Solving local conflicts will strengthen legitimacy of the central Gov. that UN is supporting.
- 3) But, we often need to have adjustments, engaging with local partners, to make it suitable for UN principles. (For instance, shura is traditionally composed by men.)
- 4) Understanding Pashtunwali must be also crucial to support the peace process between Afghan G. and the Taliban, as the Taliban behaves based on Pashtunwali, the traditional customary codes in Afghanistan for a thousand years.

One example of adjustment

2) US Policy on Japan after WWII

- US State Department hired 5 American scholars on Japan (Japanese culture, society, history, bureaucracies, etc) to create a task force.
- The task force pushed US Gov. to maintain the emperor (not as **almighty**, but as a symbol of state,), as well as basic structure of bureaucracies, although having **some reforms**.
(For instance, Interior ministry was abolished.)

3) My visit to South Sudan (2019)

In Feb & March 2019, I was assigned by Japan Foreign Minister to make intellectual contributions to peacebuilding of South Sudan after September 2018 Peace Agreement.

Interviews in Juba in Feb & March 2019

Taban Deng Gai (First Vice President of S. South)



Lomuro, Minister in Cabinet Affairs



Interviews in Juba in 2019

**Tut, Minister of High
Education**

**Dr Peter Adwak
(Opposition)**



Interviews in 2019

SRSR of UNMISS

Ismail Wais, IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan



Lecture at Juba University (1 March 2019)

With Vice President

150 audience



Both sides argue:

With regard to the national reconciliation, both sides of President Kirr(Dinka) and Vice President Machar(Nuel) argue that “**Wunlit Peace Conference in 1999**” that resulted in the reconciliation between Dinka and Nuel is the key example for future reconciliation.

(“Wunlit conference” was organized and managed by New Sudan Council of Churches, which play important roles in TCRM in South Sudan.)

Recommendations

- 1) The long term goal would be to create the institutionalized mechanism in UN field missions:

UN missions can hire anthropologists and country-specific experts as short term consultants to have mapping of TCRM, as well as identifying influential local leaders who can play positive roles in solving local conflicts and enhancing national peace process.

Recommendations 2

2) Having a series of sessions to share UN practices in addressing local and traditional conflicts by UN missions and UN agencies (in some cases, they might have used anthropologists.)

3) Having a pilot project, collaborating with some UN mission, to conduct some investigations to understand the latest situations of TCRM, especially after civil wars. (South Sudan need to have the latest analysis in this timing.)