

**Journal of Politics and International Studies**

*Vol. 9, No. 1, January–June 2023, pp.31–41*

## **Afghanistan A Melting Pot of Eastern and Western Interest A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Analysis**

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### **Abstract**

The US invasion of Afghanistan was aimed at overthrowing the Taliban regime and ending terrorism, which began after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Despite the many reasons, the main ones were the destruction of militant hideouts, the elimination of safe havens for terrorists, and the defeat of militants in every possible way. International intervention in Afghanistan since 2001 has been driven not only by the United States but also by two powers. The first was that the United States wanted to increase its strategic power by using all kinds of military force and the second was that the United Nations wanted to make the world free from violence by making efforts towards it. Using its military might, the United States launched Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan with the sole purpose of eliminating terrorism from Afghanistan, eliminating Al Qaeda and its facilitators, but not the United States and its allies. Allies have declared that the series will not end until terrorism, groups and their facilitators are eradicated from the world. In the first two years after 2001, the United States used all its resources to eliminate terrorism from Afghanistan and to set a precedent for the Taliban.

**Key Words:** Afghanistan, Melting, Eastern, Western, Taliban, United States

### **Introduction**

The US invasion of Afghanistan since 9/11 was part of a series that was supposed to defeat terrorism and al Qaeda in particular. China has been successful in the case of the failure of US in Afghanistan. If we look at the US objectives in Afghanistan; they were not one but many, including keeping an eye on South Asia

in the region. The most important goal of all NATO countries, led by the United States, was to maintain its influence in South Asia and to give China a tough time in every field in view of its growing popularity. Afghanistan was also important to the United States because Afghanistan's location provides access to Central Asian states, Middle Eastern countries, Pakistan, India, and China, which is prominent in the US "Pivot to Asia" policy. It encompasses many aspects, such as militarily countering the Afghan Taliban threat; equipping the Access network discovery and selection function (ANDSF) with modern weapons, enabling the Kabul government to govern effectively, and helping Kabul rebuild its economy. After gaining control by invading Afghanistan, the United States had other important objectives: to monitor Pakistan's nuclear assets, to monitor China's movements in every possible way, and to gain direct access to the energy resources of the Central Asian states. This is how Mohmand described the shape of US policy; that the United States wanted a military existence in Afghanistan, access to the Central Asian Republic (CARs) so that natural resources could be used as gas and oil, besieging China based on China suppression policy; Intimidation to recognize Iran; Gain full control over Afghanistan so that Pakistan, especially its nuclear program, can be monitored.

China is an independent, sovereign, emerging power with a strong conscience on the world map and a strong defense that seeks friendly relations with the rest of the world. China does not tolerate any kind of interference in its affairs but believes in measures such as common interests, harmony, equality, and cooperation. China has called for the establishment of a peaceful and stable system between the major economies to sustain and further strengthen its economic growth, which will benefit not only China but the whole world. This policy was initially called Peaceful Rise, which was later renamed Peaceful Development because the term Peaceful Rise did not have a good impression on other neighboring countries. The financial crisis in the United States in 2008, which shook the US economy, also changed the world economic landscape, causing the Chinese economy to significantly change the balance of power in the world, which was a new beginning. As China seeks to increase its economic and energy needs by investing in the Middle East's hydrocarbons, As well as investing abroad in natural resources, it has taken additional security measures to protect its maritime corridors in Asia and Africa. China's defense experts have called for the use of force for all kinds of economic and trade movements and defense, but we see China's strategic culture following Sun Zhou's formula of "victory without force." China's adherence to the formula of security without force reflects its peaceful policies, which are very different from those of the West.

China's strategy on Afghanistan, it shows that it wants to see a strong and stable Afghanistan so that China can pursue its economic interests peacefully. China has also played a role in reconciling Afghanistan and the Taliban, which will not only strengthen ties between China and the Taliban but also provide security benefits to China's supply line. However, realists believe that China has become stronger since it has adopted an expansionist approach and has expanded its interests to the point where it has spread to Asia and beyond (Zheng Bijan, 2011). China's interests in Afghanistan are as follows: to counter US hegemony in the region, to access the resources of Afghanistan and Central Asian countries, to recognize the geographical importance of Afghanistan, to establish a peaceful Afghanistan, and to strengthen its foothold in Balochistan, for investment in Gwadar and China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which shares a border with Afghanistan. The details of China's policies in the region and its interests in Afghanistan are somewhat discussed in detail;

### **Against the Backdrop of China's Inclination towards Afghanistan**

Looking back, China's intervention in Afghanistan can only be seen if China wants peace, stability, and solidity in Afghanistan. China believes that Afghanistan is the graveyard of empires in which Britain, Russia, and now the United States are living examples to the world. In the past too, China has taken a neutral stance on Afghanistan and has preferred to see Afghanistan as an internally strong and active Afghan government. When the United States invaded Afghanistan after 9/11, China still expressed its views with conflicting views. On the negative side, China condemned it because it believed that the US intended to control the region. On the positive side, China also condemned terrorism and supported America in eradicating terrorism, and assured all kinds of cooperation. In the past, when it comes to investment, one of the things that have stood in the way of China's lucrative investment in Afghanistan is terrorism, which has prevented major projects between the two countries from continuing. In 2016, China invested a total of 2.2 Million Dollars in Afghanistan, compared to 1.6 Billion in Pakistan in 2017, which was reached 5.7 Billion Dollars by the end of the year. Both are neighbors, both are important countries in the region, both provide a way for China to reach Central Asian countries, but there is a clear difference in investment, due only to terrorism, political instability, and the domination of foreign powers. After a thorough review of the past, we conclude that the only obstacle to economic relations between China and Afghanistan is security concerns. Now that the United States has left Afghanistan, the Taliban government has been formed in Afghanistan, the two sides have met and agreed to work together and improve bilateral relations. Now, if the situation remains as it is and the law and order situation is maintained, bilateral relations will be further improved, the investment will increase, which will change not only the situation in both countries but also in the region.

### **China Competes with US Supremacy After 9/11**

When Russia invaded Afghanistan, China was an ally of the United States in stopping the invasion; because China's policy is to establish peace without force. Therefore, wherever and as much as possible, China made every effort to stop the Russian aggression. After the disintegration of Russia, China was a communist state that began to give the only superpower, the United States, a tough time. However, in the Afghan-Russian war, China sided with the United States. After 1990, things began to change rapidly, so the United States realized that an emerging economy like China could not be ignored. In the 1990s, US policymakers began to consider how to put China on the world stage. During this time, voices were raised and efforts were made to prevent China from increasing its power and becoming a regional and international power in any way. Efforts have also been made to entangle China in various agreements and governments so that it becomes entangled in the international network in such a way that it becomes more difficult for it to challenge the global situation, but not only did China easily overcome all difficulties, but it also gained a special place at the international level and became the need of the world. Since then, the United States has been particularly concerned about China's growing popularity and global influence and sees it as a challenge. But on the contrary, China seems to be peaceful, stable, and world-friendly. China's policies do not appear to challenge the United States with force at any level, but it does have the right to defend itself. Policymakers in the United States appear divided over China's growing global popularity. One group says China's growing popularity should be stopped by any means, while another group believes that relations with China should be strengthened at all levels. He also said that the two countries should work together to tackle global issues such as economic problems in international markets, international peace, and terrorism. Because both the United States and China have

nuclear weapons, any kind of practical tension between the two countries could be dangerous for the whole world. In addition, some people say that China's military power is no less than a threat to the United States, whether China uses this power or not is a different matter, in any case, there is a threat. Those with such a school of thought say that in this situation, China will not allow the United States to succeed in Asia under any circumstances, but will resist in every way. He believes that the interests and concerns of the two states are the same because both are superpowers in their own right. Ideological conflicts, economic differences, and domination of world markets are common differences between the two states, while human rights, interests in other states and interventions for resources, maximum access to natural resources are also common interests. As the two countries step up their efforts to increase oil and gas supplies and become self-sufficient, there is one point that only the United States can face is terrorism .

The Chinese Communist Party (CPC) and the People's Liberation Army (PLA), which play a key role in China's foreign policy, have reservations about the recent escalation of US intervention, as China's foreign policy is similar, leading to fears of global confrontation and tensions. When we compare the situation and compare the two sides, we conclude that in the future, even if the United States does not remain a superpower, we still see the United States as a great threat. Because, on the one hand, the United States itself is very powerful, its allies are strong, its diplomacy is strong, and most importantly, it is experienced in international affairs. It cannot be ignored that the US military is engaged in different countries of the world, yet it can open a new front, and now the US military has graduated from Afghanistan and Iraq. First of all, China is not unaware of all the above issues and secondly, it is not so weak but it is giving a tough time to the United States in every field, especially South Asia.

In the escalating tensions between the two countries, both are afraid of each other and are trying their best to get ahead of each other. The United States is concerned about expanding China's defense system and increasing its defense budget; China's supremacy in the seas, especially in the South and East China Seas. Both Washington and Beijing want to expand their energy resources, with both eyes on the Middle East, Central Asia, and the land and sea trade routes between them. In all of these matters, a peaceful Afghanistan is of special importance, especially to China, as the two countries are very close in the region and share a border. China's interest in Afghanistan is limited to the elimination of resource exploitation, the elimination of terrorism, and the development of infrastructure, given its growing popularity in the region, economy, influence, political stability within the country, and its most successful foreign policy. It can play a role not only in its region but also in the world. If you look at the world scene, it seems to be happening because the United States has left the region and peace is being restored in Afghanistan. After being expelled from the Central Asian Republic, the United States strengthened ties with South Asian countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India to help gain access to cars. After the United States did so, China strengthened its ties with Pakistan and signed further defense and energy agreements. The continued presence of the United States in Afghanistan was no less of a threat to China because the United States was constantly keeping an eye on China from Afghanistan, so the US withdrawal from Afghanistan is a bargain for China. Therefore, the elimination of terrorism in Afghanistan, peace in Afghanistan, and the establishment of its government have been China's top priority, which it is still emphasizing. Now that the United States has left Afghanistan, the Taliban government has arrived in Afghanistan, some peace has been established, and most importantly, China has offered all kinds of help to the Taliban. All this strengthens China's supremacy in the region.

## **Challenges and Problems in the Future**

In the past few decades the China and us relations hit the rock bottom now with the passage of time they are progressing slowly economically and politically both by the policies made by the Chinese government and by us government, In order to promote a healthy environment between China and US one should develop a habit of cooperation it is very difficult to create the habit of cooperation between them when it comes to resolving the bigger issue where as we can always starting working from the smaller one like the Chinese journalist should be given visa to stay in united states that they should treat Chinese journalist like they treat the other foreign journalists, like wise China should re-invite American journalist back to China, may be this is not going to improve the relations but it's going to giver better environment for united states and China the consulate closing if the Americans reopen and allow the Chinese government to reopen its consulate in Houston and China allows the Americans to reopen its consulate in Chengdu will create a habit of cooperation.

If Americans end tariffs that trump created put in place China will end the retaliatory tariff is it going to get rid of all the problems the Chinese and Americans can benefit from each other. Same way China has a new variant of covid so what Americans should do they should look for a solution to overcome this pandemic in this way they are moving towards cooperation. There are lots and lots of things which have been undone in the past that need to be reconnected therefore America and China should look forward to improve their relations by starting working from basic small issues. There is a saying meaning don't think that evil is small so that you can do it but dint think that a good deed is small so you don't do it and there are some people in policy making or influential people who talk about US- China relations and they very much say that one should start bit by bit to improve a problem rather than moving towards the bigger problem itself so that the atmosphere between the two countries could turn around.

Tariff reduction is one, if we look at the overall strategic competition that the way people to some degree in China to some degree in Washington are defining the relation as a strategic competition meaning that the Americans need to counter what Chinese are doing strategically likewise the Chinese government need to counter what American government is doing strategically meaning both the governments need to allocate additional funding to defense expenditure. There are some winners un American that we call the military industrial complex in the united states armed suppliers in China win from increased strategic competition between the united states and China who loses the middle class and the poor or lower income people in the US they losses because the money which is going to the defense would have been spent on the infra-structure it would have been spent on social programs in the case of China it would have been spent on poverty alleviation it would have been spent on other infrastructures developments that's it's a misallocation of resources that punishes the middle and lower income families in the united nation than it is harder to cooperate scientifically. The strategic competition should be defined in three levels, one is economic competition, diplomatic competition that the countries compete diplomatically to reach their foreign policies strategic competition is dangerous because a country has to spend millions and billions ultimately trillion of dollars to defend against the other what is really the strategic conflict between US and China. China needs to rethink its foreign policy goals and deal with the outside world in a way that doesn't affects its relation with the United States.

## **America's Concerns in China**

In this 21st century and in the coming years it's a Challenging to create sound relation between China and US. Both the countries need to cooperate with one another rather than compete. China is rising geopolitically and its alarming for the United States because for years the United Nations was enjoying the dominance on the world just like the melting of polar ice caps in giving rise to the climate change similarly the rise of China will cause dramatic turns of event for many countries especially America. In order to counter risky and byzantine times of US and China relations the new administration should not only work on this pandemic situation but should also improve this biased politics by creating long lasting, well familiar strategies, rather than implementing short term diplomacies. that would neither be useful to United States or China and will cause unbalance. Both the countries should look beyond these flop philosophical views.

Americans increasingly view China as a potentially dangerous rival because of four major changes in the last decade.

1. Supreme dominance of China in every sector.
2. The control over the market economy and in some cases the use of reverse strategy to improve, enhance and have a central control over the economy. China's strategies is increasing the economic power in many low income countries and China is having a hold on their marketing.
3. China's emphasis on the ideology and programming of cooperates in Marxism, The return of stress on ideology, including indoctrination of officials in Marxism, emphasizing on domestic surveillance, tightening the circle around who disagrees, advancement in the technology sector, and the most recent crackdown in Hong Kong that helped limiting its self-sufficiency and political freedom.
4. Its threat to the neighboring countries by bullying them and sometimes the use of people's liberation Army PLA, Threats to neighbors through bullying and, in some cases, use of the PLA (People's Liberation Army), particularly a change in the quo in the south China seas and the border that clashes with the sea.

Because of these reasons mentioned above China and United States cannot work on their differences. They are at the bottom of their relation with one another. They have to cooperate and work on their differences. Work on the small issues first and gradually move onwards the bigger one. Shouldn't do the blame game. These are just small issues or concerns, China will present greater challenges to United States. U.S. should take China as a challenge and should think of the future ahead that how China will proceed, U.S. should think a head of China.

How should the U.S. think about a China in a decade or two that, for example:

- China will be the largest economic power and will have the world largest market in the future.
- China will compete with U.S. in technological sector in the future. China will provide innovative ideas through the advancement in technology that would support the war fare, national security, biomedical care. Education, communication, transportation and infrastructure will also be improved.
- Equivalent improvement in the Chinese military that will compete with the U.S. military this military strength will advance Taiwan unification. Military power will bring self-ruled Taiwan under control.
- China will strength other countries governance model by improving the

surveillance state, it will convert the internet into censored and close system it will stand by those countries which are working for minority ethnic group and the states that are repressing domestic freedom.

- China is responsible for the greenhouse gasses by a large portion. China's core interest is confined in few areas that majorly includes national security, national sovereignty and territory. Because of their tragic history they are defensive in nature, and are capable of moving to success with aggressive western powers. In order to have a strong foundation they believe in stability within the nation and prosperous country and that could only be achieved by a contend leader of communist party. If we look at it historically, we will find that there is a strong case for stability. It can also be used to have control over people minds, their thinking and their acts, so they don't become an issue for party leadership. So in China going against the State will always be treated as rebellious whether it is in the form religion, mass protests, ethnicities, democratic government, non-governmental organizations and provincial autonomy.

### **Chinese Goals**

In the last decade or so various Chinese goals are easy to predict and some others can be predicated with circumstantial evidence are as follows:

1. If we look at China through the military perspective. China has invested heavily in its military. With a stand-off with US in mind it has made great strides in his military might by modernizing its war machine and other capabilities. The most likely scenario of a stand-off with US and China is the South China Sea. There China has expanded its naval power and invested in state-of-the-art missiles as well capable of taking down a complete air carrier as well.
2. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is laying the foundation of infrastructure development throughout the World in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. This will help China to have a say in economic, political and security aspects with the recipient countries. BRI also help China in building massive trade routes throughout the World. It also ensures that China gets easy access to minerals, energy and other valuable resources
3. China has also become a World leader when it comes to technologies like 5G communication, artificial intelligence, semiconductor chips, solar energy, electric vehicles, aerospace, medical sciences, and other sources of energy.
4. It has become a big player in international organizations, political affairs and economic institutions, with this ability and power it can influence international bodies, important person, ideas and other objectives. Having invested so much in research and development it has an important role in information technology, design of products and international standards.

In the eyes of many critics China is consider as a threat as it follow a communist policy rather than a democratic, China needs to be contained. China's Initiative as received bilateral support. Although America is nowhere near whether it will exceed or implement on B3W. many American analysts and spokesmen persons has not reached to an agreement that United Nation should cut off its ties with the PRC peoples republic of China. In order to counter Chinese engagement Washington should look forward towards a new and more stable strategy.

America is losing jobs to China; China is an ongoing technological power that threatens the very own existence of America. The thing that threatens them the most is China's new policy on human rights. The general element of China's core

interest is in PRC, Chinese understands their strengths but they avoid working on their problems, they can't wish for their problems to go away if they are good at one thing.

Even China terms to be supreme power and work through all its differences if they'll not resolve their small problems, it will limit China's Ability to become globally superpower. There isn't any evidence claiming that China is threatening U.S. economically, technologically or by promoting human rights, or reducing the deficit with other foreign countries by following the pattern of US Soviet Union Cold War. Rather they should accept that China is Striving for economic domination in East and Central Asia, it is working against the military security in Western Pacific and rising economically outside the Asia also. China has main influence outside the Asian countries also. One should not expect from China that it's going to build a network of satellite states that could cause threat to united states.

China is not a threat to united states but one cannot avoid the facts that China is one of the biggest competitors of united states. China is a rival economically, politically, militarily and technologically. And united nation has to get its house together if he wants to compete with China. such kind of competition will limit the private cooperation in some areas where united states and China used to compete or interacted independently. The U.S. will need to work on securing its fundamental foreign policy interest against Chinese attacks, discouraging the use of force in Taiwan. And protecting the key and institutional values based on order. The Americans have to formulate an economic policy or strategy that could rebuild the competitiveness, but bring together like minded nations that will eliminate or discourage Chinese trade and investment privileges. The nations that could fight for the maintenance of an open internet, preserves the importance of dollar in international trade and finance. It is however challenging for them to project and protect their interests. Both the countries have their own areas of overlapping interests that they should work on them together. And then and only believe that America will be able to compete China effectively in all concerned areas that is political, economic, security, military and ideological domains.

The fight for the technology will be the most lethal battle US and China will fight. China is dominating US in the field of technology; this will be the most important battle ground for united states and China. Technology will facilitate the new coming future, the new generation. With remarkable advancement in the technology the mark of this 21st century, whoever will innovate a new idea will strongly dominate military and the economy in this coming future. This doesn't mean that there will be rational decoupling. The American companies will look for Chinese companies to invest and the Chinese companies will look for American companies to invest. US will want Chinese markets to launch their technology for profits and those Chinese immigrants who have worked day and night with the Americans on the extraordinary advancement in the technology.

### **Conclusion**

They need to restrict Chinese access to US advance technology. And the promises we make to the Chinese investors that will develop a particular product but refuse to provide them. There has been concerns that with the drastic increase in the Chinese technology markets has a tendency to decouple from those that are in united states. The Chinese technological investors work on strategized objectives, they work on keeping the social control strong, they want to influence by expanding internationally, they want to improve their military capabilities. On the other hand, United States is not clear on what strategy to use to prioritize technology. United states should work with the like-minded people or cooperates



that know how technology can be used for once benefit, how can it help a nation to rule internationally. Technically United States fails to provide the technology that China provides.

They need to wish for a world that is not completely tormented between choosing Chinese and American technology. All the 190 countries are forced to choose between two incompatible systems. They need to protect the technologies that are sensitive to the US national security. Open digital environment provide strategic advantages and vulnerabilities. We should minimize the security risk without undermining the government democratic values. The America should be vigilant against the China's theft of technology and should impose penalties to the involved Chinese companies. One should take strict action against them.

As said earlier the main challenge for US is how to project and protect their interests without misunderstanding the depth of the challenge they are facing. America cannot out bid China by prohibiting social media or through a better innovation of technology or by expanding and investing in a better trade or finance, America has t diplomatically strategize their attack moves America can't put immigration bans on Chinese. America goal should be to eliminate the risk permanently or they should use a strategy that at least doesn't impose the risk permanently. Americas strength lies in their traditional openness.

They should focus on the alliance they have with China at the moment, they should not the lose the hope they have to gather, the little-by-little cooperation between the two countries is increasing China is only their strategic competitor and not an enemy. Not a single country will follow America if they thinking of decoupling with China or the start of a new cold war, humanity will be killed, there will never be peace. America should acknowledge Chinese interest, should give them mutual respect as they might share the same griever with them but should not consider them an enemy. Should accept there challenges as a healthy competition.

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