**[US Taliban peace accord](https://nation.com.pk/09-Mar-2020/us-taliban-peace-accord" \t "_new)**

Asfan Tariq March 09, 2020

In 1979, a year after the coup, the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan to sustenance its communist government. It fought a resistance movement known as Mujahedeen, the blue-eyed son of US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia among other countries. In 1989, Soviet troops withdrew after Geneva Accord 1988, known formally as the agreements on the settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan between Afghanistan and Pakistan, with the United States and the Soviet Union serving as guarantors. However, the civil war continued. In the chaos that followed the Taliban (Talib means a student in the Pashto language) bounced up.

After 9/11 attacks in America, which killed nearly 3000 people, Osama Bin Laden, the head of the radical Islamic terror group Al-Qaeda was quickly recognised as the man behind all this mess. The Taliban who ran Afghanistan and protected Bin Laden refused to hand him over to the US. So a month after 9/11, the US had launched airstrikes against Afghanistan. As other countries joined the war, the Taliban were quickly removed from Kabul. But, they didn’t just disappear- their influence grew back, and they dug in.

After that, the Taliban started a guerrilla war against the US and its allies, resulting in thousands of casualties from both sides. However, the most affected ones were the civilians — and they will remain vulnerable even after the so-called peace deal that the US signed with the Taliban recently. Nonetheless, the year 2019 began with hopes for peace in war-torn Afghanistan, for the first time since the 18-year-long conflict that has pushed the country back to the Stone Age. In January, expectations of a peace agreement between the US and the Taliban were high after the two sides agreed in principle to its framework. US-Taliban meetings in Qatar’s capital Doha continued for the previous few months against the backdrop of continuing attacks by the armed group across Afghanistan and US-led air attacks. In another significant move towards peace, Doha, in July 2019, hosted a two-day intra-Afghan meeting between Taliban and Afghan officials. Thereinafter, various steps and negotiations from US-Taliban in spade a spade this peace deal has come to supposition at February 29, in Doha.

Taliban representatives and US officials have signed an agreement in the presence of leaders from Pakistan, Qatar, Turkey, Indonesia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The two sides have long wrangled over the US demand for a ceasefire before the signing of the agreement. The agreement gives a timeline of 14 months for the withdrawal of all NATO and US troops from Afghanistan. Also, the deal makes the Taliban guarantors for not allowing Afghan soil as a Launchpad that would threaten the security of the US and its allies. This agreement also proposes an intra-Afghan dialogue with the government in Kabul and release of 5000 Taliban members from prison. The Taliban has so far refused to speak to the Western-backed Afghan government, saying it is a “puppet regime”. Moreover, the Afghan government rejects the peace deal’s prisoner swap with the Taliban. The intra-Afghan talks are to begin on March 10, but no specific details have been given.

Considering the fate of Geneva Accord 1988, there are fears about the implementation of this agreement in its real sense. Let’s hope this accord leads towards sustainable peace in Afghanistan and for the entire region.