**[USA - Taliban deal: truce or another game in making?](https://nation.com.pk/01-Mar-2020/usa-taliban-deal-truce-or-another-game-in-making" \t "_new)**

Senator Rehman Malik March 01, 2020

USA – Taliban deal is still underway after 19 years but such deals are complicated due to multiple underlying factors.

I as former DG FIA & Interior minister have been watching various phases of Taliban and TTP, where the main sufferers are the nations at both sides because of international proxy wars. There is no doubt about Afghan Taliban that they never harmed Pakistan but TTP on the other hand have played a major role in damaging Pakistan’s interests.

TTP was handled through a remote control against Pakistan and Qamar Javed Bajwa is the only one who actually identified the covert and overt supporters of TTP and played a major role in smashing both visible and invisible remote control operations.

It was completely the COAS’s brainchild and he has played a great role in playing role of mediator between USA & Afghan Taliban as the present outlines of the deal could have not been possible without his role.

Let me go through the historical developments and aspects of this deal’s processes.

In fact, the efforts for peace started in 2010 when Mullah Baradar was arrested by us and we kept him in safe custody for the purpose of debriefing. President Karzai demanded his extradition but we kept denying as we knew he would be killed by NDS in Afghanistan. This was the exact period when Pakistan started experiencing more attacks of terrorism from Afghanistan in Baluchistan and KPK.

In view of substantive evidences, we decided to visit Afghanistan hence PM Gilani, myself and DG ISI visited President Karzai, and talked to him about the growing terrorism on our soil, but President Karzai refused to accept that terrorism was being launched from seven terrorists’ camps on bordering area. I gave him undeniable proofs and eventually he helplessly stated that yes these are there but I am helpless in front of Americans.

The meeting ended on a semi-positive note and instead of handing Mullah over to Afghanistan, we allowed them the access to interrogate Mullah Baradar directly in the presence of our officers where the Afghan investigators visited my office of interior Ministry. The delegation was allowed to meet and question Mullah Baradar. The NDS was suspecting that it was Mullah Baradar and his faction who were responsible for the killing of Mullah Rabbani, the head of the Peace dialogues. This was proven wrong during the investigation based on a number of interrogation sessions.

The nature and times changed as by then, Mullah Baradar had become the main man of Taliban after Siraj Uddin Haqqani (deputy leader of Afghan Taliban Overseas).

Let me jot down the brief details of the previous such agreements before I give my opinion on the present agreement.

The first dialogue started in September 2007 and the following common statement was issued:

Parties concurred to a transitory détente that, in case fruitful, would open the way for a bargain that American troops will be withdrawn from Afghanistan and conclude a long time of war. (US - Afghan Dialogue 2007-2009).

President Hamid Karzai, as well as the British and Pakistani governments, all strived for peace. Karzai announced peace talk with the Taliban in September 2007, but this too was quickly rejected. (2010- 2012)

In 2009, there was a broad agreement for the war to end but how it should end was a major issue because Karzai was re-elected and Obama’s administration had increased the deployment of troops. In Feb 2010, Taliban’s co-founder, then-second-in-command and Mullah Omer’s deputy, Abdul Ghani Baradar, was one of the driving Taliban individuals who favoured talks with the US and Afghan governments. I met Mullah Baradar along with Gen. Babar who held a secret meeting with Mullah Omer for the first time. Mullah Omer and Mullah Baradar both had played a great role in this deal.

Obama made some serious efforts for talks with Taliban through President Karzai Govt which were declined by Taliban as they wanted the US to withdraw the forces from Afghanistan but all in vain.

In fact, the diplomacy of Gen Bajawa took all the stakeholders on board and eventually a well chalked plan moved forward with Mr Zalmay Khalilzad, a representative of President Donald Trump. Khalilzad is an Afghan-US negotiator who served as US minister to the Joined together Countries (2007-2009), Iraq (2005-2007) and Afghanistan (2003-2005).

On June 7, 2018, as a notable development, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and the Taliban announced an unprecedented mutual ceasefire during the Eid celebrations. The temporary truce ended on the Eid day.

In July 2018, American authorities subtly met Taliban individuals at their political office in Qatar, which was a sign of endeavors to resolve the war in Afghanistan by the Donald Trump administration.

On September 5, 2018, Zalmay Khalilzad joined the U.S. State Office as President Trump’s consultant on Afghanistan.

The Afghan Taliban agreed in December 2018 that they would once more meet with American moderators in Qatar to settle an arrangement. However, Ashraf Ghani and his associates were not welcomed to the talks and it brought major setback.

This was the time when Pakistan started playing central role in an attempt to end the war again and gave an effective plan.

Afghan Govt announced loya jerga from April 29 to May 3, 2019 The Taliban were invited but they declined and it got frustrated again.

In September 2019, Taliban sent a designation to Russia to examine prospects for a withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan after the collapse of talks with USA. On September 18, 2019, the Taliban expressed that their “entryways are open” to President Trump.

Accordingly, Peace arrangements started once more in December 2019. This circular of talks brought about a seven-day period cease fire which has started from 22 February 2020. I sincerely hope that this will be fruitful for the peace processes.