



Kabul Peace Conference

Study Guide

Committee: Kabul Peace Conference

The question of tackling the Afghanistan crisis of 2021 and a roadmap to finding peace in the future.

Letter from the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

It is our honour to see you participate at The Kabul Peace Conference at BDMUN 2021.

I am Vriddhi Goenka, one of the head chairs, and it is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to this committee. I have an avid interest in mathematics and sciences. Other than academics, I'd consider myself to be skilled in the dramatics and debating field.

I am Sana Mehta and I am very excited to be one of your head chairs in this committee. I really have an eager interest in Economics and I consider myself a top-tier debater!

Meeting at MUN ourselves, we both know about our avid interest to partake in conferences. MUN isn't about the number of awards you have on paper, but it is about the profound experience that you take back with you. Not only do you learn so much about a certain political, economic or social issue, but you gauge knowledge on how to be a better speaker. We together do not think that anyone realises the importance of MUN until and unless they partake in it themselves.

As it is very popularly said, peace demands sacrifice. The deadlock in peace talks in Afghanistan cannot be overcome unless the two sides are ready to sacrifice their narrow interests. Because the Afghan government and the Taliban retain their war over who will manage Kabul, they forget about the fact that they'll no longer wield any legitimacy until the Afghans offer it to them. The Afghan people are the sole sovereign over the country and as such, the power is in their hands. Although our committee is about being diplomatic, we assure you that you have steamed debates and some very exciting crisis coming your way!

If you are a first-time MUNner, we'd just like to tell you that conferences may seem intimidating at first but the only way it gets comfortable for you is when you start talking. Don't think twice before you feel the need to talk because we know that you will contribute something of value to the discussion. Our simple advice to each and every delegate is to encourage them to bring something interesting to the table, think along unconventional lines and impact the committee in some way or the other. Remember, content is imperative, but delivery of it is more.

We cannot wait for the BDMUN 2021 Conference and we're more than happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Sana Mehta & Vriddhi Goenka

Chairs of The Kabul Peace Conference

BDMUN 2021

Introduction to the committee

President Joe Biden declared in April 2021 that US troops would depart Afghanistan by September 2021. Despite ongoing peace discussions with the Afghan government, the Taliban increased attacks on Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) camps and outposts, and began rapidly seizing additional land. The US military expedited the pace of troop withdrawal in May 2021. The US has completed about 95% of its departure by the end of July 2021, leaving only 650 troops to protect the US embassy in Kabul.

On August 15th, Taliban militants stormed Kabul, thus ending a 20-year effort by the United States and other Western nations to transform Afghanistan into a modern democracy. They were bolstered in part by an agreement with the Trump administration in February last year for U.S. soldiers to leave the country, with Mr. Biden designating August 31 as the departure date. Due to a lack of air cover and desertions among Afghan government soldiers, the Taliban quickly expanded its footprint before capturing the last major cities, including Kabul.

Their arrival in the capital was met with alarm. Afghans who have collaborated with Western armed forces or organisations flocked to Hamid Karzai International Airport, hoping to get out of the country. Western embassies relocated their workers to the airport, which is controlled by the US military. Crowds of Afghans ran alongside military transport planes as they prepared to take off in chaotic scenes, with some attempting to cling to the plane's sides.

Afghans and Westerners stranded in Kabul began trickling into the airport for evacuation, although admission was difficult due to Taliban fighters stationed at checkpoints and a lack of a defined mechanism for bringing people in. Following a bombing at the airport recently, the United States advised its nationals to avoid the area.

This new shift in power in Afghanistan has led to a few major issues in the country. The violation of women's rights - some women are being prevented from leaving home without a male relative, women in some provinces are forced to stop work, protection centers for women fleeing violence have been targeted and safe houses for rights activists are at full capacity. There has also been a large economic crisis throughout the country. Afghanistan's internal banking system froze up when the Taliban organisation seized power on August 15th. Long lines have formed outside

banks, many of which are closed, as well as ATMs that aren't working. People are growing increasingly desperate due to a lack of cash. The economy was already precarious and largely reliant on handouts. A country is deemed assistance-dependent if foreign aid accounts for 10% or more of its gross domestic product (GDP); according to the World Bank, international aid accounted for roughly 40% of Afghanistan's GDP. Western powers, including the US and Germany, suspended foreign aid to the country. Another major fear is that the country will once again become a training ground for terrorism.

Introduction to the topic

In 2001, the United States was responding to the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington, which killed almost 3,000 people. Al-Qaeda, an Islamist militant group, and its leader, Osama Bin Laden, were blamed by officials. Bin Laden was in Afghanistan, where he was protected by the Taliban, a group of Islamists in control since 1996. When the Taliban refused to hand him over, the US engaged militarily, overthrowing the Taliban quickly and promising to support democracy and eliminate the terrorist threat.

In 2004, a new Afghan government took over when Nato allies joined the US, but deadly Taliban attacks persisted. In 2009, President Barack Obama's "troop surge" helped push the Taliban back, although it was short-lived. Nato's multinational soldiers terminated their combat operation in 2014, at the end of the bloodiest year since 2001, handing security over to the Afghan army. The Taliban gained momentum as a result, and they conquered additional land. Peace talks between the US and the Taliban began tentatively, with the Afghan government largely absent, until an agreement on a pullout was reached in Qatar in February 2020.

The Taliban's attacks did not end as a result of the US-Taliban agreement; instead, they shifted their attention to Afghan security forces and civilians, as well as targeted murders. Their spheres of influence expanded.

With the Taliban inching closer to announce their new cabinet, Kabul is the epicentre of the major power shift. However, the formation of the government has been postponed for the time being as the Taliban are buying some more time to finetune their future administration.

Key terms and topics to research prior to the MUN

1. The Taliban

The Taliban, which means “students” in the Pashto language, emerged in 1994 around the southern Afghan city of Kandahar. It was one of the factions fighting a civil war for control of the country following the withdrawal of the Soviet Union and subsequent collapse of the government.

2. Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF)

To secure Afghanistan from internal and external threats and prevent the re-establishment of terrorist safe havens is a U.S. national security objective.

3. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

NATO was founded in 1949 and is an intergovernmental military alliance between 28 European countries and 2 North American countries. Its purpose is to guarantee the freedom and security of its members through political and military means.

4. Militant group

A militant group are people who are engaged in a war or who act aggressively for their cause. If you are militant in your beliefs, you do not question them any more than a soldier questions his orders.

Suggested Questions for Moderated Caucus

Please note that these topics are only to guide the committee in a specific direction. Using these word-for-words is not encouraged or appreciated.

1. Discussing the possibility of restarting foreign economic aid.
2. Discussing the infringement of women's rights of the nation.
3. Discussing the conditions that the Taliban need to meet in order to be a recognised government.
4. Discussing the status of resistance groups.
5. Discussing what to do with the refugees entering neighbouring countries.

Questions for consideration while doing research

1. Twenty years of conflict in Afghanistan – what happened when?
2. Why couldn't the Afghan forces better resist the Taliban despite all the US' training and assistance?
3. U.S. forces went into Afghanistan 20 years ago because the 9/11 attacks were launched from there by al-Qaeda. With U.S. forces gone, what are the chances of that happening again?
4. What is the U.S. government obligated to do when it comes to getting people out of Afghanistan?
5. How are women's rights in Afghanistan threatened right now?
6. Why did the United States (and NATO) imagine they could turn Afghanistan into a modern, Western-style democracy?
7. Why did the Taliban consistently out-fight the Afghan National Security Forces?

General tips while debating and research

1. **Come Prepared:** Do not just come prepared with papers or speeches written down, but with your delegation's weaknesses, previous issues, economic weaknesses, and questionable actions about the case and prepare rebuttals for them. Anticipate attacks from other delegates, and come up with answers to refute them.
2. **The best defense is a good offense:** Start the criticism of opposing delegations with facts you have discovered weaken their stance. Demand that specific actions or statements of their country are explained.
3. **Agree, and then refute:** Start by agreeing with the other delegation, with what can be agreed with (and what won't hurt you) and then, refute it. It will make the power of your refute multiply.
4. **Find a "universal principal" everyone agrees on:** First, know your audience, then start your speech by stating a universal principle that everyone in the room will agree with.

However, before you have started discussing your actual relevant points of debate, the entire audience will have for a moment, agreed with you.

5. **Capitalize on your strengths:** When in doubt, always remember your side's strengths, what good things you have, or did, or can do... And turn the focus on them.
6. **Find common ground, and keep using it:** When you find the debate is getting too overwhelming, and you need a certain delegation on your side, try to find something you both agree on, either from your foreign policy research or the other's speeches.
7. **Admit fault:** When necessary, when you are cornered, or when your side truly has made a mistake, admit the fault. Admitting fault in this little part in which you can no longer prove you were right, will actually strengthen your other arguments.

Citations

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<https://bestdelegate.com/the-dos-and-donts-of-model-un-a-beginners-guide-to-achieving-success/>

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