

Afghanistan: a helpless population facing the return to the terror

Policy Brief

by **Téa Ducrocq, Samantha Frary--Aubert & Vincent Lefebvre**

translated by Samantha Frary--Aubert, Jessie Lee & Iman Seepersad

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contact@growthinktank.org



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On 15 August, the Afghan capital Kabul fell to the Taliban. The Taliban is a fundamentalist Islamist group that originated in the Kandahar region and has been operating in Pakistan and Afghanistan since the mid-1990s. Opposed to the Afghan government, they seized power nationwide this week and want to be recognised as a legitimate political force by the international community. The conquest of the capital took place about 3 months after the announcement of the departure of the American forces present in the territory since 2001. This event is of great concern to the international community, which is calling for a peaceful resolution of the Afghan political situation and for the protection of the population. In this policy brief, we will review Afghanistan's bellicose history, which has had disastrous consequences on the political situation in the country and on the fate of civilians, before making our demands and recommendations to the heads of state and government of the international community.

A look back at the constant clashes since 1989

Located in Central Asia, Afghanistan declared its independence from the British protectorate in 1921. The country is inhabited by various ethnic groups, including the Pashtuns, who are the majority in the country, as well as the Tajiks, Hazaras (a Shiite minority), Uzbeks, Turkmen and Baluchs.

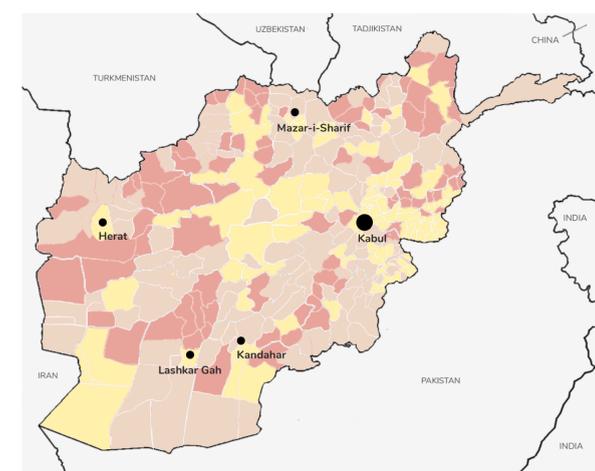
During the Cold War, a revolution in April 1978 led to the establishment of an Afghan communist government. This government delighted the USSR, which saw Afghanistan as an ally, while neighbouring Pakistan was linked to the United States and India, another important player in the region, was an integral part of the Non-Aligned Movement. Following suspicions of a move towards the West by President Hafizullah Amin, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979 in the hope of preventing the decline of communism in the country. Until 1989, the Red Army occupied the country, including its main decision-making and administrative centres. President Amin was assassinated by KGB agents in order to set up a new government to meet Moscow's needs. During the ten years of occupation, the Soviet Union was pitted against the Mujahideen, groups of Islamist and non-communist fighters supported by the United States. When the Soviet troops left, the various Mujahideen groups and the existing communist government, led by Mohammad Najibullah, fought a civil war for control of the capital and the Afghan territory. This bloody war ended in 1992 and gave way to the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

The Taliban, supported by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, took over the Afghan government in 1996. They applied an extreme version of Sharia law, the Koranic law, and thus pursued a very strict policy towards the population. It is forbidden for women to work, study or even leave their homes without male supervision. Moreover, they are forced to wear a full veil. Men are forced to grow a beard and wear a turban. All forms of art and entertainment are also prohibited. Every violation of Sharia law is punished by corporal punishment, sometimes even death. The Taliban also have an affinity with the terrorist group Al-Qaeda, which they host on their territory.

Following the 11 September 2001 attacks claimed by the latter terrorist group, the Taliban refused to hand Osama bin Laden over to the United States. The latter, supported by NATO since 2002, thus launched Operation 'Enduring Freedom' in October 2001 by invading Afghanistan as part of the war against terrorism. The Taliban regime collapsed with the establishment of a transitional government, led

by Hamid Karzai, who was finally elected in 2004. Despite the cessation of continuous fighting, countless terrorist acts are recorded in the country, resulting in up to 7,379 Afghan victims in 2018¹. This phenomenon is accentuated by the emergence of the Islamic State in 2015, an actor opposing both Taliban and government forces. At the same time, the Taliban continue their struggle to gain national power.

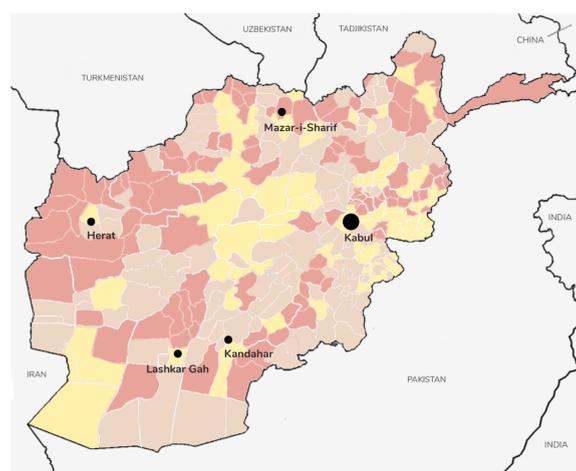
The 2021 turnaround



The Taliban takeover in Afghanistan: status as of July 9, 2021

- Taliban-controlled territories
- Disputed territory, under conflict with large Taliban presence
- Afghan government occupied territories
- Country's major cities

Edited: 20/08/2021
Source: BBC News, Le Monde

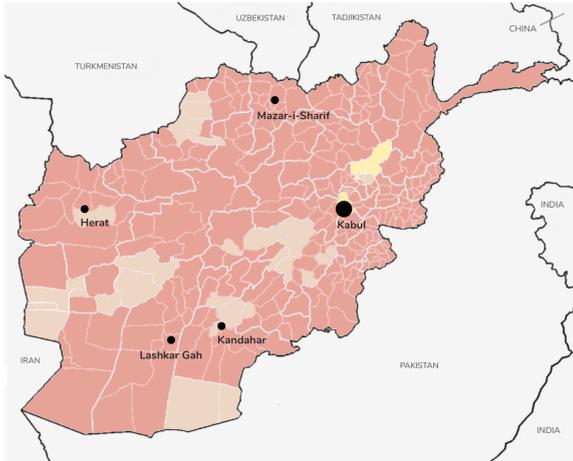


The Taliban takeover in Afghanistan: status as of July 29, 2021

- Taliban-controlled territories
- Disputed territory, under conflict with large Taliban presence
- Afghan government occupied territories
- Country's major cities

Edited: 20/08/2021
Source: BBC News, Le Monde

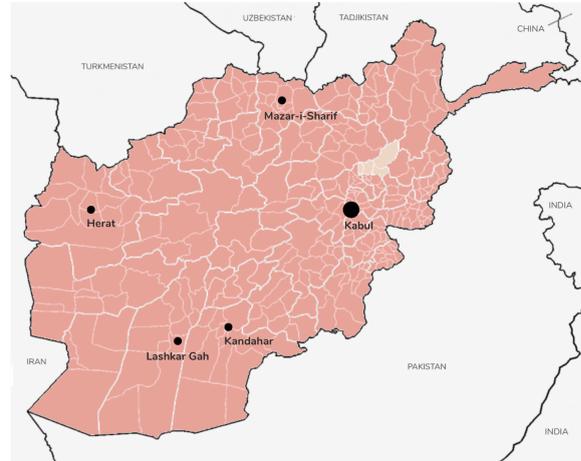
¹ FEERTCHAK, A. (2019). L'Afghanistan, le pays au monde le plus touché par le terrorisme. *lefigaro.fr*. [online] 21 Nov. Available at: <https://www.lefigaro.fr/international/l-afghanistan-le-pays-au-monde-le-plus-touche-par-le-terrorisme-20191121> [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].



The Taliban takeover in Afghanistan: status as of August 15, 2021

- Taliban-controlled territories
- Disputed territory, under conflict with large Taliban presence
- Afghan government occupied territories
- Country's major cities

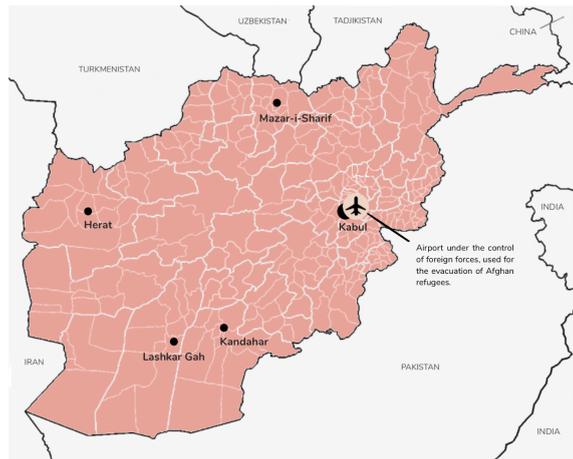
Edited: 20/08/2021
Source: BBC News, Le Monde



The Taliban takeover in Afghanistan: status as of August 16, 2021

- Taliban-controlled territories
- Disputed territory, under conflict with large Taliban presence
- Afghan government occupied territories
- Country's major cities

Edited: 20/08/2021
Source: BBC News, Le Monde



The Taliban takeover in Afghanistan: status as of August 20, 2021

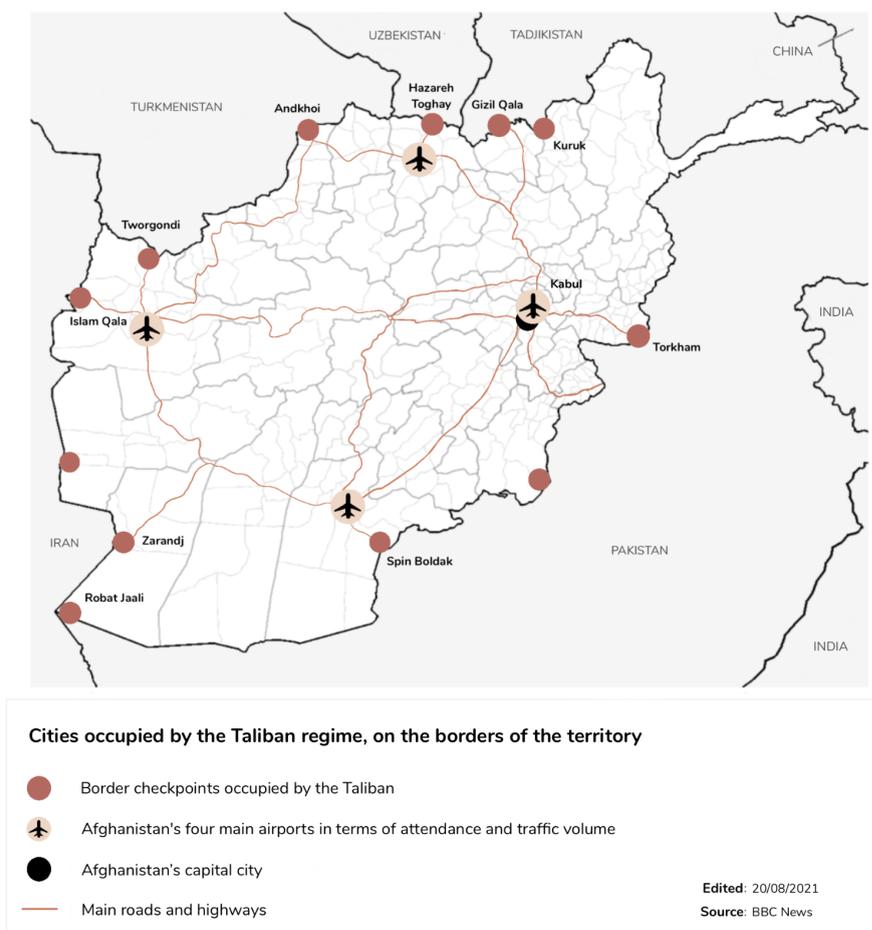
- Taliban-controlled territories
- Disputed territory, under conflict with large Taliban presence
- Afghan government occupied territories
- Country's major cities

Edited: 20/08/2021
Source: BBC News, Le Monde

In 2019, Donald Trump announced the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan. This withdrawal was then confirmed by Joe Biden on 14 April 2021. The withdrawal is the result of an agreement between the United States and the Taliban, the Doha Accords, in which the Taliban committed to an internal negotiation process leading to peace in Afghanistan following the departure of the United States.

Since the announcement of the departure of the US forces, the Taliban forces have nevertheless engaged in an accelerated offensive in the hope of regaining power in Afghanistan. In three months, the number

of districts controlled by the Taliban rose from 78 to 224 between May and July². As of 1 July, the presence of Taliban forces in the Alasay Valley in Kapisa province is particularly noticeable³. On 9 July, the Taliban reached Islam Qala on the Iranian border⁴. They then controlled border posts with all the bordering countries: Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Pakistan. This conquest of territory was not without resistance, but the national army was faced with great difficulties. In particular, there is a lack of air resources, an important advantage over the Taliban forces, who limit themselves to ground offensives. In addition, the fighting capacity of the Afghan army is decreasing following the departure of the United States, causing a collapse in the morale of the troops and a progressive lack of resources. The latter is all the more glaring in comparison to Taliban resources, as the Taliban are becoming increasingly wealthy, particularly through trafficking in opium and other resources.



² LE MONDE. (2021). *Comment les talibans reprennent l'Afghanistan*. YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MR13PjhiGJw> [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

Thus, thanks to a rapid advance, the Taliban forces succeeded in controlling more than half of the Afghan territory by 29 July⁵. Although the provincial capitals (Qala-e New, Kabul, Herat, Jalalabad, Ghazni and Kandahar) remain unaffected by this occupation, they are nevertheless mostly surrounded. The advance of the Taliban triggers panic among the Afghan population. The Afghan people rush to save their savings and to be evacuated, if they are lucky. As a result, nearly 250,000 people have left Afghanistan since May 2021 to escape the Taliban regime⁶.

The Taliban finally arrived in Kabul on 16 August 2021 against an Afghan government that advocated a peaceful transfer of power, in the hope of avoiding bloodshed among the civilian population. Government and Taliban forces say they agree on a calm transition of power in order to protect Afghan citizens as much as possible. The Taliban regime even asserts its peaceful implementation, emphasising the respect of women's rights which must remain, according to them, in accordance with Islamic values. The Taliban hope to give themselves a new image at the international level by showing themselves to be less extremist than their predecessors in 1996. However, this transition creates a panic among the population, who hasten to flee the country by all possible means. President Ashraf Ghani himself fled the country to the United Arab Emirates on Sunday 15 August and has since acknowledged the Taliban's victory. Internationally, many countries such as the United States and France are evacuating their embassies and nationals, as well as Afghan nationals who have worked for them. In addition, many countries, such as Russia, are calling for a meeting of the UN Security Council to resolve the political situation in the country. This 23 and 24 August, an emergency meeting of the UN Human Rights Council takes place to draw up a resolution to create mechanisms to collect evidence of Taliban violations.

Despite the promise of respect for human rights and a peaceful transition to the Taliban regime, the panic of the population and the international community demonstrates a distrust of the Taliban's claims that they are changed from their period in power over two decades ago. What is really happening to the Afghan population, what are the risks of the transition from a presidential Islamic republic to a Taliban regime?

What kind of future for the civilians?

The Afghan civilians are immersed in despair and fear as they try to flee the country in every possible way. This is because certain very strict Islamic laws that the Taliban intend to impose would drastically reduce the liberties and the most fundamental rights of Afghans. Since the announcement of their arrival in Kabul, a wave of panic takes hold of the Afghan population, notably of the most vulnerable persons facing the Sharia law: women, children, activists, persons of the LGBTIQI+ community, as well as those who have helped and informed the Afghan and foreign military forces in their fight against Taliban

⁵ 28 minutes - ARTE. (2021). *Peut-on encore empêcher les talibans de prendre le pouvoir ?* YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ih9H6OVDeFE> [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

⁶ UNHCR (2021). HCR : Les femmes et les enfants déplacés subissent les conséquences les plus néfastes du conflit en Afghanistan. *unhcr.org*. [online] 13 Aug. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/fr-fr/news/briefing/2021/8/61164306a/hcr-femmes-enfants-deplacés-subissent-conséquences-néfastes-conflit-afghanistan.html> [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

(informant, soldiers and Afghan and foreign collaborators). Certain risk being tortured or death, as the many testimonies show.

A young female student speaks up and recounts the evacuation of young women of her university by the police: if they do not flee, they risk being attacked or beaten if they do not wear the burqa⁷. Others quit their work knowing that they will never return. They hide their identity, turn their backs on years of university work, abandon their dreams and liberties. Children, girls and young women risk being raped, put into sexual slavery, or having a forced marriage as already being customary in numerous provinces controlled by the Taliban⁸. 80% of those forced to flee the Taliban regime in the country are women.

They will therefore no longer be able to dispose of themselves, of their bodies, of their free will: their future under the Taliban regime is to be submissive and to be the property of men, or to risk death. Their image no longer depends on them, they have to be invisible, go out accompanied by a male relative, are deprived of schools and their representations on the storefronts, for example, are erased by business owners fearing the reaction of the Taliban. An open-air prison awaits them in front of these men who hate educated and free women, as how it was still possible to be one a few days ago in Kabul. The “moderate” image that the Taliban are trying to convey does not match the reality of the facts, it even seems that their behaviour is the same, if not worse than a few years ago⁹.

The LGBTQI+ persons also have to seek refuge in foreign countries in order to save their lives. Gul Rahim, a Taliban judge, predicted the execution of homosexuals by stoning (throwing stones to death) or being crushed by a wall. The persons who have defended women’s rights and human rights in general likewise fear for their lives. In short, executions of those suspected of not adhering to Taliban practices risk taking place in public, as they did 20 years ago, although certain principles of customary international law oppose it. For example, civilians and persons *hors de combat* must be treated humanely. This principle is found in Article 3 of the four Geneva Conventions that are universally applicable and which prohibits, among other things, murder, mutilation, torture, cruel treatment, but also executions carried out without prior trial. The fundamental guarantees of civilians protecting them from corporal punishment, sexual violence and attacks on dignity are also provided in the Article 75 of Additional Protocol I and Article 4 of Additional Protocol II, article adding the mention of rape to the list of all attacks on the life, the health, the physical well-being or the dignity of the person in time of conflict. All these elements are ignored by the Taliban who do not vow to any law other than the Sharia law. This implies systematic violations of the rights of the civilians and clarifies the impossibility of sanctioning the

⁷ THE GUARDIAN. (2021). An Afghan woman in Kabul: “Now I have to burn everything I achieved.” *theguardian.com* [online] 15 Aug. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/aug/15/an-afghan-woman-in-kabul-now-i-have-to-burn-everything-i-achieved> [Accessed 17 Aug. 2021].

⁸ C.d.S. (2021). Charia, droits des femmes, police islamique... A quoi ressemble la vie sous les talibans ? *lexpress.fr*. [online] 16 Aug. Available at: https://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/monde/proche-moyen-orient/afghanistan-charia-droits-des-femmes-police-islamique-la-vie-sous-les-talibans_2156646.html [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

⁹ LAMBERT, E. and PASQUESOONE, V. (2021). L’article à lire pour comprendre qui sont les talibans, dont l’offensive éclair fait vaciller l’Afghanistan. *francetvinfo.fr*. [online] 13 Aug. Available at: https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/afghanistan/l-article-a-lire-pour-comprendre-qui-sont-les-talibans-a-l-origine-d-une-offensive-eclair-en-afghanistan_4733447.html [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

Talibans by legal means, as they despise international law. This is what awaits Afghan citizens. A life where violence, death and terror reign supreme.

Furthermore, the Afghan civilians who engaged with foreign forces are also threatened: indeed, perceived as traitors, they risk death¹⁰. Their protection by countries who have used their services must be guaranteed in no time. This Monday, their evacuation was organized as best as they could at Kabul airport: France, the United States, the United Kingdom, Portugal or even New Zealand, who worked with many locals, already had to organize the reception of threatened families for their commitments. Nevertheless, there remain staff and many civilians who face danger (interpreters, journalists, activists, artists, defenders of rights...)¹¹. It is urgent to react before these people and their families are killed, like Abdul Basir, former cook of the French army kidnapped and killed by the Taliban, who had requested a French visa since 2013, but was rejected three times. Thus, repatriating all those who risk their lives to have helped foreign armies is essential for their security, but also would allow Western countries to react with dignity and to honour these people as well as the values they claim to share.

Emmanuel Macron, thus, mentioned this Monday this “duty to protect”¹² which rests on the shoulders of France vis-à-vis these people, a duty to protect those who helped us, who share our values, as well as all individuals that we can protect.

Welcoming refugees: a human act nonetheless debated by Occidental powers

Regarding the treatment of refugees on the European side, France, Germany, the Netherlands and other countries announced that they would suspend expulsions towards Afghanistan. Nevertheless, no European policy seems to be consistent with the upcoming dramatic humanitarian situation. Division and paradoxes prevail: as conditions are degenerating in Afghanistan and as Occidental and European powers repatriate their citizens, some wants to maintain, or at least do not renounce to¹³, forced expulsion of Afghans. Yet, some countries reviewed their decision and commit to protect Afghan migrants¹⁴.

¹⁰ SIRGANT, A. and DUSSOURT, G. (2021). « *On est vraiment vulnérables* » : cachés à Kaboul, les anciens collaborateurs de l'armée française craignent pour leur vie. *rmc.bfmtv.com*. [online] 16 Aug. Available at: <https://rmc.bfmtv.com/emission/caches-a-kaboul-les-collaborateurs-de-l-armee-francaise-craignent-pour-leur-vie-2046885.html> [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

¹¹ L'EXPRESS. (2021). Opération APAGAN en Afghanistan : comment la France organise l'évacuation de ses ressortissants. *lexpress.fr*. [online] 16 Aug. Available at: https://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/monde/proche-moyen-orient/operation-apagan-en-afghanistan-comment-la-france-organise-l-evacuation-de-ses-ressortissants_2156639.html [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

¹² ELYSÉE. (2021). Allocution relative à la situation en Afghanistan. *elysee.fr*. [online] 16 Aug. Available at: <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2021/08/16/allocution-relative-a-la-situation-en-afghanistan> [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

¹³ VALLET, C. (2021). Le sort des réfugiés afghans divise l'Union européenne. *lemonde.fr*. [online] 14 Aug. Available at: https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2021/08/14/le-sort-des-refugies-afghans-divise-l-union-europeenne_6091417_3_210.html. [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

¹⁴ AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FRANCE. (2021). Afghanistan : La France doit agir rapidement pour sauver des vies. *amnesty.fr*. [online] 16 Aug. Available at:

The UN fears the beginning of a civil war and of a humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, in which all human rights can potentially be scorned: this is why it is important to consider the refugee issue on a larger scale. While the International Organisation of Migrations declares that 360,000 persons were internally displaced in 2021, 40,000 Afghans cross the country's border every week since the beginning of the summer.

The international community thus cannot get around the issue of welcoming migrants: as Canada announced it was ready to welcome 20,000 Afghan refugees, European countries' decisions remain unclear. The French President Emmanuel Macron's allocution on 16 August mentions it a "*solid, coordinated and united answer going through the fight against irregular flow, a solidarity in the effort, the harmonisation of protection criteria and the cooperation with transit and welcoming countries such as Pakistan, Turkey or Iran*"¹⁵. As bordering or nearby countries, those States are the first affected by those migrating flows. Fighting against those migrations implies that France does not feel ready to welcome other Afghans than the ones it wants to protect, those who would be the most in danger. But on what criteria? Aren't all Afghans threatened to be raped, beaten, tortured or killed? This statement appears against the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, in which Article 33 relating to the prohibition of expulsion or return states that "*No Contracting State shall expel or return a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion*". Furthermore, the Recommendation D of the Final Act of the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons, unanimously adopted, "*recommends that Governments continue to receive refugees in their territories and that they act in concert in a true spirit of international co-operation in order that these refugees may find asylum and the possibility of resettlement*". Thus, notions of solidarity and of welcoming refugees when they are in danger and persecuted remain central.

It appears a complete disconnection between reality and the way facts are interpreted and expressed by the French president through large, unclear, and sometimes even digressive terms. Those vague words of "massive" and "irregular" migrations, notably mobilised by nationalo-populist parties to scare public opinion, actually designate Afghans that left in a moment of panic, often without documents or personal belongings, and for whom asylum applications will be a complex process in the entire world. Indeed, there is not only a language barrier, but also a strong dematerialisation of administrative procedures that dehumanise those procedures in which human contact remains essential. While in July Pakistan announced the closing of its borders in case of an Afghan exodus, and the United Arab Emirates forbid flights from Afghanistan to Dubai, the Afghan government itself closed its documentation services for a month in order to prevent the flight and exile of its inhabitants. Then, what solution remains for those people who only want to escape a dangerous regime, for most of them in a haste, if it is impossible for them to get the necessary documents constituting a 'regular' migration?

<https://www.amnesty.fr/conflits-armes-et-populations/actualites/afghanistan-la-france-doit-agir-rapidement-pour-sauver-des-vies> [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

¹⁵ ELYSÉE. (2021). Allocution relative à la situation en Afghanistan. *elysee.fr*. [online] 16 Aug. Available at: <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2021/08/16/allocution-relative-a-la-situation-en-afghanistan> [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

Moreover, the cooperation and coordination of European countries regarding the management of so-called ‘irregular’ immigration flows is not clear, and even inconsistent with the supposedly solid and united answer mentioned by Emmanuel Macron. Indeed, on 13 August 2021, Austrian chancellor Sebastian Kurz recommended Turkey as a place for exile instead of European countries such as Austria, Germany or Sweden¹⁶. This statement did not please Ankara, which is now constructing a wall with its Iranian border to block the Afghan migration flow. Regarding European rules to welcome asylum applicants, the Third Dublin procedure (Dublin III) states to European Union members that the responsibility of the first country welcoming a refugee is engaged when this same refugee applies for asylum. Thus, following a sovereignty provision, the first country that welcomes a refugee on its territory can accept or refuse to provide asylum on its territory¹⁷. This sovereignty provision also allows for other member states to voluntarily study the asylum application if it is registered on its territory. Yet, this clause causes uncertainty regarding the policy adopted by the European Union. Thus, it all depends on how this provision is applied: it can be applied with European solidarity by accepting to treat the application even without being the responsible State for it, or by opposite, by refusing to deal with the application and by transferring it to the responsible country, which will take the decision to provide asylum or to expulse the individual in its origin country. Moreover, even if as of today, some States announced that they will stop evicting Afghans towards their country, some continue to do it. It unveils a failure of the controversial Dublin III. Indeed, countries that are forbidding expulsions towards Afghanistan, but that are not responsible for asylum demands according to Dublin III, can proceed to transferring the asylum seeker in the responsible country, which does not necessarily forbid expulsion. Despite the French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs’ statement from 12 July, transfers of Afghans to other European member authorities (such as Belgium, which did not forbid expulsion at this point) were ordered by prefectural authorities; with the justification that France was not responsible for processing the asylum applications considering Dublin III. This issue would not, of course, be an issue if all European countries were opposed to expulsion to Afghanistan.

We can thus feel apprehensiveness regarding the management of multiple asylum applications, the presence of underlying tensions and the difficulty of cooperation facing different expectations from each implicated nation. Indeed, one can notice an ambiguity because of the wish to “*protect those who are the most in danger*” but also the wish to “*protect*” France and Europe from “*important irregular migration flows that could put in danger those that are following them and that could nurture different trafficking*”. This dissent seems complex and makes it difficult to project ourselves in the implementation of policies, notably at the European level, if such tension remains and creates many questions on how this crisis will be handled by Occidental powers and their allies.

¹⁶ DANIEZ, C. (2021). L’Europe face à la crainte d’une vague de migrants afghans fuyant les talibans. *lexpress.fr*. [online] 13 Aug. Available at : https://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/monde/europe/l-europe-face-a-la-crainte-d-une-vague-de-migrants-afghans-fuyant-les-talibans_2156489.html [Accessed 19 Aug. 2021].

¹⁷ In reality, things are more complicated than this. A person can enter the territory of a European State without depositing or being compelled to deposit one’s fingerprints. The country responsible for processing their asylum application will be the one where their fingerprints were taken for the first time, which does not necessarily correspond to the first European country through which the asylum seeker will have transited. If the person wishes to deposit an asylum application in another member state other than the one initially responsible for that person’s application, the person will be placed in the Dublin procedure (which is called “dublined”, “dublinée” in French) and exposed to a transfer to the first country. It is only after a period of 6 months, in principle, that the second country becomes responsible for the evaluation of the asylum application.

Conclusion

Finally, the long-awaited return to stability in Afghanistan once again appears to be in jeopardy. The intervention on the Afghan territory by different foreign powers in the last decades, the diverse wars on the territory and the successive fights for power and control of the country (invasion of the USSR, civil war, Taliban) have contributed to profound instability in the region. The upcoming crisis could have been, for certain, foreseeable because of the withdrawal of the American troops and the rapid progression of the Taliban forces in recent months. While Joe Biden has maintained that this decision was the best, the systemic violations of human rights that punctuate the advancement of the Taliban and their seizure of the territory could nuance this declaration.

The future of Afghan civilians is gloomy, between the obligation to submit to authorities and the constraint to flee. However, escaping remains a solution not all Afghans can afford due to the lack of contact and material and financial resources that some may face. In addition, the borders being controlled by the Taliban, the airway remains the most certain solution. Extraditions, therefore, are organised by Occidentals reaching to offer help to a part of the population that is hand-picked. Migration is going to be massive and will constitute one of the priorities in the following months, whilst the upcoming years will be characterized by the need to reestablish a peace summit in the country and to guarantee national and international security. A particular attention notably has to be brought to the relations between the Taliban forces and a potential new rise of international terrorism, inseparable from the Taliban since the attack of 11 September 2001. It is equally primordial to think of a long-term solution regarding refugees, that technically had no choice than to leave the country. In fact, because of this forced exile, Afghan refugees see a great number of their rights, such as their freedom of movement, their right to property, to education, to respect of family life, being violated by the lack of stability that they are confronting.

Recommendations

For now, it is crucial that the international community comes together to help the local population to reach a place where they will be in security and where a dignified welcome and the respect of their rights will be guaranteed.

- GROW calls out the international community on the urgent necessity of the reception of all the persons who wish to quit Afghanistan, out of fear for their life, while taking care to respect recommendation B of the Final Act of the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons that demands States to ensure *“the unity of the refugee’s family is maintained particularly in cases where the head of the family has fulfilled the necessary conditions for admission to a particular country”* as well as to ensure *“the protection of refugees who are minors, in particular unaccompanied children and girls, with special reference to guardianship and adoption.”*
- GROW likewise reminds States of the international community the recommendation C of the Final Act of the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons

that recommends “*governments and intergovernmental bodies to facilitate, encourage and sustain the efforts of properly qualified organizations*”, in other words, to welcome the foreigners.

- GROW demands the heads of State and government to register to the agenda of the coming G7 summit on Afghanistan, on the reception of the Afghans without consideration of their social status and whether or not they have worked for a foreign country in the past twenty years.
- GROW calls all the countries of the Human Rights Council of the UN to make the reception of the Afghan migrants a common cause, during the summit that will take place on coming 24 August, in order to organise and gather the strengths and capacities of each one in the best possible way, in the interest of the thousands of Afghans seeking to leave their country.

On the question of the Afghan asylum seekers that are already present on the territories outside Afghanistan:

- GROW demands the States of the international community to positively respond to the call of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, related to the immediate suspension of returning individuals back to Afghanistan, on the motive that the political situation represents a danger for them, moreover if they belong to the following categories: women, children, members of the LGBTQI+ community, political opponents, Afghan personnel who have worked for a foreign country.
- GROW demands the European Union member states subject to the Dublin III regulation to adopt a more humanist and more dignified line in the conduct of their migration policy, by no longer carrying out an indirect return.
- GROW calls for all the countries that have already announced the suspension of returns to Afghanistan, and those who will do so in the near future, to keep this commitment in accordance with the Article 33 of the Geneva Convention of 1951 on the status of the refugees that came into force on 22 April 1954.
- GROW calls for the rejected asylum applications of all Afghans in a country other than their country of origin to be subject to an unconditional review, which will take into account the dramatic development of the political situation in the country.
- Finally, GROW calls for political asylum to be granted to all Afghans who have started a procedure and who have not yet started, as well as those who are about to file a first request or a request for reconsideration.

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