

The US has Committed heinous Crimes in Afghanistan: Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA)

Interview

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15 years after the Western military intervention, little is heard about Afghanistan in the media in France. What is the general situation of the country? How manifest foreign occupation every day for Afghan men and women?

Right at the beginning of the US invasion of Afghanistan, RAWA declared that the purpose of this aggression is to serve the imperialist aims of the US, and in this ordeal they will partner with the worst enemies of our country.

The US has committed heinous crimes in Afghanistan in the past decade, killing thousands of innocent people in airstrikes and night raids, and torturing innocent Afghans in their black sites. The Bala Baluk massacre in Farah province in 2009 that killed 147 innocent Afghans, the Panjwai massacre in Kandahar province in 2012 that killed 16 innocent Afghans, the killing of twelve innocent children in Kunar province in 2013, and the MSF hospital strike of 2015 in Kunduz province that killed 42, are only a few incidents of the bloodshed caused by US/NATO forces in Afghanistan.

Today, Afghanistan is more unsafe than ever before. Security is more vital for people than food and water, and it gets worse with every passing year. The number of civilians killed in suicide attacks by Taliban, the night raids and airstrikes and drone strikes of US forces, and the crimes of the militias of local warlords in different parts of Afghanistan, increases with every passing year. This increase shows the deteriorating security situation.

Afghanistan's economy is in shambles, controlled by mafia who draw support from powerful Afghan government officials. The US and NATO invaded Afghanistan with tall claims of "reconstruction", but we do not see any growth in any fundamental sector of Afghanistan. More than 60 billion dollars was donated to Afghanistan for the so-called reconstruction effort but not even cents reached our people and filled the pockets of mafia in and out of the government.

Poverty and hunger in Afghanistan is among the highest in the world, comparable only to African nations. Afghanistan has the highest infant mortality rate in the world, millions suffer from hunger and malnourishment. 25% of the children in Afghanistan are engaged in labor to feed their families, which deprives them of school and other basic rights.

Afghanistan has been named the most corrupt country in the world for the past few years. Thanks to the US invasion, Afghanistan is not just the top producer of drugs providing 90% of the world's opium, but also has the highest user of drugs with around 3 million addicts.

The US has no interest in Afghanistan's prosperity. In fact, instability, insecurity, poverty, illiteracy and other deeply-entrenched social and economic problems help the US and its puppet government retain their power without any opposition from the people.

The situation of women has improved since 15 years?

Like all the people of Afghanistan, women are crushed between several forces in a continuous war and insecurity that has plagued our country for more than a decade : the US and its allies, Jehadi and Taliban fundamentalists, and now the newly-emerged ISIS. The situation of women today is catastrophic. Violence against women has risen to unprecedented levels today. Women suffer from domestic violence, rape, gang-rape, sexual abuse, murder, immolation, honor-killing, underage and coerced marriage to men much older than them, exchange of girls in marriage for items, and tens of other such misfortunes. Young girls have been tortured in basements, have had their noses, lips, and ears chopped off, deprived of food, and beaten to death by their families or in-laws. What we hear in the media is only the tip of the iceberg.

Last year, Afghanistan witnessed the most horrific crime ever committed against an Afghan woman in broad daylight in central Kabul, under the nose of policemen and the government. Farkhunda, a 26-year-old student, was lynched by a mob of thugs who falsely accused her of burning the Quran. She was kicked, punched, run over by a car, stoned, then burned and thrown in the dry Kabul river. Most of Farkhunda's killers were released days after their arrest. Out of the four remaining, one was sentenced to just 10 years in prison and the other three to 20 years. Their death penalties were overturned in what were ridiculously brief court sessions.

Later that year, 19-year-old Rukhshana was stoned to death by a Taliban kangaroo court in a Mullah (Muslim cleric)-dominated western province of Afghanistan for eloping. A delegation was sent by Ashraf Ghani to investigate and punish the perpetrators of the crimes but it was headed by a Mullah who backed the Taliban and openly championed the stoning of the young girl as being Islamic and legal a few days after the incident !

The parliament has attempted to legalize stoning to death for adultery, wife-beating, and honor killing. The legislators, judiciary, and police all over Afghanistan are misogynist fundamentalists who impose their anti-women mentalities in the form of laws, and offer full impunity to the perpetrators of these horrendous crimes. Most of the women in Afghan jails today were sentenced by the misogynist judiciary for "moral crimes" such as running away from home from cruel husbands and in-laws, eloping with a lover, etc. Countless cases of public lashing and executions have been carried out by mock courts of Taliban, and local warlords and Mullahs in all parts of Afghanistan. It is only natural that in such a situation, violence against women will only continue to rise. The rates of self-immolation have also reached new heights as women see no other solution to their problems.

Afghanistan still has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world, with thousands of women dying during childbirth every year. The official literacy rate stands at 18% although considering the ground reality the rate is much lower than this. Afghanistan is

rightfully called one of the worst places to be a woman.

The US uses the symbolic presence of female officials to deceive the world about the actual situation and justify its occupation. Most of these women are tied to the same fundamentalist parties and criminals, and are as undemocratic and misogynist, as their male counterparts. The other achievements of women such as reopening of schools and jobs for women are limited to a few urban cities of Afghanistan, with majority women still suffering in the current hellfire.

And refugees? Did they hope to return to their country?

Afghans are the second largest group of refugees in the world after Syria. The situation I described above is what drives these youngsters to search for a better life abroad. The only reason these people may return is if the security situation improves, and there are jobs and money for them to lead a decent life. We have said this before and will say it again: as long as the US stays in our country, or continues its intervention through its traitorous puppet government and its other criminal proxies, we will not have stability or prosperity in the country and people will not only not return, but will continue to flee this devastation.

How do you explain that the occupation forces have failed to establish a stable regime and to “pacify” the country ?

The biggest treason the US has committed in Afghanistan is the re-installment of Islamic fundamentalist criminals in power. Today Afghanistan is ruled by bloodthirsty fundamentalist warlords and criminals who share the Taliban’s ideology and have committed crimes worse than that of the Taliban in the past. The Northern Alliance, composed of the most traitorous and misogynist elements of warlords and military commanders were imposed on our people through three historically fraudulent elections. These criminals led the civil war of 1992-1996 that killed more than 65,000 civilians in Kabul alone and plundered the city. Their militias committed systematic war crimes which have been documented by international organizations like HRW and Amnesty International. Instead of facing prosecution in international courts for these crimes, these killers enjoy full impunity and fatten their bank accounts with the West’s support.

The new government of Afghanistan called the ‘National Unity Government’ is headed by long-time US mercenary Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah of Northern Alliance, who were united by a John Kerry brokered agreement after the two could not agree on the results of the rigged and disgusting presidential elections which was full of fraud (the result of this election was officially released a year later !). Ashraf Ghani’s deputies were infamous criminals Abdul Rashid Dostum and Sarwar Danish, while Abdullah’s running mates were Mohammad Khan and Mohammad Mohaqiq, two other criminals.

The US is the creator and nurturer of these violent groups. It is a conscious policy of the US government to partner with Islamic fundamentalists wherever it steps in. We saw this in Libya and Syria as well. The US claims to be fighting terror, but the biggest terrorists, the Northern Alliance criminals, were brought to power by the US itself. The US heavily relies on terrorism as a weapon to block the progress of its rival countries, especially Russia and China, and as their loyal proxies in the wars they wage.

The United States negotiating with the Taliban today. What is their objective?

The US and NATO occupied Afghanistan to obliterate the Taliban terrorist, but according to the UN, the Taliban's reach is widest now since 2001. The opposition to these expensive wars is also continuously growing in their own countries. At this point it seems that the US and NATO are using these peace talks to show an achievement in this highly unpopular war.

It is no secret that the bloodthirsty Taliban regime was created and nurtured by the US, and will be used by the US whenever they need them. Now it seems that this Taliban project of the US and its allies is coming to an end and so they want to include them in the Afghan government like their fundamentalist brothers. With the emergence of ISIS in Afghanistan, the US will no longer need the excuse of the Taliban to justify its occupation of Afghanistan like it did in 2001, ISIS will be that reason today.

While the wounds the Taliban gave our people are still bleeding, these criminals are being invited to join the government to complete the circle of fundamentalist, mercenary criminals in power. Like the criminals who are already present in the government, they will also enjoy complete impunity and will not face prosecution for heinous crimes

What is certain is that even if these peace talks take place there will be no peace and prosperity for the Afghan people as long as the US and its reactionary lackey fundamentalist and non-fundamentalist elements are present.

It is worth mentioning that the Afghan puppet government also attempted to negotiate with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the most infamous of all these warlord criminals. They wanted to take his name off the UN black list and give him legal protection, despite the fact that he has killed thousands of innocent people during the Afghan civil war, assassinated tens of intellectuals, and used to throw acid on the faces of women who were seen in public when he was a university student.

Still, there comes the Afghan people to organize politically?

If the political situation of Afghanistan is unchanged, the current situation is only going to become bleaker. Our people will continue to be victim of the crimes of the US forces, Taliban, and Jehadi warlords. There is only one way the current situation can change and that is for the people themselves to struggle for their rights and a better country, against their prime enemies.

We have always said that the independence of a country is the first condition for democracy, freedom, and justice in a country. The key to freedom and democracy is in a united, organized struggle of our people. Only the people of a country can decide their fate and build a system that serves them. This will be a long and hard process, but Afghans have no other alternative but to unite and fight for freedom, democracy, justice and liberation.

How revolutionary, world anti-imperialist and progressive they can support you and support the Afghan people?

The solidarity of the freedom and peace loving people of the world is very important in strengthening our people's struggle at home.

We have nothing to say to the Western governments who have the blood of our innocent people on their hands. Our message for the peace-loving people of these countries is that they have to see the reality of Afghanistan and all the other countries the US has invaded.

The people of these countries do not have the true picture from the US wars to make proper, informed decisions on them. Afghanistan barely gets any coverage and if it does, the crimes of the US forces such as killings and torture and night raids will never be shown, as will the insecurity and instability of our country and the devastating situation of women and people will not get any attention.

The people of the West should know that the tax they pay is used by their governments to further their wars in Afghanistan and other war-torn countries. These bloody wars do have a blowback like we witnessed the Paris attacks and the Orlando shooting. They need to pressurize their governments to change this invasion and occupation policy, and stand in solidarity with the people who are the victims of these wars. This international solidarity will strengthen the fight for freedom and democracy in these countries.

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