

ABSTRACT

This research study analyses the conflict transformation in Afghanistan in the Taliban era of First Islamic Emirate during the period 1996-2001. The term conflict transformation refers to attaining peace by addressing the core issues of a conflict and may involve structural changes for peaceful settlements. The study was qualitative with historical description and aimed at ascertaining the positive changes the Taliban made during the period 1996-2001. Also, it highlighted the areas of improvement they should have done to gain overwhelming support of the people of Afghanistan and the world by and large for a peaceful Afghanistan. Conflict transformation theory of Johan Galtung was taken as a guideline for this study. The theory holistically presents as to how durable peace can be attained from a conflict habituated system. The data collected through interviews were described in broader theme's aimed at the challenges to the Islamic Emirate to achieve positive peace and efforts made for conflict transformation in Afghanistan.

It is generally believed that the economic woes in a country lead to violent activities. Accordingly, in the twentieth century expecting peace and socio- economic development of any country while keeping half of the population i.e.: women, aloof from the process was an uphill task for Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan during the period of 1996-2001. With regard to the large economic magnitude and especially the lack of previous literature available on the topic it was difficult to empirically analysis the exact socioeconomic development with proper indicators in the Taliban era. However, it was evident that the collapse of the state machinery resulted in the 'bazaar economy which was mainly controlled by the informal sector. The same was responsible for drastic changes in the Afghan society. In the first Islamic Emirate from 1996-2001, the Afghan economy was based mainly on trading. While alone in the year 1999 the Afghan opium production reached to its optimum level and in the same year 75% of the world opiates were produced in Afghanistan. Following positive response to the international community, the Taliban banned the cultivation of opium in 2000. Though Opium was the mainstay of the Afghan economy the cultivation of opium was completely discontinued in 2001 which was a very good gesture on part of Taliban to gain support of the world and avoid sanctions.

The Taliban in the first Islamic Emirate built on the rural population distrust for urban areas because urban areas were seen as main areas for corruption and violence of various levels. It was

noted that the Taliban support was higher in the rural Pashtun areas as compared to cities. One of the major factors behind the success of the Taliban and support of local Afghans for them was the absence of proper administration at a district level and existence of political divide among the Afghans in the 1990s.

The Taliban brought an end to civil-war, improved law and order situation in Afghanistan and imposed laws based on Shariah during the year 1996-2001. They also categorically refused all those proposals and resolutions which were against the teachings of Islam and Quran. The disagreement with international laws and resolutions of United Nation led to further measures against them. This resulted in economic and military sanctions against the Taliban government.

The study recommends that the world must not repeat the mistakes it did in the First Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan from 1996-2001, when they disengaged with the Taliban government and as a result the country hosted international terrorists like Al-Qaeda which led to 9/11 attack in the United States of America and other acts of terrorism in the world and thereby became a threat to world peace. Therefore, a peaceful Afghanistan is mandatory for the sake of world peace; and it can only be achieved if the world, especially countries like USA, China, Russia, the neighboring Pakistan and Iran recognize their role in addressing key issues of the people of the war torn country and at the same time respect its sovereignty.

Key Words: Conflict Transformation in Afghanistan; Taliban in Afghanistan; First Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan