

Dear Friends and colleagues,

On behalf of the Solidarity Party of Afghanistan (Hezbi Hambastagy Afghanistan), section Europe, I am deeply touched and honored to be invited to such a gathering to give voice to the suffering people of Afghanistan and share a small part of the grief that million of Afghans suffer.

Afghanistan has only known wars, military invasions, destruction, destitutions and misery over the past three decades. Today it is once again a battlefield among powers vying for influence in the heart of Asia. The game masters have continued to create victims, oppressors, victors, terrorists, peace loving, dictators and monsters – each group changing roles as the rule of the game changes. Over the past three decades, neither the creators nor the created have changed but just the roles they play. The same characters were once allies, freedom fighters, democratic minded and moderates, with time the same characters are enemies, terrorists, fanatics and downright monsters. Such changes in the rules of the game in the Afghan amphitheatre has cost hundreds and thousands of lives, dignity and basic human rights.

Lets not forget the disastrous adventurism of the Soviet leadership in late 1970s, which killed directly and through its installed puppet regime nearly two million people and permanently maimed another 2 to 4 million people out of an estimated population of about 18 million at the time. The Soviet invasion and a more than a decade long occupation was the source of miseries in the subsequent years.

In the past nine years, the occupation forces led by the US make fool of the world by asserting that they are there to bring peace, democracy and freedom to Afghan people. But in fact it is nothing other than a cynical excuse for strategic, economic and military interests once again at the expense of ordinary Afghans.

The US and NATO claim that they are fighting terrorism, but in fact they themselves are terrorizing our people through their bombings and use of dangerous weapons. Most of the people they fight today are their own creation and once hailed as the best allies the US can have. The installed puppet regime is nothing other than a junior lieutenant whose only job is to follow certain minor instructions. The regimes allies, friends and foes are already defined and there is little room for dissent from the game master's official line. Today the best friends of the US and NATO in Afghanistan are warlords and drug-lords like Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf, Karim Khalili, Qasim Fahim, Dr. Abdullah, Burhanuddin Rabbani, Mohammad Mohaqiq, Atta Mohammad and many other such murderers and dark-minded individuals and groups, who have a long history of human rights violations and atrocities against defenseless people of Afghanistan.

There are claims of positive changes in Afghanistan since the US/ NATO invasion – lets just list a few: (1) Afghanistan produces over 90% of world opium and has become a major hub of international drug mafia activities;

(2) Afghanistan is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most corrupt country in the world where billions of Dollars of aid are being looted by the warlords, ministers, national and international NGOs. The foreign troops themselves are engaged in drug trafficking and corruption which has made the life of ordinary Afghans bleak and unbearable.

(3) The UN estimates that 7.4 million people or more than a third of the population do not eat more than one meal a day, another 8.5 million people or 37% of the population are seasonally hungry;

(4) malnutrition is the highest in the world; (5) access to education, in particular for women is the lowest in the world; (6) maternity death rates are the highest in the world; and so on.

On the other hand, however, fancy large castles have sprang up in various parts of the country, individuals owning private jets, airlines, banks and large properties in different parts of the world. These are not just any individuals, indeed they are the Empire's chosen ones. These are the new faces of democracy and social justice, some of whom were at some point considered terrorists.

While the game masters choose players and designate the good and the bad and continuously change functions and stamps of identity, the ordinary Afghans are caught in between and continue to suffer. The US is not alone in the feast, of course, minor regional lieutenants also have their share of the feast. The Taliban and the Hekmatyar groups were once created and heavily supported by the US and its allies but somehow upset the master and the rules of the game had to change. Iran, Pakistan and some Arab governments have been heavily involved in supporting and nurturing one or another group. Without the support from Pakistan, Iran and a number of other countries the Taliban and Hekmatyar groups could not survive that many years at all.

It is indeed shocking to hear and see that some so-called progressive and even left groups in the West regard Taliban as anti-imperialist force and see them as “national movements” against occupation. They forget that the Taliban and Al-Qadea both are reactionary and terrorist groups created by the US. They have links with international terrorism and are supported by fundamentalist and fascist regime such as Pakistan and Iran. They do not represent Afghan people and their war is mainly against our innocent people. Existence of such brutal and

ignorant groups gives a golden opportunity to the US and NATO to hold its grip on Afghanistan and keep there military bases and presence there as part of the Empire's long arms strategy.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the US has become the solo superpower. To keep her position, they fight their potential enemies on all grounds, in order to secure its political, economical, geostrategic and hegemonic interests. The so-called "anti-American" groups in Afghanistan are needed as a prime excuse for the US to exert control at the heart of Asia.

The so-called new strategy of Obama for Afghanistan and increasing troops have already turned the Afghan tragedy into disaster. The number of innocent Afghan civilians killed by NATO is growing. The US talks of "war on terror" but tries to make comfortable bed-fellows with Taliban and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. The US puppet regime of Hamid Karzai created a so-called "Peace Council" in order to share power with those savage groups. If they join the government, the Afghans will be destined to be driven to the dark ages. Such coalition will be like unity of wolves and vultures who jointly tear our unfortunate nation apart. Indeed the chosen members of the 'peace council' are former friends of the Taliban and ideologically there is no difference between them. Hence the future state of affairs have already been drafted.

Respected friends,

The US/NATO governments talk about democracy but act principally against democracy and justice. They waste the tax-payers money and blood of your sons for a war which is neither in the benefit of Afghans nor Western people. In the past nine years they armed and empowered the most dangerous reactionary fundamentalist groups in Afghanistan because they know that only such groups will better serve their interests in Afghanistan. The US/NATO try to block any options for emergence of progressive and democratic-minded movements in Afghanistan because such movements will never dance to the tunes of the Empire. They are busy in seeding ethnic, lingual, religious and regional conflict, which may necessitate the presence of foreign powers for years to come.

We think neither the US/NATO nor reactionary fundamentalist groups such as Taliban will bring peace, justice and democracy for Afghanistan. Only Afghan people themselves can liberate Afghanistan if they are united under the banner of a progressive and independent movement. We have individuals and small groups working towards this very vital goal. While progressive and democratic groups are under constant pressure from all sides and are being ignored, but there are many individuals like Malalai Joya who have committed herself to rise against occupation and fundamentalism and mobilize poor masses of Afghanistan for a decisive fight for independence, justice and democracy in our country.

The withdrawal of occupation forces from Afghanistan should be the first step towards peace and democracy in Afghanistan. If they do not pull out voluntarily, they may face strong opposition from our people, because Afghans have come to know that these troops are only making Afghanistan a more dangerous place for them and only a handful of killers and looters benefit from the presence of such groups.

Our progressive groups working inside Afghanistan face many obstacles and limitations in their struggle. But despite all the problems and risks, they continue to organize demonstrations and campaigns among ordinary Afghan people in the cities and villages of Afghanistan. Afghan people are fed up with the occupation, their puppet regime and the Taliban, so a progressive message is strongly welcomed and supported by the majority of people. Unfortunately democratic-minded groups are not supported by any source and they face many challenges and restrictions.

While the US and European powers play with the fate of our people and support our enemies and make barriers for advancement of democratic forces, we count on the support and help of leftist, anti-war, pro-democratic and peace loving individuals and groups in these countries. We call on you not to forget your comrades in Afghanistan who are risking their lives for a just cause. We need your solidarity in words and in action.

I salute you for remembering your Afghan comrades and showing your solidarity with them.

Thank you.