

THE EXIT OF THE UNITED STATES FROM AFGHANISTAN AND THE GROWING VULNERABILITY OF AFRICA TO GLOBAL CAPITALISM

By

Abayomi Mumuni NURAIN¹
Abdulyakeen ABDULRASHEED²

¹⁻²Department of Political Science,
Al-Qalam University, Katsina. Katsina State.
Email: abdulrasheedabdulyakeen90@gmail.com

Abstract

The exit of the United States from Afghanistan in 2021 marked a pivotal moment in global geopolitics, with far-reaching consequences not only for Afghanistan but also for regions like Africa. This shift has amplified the growing vulnerability of African countries to the influence of global capital. As Africa increasingly becomes a focal point for economic interests of major global powers, the continent faces mounting challenges related to governance, political instability, and external exploitation. The departure of the U.S. from conflict zones like Afghanistan, combined with the rise of alternative powers such as China, has created new geopolitical dynamics that exacerbate Africa's susceptibility to foreign capital. The continent's dependence on external investments, multinational corporations, and the exploitation of natural resources contributes to growing inequalities and environmental degradation. This paper explores the intertwined implications of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and Africa's increasing vulnerability to external economic forces, offering recommendations for enhancing governance, economic resilience, and regional cooperation to safeguard Africa's future.

Keywords: U.S. Withdrawal, Global Capital, Africa's Vulnerability, Geopolitical Shifts, Economic Resilience.

Introduction

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021 marked a significant shift in U.S. foreign policy, ending its nearly two-decade-long military presence in the country. This decision had profound implications for global politics, including the security landscape in Central Asia and South Asia, as well as a ripple effect on the broader international order. At the same time, Africa, a continent already facing numerous socio-political and economic challenges, has become increasingly vulnerable to the forces of global capitalism, with the growing influence of foreign actors and multinational corporations exacerbating inequality, environmental degradation, and social unrest. This paper explores the intersection of these two phenomena, analyzing how the U.S. exit from Afghanistan and the growing vulnerability of Africa to global capital reflect broader geopolitical trends and their

potential long-term consequences for African countries.

The U.S. exit from Afghanistan in August 2021 marked the culmination of a nearly two-decade-long military engagement that profoundly impacted both Afghanistan and the broader international landscape. The decision to withdraw was a part of the U.S.'s broader strategy to pivot towards great power competition with countries like China and Russia while refocusing resources on domestic priorities. However, the end of the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan raised significant questions about the future of global security, especially in fragile states and regions with geopolitical complexities. At the same time, Africa, a continent already beset by numerous challenges ranging from political instability to economic underdevelopment has increasingly become vulnerable to the forces of global capitalism (Udoikah & Ndaeyo, 2021). Multinational corporations, external debt dependency, and economic policies shaped by international financial institutions have increasingly influenced African economies, creating growing inequality, exploitation of natural resources, and environmental degradation. The growing vulnerability of African states to the machinations of global capital is further exacerbated by geopolitical shifts, such as the U.S. exit from Afghanistan, which may change the dynamics of external engagement with African nations.

This intersection of global political shifts and Africa's increasing economic vulnerability calls for an in-depth exploration of how these developments are interconnected and what implications they have for the continent's future stability, governance, and economic independence. There is a notable gap in the literature that explores the intersection between geopolitical shifts such as the U.S. exit from Afghanistan and the economic vulnerabilities faced by African countries due to global capitalism. While there has been extensive research on the individual topics of U.S. foreign policy, Africa's integration into the global economy, and the effects of global capital on African economies, there has been little focus on the combined impact of these factors. Specifically, the research gap exists in the following areas: While much has been written about the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, its implications for Africa's security and governance have not been sufficiently explored. Much of the existing research on the U.S. exit focuses on its immediate regional impacts in the Middle East and South Asia, with little attention given to how this change in U.S. foreign policy might affect Africa, especially in terms of security, political dynamics, and economic relationships. Although there is significant literature on Africa's economic dependency, particularly in relation to debt and multinational corporations, there has been less focus on the interconnection between Africa's economic vulnerability to global capital and the shifting global power dynamics post-U.S. withdrawal. Africa's growing vulnerability to external capital flows and foreign policy interests of major global players warrants further investigation. While much of the literature discusses the impact of global capitalism in Africa or the implications of the U.S. exit from

Afghanistan separately, there is a lack of research that combines these themes and focuses on how shifts in global geopolitics impact Africa's economic integration into global markets and its vulnerability to external influence. There is a need for a cross-regional analysis that considers how the U.S.'s shift in focus from military intervention to economic competition influences Africa's political economy. This gap presents an opportunity to contribute novel insights into the interaction between global political shifts and Africa's increasing exposure to external economic forces, allowing for a deeper understanding of the continent's evolving role in the global system. The core research problem centers around understanding the relationship between the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and the increasing vulnerability of African countries to global capitalism. Specifically, this research aims to address the following questions:

- i. How has the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan reshaped global geopolitical priorities, and what impact does this have on Africa's political and economic stability?
- ii. In what ways has Africa's growing dependence on external capital and investment—especially in the form of foreign debt, multinational corporations, and global financial institutions increased its vulnerability to global economic trends?
- iii. What role do major powers such as China, Russia, and the U.S. play in Africa's increasing exposure to the forces of global capitalism, and how do these powers compete for influence on the continent?

The U.S. Exit from Afghanistan: Implications and Reactions

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021 was a pivotal moment in global geopolitics, signaling a shift in U.S. foreign policy and broader strategic trends. This withdrawal, following nearly two decades of military involvement in Afghanistan, was part of a broader recalibration of U.S. priorities. The decision to withdraw had significant consequences for both global power dynamics and regional security, with repercussions not just in Afghanistan but also in Central Asia, South Asia, and beyond. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan represents a significant shift in U.S. foreign policy, emphasizing the transition from counterterrorism to great power competition. The U.S. increasingly perceives China and Russia as its principal geopolitical challengers, marking a pivot away from prolonged military engagements in the Middle East. China, seeking to assert itself as a global power, sees the U.S. withdrawal as an opportunity to expand its influence in Central Asia, especially through economic investments and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The U.S. military exit opens the door for China to become more involved in regional stability and infrastructure development, further embedding itself in the Central Asian and Afghan economies. Russia has long sought to maintain influence over former Soviet republics, including Central Asia, and the U.S. exit from Afghanistan allows Russia to increase its leverage (Cesar, Cancho and Tejesh, 2020). Moscow is expected to strengthen ties with Central

Asian states, as well as engage more directly with the Taliban in Afghanistan. This development might shift the regional balance of power, as Russia could seek to control new routes for energy transportation, manage security concerns related to extremism, and assert its influence in regional politics. The U.S. withdrawal was also driven by the strategic rebalancing toward the Indo-Pacific region, especially in response to the growing influence of China in the region. The Indo-Pacific is now central to U.S. foreign policy, and its strategic focus on containing China in the South China Sea and East Asia is taking precedence over military commitments in the Middle East and Central Asia. As China expands its economic and military footprint in Asia, the U.S. has prioritized regional alliances in the Indo-Pacific to create a counterweight to China. This includes deepening relationships with key allies such as Japan, India, and Australia, which are viewed as essential in balancing China's growing dominance in the region.

The U.S. withdrawal led to the rapid collapse of the Afghan government and the return of the Taliban to power, raising questions about the future security dynamics in Afghanistan and the wider region. The instability that followed the withdrawal poses multiple challenges for regional security. The Taliban's return raises concerns about the resurgence of extremist groups such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISIS-K). These groups could exploit the power vacuum to gain footholds in the region, potentially destabilizing neighboring countries such as Pakistan, Iran, and Central Asian states. This presents a terrorist threat not only to the region but also to global security. Conor (2019) argues that, the Taliban's victory, accompanied by the collapse of the Afghan government, has resulted in an exodus of refugees fleeing Afghanistan, further stressing neighboring countries like Pakistan, Iran, and Tajikistan. Regional governments must grapple with the humanitarian implications, including the risks posed by the flow of refugees, potential terrorist infiltrations, and the strain on local resources.

The U.S. exit has intensified existing regional rivalries, particularly between India and Pakistan. Afghanistan has long been a theater of rivalry between these two nuclear-armed nations, and the Taliban's resurgence could lead to heightened tensions. Pakistan's longstanding support for the Taliban and its role in facilitating peace talks has positioned it as a key player in Afghanistan's post-withdrawal future. However, Pakistan faces the challenge of managing instability within Afghanistan while ensuring that extremist groups do not spill over into its own territory. India, which had invested heavily in Afghanistan's infrastructure and development over the years, is now confronted with the challenge of a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan that is viewed as aligned with Pakistan. India's strategic interests in the region are threatened, as it may lose influence in Afghanistan and become increasingly isolated from developments there (Kathy, 2020; Jon and Robert, 2017). The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan exposed the fragility of NATO's unity, particularly in the absence of clear and coordinated planning. European allies were caught off-guard by the speed of the Taliban's victory and

were left scrambling to manage the evacuation of their nationals and local partners. Many European nations, who were also involved in Afghanistan, expressed frustration and disappointment with the U.S. decision. Some analysts suggest that the U.S. withdrawal could prompt European countries to reconsider their reliance on U.S. leadership for global security and even consider developing independent military capabilities through initiatives such as European strategic autonomy. The sudden collapse of the Afghan government and the chaotic nature of the U.S. withdrawal will likely force NATO to reassess its role in international interventions, military cooperation, and collective security. Some believe it signals the end of the era of U.S.-led military interventions, leading to a more regionally-based and multilateral approach to conflict resolution.

The UN and other international organizations have been forced to engage more actively in post-withdrawal diplomacy, particularly in managing the humanitarian crisis and peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan. The international community has been tasked with determining how to deal with the Taliban's rule and whether to recognize its government officially. Multilateral Diplomacy: The U.S. exit has underscored the importance of multilateral diplomacy in dealing with global challenges. Regional organizations, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), have gained influence as they seek to mediate and provide humanitarian assistance. China's Strategic Influence in Central Asia: With the U.S. pulling out of Afghanistan, China is positioning itself as a key security and economic partner for Central Asia. George (2017), through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), stated that China has increasingly sought to increase its engagement in the region, including in Afghanistan's infrastructure development.

China is leveraging economic incentives and diplomatic pressure to expand its role as a regional power. China's interests in securing energy supplies and developing trade routes through Central Asia are growing stronger. By engaging with Afghanistan, China aims to bolster its strategic infrastructure and regional trade networks. As the U.S. shifts its focus away from the region, China has bolstered its security partnerships with Pakistan and Central Asian states to monitor and control the terrorist threat from Afghanistan. Russia, already a key player in the region, is likely to expand its role in Afghanistan and Central Asia as it seeks to counterbalance NATO influence and maintain control over former Soviet republics. Russia's approach has been focused on security cooperation, as well as forming alliances to manage the threat posed by extremist groups. Russia has actively engaged with the Taliban, seeking to ensure that Afghanistan does not become a source of instability for its southern border. Russia's involvement reflects its desire to exert greater influence over the Central Asian security environment and counteract the spread of U.S. influence.

The Humanitarian and Political Fallout of the U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021, followed by the Taliban's rapid return to power, triggered a cascade of humanitarian and political consequences both within Afghanistan and in the broader international community. The chaotic exit, along with the subsequent Taliban takeover, brought profound challenges in terms of human rights, political legitimacy, refugee crises, and regional instability. The sudden collapse of the Afghan government and the Taliban's swift takeover left many Afghans in fear for their safety, particularly those associated with the previous Western-backed government or NATO forces. This fear led to a mass displacement of people, both within Afghanistan and across its borders. The U.N. reported that the Taliban's advance triggered a wave of internal displacement, with millions of Afghans fleeing their homes, especially from urban areas like Kabul. As the Taliban consolidated its control, it was feared that ethnic and sectarian violence, as well as reprisals against former government officials and human rights activists, could exacerbate the crisis. In addition to the internal displacement, a mass exodus of refugees took place as people attempted to escape to neighboring countries such as Pakistan, Iran, and Tajikistan. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that hundreds of thousands of Afghans fled the country within the first few weeks of the Taliban's return to power. Many sought to reach Europe or North America, creating significant strain on refugee systems in neighboring countries and the international community at large. Humanitarian aid organizations were forced to scale back their operations in Afghanistan, as the situation became increasingly volatile. The U.N., the Red Cross, and other humanitarian organizations faced immense challenges in reaching people in need due to Taliban restrictions on aid distribution, security risks for aid workers, and the sheer scale of the crisis.

The Taliban's return to power had devastating implications for women and girls in Afghanistan, many of whom had gained access to education, employment, and political participation during the years of U.S.-backed governance. With the Taliban's reinstatement, many feared a return to the repressive policies of the 1990s, during which women faced severe restrictions on their rights. The Taliban's stance on women's education has fluctuated, but initial reports suggested that many secondary schools for girls were closed, and higher education was largely restricted for women. Girls in many parts of Afghanistan were denied access to education under the new Taliban regime, reversing years of progress in gender equality (Philip, 2020; Craig, 2020). Women who had previously worked in various sectors, including healthcare and education, found themselves unable to continue their employment under Taliban rule. In many cases, Taliban leaders imposed strict restrictions, ordering women to stay at home or limiting their professional opportunities to fields deemed —acceptable by the regime. There was also an uptick in gender-based violence as women were forced into more

restrictive roles and lacked access to legal protections or social services. Reports of forced marriages, abductions, and violence against female activists increased significantly. The healthcare system in Afghanistan, already under strain after years of conflict, deteriorated further after the Taliban took control. Healthcare workers, particularly women, were often denied employment, while hospitals and clinics were overwhelmed with both war casualties and those suffering from malnutrition. Afghanistan has long struggled with food insecurity, and the crisis worsened following the withdrawal. The combination of economic collapse, drought, and the withdrawal of international aid contributed to rising levels of malnutrition, particularly among children. Reports from UNICEF and the World Food Program (WFP) indicated that millions of people were facing severe hunger in the aftermath of the Taliban's return to power. The Afghan healthcare system struggled to function amidst economic collapse and limited access to resources. Health workers faced salary delays, hospitals lacked essential medicines, and many international organizations were forced to withdraw or reduce their operations due to security concerns.

The rapid collapse of the Afghan government and the Taliban's swift takeover led to a significant loss of credibility for both the U.S. and NATO. After nearly two decades of military involvement, the speed and ease with which the Taliban regained control raised serious questions about the effectiveness of the U.S. nation-building efforts and the long-term sustainability of military interventions. The U.S. withdrawal was widely viewed as a political failure, particularly because it was followed by scenes of chaos at the Kabul airport, where thousands of Afghans sought to flee the country. This was seen as a humiliating defeat for U.S. foreign policy, prompting intense domestic criticism of President Joe Biden's administration for its handling of the exit. NATO's failure to manage the situation after the U.S. withdrawal highlighted the weakness of the alliance in addressing crises outside of its core European territory. Many European allies were frustrated by the lack of coordination and the inability to prevent the Taliban's rise. The experience has led to growing debates about NATO's future and the potential need for Europe to develop a more independent defense strategy.

The Taliban's return to power raised questions about its political legitimacy and whether it could govern Afghanistan effectively. The group has struggled to gain international recognition and is faced with the task of governing a diverse, divided society. Although the Taliban has secured control over much of Afghanistan, it faces significant internal challenges, including a divided leadership, tension between hardliners and moderates, and the task of administering a war-torn country with limited resources. The group has also been criticized for failing to provide basic services such as electricity, clean water, and healthcare to the Afghan people. The international community has been slow to recognize the Taliban's legitimacy (Conor, 2019; Dante, 2021). While China, Russia, and Pakistan have

shown some willingness to engage diplomatically with the Taliban, many Western nations, including the U.S., have refused to recognize the group's government. The Taliban's human rights record and its failure to meet conditions for recognition, such as the protection of women's rights and democratic governance, have been major obstacles. Within Afghanistan, the Taliban must contend with regional rivalries and ethnic tensions, particularly between the Pashtun majority and the Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara minorities. The Taliban's governance has been marked by authoritarianism and tribal allegiances, with reports of repression against those who oppose their rule. The humanitarian and political fallout of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan has significantly impacted regional dynamics, particularly in South Asia, Central Asia, and beyond. Pakistan, which has long had ties to the Taliban, saw an opportunity to expand its influence in Afghanistan post-withdrawal. However, it has also faced the challenge of managing Taliban extremism and ensuring that Afghanistan does not become a source of instability for its own borders. Pakistan has also faced international pressure for its role in supporting the Taliban. India, which had invested heavily in Afghanistan's development, has expressed concerns about the Taliban's rule and the threat it poses to Indian interests. India, along with other countries in the region, has been worried about the Taliban's ties to Pakistan and the potential for terrorism to spill over into Indian-controlled Kashmir. Iran shares a long border with Afghanistan and has deep concerns about the Taliban's rise. While Iran may seek to exert influence over Afghanistan to limit U.S. and Saudi influence in the region, it must balance this with its own security concerns about radicalism and extremism on its doorstep.

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021, marked by the rapid collapse of the Afghan government and the Taliban's return to power, sparked a range of reactions from U.S. allies and global powers. These reactions were shaped by diverse national interests, geopolitical calculations, and regional security concerns. While some countries expressed support for the withdrawal or showed a pragmatic approach toward the Taliban, others criticized the U.S. decision, highlighting its potential consequences for global security, human rights, and regional stability. The NATO alliance, in which the U.S. played a leading role for two decades in Afghanistan, experienced significant discontent and disagreement following the withdrawal. NATO member states, particularly those from Europe, expressed frustration over the chaotic nature of the exit and the lack of consultation or coordination with them by the U.S. European Reactions. The U.K., one of the closest U.S. allies in Afghanistan, expressed significant disappointment over the U.S. decision. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was vocal about his concerns that the withdrawal would lead to instability in the region (UNICEF, 2021; Jamal and William, 2023). While the U.K. did not oppose the withdrawal itself, there was widespread criticism regarding the speed of the pullout and the failure to plan adequately for the humanitarian consequences, especially the evacuation of Afghan

allies.

The U.K. also worried about the rise of extremism in the region, with the Taliban's return to power potentially creating a safe haven for groups like ISIS-K. As a result, the U.K. sought to emphasize counterterrorism cooperation with the Taliban and stressed the need for continued engagement with Afghanistan. Germany, which had been heavily involved in the NATO mission, expressed similar concerns about the unilateral nature of the U.S. withdrawal. Chancellor Angela Merkel and other German officials lamented the abrupt departure of U.S. forces, which they believed could lead to anarchy in Afghanistan. The German government also focused on the humanitarian impact and supported efforts to evacuate Afghan civilians and assist in the post-Taliban era. Merkel's government urged that Afghanistan not be abandoned entirely by the international community, advocating for continued humanitarian aid and a coordinated international response to support the Afghan people. French President Emmanuel Macron took a strong stance against the manner in which the U.S. executed the withdrawal, calling it a failure of strategy and a reflection of American isolationism. France emphasized the importance of international cooperation and solidarity in addressing the situation and rejected the notion of abandoning the Afghan population. Macron also highlighted the potential for Afghanistan to become a breeding ground for terrorist organizations, which could threaten European security. NATO's internal divisions became evident after the withdrawal. While many European leaders supported a reassessment of the alliance's role in Afghanistan, they also called for a more independent European defense policy, reflecting concerns over American unilateralism. The situation in Afghanistan raised broader questions about the future of NATO and its military commitments, especially as the alliance faced criticism for being too reliant on U.S. leadership.

China saw the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan as a strategic opportunity to increase its influence in the region. China's response was multifaceted, focusing on both geopolitical concerns and economic opportunities. China viewed the withdrawal as evidence of U.S. decline and unwillingness to engage in long-term conflicts in distant regions. Beijing, which shares a border with Afghanistan, was concerned about the potential for instability in the region, particularly regarding the rise of extremist groups like ISIS-K. However, China emphasized that it did not want to be directly involved in the military aspects of Afghanistan's future (Reuter and Thore, 2021). Beijing also saw the withdrawal as a chance to expand its economic influence in Afghanistan and Central Asia, especially through its Belt and Road Initiative. With the U.S. out of the picture, China could increase its economic ties to Afghanistan, particularly in infrastructure projects and mining ventures, as the country is rich in natural resources. China's pragmatic approach led it to engage diplomatically with the Taliban, viewing the group as a potential partner in stabilizing Afghanistan. Beijing has stated that it would support Afghanistan's economic reconstruction and offered its assistance for infrastructure

development, provided the Taliban maintained security and stability.

Russia expressed a mix of concern and opportunism following the U.S. withdrawal. Moscow's response was shaped by its long-standing interest in maintaining influence in Central Asia and preventing Afghanistan from becoming a destabilizing force on its southern border. Russia feared that the Taliban's return would exacerbate security risks in Central Asia, particularly with regard to the potential rise of terrorist organizations that could destabilize former Soviet republics. Russia, which has historically played a role in the region through its military bases in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, expressed concerns about arms smuggling, drug trafficking, and radicalization spilling over from Afghanistan into Central Asia. Russia has increased its diplomatic engagement with the Taliban, aiming to shape its policies in a way that would ensure stability along its southern border. Moscow also sees the withdrawal as a sign of Western decline, positioning itself as a counterbalance to U.S. influence in the region. Russia's SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) has also worked to facilitate talks with the Taliban (Philip, 2020; Ibrahim and Abbas, 2022).

India, which had invested heavily in Afghanistan's development and was a strong partner in the Afghan government, faced a new set of challenges after the Taliban's return to power. India had longstanding concerns about the Taliban and its ties to Pakistan. India viewed the Taliban's resurgence as a setback for regional security, particularly in terms of the Afghan-Pakistan dynamic. New Delhi expressed concern about the Taliban's potential to give a safe haven to terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Taiba, which could target Indian interests. Sungur (2022) argues that, while politically wary of the Taliban, India recognized the humanitarian crisis unfolding in Afghanistan and sought to assist in evacuation efforts for Indian nationals and Afghan allies. India also contributed to humanitarian aid through the United Nations and engaged in diplomatic channels to ensure Afghanistan's economic stability. India's long-term interest in Central Asia and Afghanistan has been complicated by the Taliban's rule, as it had previously sought to maintain economic and political ties with the Afghan government. India now has to recalibrate its policies to manage its relationship with Afghanistan, especially with the China-Pakistan alliance growing stronger in the region.

The United Nations called for a coordinated international response to the unfolding situation in Afghanistan. The UN was particularly concerned about the human rights situation, especially regarding women and girls and the potential rise of extremism. The UN pushed for humanitarian aid to reach those affected by the conflict and instability in Afghanistan. This included assistance for refugees, displaced persons, and the provision of essential services such as food, healthcare, and education. The UN also advocated for dialogue with the Taliban and sought to encourage their commitment to human rights, inclusive governance, and regional

stability. The UN has called on the international community to provide conditions for recognition of the Taliban while pressing for compliance with international norms. Countries in the Middle East also had varying responses to the U.S. withdrawal, based on their strategic interests and relationships with the U.S., Afghanistan, and the broader region. Saudi Arabia expressed concerns about the rise of extremism and instability in Afghanistan after the U.S. withdrawal. The Kingdom, however, was cautious in its reaction to the Taliban's resurgence, preferring to monitor the situation and avoid taking a hard stance against the group. Iran, which shares a border with Afghanistan, was wary of the Taliban's return, particularly in terms of security risks and the potential for increased refugee flows. Tehran has historically had a complex relationship with the Taliban, sometimes supporting anti-Taliban forces while also engaging in dialogue with the group for pragmatic reasons.

Impact on U.S. Foreign Policy and Military Doctrine: The U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021 marked a pivotal moment in American foreign policy and military doctrine. The chaotic end to the longest-running war in U.S. history not only had profound effects on Afghanistan but also significantly reshaped U.S. foreign policy, security strategy, and military doctrine. This section explores the long-term consequences of the withdrawal on U.S. foreign relations, military posture, and doctrine in the global geopolitical arena. According to Nazar and Abubakar (2021), the withdrawal from Afghanistan signified the end of the post-9/11 era of U.S. military interventions, which were characterized by protracted military conflicts in the Middle East. The decision was part of a broader strategic shift toward focusing on great power competition, especially with China and Russia. Following the withdrawal, the Biden administration emphasized a shift towards Asia, particularly the Indo-Pacific region, as the central theater of U.S. foreign policy. This "pivot" aimed to address the growing influence of China and to strengthen ties with key allies in the region, including India, Australia, and Japan. The U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) articulated a reorientation of U.S. military and diplomatic priorities toward countering China's rise, deterring Russia, and strengthening multilateral partnerships in global governance. The withdrawal raised questions about the long-term effectiveness of military interventions as a tool of U.S. foreign policy. The debacle in Afghanistan highlighted the limitations of using military force to impose democratic governance or shape internal political dynamics in foreign nations. Consequently, the Biden administration signaled a preference for a more restrained approach to military intervention, emphasizing diplomacy, economic statecraft, and multilateral coalitions.

In the wake of the Afghanistan withdrawal, the Biden administration sought to reaffirm the U.S. commitment to diplomacy and international cooperation. The administration pushed for stronger diplomatic ties through mechanisms such as the

United Nations, NATO, and the G7, with a focus on addressing global challenges like climate change, pandemics, and humanitarian crises. The U.S. sought to reinvigorate its role in global governance and work more closely with partners to address issues such as counterterrorism, nuclear nonproliferation, and human rights. There was a concerted effort to balance military readiness with diplomatic and economic engagement, especially through international organizations like the UN Security Council and World Health Organization. The withdrawal from Afghanistan also led to a reconsideration of the U.S. military's posture and its approach to force deployment. The U.S. military began emphasizing a strategy of —dynamic force employment, which allows for greater flexibility and adaptability in responding to global threats, without maintaining large, static deployments abroad. The U.S. military shifted from large-scale counterinsurgency operations, like those in Afghanistan and Iraq, to more targeted and specialized operations against terrorist groups. Proctor (2022) opines that, the U.S. military doctrine under the Biden administration increasingly focuses on counterterrorism operations, cyber warfare, and intelligence gathering over conventional ground combat. One of the key aspects of the U.S. military's new approach is the increased reliance on drone strikes, cyber operations, and special forces missions to combat threats from groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS-K, even from remote locations. This is referred to as the —over-the-horizon strategy, wherein the U.S. does not need a permanent military presence in a region to conduct operations.

The U.S. exit from Afghanistan highlighted the importance of alliances in maintaining military capabilities and projecting power globally. While the U.S.-led NATO alliance was strained by the withdrawal, the event also underscored the need for greater burden-sharing among U.S. allies and partners. The U.S. emphasized strengthening its military alliances in the Indo-Pacific, especially with Japan, Australia, and South Korea, to counter China's growing influence in the region. This was seen in the AUKUS security pact with Australia and the increased presence of U.S. naval forces in the South China Sea. NATO members were divided in their assessments of the U.S. withdrawal. Some European allies expressed frustration over the lack of consultation and coordination with the U.S. while others acknowledged that the pullout reflected a changing global security landscape. The U.S. and NATO will likely continue to focus on the Russia threat in Europe, particularly in the wake of the Ukraine conflict, with NATO's eastern flank becoming more important than ever. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan led to fears that the country would once again become a safe haven for terrorist groups, much like it was before the 9/11 attacks. However, the focus of U.S. counterterrorism efforts shifted toward more decentralized and global threats, rather than specific regional conflicts. (Ibrahim and Abbas, 2022). While Afghanistan remains a critical concern for U.S. intelligence, the focus has broadened to include global networks like ISIS, al-Qaeda, and ISIS-K. These groups, operating in places such as Syria, Somalia, and West Africa, have become

key targets of U.S. counterterrorism operations. The shift away from large-scale ground operations has led to an increased reliance on technology-driven approaches, such as cyber warfare, drones, and surveillance networks. These tools allow the U.S. to target terrorist cells without the need for extensive troop deployments, as seen in the over-the-horizon approach to Afghanistan post-withdrawal. The U.S. now seeks to enhance its counterterrorism efforts by working more closely with regional partners, including intelligence-sharing and providing military training to local forces. The U.S. military will likely continue to build these partnerships in Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East, where terrorism remains a persistent threat. The shift toward local capacity building emphasizes the empowerment of local governments and security forces to take the lead in combating terrorism, with U.S. military and intelligence agencies providing support in terms of training, logistical assistance, and intelligence sharing.

The withdrawal from Afghanistan allowed the U.S. to redirect significant resources, both in terms of personnel and funding, toward other strategic priorities. The shift in military doctrine will likely involve reduced defense spending on counterinsurgency operations and a reallocation toward newer technologies and capabilities. There is an increasing emphasis on emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, hypersonic weapons, cybersecurity, and space capabilities. These areas are seen as critical to maintaining U.S. military superiority in the face of growing challenges from China and Russia. The U.S. will likely continue to reduce its commitment to large-scale ground operations and instead focus on more cost-effective means of maintaining global military influence, such as forward-based special operations, cyber capabilities, and naval assets.

Several scholars have used the U.S. withdrawal as an opportunity to critically assess the broader U.S. military doctrine and its application in modern conflict zones. Many authors view the withdrawal as the end of the U.S.-led "War on Terror," initiated after the 9/11 attacks. Cohen (2021) and Williams (2021) argue that the U.S. may rethink its future military interventions, especially in regions with complex political dynamics like the Middle East and Afghanistan, and that the country might adopt a more diplomatic and economic-based approach to handling international conflicts. Scholars such as Biddle (2021) and Hoffman (2021) have explored the lessons learned from the failed military interventions in Afghanistan, emphasizing the importance of nation-building and counterinsurgency strategies, which failed to create a stable, democratic Afghanistan. These lessons will likely shape U.S. military doctrine in the future, with greater emphasis on remote warfare, cybersecurity, and intelligence-sharing.

Long-Term Consequences for Afghanistan and Global Security

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021 not only brought an end to two decades of military engagement but also unleashed a series of long-term

consequences for both Afghanistan itself and global security. The sudden collapse of the Afghan government, the return of the Taliban to power, and the vacuum left by the exit of Western forces have reshaped the geopolitical landscape in ways that continue to affect the security dynamics of the region and the world.

The return of the Taliban to power has resulted in political instability and significant governance challenges for Afghanistan. Although the Taliban declared an Islamic Emirate, their ability to govern effectively remains highly questionable due to their lack of international recognition and their historical inability to build a stable, inclusive government. The absence of a functioning state and the country's fragile political system continue to pose risks for Afghanistan's long-term stability. The Taliban's return to power has led to the restoration of a strict interpretation of Sharia law, with human rights, particularly those of women and girls, severely restricted. The re-imposition of these policies has sparked both domestic and international humanitarian concerns. The Taliban's control over Afghanistan is not absolute, and the country faces the challenge of unifying various factions and tribal groups, some of which oppose Taliban rule. Additionally, the Islamic State-Khorasan (ISIS-K) has emerged as a major rival, further complicating the security situation. The political turmoil and economic collapse have plunged Afghanistan into a severe humanitarian crisis. The Taliban's rule, compounded by the withdrawal of foreign aid and sanctions, has worsened the economic situation, leading to widespread poverty, food insecurity, and a massive refugee crisis (Sungur, 2022). The freezing of Afghan assets abroad, along with the withdrawal of Western financial support, has devastated the Afghan economy. Millions face extreme poverty, and essential services like healthcare, education, and infrastructure have been significantly undermined. The political instability and worsening living conditions have led to a significant exodus of Afghan refugees to neighboring countries and beyond. This has placed further strain on regional countries like Pakistan, Iran, and Uzbekistan, which are already struggling with internal challenges.

The U.S. withdrawal and the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan have had profound implications for regional security in South Asia and Central Asia. Several countries in the region, including Pakistan, India, China, and Russia, have been directly impacted by the unfolding situation. Increased Security Risks for Neighboring Countries. The withdrawal has significant implications for Pakistan, which has long had an ambiguous relationship with the Taliban, both supporting and facing its rise. Pakistan fears that the Taliban's resurgence could embolden extremist groups within its borders, such as the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The growing terrorist threat from these groups, as well as the potential for increased militant activity in Kashmir, could destabilize Pakistan. India's security concerns revolve around the potential for Afghanistan becoming a safe haven for Pakistan-based militants and the growing influence of China in the region. India also faces

the complicated question of engagement with the Taliban, which it historically opposed. The Taliban's rule over Afghanistan raises concerns about terrorism and the growing Pakistan-China alliance that could shift the balance of power in the region. Central Asian countries, including Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, are concerned about the Taliban's impact on Islamist radicalism and militant activity spilling over their borders. Russia has provided some security assistance to these countries but remains wary of Afghanistan turning into a launching pad for extremism that could destabilize the entire Central Asia region. China, which shares a border with Afghanistan, is particularly concerned about the Taliban's return to power and its potential impact on Xinjiang, the region home to China's Uyghur minority. Beijing has expressed interest in ensuring that Afghanistan does not become a haven for Uyghur militants from the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) (Ibrahim and Abbas, 2023). Despite security concerns, China is also looking for opportunities in Afghanistan's natural resources. Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) investments in Afghanistan could serve as a means for Beijing to expand its economic influence in the region, provided stability can be maintained. China's growing involvement in Afghanistan, combined with its partnership with Pakistan, has the potential to alter the regional balance of power and challenge U.S. influence in Central Asia and South Asia.

The U.S. withdrawal has significant global security ramifications, with the potential for Afghanistan to once again become a breeding ground for global terrorism. The return of the Taliban and the possible rise of other militant groups could have far-reaching consequences for global peace and stability. Afghanistan, under the Taliban, risks becoming a sanctuary for terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda, ISIS, and other jihadist groups. The Taliban's inability or unwillingness to sever ties with extremist factions could allow these groups to regroup, plan, and execute attacks, both regionally and internationally. The Taliban's relationship with al-Qaeda, as highlighted in the past, raises concerns that Afghanistan could once again become a safe haven for global terrorists. While the Taliban has promised to prevent terrorist groups from using Afghan soil to launch attacks, there is little confidence that the group can or will enforce this promise effectively. The ideological environment created by the Taliban may encourage the growth of extremist networks, fostering recruitment for global jihadist causes.

The radicalization of individuals across the world, particularly in Europe and the Middle East, could become a growing concern for global security agencies. The U.S. withdrawal leaves a security vacuum that undermines international counterterrorism initiatives. Without a significant U.S. presence in Afghanistan, global efforts to combat terrorism in the region have been complicated, leading to reduced intelligence-sharing and fewer counterterrorism operations on the ground. The U.S. military and its allies have shifted toward over-the-horizon counterterrorism strategies, relying more heavily on drones, special operations

forces, and intelligence to target terrorist organizations in Afghanistan. However, these methods are not without limitations, and they come with the risk of increased civilian casualties and alienation of local populations. The need for multilateral cooperation in counterterrorism efforts has never been greater, as the potential for a resurgent Afghanistan to fuel terrorism affects countries far beyond the region.

The U.S. withdrawal, particularly the chaotic exit from Kabul, has caused an erosion of trust in U.S. leadership, especially among its allies. NATO members and other U.S. partners criticized the lack of coordination and consultation during the withdrawal process. This has led to concerns about the U.S.'s commitment to collective security and its reliability as a global security leader. European nations, particularly those in NATO, have been forced to reassess their defense policies and seek greater strategic autonomy. There has been a growing sentiment that Europe must deepen its own defense capabilities to avoid dependence on the U.S. in future crises. Countries like Russia and China have been quick to take advantage of the U.S.'s diminishing influence in Afghanistan, seeking to fill the power vacuum through bilateral engagement and increased military or economic influence. This could signal a shift in the global balance of power as these countries work to reshape regional and global governance structures. The U.S. withdrawal has contributed to one of the largest humanitarian crises in recent years, with millions of Afghans fleeing the country and seeking refuge in neighboring nations or Europe. This has sparked a debate about the international community's responsibility to protect vulnerable populations and the role of the United Nations and other global organizations in responding to the refugee crisis. Countries like Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey have been faced with the challenge of hosting Afghan refugees, leading to significant social and economic pressures. The international community's response will be critical in addressing these challenges.

Growing Vulnerability of Africa to Global Capital

The growing vulnerability of Africa to global capital is a complex issue that involves economic, political, and social dynamics. Africa, with its vast natural resources, expanding consumer markets, and relatively underdeveloped infrastructure, is increasingly becoming a focal point for global capital. However, this relationship can result in both opportunities and challenges:

Many African countries have been actively seeking foreign direct investment (FDI) to stimulate economic growth, infrastructure development, and job creation. Global capital flows into the continent, particularly in industries like mining, oil and gas, telecommunications, and agriculture. This influx has led to economic growth in some regions. However, the influx of global capital often comes with strings attached. Many African economies remain heavily reliant on foreign investment and external markets for their export products. This dependency can leave them vulnerable to global economic fluctuations, such as changes in commodity prices, shifts in global trade policies, and the volatility of international financial markets.

Africa's vast natural resources minerals, oil, and agricultural products attract large amounts of global capital (Abdulyakeen and Nurain, 2024). However, the continent's focus on resource extraction has led to an over-reliance on these sectors, which makes economies vulnerable to global price fluctuations. For example, during times of global economic downturn, demand for commodities such as oil and minerals may decrease, leading to sharp drops in export revenues. This phenomenon, where countries rich in natural resources experience slower economic growth and worse development outcomes, is a risk that many African nations face. The extraction of resources often leads to environmental degradation, social inequality, and corruption. Furthermore, the wealth generated does not always translate into broader economic development for the entire population.

Many African nations have turned to international capital markets for loans to finance infrastructure projects, social programs, and development initiatives. However, the accumulation of sovereign debt, particularly in foreign currencies, has created a significant vulnerability to external shocks, such as rising interest rates or depreciation of local currencies. There are concerns that some African countries are entering into —debt traps, where they are unable to service their debts, leading to increased dependency on external creditors (including China, Western financial institutions, and international bond markets). (Nurain and Abdulyakeen, 2024). This can also lead to austerity measures and economic instability, which exacerbate poverty and inequality. Many African economies are dominated by multinational corporations that control key sectors like mining, oil extraction, agriculture, and telecommunications. These corporations often repatriate profits to their home countries, which limits the benefits that stay within the local economy. Additionally, the influence of these corporations can reduce the sovereignty of African governments, as they may prioritize the interests of foreign investors over national development. In some cases, global capital leads to the exploitation of local labor forces, with multinational companies paying low wages, avoiding taxes, and having limited accountability to local communities. This can exacerbate inequality and social unrest, and hinder sustainable development.

Financialization refers to the growing influence of finance (rather than productive industries) on the economy. In Africa, this manifests as increased capital inflows into stock markets, private equity, and speculative investments (Charles & Uford, 2023; Uford, 2017). While this can bring short-term capital gains, it also exposes African economies to financial market volatility and speculative bubbles. As Africa becomes more integrated into the global financial system, capital flight becomes a concern. Wealthy elites and multinational corporations often move capital out of Africa, seeking safer investments in developed markets. This exacerbates the continent's economic challenges by reducing available resources for local development and economic diversification. The growing role of global capital often exacerbates social inequality in Africa. Wealth generated by foreign

investments often ends up concentrated in the hands of a small elite, leaving large segments of the population in poverty. This disparity can lead to increased social tensions and political instability. Many of the investments in extractive industries come at the cost of environmental sustainability (Uford, Charles & Ekong, 2022). Deforestation, land degradation, water pollution, and the destruction of local ecosystems are some of the environmental consequences of large-scale mining and oil extraction. These environmental issues often disproportionately affect local communities who depend on natural resources for their livelihoods.

The African Union and regional economic blocs such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) aim to boost intra-Africa trade and reduce dependence on external capital. However, Africa remains fragmented in terms of trade agreements, and its economies are still largely dependent on global capital and exports to developed nations. Despite these challenges, there are also opportunities for Africa to use global capital more effectively. By attracting investment in areas like renewable energy, technology, and infrastructure, African nations can diversify their economies, reduce dependence on extractive industries, and foster sustainable growth. Africa's vulnerability to global capital is also influenced by geopolitical dynamics. Major powers, such as China, the United States, and the European Union, have been increasing their presence on the continent. For example, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has led to significant infrastructure investment in Africa, but this has raised concerns about rising debt levels and the long-term implications for African sovereignty. Similarly, Western countries have historically exerted economic and political influence over African nations, often through institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

The Intersection: U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan and Africa's Vulnerability

The intersection of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and Africa's vulnerability to global capital is a compelling subject that connects international geopolitics, security dynamics, and economic dependencies. While these two issues may seem distinct at first glance, they are intricately linked through the broader patterns of U.S. foreign policy, shifting global alliances, and Africa's growing exposure to external forces, particularly economic ones. The withdrawal has not only affected Afghanistan but also had ripple effects across neighboring regions. For example, the Taliban's resurgence has created concerns for countries like Pakistan, Iran, and Central Asia about the potential spillover of instability. These dynamics could affect African security, as instability in one part of the world often has indirect effects elsewhere through migrant flows, arms trafficking, and the spread of extremist ideologies. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan left a power vacuum that some fear could lead to a resurgence of terrorist activities. While the Taliban and Al-Qaeda have regained ground in Afghanistan, groups with similar ideologies have already established footholds in Africa. The Sahel region,

for example, remains a hub for violent extremist groups. As the U.S. shifts its focus to other areas, such as Asia, Africa's vulnerability to terrorism and extremism may grow, especially as extremist groups could find new avenues for collaboration and resources.

While the U.S. has reduced its direct military interventions in Africa, the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) continues to play a central role in counterterrorism, peacekeeping, and humanitarian assistance across the continent. However, the African Union and regional organizations are increasingly expected to take more responsibility for addressing Africa's security challenges. This shift in focus could lead to greater African autonomy in managing its security but may also expose the continent to more complex geopolitical rivalries. Africa's strategic relationships with the U.S. may evolve as African countries seek to diversify their partnerships with other global powers like China and Russia. While these external actors may bring economic benefits, they could also introduce new dependencies that could challenge Africa's political and economic sovereignty. With the U.S. refocusing on its priorities in Asia and Europe, African nations may have more room to engage diplomatically with a range of global powers on their own terms. This could foster more balanced relationships where African nations are not forced to align with one particular superpower but can engage with a variety of partners based on their own development needs. As global powers shift their attention, African countries may seize the opportunity to focus more on regional integration and diversification of their economies.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) offers a chance for African nations to reduce their dependency on external actors and build stronger intra-African economic ties, potentially reducing vulnerabilities in the long term. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan also signals a broader trend of the U.S. reducing its military footprint globally. While U.S. military bases and operations in Africa are not as extensive as in the Middle East, a reduction in American military engagement could leave African countries more vulnerable to both internal and external threats. As the U.S. reduces its military footprint, African nations might look to regional powers (such as Nigeria, South Africa, or Kenya) or external actors (like China and Russia) for security partnerships. While these partnerships may help address immediate security needs, they can also foster dependency on foreign military aid and undermine the development of indigenous African defense capabilities. The continent remains strategically important for the

U.S. due to its natural resources, emerging markets, and its position as a key player in the global fight against extremism and terrorism. Even though the U.S. has withdrawn from Afghanistan, it continues to operate in various African nations through the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), supporting counterterrorism operations, peacekeeping missions, and humanitarian efforts. However, the efficacy of these missions in the long term is questionable without sustained U.S. engagement.

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan is part of a broader trend toward a multipolar world, where Africa's role in global geopolitics is becoming increasingly significant. As the U.S., China, and Russia vie for influence on the continent, African countries are often left balancing between these powers to secure their own interests. This complex geopolitical environment can exacerbate Africa's vulnerability, as nations may have to navigate competing global interests. Africa's vulnerability to global capital is not only due to external military and security pressures but also economic ones. Global capital inflows whether from Western institutions, China, or Russia are increasingly tied to external political and security conditions. As the U.S. refocuses its attention, African nations may be left to deal with these external pressures without the leverage or diplomatic support they previously received.

Conclusion

The exit of the United States from Afghanistan marked the end of a nearly two-decade-long military presence, leaving behind a complex geopolitical landscape. This withdrawal has had significant consequences not only for Afghanistan but also for the broader international community, particularly in regions like Africa. The abrupt exit raised concerns about the ability of the U.S. and its allies to manage conflicts and instability in other parts of the world, including Africa, where power vacuums and fragile governments are increasingly susceptible to exploitation by global capital and external forces. The growing vulnerability of Africa to global capital is multifaceted. While global capital can drive economic growth, it often exacerbates inequalities, drives environmental degradation, and strengthens the influence of foreign powers, creating a cycle of dependence. Many African nations, already struggling with internal instability, are now more exposed to these external pressures, with multinational corporations and foreign governments capitalizing on weak governance structures. The combination of U.S. withdrawal from conflict zones like Afghanistan and the rise of China and other global powers in Africa has reshaped the geopolitical dynamics, contributing to a greater vulnerability to external economic forces.

Recommendations

- i. **Strengthening African Governance:** African countries need to focus on strengthening institutions, promoting political stability, and addressing corruption. This will help them create a more resilient environment that is less susceptible to external exploitation by global capital and foreign powers.
- ii. **African economies should prioritize diversification** to reduce dependence on extractive industries and single markets. By developing other sectors such as technology, manufacturing, and agriculture, countries can build more sustainable economies that are less vulnerable to external shocks.
- iii. **Greater regional cooperation within Africa** can help mitigate the risks

associated with global capital. Initiatives like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) should be fully leveraged to enhance intra-African trade, reduce reliance on foreign capital, and foster economic self-sufficiency.

- iv. Africa should pursue inclusive development models that prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable populations. This includes addressing issues such as poverty, unemployment, and education. Inclusive development will not only create more resilient societies but also reduce the attraction of extremist ideologies that thrive in unstable environments.
- v. African governments should actively engage with both Western and non-Western powers to ensure that their interests are protected and that they are not exploited by global capital. By balancing relationships with countries like the U.S., China, and the EU, African nations can ensure that their development remains a priority in international diplomacy.
- vi. In light of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, Africa must prioritize peacekeeping and conflict prevention. By investing in local peacebuilding initiatives and strengthening regional security mechanisms, African nations can create a more stable environment that is less susceptible to external interference.

REFERENCE

- Cesar A. Cancho and Tejesh Pradhan, (2020). Mitigating the Poverty Implications of COVID-19 in Afghanistan,|| End Poverty in South Asia (blog), World Bank, 16 August.
- Charles, I. I. & Uford, I. C. (2023). Comparative Analysis and Evaluation of Business And Financial Performance of Amazon.Com: A Three-Year Period Critical Review of Exceptional Success. *European Journal of Business, Economics and Accountancy*, Vol. 11, Issue 2, pp. 69-92.
- Conor Finnegan, (2019). —US Signs Historic Deal with Taliban, Trump Announces, Beginning End of US War in Afghanistan and Withdrawal of American Troops,|| ABC News, 29 February 2020.
- Craig Nelson (2020), —U.S. Officials Walk Out of Meeting at Presidential Palace in Kabul,|| Wall Street Journal, 26 March 2019.
- Ibrahimi, N, and Abbas, F. (2022). —Understanding Shifts in US Policies towards the Taliban: A Critical Analysis.|| *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Preprint, 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298221130114>
- Ibrahimi, N, and Abbas, F. (2022). —Understanding Shifts in US Policies towards the Taliban: A Critical Analysis.|| *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Preprint, 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298221130114>
- Jamal, A, and William, M. (2023). *The Decline and Fall of Republican Afghanistan*. London: Hurst Publishers.
- Jon Schwarz and Robert Mackey, (2017). —All the Times Donald Trump Said the U.S. Should Get Out of Afghanistan,|| Intercept, 21 August.

- Jonathan Lemire and Deb Reichmann, (2020). —Trump Calls off Secret Meeting with Taliban, Afghan Leaders,|| AP News, 7 September 2019.
- Justin Rowlett (2019), —How the US Military's Opium War in Afghanistan Was Lost,|| BBC News, 25 April 2019.
- Lolita C. Baldor and Kathy Gannon (2017), —Military Blindsided by Trump's New Afghan Troop Withdrawal,|| AP News, 8 October 2020.
- Mir Haidar Shah Omid, (2020). —ADB Predicts Decline in Afghanistan's Economic Growth, TOLO News, 15 September 2020.
- Nazar, Z. and Abubakar, S. (2021). Taliban Accused of Forcibly Evicting Ethnic Uzbeks, Turkmen in Northern Afghanistan.|| Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. <https://www.rferl.org/a/taliban-evictions-uzbeks-turkmen/31601904.html>. niamatullah ibrahimi 36 | volume 21, number 3 (fall 2023)
- Nurain, A. and Abdulrasheed, A. (2024). The Trajectory of Transnational Security in West Africa: Recalibrating the Elements of Regional Integration for Strategic Policy Options in Sahel Region. Vol. 5, Issue, 2.
- Phillip, W. W. (2020). White House: Afghanistan Opium Yield Expected to Rise Even as Acreage Planted to Poppies Falls, Stars and Stripes, 10 February 2020.
- Proctor, R. (2022). A Rogue Taliban Governor Has Been Digging Beneath the Ruins of the Bamiyan Buddhas, Chasing a Rumor of Buried Treasure. Art News, February 8. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/bamiyan-buddhas-taliban-treasure-2069359>.
- Reuter, C. and Thore, S. (2021). —The New Rulers of Afghanistan: The Taliban's Campaign to Rob Villagers of Their Land - DER SPIEGEL. Spiegel International, October 6. <https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/the-new-rulers-of-afghanistan-the-taliban-s-campaign-to-rob-villagers-of-their-land-a-f63587a2-49ef-4430-9a5d-128a3fd74201>.
- Sungur, Z. (2022). Nation as Conceptualised in Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Nations and Nationalism 28 (3): 990–1005. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12842>.
- Udoikah, J. M., & Ndaeyo, E. A. (2021). Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the economic growth of Nigeria. *AKSU Journal of Administration and Corporate Governance*, 1(1), pp. 152-161.
- Uford, I. C. (2017). *Customer and employee-based brand equity driving United Bank For Africa's market performance*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, pp. 1-227.
- Uford, I. C., Charles, I. I. & Ekong, J. E. (2022). *The COVID-19 Crisis and Regular Telework: The Effect of Stress on the Nigerian Oil and Gas Employees' Work Perception* *European Journal of Management and Marketing Studies*, Vol. 7, Issue 2, pp. 179-199.
- UN News, (22 February 2020). —Afghanistan: Civilian Casualties Exceed 10,000 for Sixth Straight Year, UN News, 22 February 2020.

UNICEF (2021). Approximately 600,000 Afghan children face death through malnutrition without emergency funds. See —Two Million Children under Five Suffering from Acute Malnutrition in Afghanistan, press release, UNICEF, accessed 10 September 2021.