

**THE ISSUE OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS FROM
AFGHANISTAN AND THE GENEVA AGREEMENT
(1980s)**

Norqochqarov Khushvaqt Eshnazarovich

Termez State University of Engineering and Agrotechnology

Teacher of the Department of “Social and Humanities”

E-mail: khushvaqt.norqochqarov@mail.ru

Tel: +998919100221

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Abstract: This article examines the impact of the Geneva talks, initiated by the United Nations in the 1980s, on the civil war in Afghanistan and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country, based on certain facts and analyses.

Keywords: Afghanistan, United Nations, Diego Cordovez, Geneva talks, USA, USSR, Babrak Karmal, Muhammad Najibullah, Soviet troops.

Introduction). In order to ease the situation in Afghanistan and solve Afghan problems, many countries tried to exert their influence on Afghanistan. The USA, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan, China, Japan, and several European countries continued to interfere in Afghan problems, its internal and foreign policies[1,B.12-13]. International negotiations aimed at solving Afghan problems took place under the supervision of the UN[1,B.12-13].

Materials and methods. In order to alleviate the situation in Afghanistan and solve Afghan problems, many countries tried to exert their influence on Afghanistan. The USA, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan, China, Japan, and several European countries continued to interfere in Afghan problems, its internal and foreign policy. International negotiations aimed at solving Afghan problems took place under the supervision of the UN. Although a lot of literature has been created and articles have been published on Afghan problems, there are several books dedicated specifically to Afghan problems. This article uses the research of a number of scientists and specialists, such as N.I. Kozarov, G.M. Kornienko, V.F. Zayemsky, M. Barry. Encyclopedic materials and Internet sources were also used. This article attempts to uncover the essence of the topic by comparing the opinions of similar researchers, using methods such as comparative analysis, historicity, consistency, and objectivity.

Discussion and results. From June 16 to June 24, 1982, negotiations on the problems of Afghanistan began in Geneva[3,B.46]. The negotiations were led by the UN and attracted the attention of international organizations to this issue in order to ease the situation in the region. The talks were attended by the Pakistani Foreign Minister Yaqub Khan and the Afghans by Shah Muhammad Dost. These were the first Geneva talks. Many controversial issues were discussed at these talks, but none of them were clarified[4].

The second Geneva talks were held from January 21 to February 7, 1983. The issue of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country was discussed at the talks. However, no final decision was made on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. The third Geneva talks were held in April 1984. It discussed the issue of stopping the supply of weapons to the Afghan opposition forces [5, B.34-35].

In June 1985, the next Geneva talks were held. Several decisions were also made there on the resolution of the Afghan problems. After that, from the end of 1985 to 1988, four more Geneva talks were held. It is worth noting that the USA, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan did not want a quick resolution of the Afghan problems. In this regard, they also tried to put pressure on the governments of Kabul and Moscow. They did not reduce their material and military assistance to the opposition. Their goals were to overthrow the legitimate government in Afghanistan and



provide the Mujahideen with a government. The Washington government made every effort to weaken the former Soviet Union and reduce its influence in the region. The United States did not recognize the decisions reached at the Geneva talks and did not stop supporting the opposition. It began to demand that the former Soviet Union withdraw its troops from Afghanistan as soon as possible. The former Soviet Union also ignored these efforts and did nothing practical. Only by 1986 did it withdraw 6 regiments of its limited military forces from Afghanistan [6, P.45-46].

In September 1987, with Moscow's consent, an Afghan delegation arrived in Geneva and the next round of negotiations began. As a result of the negotiations, the time for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country was reduced from 16 to 12 months. After that, the former Soviet Union and the United States also signed an agreement on this matter. After that, the Russian government decided to take the first step towards implementing the Geneva decisions. According to it, a specific date for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was set. This date was announced at a meeting of high-level Soviet-Afghan leaders in 1988. At this meeting, the leaders agreed that Soviet troops would be withdrawn from the country starting on May 15, 1988 and that this work would be completed within 10 months. In addition, the Moscow government announced that it could withdraw its troops even earlier than the specified deadline. As a condition for this, he set no further military operations in Afghanistan.

Najibullah replied to Moscow in this regard: "We believe that after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country, there will be no further military operations in Afghanistan." The Moscow leader informed Najibullah that the assistance of the former Soviet Union would continue. The governments of Moscow and Kabul placed great hopes on the UN to moderate the further situation in the country. In addition, the Moscow government began to worry about the continuation of the Pakistani government's assistance to the Afghan opposition forces after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country. Therefore, Moscow turned to the UN and proposed the rapid formation of a coalition government in Afghanistan.

After the Geneva Accords, the leaders of the Mujahideen met in Peshawar in 1988 to discuss issues related to resolving Afghan problems. They announced that they would agree to a coalition government only if Soviet troops were withdrawn from the country. At the same time, they demanded that Afghan refugees be returned to the country and their rights be protected. The Mujahideen also announced that elections for a coalition government would be organized within six months after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country and that they would participate in them. The Mujahideen announced that 28 representatives would be appointed to the new government, including 14 from the Mujahideen, 7 from Afghan refugees, and the remaining 7 from representatives of Muslims living in Afghanistan. The appointment of representatives from the communists in the new government was categorically rejected.

In addition, the Mujahideen demanded that the Afghan government be handed over to the Mujahideen before the Soviet troops left the country. Neither Moscow nor Najibullah accepted this demand. Thus, the implementation of the agreement became difficult. In February 1988, UN Secretary-General D. Cordovez proposed new negotiations on resolving the Afghan problems. It was planned to hold negotiations on ending the conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, these negotiations, according to the Kabul government, would not help in any way to form a coalition government. Najibullah stated that these issues should be resolved within the framework of the Geneva Agreement. In response, the next Geneva negotiations began in March-April 1988. These negotiations were mainly about the Afghan-Pakistani border. Najibullah demanded that the UN guarantee the legality of the border and prevent it from being violated by Pakistan. Moscow, however, announced its readiness to assist the Kabul government in ensuring the security of its borders. Considering that the security of Afghanistan's borders has been violated by Pakistan so far and that if this situation continues, the situation in the region may worsen, the UN has made a firm demand on the Pakistani government in this regard.



Although many issues were resolved, the issue of forming a coalition government in Kabul remained unresolved. However, an agreement was signed between Afghanistan and Pakistan on the security of its borders. As a continuation of this agreement, it was determined that the issue of forming a coalition government would be discussed next time. The Mujahideen announced that they would only be able to start negotiations with the Kabul government after the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country. Najibullah, trusting them, appealed to the former Soviet Union and asked them to accelerate the withdrawal of troops.

On April 14, 1988, the Afghan-Pakistani delegations began negotiations in Geneva for the first time. As a result of these negotiations, two bilateral agreements were signed between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The first of them was the agreement "On Mutual Relations and Non-Interference in Internal Affairs", and the second was the agreement "On the Return of Afghan Refugees to the Country". These agreements were signed by A. Vakil from Afghanistan and Z. Nurani from Pakistan. In addition, two more agreements were signed in Geneva. The first of them was the "Declaration on International Guarantees", and the second was the agreement "On Improvement of the Situation in Afghanistan", which were signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the former Soviet Union A. Shevardnadze and the US Secretary of State J. Schultz. According to these agreements, the former Soviet Union undertook to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan, and this was to be done within 9 months. It was also agreed that the withdrawal of Soviet troops would be carried out in two stages, the first stage lasting from August 15 to November 15, 1988, and the second stage lasting from November 15 to February 15, 1989.

According to the agreements signed between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the parties undertook the following obligations:

- Respect the sovereignty of the countries;
- Recognize each other's political independence;
- Preserve the territorial integrity of the two countries;
- Observe the laws of non-interference in internal affairs;
- Recognize the legitimacy of borders between countries;
- Respect each other's cultural, spiritual and social life;
- Under no circumstances should the parties attack each other;
- Put an end to the activities of organizations that contradict the interests of the parties in the territories of the countries;
- Not to carry out subversive activities in the territories with the help of various terrorist groups;
- Not to provide material and military support to anti-government forces;
- Not to allow groups with the same ethnic affiliation to carry out armed actions, etc.[7,B.49-52].

The US government, according to the Geneva Agreement, gave Afghanistan a guarantee to stop all interventions and attacks from May 15, 1988, and announced that the opposition forces would no longer be provided with material and military support. Thus, the final agreement of the Geneva negotiations was signed. The UN officially recognized the US and the former Soviet Union as guarantors of this agreement. If any of the provisions of the agreement were violated, the above-mentioned countries would take action with the permission of the UN.

After many years, the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan signed an agreement on the complete elimination of conflicts. The Pakistani government acknowledged that this agreement would come into force immediately after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. The US government, which signed the Geneva Agreement, hid its goals from the public. Its real goal was to reduce the role of the former Soviet Union in the region and create a bridgehead against Iran on the territory of Afghanistan. In addition, the US government, in cooperation with Pakistan, also intended to overthrow the Najibullah government and completely remove the communist government from Afghanistan. They set these goals to be achieved after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the



country. Other countries in the region also wanted to overthrow the Najibullah government and transfer power to the Mujahideen, and they set the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan as the first condition for this.

Saudi Arabia, which has great importance in the Islamic world, supported the Afghan opposition forces in every possible way during this period and did not reduce its financial assistance to them. This state recognized the Geneva Agreement and also set the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country as the first condition for the formation of a coalition government. The Riyadh government's relations with Najibullah were in extremely difficult conditions. The communist regime of Najibullah and the AKP in the country did not please the Arab world. After the Soviet troops left, their first goal was to overthrow the Najibullah government and ensure that the Mujahideen came to power.

During this period, along with the resolution of the Afghan problems, political actions of the United States and other countries against the former Soviet Union were also carried out. The Najibullah government placed great hopes on the Geneva Agreement and asked the UN to take control of regional security. The Kabul government strongly believed in the formation of a coalition government in Afghanistan after the Soviet troops left the country. The most important aspect of Najibullah's foreign policy was that he relied more on international forces to resolve the Afghan problem. He turned to the UN and many other organizations for help in this regard. He was not even afraid of the deterioration of relations with the former Soviet Union for the formation of a coalition government.

After the signing of the Geneva Agreement, the opposition forces did not stop their activities. They announced that if a single Soviet soldier remained in the country, they would expand armed actions against the Kabul government and would not agree to a coalition government. Although the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan began, the US and Pakistani governments did not fulfill their obligations under the terms of the agreement. The US continued to forcefully arm the Mujahideen. By the end of May 1988, 23 groups with a total of 15,000 people were armed on the territory of Pakistan. In response, the government of the former Soviet Union strongly warned the US that the Geneva Agreement was being violated and proposed organizing a high-level meeting on the Afghan issue under the auspices of the UN. However, the proposal of the former Soviet Union was not accepted, and the US government announced that it was helping Pakistan, not the Afghan opposition. While the Soviet troops were being withdrawn from the country, the US, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan decided to increase their military and material assistance to strengthen the Afghan opposition. In December 1988, a high-level meeting was held in Islamabad. According to it, an agreement was signed to increase aid to the Mujahideen by another \$650 million [8, B.83].

The US government continued its tense relations with Najibullah. Washington planned to overthrow Najibullah's government within a week of the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Therefore, it invited Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, one of the leaders of the Afghan opposition, to Washington and shared its plans. An agreement was signed between Hekmatyar and the US government on material and military support for the opposition forces [9, P. 275–280].

After the problems of Afghanistan became difficult to resolve, Najibullah repeatedly appealed to the UN. UN leaders, in turn, announced that after the withdrawal of Soviet troops, Afghanistan would be assisted in forming a coalition government.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the situation in Afghanistan improved somewhat in the late 80s and early 90s of the 20th century. It is no exaggeration to say that during this period the Afghan people recognized their identity. At this time, in 1986, Najibullah, who came to power, created many freedoms and conditions for the Afghan people. The era of Muhammad Najibullah is considered one of the most stable periods in the history of Afghanistan. Just as there are two sides to a coin, we must also look at its negative aspects, along with showing the positive sides



of Najibullah's policy. One of its negative sides is that he gave privileges to the people and khans of Paktia in many issues. Because of this, crises arose here several times.

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