

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Call to the Nation

Fellow countrymen!

Afghanistan has been awash with aggression, civil and proxy conflicts, and a myriad of other devastating episodes over the last half a century. Through it all, political transitions in Afghanistan have been fraught, marred by the threat and the use of force.

The transfer of power in 2014 was the only one that was perceived quasi-peaceful, despite the tensions and stark revelations that emerged during and after the process, which gradually led to the erosion of the legitimacy and ultimately the collapse of the government. It is worth mentioning that the feeble performance of the previous administration and the notoriously rife corruption within the system had already wreaked havoc on the foundations of the new-found state and its credibility. But overall, the tumultuous pattern of governance that unfolded following 2014 and onward until August 2021 proved to be utterly disastrous for the nation, causing immeasurable pain, suffering, misery and adversity.

Meanwhile, the ongoing national peace process was sabotaged, leading to the usurpation of power by the Taliban, the collapse of the state, and the relapse of Afghanistan into chaos.

Deeply shocked by the situation, nevertheless, Afghans hoped that at least bloodshed would end, and calm would prevail. People expected that the Taliban would use past experiences conscientiously to mark a new page in the history of the nation, and that the new rulers would make good of their promises by endeavoring to achieve unity and harmony.

Dismayingly, however, an entire year into their reign, not only have the Taliban not learned from history, but have also plunged Afghanistan into unprecedented isolation and a deep crisis because of it. Hence, August 15, 2021, will go down into the history of Afghanistan as the de-facto day of “societal collapse”. Still shrouded in intricacy in terms of the nature and character of the elements involved, there is no doubt that certain officials at the highest ranks of the former government committed high treason against the state, and bitterly betrayed the whole nation.

Mindful of the fact that exploring history can help us have a better future, it is imperative that we scrutinize the root causes of the decades-long misgovernance in the country before taking due measures to redress them. Accordingly, we can identify, among others, a lack of vision; a lack of genuine national leadership; constitutional transgression; disregard of the law; corruption; demagoguery; hypocrisy; egotism; divisive ideological, ethnic, and party politics; and contempt to the rule of law and accountability as some of the key factors amongst the range of chronic failures, which have contributed to the national crises and conflicts throughout the last half of a century.

At this critical moment in the country's history, today, we all need to ask ourselves some tough questions: how is it possible for a country of 40 million, enjoying a sensitive strategic location in the region to function without a modern system of governance, no educational and public health

systems, and without a banking and economic infrastructure? How is it really possible that women and girls, accounting for more than 50 percent of the population of Afghanistan be subjugated to deprivation of their Islamic and human rights to education and work? How is it possible for the youth of this country, who make up over 65 percent of the country's total population, to be rejected or marginalized within the society? How is it possible to rule without the will of the people and international recognition? The clear and conclusive answer to all these questions is a resounding 'it isn't possible'. And if the history of our country is a witness, no government attempting to rule only at gunpoint has ever succeeded.

The Taliban's performance over the past year in clear departure and defiance to the provisions of the Doha Agreement, and in pursuit of their arbitrary and self-proclaimed rule has pushed Afghanistan to a dangerous and unpredictable situation, to which the recent incidents unfolding in Kabul, as well as other provinces provide clear testimony. Therefore, the time has come for the people of Afghanistan to step forward in order to save the country and determine their destiny. The prevailing situation demands from us to seek credible alternatives and find viable solutions. Such solutions can only be achieved by joint effort, collaborative approach, and through national integration and mobilization.

Taking the aforementioned facts into consideration, and with the pivotal solemn aim of ensuring a nationwide lasting and durable peace in the country, we are pleased to inform you that a large number of political elites and well-known personalities from inside and outside the country, bearing strong resolve and commitment, have gathered together to form and manage a national platform to this end.

We hereby invite all the patriotic, committed and faithful forces, including the Taliban and other political parties, civil society organizations, national personalities and figures, scholars, rights activists, tribal elders, business persons, members of the media, men, women, and youth, within and outside Afghanistan to join us in creating a single unified national league as a powerful umbrella to encompass and integrate the collective will and views of all Afghans about the future of the nation.

The Way forward:

- 1- We pursue a centrist policy based on equilibrium and neutrality in relations to all the concerned parties to the current crisis in Afghanistan as a unifying movement.
- 2- Bearing strong conviction that negotiation is the only conduit to finding a solution to the current crisis in the country, we consider the full implementation of the terms, conditions, and stipulations of the Doha Agreement as the sole practical mechanism of achieving lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Cognizant of the importance of strengthening national unity based on equality and social justice, we firmly believe in the full participation of all the fraternal ethnic groups of the country in the process of forming a government acceptable to the people of Afghanistan to be recognized by the international community, and thus able to interact constructively with the world.

We call upon the Taliban to respond positively to this national call, return to the negotiating table with their compatriots, utilize this available opportunity in light of the bitter past experiences for the welfare of the country and the wellbeing of its people by putting an end to the suffering of the Afghan people, and preventing further destruction of the country.

- 3- We believe that the formation of an interim government, which constitutes one of the main clauses of the Doha Agreement, would lead to the restoration of the trust of the people of Afghanistan, and help gain national and international legitimacy, giving way to an immediate resolution of the current socio-economic crisis in the country. The interim government would then create the opportunity necessary to appoint a commission vested in with the authority to draft or amend the constitution, and finally convene a Loya Jirga to approve a new constitution and deliberate upon such major national issues as the type of the future political system, and other matters of due importance.

In this context, we consider the formation of an interim government consisting of the Taliban and qualified Afghan experts and professionals to be recommended through a national dialogue mandated by an international conference, and one to be headed by an impartial national personality of high integrity acceptable to all sides as the principal prerequisite for the implementation of the above.

- 4- We acknowledge that the Taliban are a part of the Afghan society along with all other political forces in the country, each possessing a specific status and role in the affairs of the country. However, it is also obvious that the ordinary people of Afghanistan, who have unfortunately been the main victims of the conflicts throughout the last half a century, are the main proprietors and decision makers of the country's future and destiny. Therefore, the time has come for the people of Afghanistan to be acknowledged nationally and internationally as the main stakeholders in the peace negotiations and their role in determining their own destiny.
- 5- We earnestly call upon the international community in its capacity as a party to the Doha Agreement, to support the people of Afghanistan in their quest for achieving a comprehensive, lasting and durable peace, and by facilitating the convocation of an international conference to accelerate an Afghan-led intra-Afghan dialogue, and the full implementation of the Doha Agreement.
- 6- We urge the regional states to adopt a concerted and unified strategy vis-à-vis Afghanistan to help Afghans achieve genuine and meaningful peace. A secure and united Afghanistan, led by a responsible, legitimate government, espoused by all Afghans serves the best interest of all the neighbours and beyond.

Respectfully,

National League of Afghanistan (NLA)
15 August 2022