

Protracted Afghan Refugee Situation: Policy Options for Pakistan

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Abstract

Pakistan provided shelter to one of the world's largest protracted refugee populations — more than five million Afghan refugees have been living in Pakistan since 1979. Continued violence and political and economic turmoil in Afghanistan have discouraged refugees to return and resulted in the continued influx of Afghan refugees into Pakistan. Since 2002, 3.8 million (Afghans) have returned to Afghanistan but many returnees keep trickling back to Pakistan.¹ Over the years, Afghan refugees have become a serious concern for Pakistan and an irritant in Pakistan-Afghan relations due to declining donor assistance, domestic constraints, weak economy, refugee fatigue, and the growing threat of terrorism. Currently, there are three million registered and unregistered Afghan refugees,² however, the number of unregistered refugees is believed to be far greater since movement across the Pak-Afghan border has traditionally taken place under an unregulated and unmonitored system, thus making it close to impossible to give an accurate number of unregistered refugees.³ As a result, Pakistan has been the most vulnerable country to mass movement, militants, trafficking of drugs and arms from Afghanistan. Although the UNHCR provides assistance for only one point five million registered refugees of the total three million, it is estimated that during the past 34 years, Pakistan has spent hundreds of billions of dollars on hosting Afghan refugees. Although, the UNHCR has doubled the assistance package from US\$200 to US\$400 per person for the registered Afghan

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¹ “Afghan Refugees in Pakistan await extension of repatriation deadline,” *Express Tribune*, June 18, 2013.

² “Pakistan urges world to help ensure honourable repatriation of Afghan refugees,” *Nation*, July 12, 2016.

³ Tahir Khan, “Afghanistan, Pakistan agree on ceasefire along Torkham border: Abdullah Abdullah,” *Express Tribune*, June 13, 2016

refugee families opting to return to Afghanistan,⁴ the refugees are reluctant to go back due to the poor state of affairs in Afghanistan. Hence the aim of this paper is to focus on the presence of Afghan refugees in Pakistan since 1979, their current status in the light of changing dynamics and suggest plausible options for the management and honourable repatriation of Afghan refugees.

Keywords: Refugees, Repatriation, Pak- Afghan Relations, Pak-Afghan Border, Prolonged Conflict, United Nations, International Assistance.

History of Afghan Refugees (1979- to present)

Afghanistan continues to face one of the world's largest refugee crises and the largest protracted refugee situation under the UNHCR's mandate. Afghan refugees represent the second-largest refugee group after the Syrians as it is estimated that one in four Afghans has been a refugee.⁵ Even after more than three decades of prolonged displacement, the Afghan refugee crisis continues to linger on. While Afghan refugees are present in more than 70 countries, 95 per cent are hosted by Pakistan and Iran⁶. Continued strife and turmoil in Afghanistan has led to the continuous flow of individuals fleeing the country as well as internal displacement of the Afghan population.

The Afghan nationals moved to Pakistan prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Traditionally, Afghans have migrated across the border for social issues or to meet their families, trade, in search of work, to escape poverty, drought and, more recently, conflict and war.

⁴ Mateen Haider, "UNHCR doubles stipend for Afghan refugees returning home," *Dawn*, June 29, 2016 .

⁵ Hiram A Ruiz, "Afghanistan: conflict and displacement 1978 to 2001," *Forced Migration Review* 13, <http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/FMR13/fmr13.3.pdf>

⁶ Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, *Regional Overview*, Update 2015-2016, UNHCR, <http://www.unhcr.org/542522922.pdf>

While thousands of Afghans fled to Pakistan after the Saur Revolution in 1978,⁷ the first documented large scale movement of Afghans into Pakistan began in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion in 1979. It is estimated that during the invasion, there were more than six million Afghan refugees.⁸ Although, a non-signatory to the Geneva Convention of Refugees, Pakistan welcomed the incoming refugees which at one point numbered five million, thus making Pakistan the second largest refugee hosting nation⁹, hosting 21 per cent of the world's refugees.¹⁰ In 1981, there were 1.5 million Afghan refugees but by 1986, this number had risen to around five million, with majority of the refugees based in Pakistan.¹¹ Majority of the Afghan refugees that came to Pakistan were ethnic Pashtun but also included Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras. Due to cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious affinities, Afghan refugees easily integrated into the society and lived in relative peace.

Majority of the Afghan refugees settled in the Pashtun belt of Pakistan which includes the former North-West Frontier Province currently Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (KP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) as well as in the province of Balochistan where refugee camps were established and overseen by UNHCR, the Pakistani Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CCAR) and a division of the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON). Even now, 62 per cent reside in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA and 20 per cent in Balochistan.¹² After KP and FATA, Balochistan is the second biggest refugee hosting province.¹³ Refugees remained in the camps where they received basic facilities such as food, health and education. Unlike Iran,

⁷ Catherine Putz, "What About Afghan Refugees?" *The Diplomat*, November 03, 2015, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/11/what-about-afghan-refugees/>

⁸ Hiram A Ruiz, "Afghanistan: conflict and displacement 1978 to 2001."

⁹ Charlotte Jenner, "Breaking the Cycle: Education and the Future for Afghan Refugees," September 2015, UNHCR, http://www.unhcr.org/nansen/breaking_the_cycle_report_2015.pdf

¹⁰ Rauf Khan Khattak, "Afghan refugees and NAP", *Conflict and Peace Studies*, Volume 7, July-December 2015, Number 2.

¹¹ Hiram A Ruiz, "Afghanistan: Conflict and displacement 1978-2001."

¹² Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, Regional Overview, Update 2015-2016, UNHCR, <http://www.unhcr.org/542522922.pdf>

¹³ UNHCR <http://unhcrpk.org/about/location/>

which also faced an initial influx of 200,000 refugees at the time,¹⁴ the movement of refugees in Pakistan was not restricted to the camps. They moved around freely throughout the country where they were allowed to work, acquire education, rent houses, and travel freely within Pakistan like other Pakistani citizens.¹⁵ It is worth mentioning that a major chunk of the refugee community in Pakistan became the foundation for the US-Saudi backed resistance against the Soviet in Afghanistan.¹⁶ With the passage of time some moved out of the camps into residential areas in all the major cities of Pakistan. Although, Pakistan's law prohibits the hiring of unregistered foreigners, the authorities have always accommodated the Afghan refugees to work in the informal sector.¹⁷ In the formal sector, refugees officially need Pakistani partners and cannot hold immovable property or the requisite documents to own a business.¹⁸ However, more often than not, this has been ignored. For example in KP, refugees cannot officially own trucks according to law, yet, they dominate the entire transport sector in the province.¹⁹

During the course of the last three decades, the Afghan community spread to all corners of the country as Afghan communities have settled in Punjab, Sindh, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Currently, 67 per cent of Afghans live in urban and rural areas, while 33 per cent live in 54 refugee villages throughout the country.²⁰

¹⁴ "Afghanistan 10 years after Soviet pull-out," UNHCR, February 12, 1999, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=3ae6b81cf0&query=Return%20to%20Afghanistan>

¹⁵ Ilyas Chattha, "Refugee Resettlement from Pakistan: Findings from Afghan Refugee Camps in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP)," KNOW RESET Research Report 2013/01 Country of First Asylum Report, http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00696_20130530122128_carim-knowresetrr-2013-01.pdf

¹⁶ Najibullah Urges Refugees' Return : Afghan Leader Makes Appeal at Farewell for Soviet Troops, " *Los Angeles Times*, May 17, 1988, http://articles.latimes.com/1988-05-17/news/mn-2849_1_afghan-refugees

¹⁷ World Refugee Survey, Pakistan, <http://www.refugees.org/countryreports.aspx?id=233>

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Frédéric Grare and William Maley, "The Afghan Refugees in Pakistan -Refugee Cooperation," *Middle East Institute*, June 30, 2011, http://www.refugeecooperation.org/publications/afghanistan/pdf/09_grare.pdf

²⁰ Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, Regional Overview, Update 2015-2016, UNHCR, <http://www.unhcr.org/54252292.pdf>

After the Geneva Accord in 1988, which led to the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan in February 1989, it was hoped that refugees would repatriate. The then President of Afghanistan, Mohammad Najibullah Ahmadzai, appealed to the 5 million Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan and Iran to return.²¹ However, very few Afghan refugees returned as the bulk continued to stay in Pakistan and Iran respectively.²²

After the victory of the mujahideen over Najibullah's government in April 1992, Afghanistan witnessed the return of some 1.4 to 1.5 million refugees under the UNHCR assisted repatriation programme. However, continued political instability and turmoil as a result of the failure of the mujahideen to successfully establish a government led to the outflow of even more Afghans soon after. Subsequently, as a result of the ongoing fighting and take over by the Taliban regime in 1996, further displacement and migration continued to take place. This led to the movement of an additional 700,000 refugees mostly to Pakistan and some to Iran. Additionally, due to the drought that hit Afghanistan in the year 2000, an estimated 172,000 refugees came to Pakistan.²³

After the 2001 US invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent ouster of the Taliban, repatriation began to take place. From 2002 to 2015, more than 3.8 million Afghan refugees returned to Afghanistan with UNHCR assistance under the formal bilateral agreement on Afghan refugees, the Tripartite Commission.²⁴ Although Afghanistan saw the return of refugees, the deteriorating state of affairs in Afghanistan did not

²¹ "Najibullah Urges Refugees' Return: Afghan Leader Makes Appeal at Farewell for Soviet Troops,"

²² Nasreen Ghufraan, "Afghan Refugees in Pakistan Current Situation and Future Scenario,"

Policy Perspectives, vol. 3, no.2, *Institute of Policy Studies*,

<http://www.ips.org.pk/the-muslim-world/1023-afghan-refugees-in-pakistan-current-situation-and-future-scenario.html>

²³ Valentina Hiegemann, "Repatriation of Afghan Refugees in Pakistan: Voluntary?," *Oxford Monitor of Forced Migration* vol. 4, no. 1,

http://oxmofm.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Repatriation-of-Afghan-Refugees-in-Pakistan-Voluntary_Valentina-Hiegemann.pdf

²⁴ "Afghanistan, Pakistan and UNHCR agree on adopting new approaches to assist the voluntary return of Afghans from Pakistan," UNHCR, March 11, 2015, <http://unhcrpk.org/afghanistan-pakistan-and-unhcr-agree-on-adopting-new-approaches-to-assist-the-voluntary-return-of-afghans-from-pakistan/>

prevent masses from fleeing the country.²⁵ For example, in 2011, an estimated 160, 000 Afghans fled to Pakistan.²⁶ Hence, continued turmoil in Afghanistan has been the sole reason behind the continued influx of Afghan refugees into Pakistan.

Afghan Refugees in Pakistan

Continued violence, political and economic turmoil and poverty have discouraged refugees from returning home. Consequently, it has resulted in a continuous influx of refugees into Pakistan. The number of unregistered refugees is believed to be far greater since movement across the Pak-Afghan border has traditionally taken place under an unregulated and unmonitored system, thus making it close to impossible to give an accurate number of unregistered refugees.²⁷ As a result, Pakistan has been the most vulnerable country to mass movement, militants, trafficking of drugs and arms from Afghanistan.

For majority of the Afghan refugees who fled from Afghanistan in 1979, Pakistan became their permanent home. While many have attained Pakistani citizenship through illegal means, others continued to live in Pakistan without facing any form of discrimination. Pakistan has second and third generation locally born Afghans who while on paper may be Afghans are Pakistani in spirit and conduct. According to 2014 statistics, more than 51 per cent of the total Afghan refugee population in Pakistan is under 18 years of age (with the majority born in Pakistan).²⁸ Unlike in Iran, which restricted the movement of refugees to camps and prevented them from indulging in politics, registered and unregistered refugees in Pakistan have like all Pakistani nationals, been given access to education, health and the right to work.

While many work as labourers, others have found odd jobs and set up small businesses. Yet others have established themselves within the

²⁵ "Afghan refugees in Pakistan resist pressure to return," *Dawn*, December 12, 2012.

²⁶ Valentina Hiegemann, "Repatriation of Afghan Refugees in Pakistan: Voluntary?."

²⁷ Tahir Khan, "Afghanistan, Pakistan agree on ceasefire along Torkham border: Abdullah Abdullah," *Express Tribune*, June 13, 2016.

²⁸ Muhammad Abbas Khan, "Afghanistan's Displaced People: 2014 and Beyond", *Forced Migration Review*, FMR 46, May 2014.

country's business community and working class, particularly in the transport, carpet and gem stone industry. For instance, the business of gemstones, which is primarily run by Afghan traders based in Peshawar, constitute a considerable part of Pakistan's export to other countries and has earned US\$27.562 million in terms of foreign exchange in the last five years.²⁹ Similarly, Afghan refugees make up more than 70 per cent of the work force in the carpet weaving industry in Khyber Puktunkhwa which is renowned all over the world for its skilful art and has contributed significantly to Pakistan's economy.³⁰ As refugees and locals coexist, many of them have married locals and integrated into the larger society. Majority of the refugees that came to Pakistan were illiterate and had no finances at all. However, once settled they were able to find work and earn, even though at a subsistence level. Pakistan provided them with a higher quality of life than in Afghanistan.³¹ Even after more than three decades, the same holds true.

On the contrary, the Afghan refugees in Iran have had limited access to public facilities and have not been able to merge into the Iranian society so easily. While Afghan refugees were welcomed in Iran after the Soviet invasion, by 1990 Iran's attitude underwent a significant change from "integration to repatriation and prevention of future flows due to continuing uncertainty in Afghanistan."³² Over the years, Iran imposed several restrictions on the Afghan refugees in an attempt to compel repatriation. These include increasing the cost of living, decreasing financial assistance for healthcare, unemployment, limited access to free education, laws prohibiting undocumented Afghans,³³ denial of citizenship and marriage rights, and impunity for attacks and violence

²⁹ Abdul Mateen, "Gemstone's business in Pakistan in doldrums as Afghan traders forced to repatriate," *Daily Times*, October 4, 2016.

³⁰ Abdur Razzaq, "With Afghan refugees leaving, is Pakistan waving goodbye to carpet-weaving?," *Express Tribune*, January 24, 2017.

³¹ "What Are You Doing Here?" *Human Rights Watch*, November 18, 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/11/18/what-are-you-doing-here/police-abuses-against-afghans-pakistan>.

³² Aryaman Bhatnagar, "Iran: Understanding the Policy towards Afghan Refugees," *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS)*, July 25 2012, <http://www.ipcs.org/article/Afg-Iran/iran-understanding-the-policy-towards-afghan-refugees-3683.html>.

³³ *Ibid.*

perpetrated against them by private actors.³⁴ Since 2002, Iran has begun to implement stringent measures restricting the movement of refugees and has declared “no go areas” for refugees. They were limited to border provinces, but they now exist in majority of Iran’s 31 provinces, the most recent being the Mazandaran province. 16 provinces have a complete ban on Afghans living there and 12 provinces have bans on particular areas and cities. Tehran, Alborz, and Qom are the only provinces that do not have residential restrictions on Afghans.³⁵ Simultaneously, the number of work permits issued to Afghan refugees has drastically decreased and the cost for renewing permits has been substantially increased. This has made them more vulnerable to deportation.³⁶ Time and again, the Iranian authorities have repeatedly associated unemployment, crime and drug problems in Iran to the presence of these refugees

Over the years, Afghan refugees have become an issue of concern for Pakistan, too, due to domestic constraints, weak economy, refugee fatigue, declining donor assistance, increase in crime and the threat of terrorism. Hence Islamabad has begun to raise the issue of their honourable repatriation.

During the 1990’s, international funding for Afghan humanitarian relief began to decrease and as a result Pakistan’s stance towards Afghan refugees also began to alter. An ‘encashment’ programme was launched in Pakistan by the UNCHR in 1990 to encourage voluntary repatriation. After the victory of the mujahideen in 1992, Pakistan advocated for repatriation.. As a result, Afghanistan saw the return of 1.4 to 1.5 million refugees. However, after the Taliban came into power, foreign aid once again began to decline which led to many leaving Afghanistan and crossing into Pakistan.³⁷ Hence, Pakistan was once again feeling the strain of incoming refugees in addition to the already existing ones. Subsequently, in 1995, all food rations to refugee camps had ceased as

³⁴ “Unwelcome Guests, Iran’s Violation of Afghan Refugee and Migrant Rights,” *Human Rights Watch*, November 20, 2013, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/11/20/unwelcome-guests/irans-violation-afghan-refugee-and-migrant-rights>.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Aryaman Bhatnagar, “Iran: Understanding the Policy towards Afghan Refugees.”

³⁷ Peter Mardsen, *The Taliban: War, Religion and the New Order in Afghanistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 37.

the World Food Programme (WFP) determined that the Afghans were capable of providing for their own food needs. As the flow of international aid began to diminish, the number of Afghans moving to cities to look for work increased.³⁸ As a result, by 1995, Pakistan began to refuse refugee status to new arrivals, terming them as economic migrants.³⁹ By the end of 1995, the UNCHR stopped registering new arrivals.⁴⁰ Hence the repatriation that had started was short lived, as fewer Afghans were going back, for example in 1996, only 120,000 repatriated.⁴¹

In the year 2000, the international community, too, began to lose interest in Afghanistan which resulted in a further decline in donor assistance. Islamabad began to show signs of ‘refugee fatigue’ as they adversely affected Pakistan’s economy and meagre national resources. Although the UNHCR provides assistance for 1.5 million registered refugees of the total three million, it is estimated that during the past three decades, Pakistan has spent hundreds of billions of dollars on hosting Afghan refugees. Over the years, the budget for Afghan refugees in Pakistan has also decreased significantly from US\$201 million in 1981 to US\$12 million in 2000 — a mere US\$10 for each of the 1.2 million refugees living in camps.⁴²

³⁸ Rhoda Margesson, “CRS report for Congress, Afghan Refugees: Current Status and Future Prospects,” January 26, 2007, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33851.pdf>.

³⁹ David Turton and Peter Marsden, “Taking Refugees for a Ride? The politics of refugee return to Afghanistan,” *Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit*, December 2002, <http://areu.org.af/Uploads/EditionPdfs/208E-Taking%20Refugees%20for%20a%20Ride-IP-web.pdf>.

⁴⁰ Afghans in Peshawar: Migration, Settlements and Social Networks, *Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit*, January 2006, <http://www.unhcr.org/43e754da2.pdf>.

⁴¹ Frédéric Grare and William Maley, “The Afghan Refugees in Pakistan-Refugee Cooperation,” *Middle East Institute*, June 30, 2011, http://www.refugeecooperation.org/publications/afghanistan/pdf/09_grare.pdf.

⁴² Ameena Ghaffar-Kucher, “The Effects of Repatriation on Education in Afghan Refugee Camps in Pakistan,” *Education in Emergencies and Post-Conflict Situations: Problems, Responses and Possibilities*, vol. 2 (Spring 2005), <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/international-and-transcultural-studies/international-and-comparative-education/student-resources/iedcie-related-student-organizations/SIEVolume2EmergEd.pdf>.

The overall presence of around five million refugees has put an added strain on Pakistan's environment,⁴³ infrastructure, local economy as well as resources such as schools, hospitals etc. The presence of refugees has driven wages downward since refugees are willing to work for less and for exacerbating pressure upon fragile social sectors. Many refugees have established "refugee villages" on the private land of locals⁴⁴ and despite having lived in peace, due to the increase in crime and growing wave of terrorism, they have been asked by the land owners to leave. Many refugees had established "refugee villages" on the private land of locals.¹ Although they had been living in peace, the increase in crime and growing wave of terrorism in Pakistan has compelled the land owners to ask the refugees to vacate. This has resulted in clashes over the possession of land between locals and the refugees as well as mounting pressure on the government to repatriate them.

The security impact of the presence of refugees has also played an important role in altering Islamabad's stance regarding refugees and hence the call for their repatriation. Afghanistan continues to be the largest producer of opium, producing about 92 per cent of the world's opium crop. It is believed that militants groups fund their insurgencies through an 'informal tax' they collect when it is smuggled through Pakistan.⁴⁵ There is no doubt that, among other reasons, the use of drugs in Pakistan is also an unfortunate consequence of the prolonged conflict in Afghanistan as well as the presence of the Afghan refugees. This is reflected in the fact that during the 1980s there were an estimated 50,000 drug users in Pakistan;⁴⁶ this number rose to 8.1 million in 2011.⁴⁷

⁴³ Frédéric Grare and William Maley, "The Afghan Refugees in –Refugee Cooperation."

⁴⁴ Ilyas Chattha, "Refugee Resettlement from Pakistan: Findings from Afghan Refugee Camps in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP)."

⁴⁵ Frédéric Grare and William Maley, "The Afghan Refugees in Pakistan."

⁴⁶ Huma Yousaf, "The Drugs of War," *New York Times*, November 9, 2012, http://latitude.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/11/09/the-war-in-afghanistan-brings-drugs-to-pakistan/?_r=0

⁴⁷ Rahib Raza, "Day against Drug Abuse: More than 8.1 m addicts in Pakistan now," *Express Tribune*, June 26, 2011.

Registered and Unregistered Refugees

The Afghan refugees have been living in Pakistan for more than 37 years without any form of legal identification since there has been no comprehensive registration. It was only in 2005 when a survey was conducted⁴⁸ to determine the number of refugees residing in Pakistan.⁴⁹ The task was laborious since many refugees had acquired fake national identity cards and others refused out of fear of deportation.⁵⁰ In 2006, with the support of UNHCR, some 2.15 million Afghans were registered and Proof of Registration (PoR) cards were issued by National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) recognizing them as Afghan citizens living in Pakistan who were entitled to live and work for three years until December 2009.⁵¹ These cards also allowed them to open bank accounts, obtain driving licenses and mobile SIM cards, which made life easier for the refugees.

Additionally, Islamabad decided to close all refugee camps, starting from FATA, with the closure of a camp in South Waziristan in 2005⁵². The decision to close the camps was taken while the repatriation process was ongoing which began in 2002 and had resulted in the repatriation of 2.4 million Afghans to return.⁵³ Pakistan also announced the closure of refugee camps in KP and Balochistan to ensure security as it was believed that these camps provided a safe-haven to terrorists and criminals as well as illegal Afghan refugees⁵⁴. This process went on till

⁴⁸ The Government of Pakistan with support from the UNHCR conducted a survey from February 23-March 11, 2005.

⁴⁹ *Saher Baloch*, "Not every Afghan living in Pakistan is a refugee, says UNHCR," Dawn, December 30, 2014, Survey was conducted by the Government of Pakistan with the support of the UNHCR.

⁵⁰ Vivian Tan, Babar Baloch, Asif Shahzad, Rabia Ali, ed. Leo Dobbs, "Afghans in Pakistan get registered for first ever identification," UNHCR, October 16, 2006, <http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2006/10/453391fd4/afghans-pakistan-registered-first-identification.html>

⁵¹ *Saher Baloch*, "Not every Afghan living in Pakistan is a refugee, says UNHCR."

⁵² "Pakistan to close refugee camps," *BBC News*, August 6, 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4126972.stm

⁵³ Jack Redden, ed. Vivian Tan, "Consolidation of refugee camps in Pakistan accelerates," June 21, 2005, UNHCR

⁵⁴ Vivian Tan, Babar Baloch, Asif Shahzad, Rabia Ali, ed. Leo Dobbs, "Afghans in Pakistan get registered for first ever identification."

2007. The UNHCR supported Pakistan's decision to close the camps because security issues were posing a challenge to the provision of humanitarian assistance as well as the fact that those who were against repatriation had the option of relocating to vacant camps in other parts of Pakistan.

Hence, residents of the camps were given the choice of voluntary repatriation with UNHCR assistance of US\$100 per person, or relocation to camps in Dir and Chitral. However, very few opted for relocation to these 'government-designated' camps due to their location, lack of basic infrastructure and the limited possibilities for livelihood.⁵⁵ Meanwhile in 2009, due to the worsening state of affairs in Afghanistan and on the behest of the Afghan government registered refugees were given an additional 3 year extension, till December 2015.

In 2010, Pakistan also adopted the Afghan Management and Repatriation Strategy (AMRS) to find a durable solution for the protracted refugees' population. In December 2012, due to the deteriorating state of affairs in Afghanistan as well as the continued challenges impeding the return of refugees, the stay of the refugees was extended until June 30, 2013 as an interim measure. In July 2013, a new policy on Afghan refugees was approved, which included the extension of the Proof of Registration (PoR) cards and the Tripartite Agreement on Voluntary Repatriation until December 31, 2015. In July 2013 Islamabad agreed to a new National Policy on Afghan Refugees, which was drafted in tandem with the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), which focuses on voluntary repatriation in safety and dignity, sustainable reintegration inside Afghanistan, and assistance to refugee host communities. Since then the government has had to keep on extending the deadline — with the current deadline extended from March 2017 to December 2017.⁵⁶

Since 2001, Pakistan has been facing immense instability and violence primarily in FATA and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa due to the US invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent threat posed by the Tehreek-

⁵⁵ Rabia Ali, ed. Jack Redden , "Kacha Garhi refugee camp closes in Pakistan after 27 years", July 27, 2007, *UNCHR*.

⁵⁶ Riaz ul Haq, "Stay of Afghan refugees extended till year-end," *Express Tribune*, February 8, 2017.

e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) since its inception in 2007. As a result of Pakistan's counterinsurgency operations more than 2 million people have been displaced internally. Hence Pakistan's priorities have shifted to addressing its domestic concerns. Moreover, the Afghan Refugees have become a concern for Pakistan in terms of being a grave security risk mostly in the form of support to militant groups operating in Pakistan as well as their alleged involvement in terrorism. Thus with the additional burden of Pakistan's internally displaced persons, Islamabad has adopted a firm stance for the repatriation of the refugees.

Subsequently, the wave of violence and militancy that has plagued the country particularly after the horrific attack on the Army Public School and College Peshawar on December 16, 2014 has further reinforced the Pakistani governments call for the repatriation of all Afghan nationals. Although the attack was not carried out by Afghan refugees, it had been planned and carried out in Afghanistan. As a result, under the 20-point National Action Plan, the government devised a policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees.⁵⁷ It was further decided that undocumented Afghan nationals would be registered by the end of 2015 by NADRA which was tasked to conduct the exercise throughout the country. This however did not happen due to bureaucratic differences between SAFRON and the Interior Ministry.⁵⁸ At the same time law enforcing agencies were authorised to start a major crackdown against undocumented Afghan nationals and deport them after completing legal formalities. Thousands of Afghans were arrested under the NAP in this regard.⁵⁹ Many illegal Afghan refugees living in KP have been accused of involvement in various crimes including murder and kidnapping. This has also encouraged certain elements within Pakistan's law enforcing agencies to pursue an unofficial policy of harassment, detention threats, extortion, and the demolition of Afghan

⁵⁷ According to the National Action Plan, point 19 states " The formulation of a comprehensive policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees, beginning with registration of all refugees," National Counter Terrorism Authority Pakistan (NACTA), <http://nacta.gov.pk/NAPPoints20.htm>

⁵⁸ Zulfiqar Ali, "Afghan govt seeks extension in stay of refugees in Pakistan," *Dawn*, May 30, 2016.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

homes⁶⁰ which prompted large numbers of Afghans to return to Afghanistan.

Islamabad's call for repatriation has cast an uncertain shadow on the lives of unregistered Afghans who have lived in Pakistan without any official/legal documents. However, one cannot but question the claim that 'unregistered' refugees are responsible for the worsening security situation in Pakistan. It is important to highlight that while some cases of organised crime and insecurity in KP have been traced back to the refugees, the notion that they are solely to blame for major crimes has been exaggerated, as refugees constitute just over one per cent of those found to have been involved in major crimes.⁶¹

According to the Directorate of Prosecution, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, from 2014 to Sept 30, 2016, 10,549 cases were put up in court, in which 134 involved Afghan refugees. subsequently, 23,007 individuals were accused, out of which only 300 were Afghan refugees.⁶² Hence, only 1.3 per cent Afghan refugees were actually involved in crimes. While there is a need for the repatriation of all refugees it needs to be achieved in a dignified manner and reasonable timeframe. Afghan refugees have been living in Pakistan for more than three decades, frequently moving across the border yet they were not documented till 2005. It is important to highlight that during the past three decades, the flow of refugees into Pakistan has not ceased. Even when refugees have been prevented from legally entering Pakistan, they have still done so through the numerous illegal crossings or openings along the Pak-Afghan border. For example, only until June 2016, an estimated 60,000 people would cross daily into Pakistan through Torkum and Chaman which are legal crossings.⁶³

According to Pakistani officials, till May 2016, an estimated 2,000 visas were issued daily to Afghan nationals, yet between 40,000 to

⁶⁰ "Pakistan: Police Abusing Afghans," *Human Rights Watch*, November 18, 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/11/18/pakistan-police-abusing-afghans>.

⁶¹ Ismail Khan, "KP prosecution data gives lie to claims against Afghan refugees," *Dawn*,

January 15, 2017, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1308486>

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Tahir Khan, "Border coordination hampered amid reservations from Afghanistan", *Express Tribune*, March 12, 2016.

60,000 people (mostly Afghans) would cross the border into Pakistan. Hence the current method of crackdown on the refugees has to be questioned and revised. How can a refugee be asked to produce legal documents when he has been living in Pakistan for more than three decades without being registered?

Increased Repatriation

Pakistan has insisted on the return of refugees as it can no longer bear the strain on its infrastructure, economy or security. Additionally, strained ties with Kabul, particularly after border clashes took place in June 2016 has also had an impact on Pakistan's refugee policy. As a result, Pakistan enforced new border initiatives which include valid and legal travel documents (passport and visa) for all Afghans entering Pakistan, including those who enter Pakistan daily for studies or work. Hence around 6,000 Afghans were refused entry into Pakistan daily⁶⁴ due to lack of valid travel documents. Escalating tensions between Kabul and Islamabad increased the number of returnees to Afghanistan. For example in June 2016, 1,433 refugees returned to Afghanistan, this number increased to 11,416 in July and 60,743 in August.⁶⁵ Overall more than 600,000 refugees have been repatriated so far which include 365,000 registered refugees.⁶⁶ This is the highest number of returnees since 2007.⁶⁷ Another major factor behind the increase in repatriation has been the blocking of all counterfeit identity cards the Afghan refugees illegally acquired over the years.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Ayaz Gul, "UNHCR: More Than 100,000 Afghan Refugees Repatriated in 5 Weeks," *Voice of America*, October 4, 2016, <http://www.voanews.com/a/unhcr-says-more-than-100000-afghan-refugees-repatriated-in-five-weeks/3536705.html>

⁶⁵ James Mackenzie and Mirwais Harooni, "Afghan refugees in Pakistan feel heat of rising regional tensions," *Reuters*, October 3, 2016, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-afghanistan-pakistan-refugees-idUKKCN12302H>

⁶⁶ "Pakistan Coercion, UN Complicity," *Human Rights Watch*, February 13, 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/02/13/pakistan-coercion-un-complicity/mass-forced-return-afghan-refugees>

⁶⁷ Ayaz Gul, "UNHCR: More Than 100,000 Afghan Refugees Repatriated in 5 Weeks,"

⁶⁸ Danish Hussain, "Over 1,600 illegal ID cards returned," *Express Tribune*, September 8, 2016.

Officials in NADRA have also been involved in issuing fake identification documents.⁶⁹ Since 2015, more than 100,000 computerised national identity cards, including those issued illegally to foreigners have been blocked.⁷⁰ According to authorities, majority of Afghan refugees in Balochistan have been in possession of fake CNICs. Many have returned their fake CNICs as bank accounts, Pakistani passports and driving licenses automatically become dysfunctional with the blocking of cards. Hence this has encouraged many refugees to come forward and surrender their fake documents.⁷¹ In the meanwhile, voluntary repatriation facilitated by the UNHCR continues to take place. Two repatriation centres supported by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department have been established at Azakhel and Chamkani, in Peshawar.⁷² However, uncertainty still looms over those refugees who want to remain in Pakistan. In November 2016, a call was made by the UNHCR as well as Pakistani political parties namely the Jamaat Islami (JI), Awami National Party (ANP), Qaumi Watan Party (QWP), Jamiat-i-Ulema Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), and Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) to postpone the repatriation process due to winter from December 2016 to February 28, 2017.⁷³ Hence repatriation was temporarily halted from December 2016 and is due to commence from March 2017.⁷⁴

Afghan Response

In July 2016, President Ghani's government launched a campaign, 'Khpal Watan, Gul Watan' (the grass is green in my land) to encourage Afghan nationals to repatriate, the first official initiative since 1996.

⁶⁹ Qadeer Tanoli, "Govt arrests officials involved in issuing Pakistani passport to Mansour," *Express Tribune*, May 28, 2016.

⁷⁰ "100,000 fake ID cards blocked last year: Chaudhry Nisar", *Nation*, November 26, 2015.

⁷¹ Qaiser Butt, "Over 100,000 refugees to leave for Afghanistan by Nov-end," *Express Tribune*, October 25, 2016.

⁷² Suhail Kakakhel, "Another repatriation centre for Afghan refugees opened," *Dawn*, September 29, 2016.

⁷³ Qaiser Butt "Pakistan mulls suspending refugee repatriation," *Express Tribune*, October 31, 2016.

⁷⁴ Tarique Siyal, "Afghan refugee repatriation suspended till March 2017," *Daily Times*, November 12, 2016. <http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/12-Nov-16/afghan-refugee-repatriation-suspended-till-march-2017>.

However, despite President Ghani's call to all refugees that 'Afghanistan needs your contribution in the peace process' and 'come back and take part in the reconstruction of Afghanistan' and pledges to ensure stability and peaceful conditions as well as boost the economy and create jobs, not only are refugees reluctant to return, thousands continue to flee Afghanistan⁷⁵ in what some are terming the greatest numbers since 2001. While the international community has failed to bring stability to Afghanistan, successive Afghan governments including the government of national unity has also failed to deliver. According to a report released by the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), in April 2016, 'Afghanistan is worse off today than it was before 2001.'⁷⁶ Despite 15 years of international presence and the US claims of 'liberating Afghanistan,' the state of affairs in Afghanistan has constantly deteriorated with a marked increase in violence and casualties. The country continues to be confronted by the Taliban's growing insurgency, weak and ineffective governance, corruption and a booming narcotic's trade. Economic growth in Afghanistan has dropped significantly, from 2003-2012, the country's economic growth was nine per cent and currently it stands at two per cent¹. Subsequently, 36 per cent of Afghans live below the poverty line¹.

Afghanistan's current state of affairs, which is marked by violence, instability, weak social and economic conditions, and poverty, continue to pose serious hurdles for the repatriation of refugees as well as sustainable reintegration of displaced Afghans inside the country. In 2015 alone, more than 250,000 Afghans left for Europe⁷⁷ with 20 per cent of all arrivals in Europe by boat being Afghan nationals.⁷⁸ Deteriorating conditions in Afghanistan have prompted more than

⁷⁵ President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani's Speech On World Refugee Day, June 20, 2015, <http://president.gov.af/en/news/48479>

⁷⁶ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, April 2016, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2016-04-30qr.p>

⁷⁷ Hasib Danish Alikozai, "Afghan Government Seeks Financial Assistance to Bring Refugees Home," *Voice of America*, April 15, 2016, <http://www.voanews.com/a/afghan-government-seeks-assistance-bring-refugees-home/3288020.html>

⁷⁸ Yalda Hakim, President Ghani calls for Afghans to remain in country," *BBC News*, March 31, 2016 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35928538>

178,000 Afghans to register first-time asylum claims in the European Union in 2015.⁷⁹

According to Amnesty International, Afghanistan failed to implement a 2014 national policy to provide basic living standards for IDPs who are “on the brink of survival.”⁸⁰ Although Afghan authorities claim they have started welfare programmes to welcome incoming refugees, majority of those that have returned find themselves in a desperate situation without housing or any means to sustain themselves.⁸¹ Incoming refugees claim that the Afghan government has not provided any support to them.⁸² On the contrary, it is the UNHCR which provides financial support to the registered refugees, which often proves to be inadequate.⁸³ Hence, question of corruption and mismanagement have surfaced regarding the Afghan authorities handling of incoming refugees. In fact, the former (Afghan) government’s corruption and mismanagement of programmes meant to help returnees has been highlighted in the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) report of August 2015. It clearly states that since 2002, US\$950 million were allocated by the US for assisting Afghan refugees and returnees, but “most of that money has been lost to corruption while those in need remain in dire conditions.” The report also states that the Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MORR), which was “afflicted by institutional corruption” has made little progress in implementing a strategy to bring home refugees and allocate land for them to settle.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ “Pakistan: Renewed Threats to Afghan Refugees,” *Human Rights Watch*, July 1, 2016.

⁸⁰ Jared Ferrie, “Afghanistan’s failed promises to help people displaced by war,” *IRIN*, May 31 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/574d3eb44.html>

⁸¹ Shamil Shams and Riaz Sayed, “Violence and uncertainty await repatriated Afghan refugees,” *Deutsche Welle*, September 16, 2016, <http://www.dw.com/en/violence-and-uncertainty-await-repatriated-afghan-refugees/a-19557397>

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ “Afghan Refugees and Returnees: Corruption and Lack of Afghan Ministerial Capacity Have Prevented Implementation of a Long-term Refugee Strategy,” *US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) 15-83 Audit Report*, August 2015, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/sigar-15-83-ar.pdf> & Catherine James, “The \$1bn hole in Afghanistan’s refugee system,” *IRIN*, 3

Despite Afghanistan's limitations, the Afghan state needs to take ownership of the issue of refugees so as to accommodate them. While the Taliban's insurgency is a bitter reality that continues to confront the Afghan state, Afghan authorities have to move beyond shifting the blame, and find ways to address the issue of its refugee population. For sustainable and long term repatriation and reintegration, it is imperative that a conducive environment inside Afghanistan is attained.

For repatriation to be sustainable returnees need incentives or what Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has referred to as the "pull factor," which entails basic facilities such as shelter, food, health, education and jobs. Pledges have been made by the government to provide returning refugees with land and housing, the opportunity to invest in small businesses, access to education, health, other basic services and settlement in any part of the country."⁸⁵ However it has yet to deliver. So far, the returnees, who make up around a quarter of Afghanistan's current population have been denied these basic rights, forcing them to either return to Pakistan or become internally displaced. Similarly, President Ghani had also announced a housing project for returnees in Nangrahar and Kabul which is expected to be implemented under the Afghan government's land distribution scheme for returnees and IDPs adopted in 2005.⁸⁶ However, so far progress has been slow as returnees continue to fend for themselves due to lack of shelters.⁸⁷

In the absence of relative stability, refugees will continue to resist repatriation. What is more alarming is the fact that 60 per cent of Afghanistan's population is under the age of 20.⁸⁸ Apart from underprivileged masses that continue to flee Afghanistan mostly to

September 2015, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/101952/1bn-hole-afghanistan%E2%80%99s-refugee-system>

⁸⁵ Jelena Bjelica, "Caught Up in Regional Tensions? The mass return of Afghan refugees from Pakistan," *Afghan Analyst Network*, December 22, 2016, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/caught-up-in-regional-tensions-the-mass-return-of-afghan-refugees-from-pakistan/>

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ The 2015 Afghanistan Refugee and Returnee Overview, *UNHCR*, <https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Afghanistan/2015%20Afghanistan%20Refugee%20and%20Returnee%20Overview.pdf>

⁸⁸ Yalda Hakim, "President Ghani calls for Afghans to remain in country."

Pakistan and Iran, which accounts for 90 per cent,⁸⁹ the educated, professional and elite class of Afghanistan are also fleeing to Europe and elsewhere in search of safety and stability.⁹⁰

In February 2016, majority of the European countries reclassified Afghan refugees as ‘economic migrants’ as a measure to prevent their stay in Europe. In an additional measure to prevent refugees from entering Europe, an agreement was signed between the European Union and Afghanistan in which Afghanistan agreed to take back Afghan nationals provided they are given assistance with the returnees in the provision of security and employment opportunities by establishing vocational institutes in certain provinces to train those deported.⁹¹ However, with the worsening state of security and lack of basic facilities, it will become increasingly difficult to convince masses, particularly the youth, to stay and encourage refugees to return voluntarily to Afghanistan.

Recommendations

- The protracted Afghan refugee dilemma needs a rational and sustainable solution. While it is understood that all refugees will eventually have to go back to Afghanistan, it cannot be achieved through force – Pakistan will have to adopt a benign and flexible policy in order to ensure sustainable repatriation. Hence a respectable time frame becomes imperative that needs to be devised collectively by all three principle partners i.e. UNCHR, Pakistan and Afghanistan. While repatriation has begun to take place, it needs to be achieved in a phased and dignified manner in order to achieve maximum and sustainable repatriation without damaging Pakistan’s ties with Afghanistan. Hence Pakistan’s decision to extend the deadline for repatriation to December 2017 is a welcoming development. This will provide sufficient time for all stakeholders to make adequate arrangements for repatriation. Uprooting refugees summarily will not only alienate them but it

⁸⁹ Florian Weigand, “Afghanistan's elite fleeing to Europe,” *Deutsche Welle*, April 24, 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/afghanistans-elite-fleeing-to-europe/a-18406681>

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Hasib Danish Alikozai, “Afghan Government Seeks Financial Assistance to Bring Refugees Home.”

also goes against the tradition of hospitality that Pakistan has extended. Keeping in view the strained ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan a respite in repatriation will afford sufficient time to the Afghan government already in financial straits to make necessary /adequate arrangements for the settlement and rehabilitation of refugees.

- It would also be advisable to invest in the Pashtun refugees who have been law abiding and have lived peacefully during their stay in Pakistan. Most have bought property and established lawful businesses accelerating economic activity. They have been a source of revenue generation giving a fillip to healthy business and competitiveness i.e. Gem stone business which is solely run by Afghans based in Peshawar. Similarly the carpet weaving industry which has significantly contributed to Pakistan's economy has suffered greatly as carpet production has dropped by five per cent⁹² due to the repatriation of refugees. Similarly, many businesses are winding up and it is believed that many Afghans have relocated their businesses to India, which means that Pakistan is unwittingly pushing them into the Indian orbit. Instead Islamabad should devise measures to allow these Afghans to stay in Pakistan and continue to contribute to the national exchequer.
- It is suggested that those Afghans born in Pakistan (74 per cent)⁹³ who are desirous to attain Pakistani citizenship may be considered (provided they are law abiding and possess a criminal free record) under Section 4 of the Pakistan Citizenship Act, 1951. Similarly under Section 3 of the Naturalization Act, 1924, those individuals who have lived in Pakistan for well over the prescribed period⁹⁴, possess knowledge of Pakistani languages,

⁹² Abdur Razzaq, "With Afghan refugees leaving, is Pakistan waving goodbye to carpet-weaving?," *Express Tribune*, January 24, 2017.

⁹³ "Pakistan still has 1.65m Afghan refugees: report," *News*, December 10, 2012.

⁹⁴ Pakistan's Naturalization Act 1926 (section C) states that "he has resided in Pakistan throughout the period of twelve months immediately preceding the date of the application, and has, during the seven years immediately preceding the said period of twelve months, resided in Pakistan for a period amounting in the aggregate to not less than four years."

and have a crime-free record, can claim Pakistani citizenship under Pakistan's Naturalization Act, 1924.⁹⁵ Similarly Afghani men married to Pakistani women or Afghani women married to Pakistani men, too, are legally entitled to attain Pakistani citizenship under Section 10 of the Citizenship Act. In addition concessions need to be made for those individuals or minors who do not have parents/guardians to look after them. Similarly, widows as well as women whose husbands are lost or imprisoned should also be given the option of attaining Pakistani citizenship along with their children.

- In order to encourage those 'unregistered' refugees that are not registered and avoid doing so in fear of being repatriated, Pakistan should offer legal /identity documents entitling them to live and work in Pakistan for one year. Not only will this make their stay legal, it will also provide Pakistan with legal grounds to deport those that are not registered as well as those who do not leave the country after the expiration of their stay.
- Traditionally and historically the Pak-Afghan border has remained open and soft, hence closing the border aimed at curbing free movement is viewed with skepticism by the Afghans. A way forward would be mutual border management in consultation with Afghan authorities in order to check /curb unregulated movement. The need for strict adherence to documentation while moving across the border may be emphasized and implemented as is currently being done by Pakistan. This arrangement would certainly benefit both countries in terms of illegal movement and help reduce their strained bilateral ties.
- Pakistan should not tarnish its image as the longest host of refugees and destroy the goodwill of the Afghans toward Pakistan by using security as an excuse for any harsh crackdown. The repatriation of Afghan refugees should be delinked from Pakistan's policy on countering terrorism and should be addressed a separate bilateral issue. Islamabad should not force

⁹⁵ The Naturalization Act ,1926.

repatriation nor should it put restrictions on the legal movement of refugees inside Pakistan. Islamabad should highlight its longstanding support to the Afghan refugees internationally and work with Kabul for their dignified return. Those Afghan nationals interested in returning to Pakistan for employment, business or education may do so under a flexible visa regime for Afghan passport holders. This will encourage legal movement and help reduce tensions between the two neighbours.

- While Pakistan is fully cognizant of the Afghan state's limitations and challenges and has always been calling for 'voluntary' repatriation, at the end of the day, it cannot achieve this on its own. Afghanistan and the international community will have to play a more constructive role. As time goes by, considering Afghanistan's current state of affairs, it will become increasingly difficult to encourage refugees to return voluntarily. For sustainable repatriation and reintegration, it is imperative that a conducive environment inside Afghanistan is attained. Despite Kabul's limitations, the UNCHR and the Afghan government must make adequate arrangements to facilitate repatriation. Efforts need to be made to encourage repatriation to and resettlement in Afghanistan. One measure could be relocating all incoming refugees to the relatively safer parts of the country in areas that are war free. Temporary shelters can be set up to house the refugees. In the meantime construction can commence on refugee villages. The proposed development of 48 reintegration sites for returnees should therefore be given top priority by Kabul and the international community but so far very little progress on these has been made. This can also be done by incentivizing both processes. Measures under the program should include the provision of shelter, food rations and basic facilities such as health and education as well as cash incentives. While these provisions cover basic facilities, in order to ensure individuals do not come back, minor jobs can be offered in order to sustain repatriation.
- Thousands of refugees that fled into Pakistan had to leave their property behind (land and homes). Over the years, a combination of rival tribe, influential locals, warlords, and even militants have

occupied these properties and are unwilling to let go. In other cases, due to the constant state of war, many of these properties have been destroyed. Therefore those refugees that are willing to go back need to be compensated. In this regard, the Afghan government should honour its promise of providing housing and land under the land distribution scheme for returnees and IDPs adopted in 2005.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Jelena Bjelica, “Caught Up in Regional Tensions? The mass return of Afghan refugees from Pakistan.”