# *The Fallacies of the 'Failed State' Concept*

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# Abstract

The ‘failed state’ concept is a new notion which is nowadays used differently in a variety of contexts by scholars and policymakers. The consequence of this general use is that foreign nations are given the right to intervene to help underdeveloped states. While this goes against the sovereignty of a nation, it is evident today that many underdeveloped countries, which are considered ‘failed states’, necessitate aid from the international community. With this problem in mind, the research question is: *To what extent is the ‘failed state’ concept fallacious?* To answer this question, the research has been conducted through the analysis of secondary literature from key authors on the principles of the ‘modern state’, differences in the usage of the ‘failed state’ terminology and theories of underdevelopment. The results of this dissertation are that underdeveloped nations indeed face geographic and institutional constraints, however, the Western–centric narratives, enforced further through theories of underdevelopment, have only led to monocausal and reductionist claims which are inaccurate, judgemental, deterministic and most of all discriminatory. On this basis, one must recognise the limits of universal positions and always be sceptical about them to avoid false claims that may have dire repercussions to already unfortunate nations.

# Contents

# 1. Introduction

The aim of this dissertation is to explore the extent of the fallacy of the 'failed state' concept. With its distinctive focus on disciplines of political and development science, the subject is of great relevance to our contemporary world where underdeveloped states are seen as a threat by developed nations to the international community. The problem addressed in this dissertation is that the binary perception of states, either being 'successful' or 'failed', gives legitimacy to foreign actors to intervene in underdeveloped countries. Under the pretext of providing aid and stability, these interventions are out of self–interest to outsource 'failed states' and to establish a geopolitical position in the region. As a recent phenomenon, the literature on the 'failed state' is not as dense when compared to that of the state theory. Nonetheless, the terminology has been extensively used in the past twenty years by scholars and policymakers. Notably, scholars like Gerald Helman, Steven Ratner, William Zartman, Jean–Germain Gros and Donald Potter have contributed to the 'failed state' debate by proposing different uses of the terminology in their work. Critiques of the 'failed state' concept who stand out are Ralph Wilde, Rosa Brooks, Piar Bilign and Adam Morton. Concerning factors of state development, the authors who have formed a discussion surrounding theories of state failure are Charles Montesquieu, Jared Diamond, Jeffrey Sachs, Nuno Limao, Anthony Venables, Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson. These authors criticise each other in their peer reviews. The aforementioned authors form the secondary literature of the dissertation which will be heavily used throughout. Besides describing and analysing the theoretical aspects of their work, quantitative methods will be employed to emphasise the discrepancies between fact and narratives advocated by academics and policymakers in the 'failed state' debate.

This paper is structured as follows: Firstly, in order to discuss what a 'failed state' is we will need to explain the sociological and historical development of the 'modern state'. Emerging with the Westphalian Peace Treaty and later being influenced by the French Revolution and the period of globalisation, after the Second World War, as well as by several sociological perspectives, the 'modern state' has become a specific standard for newly formed states. The main focus of the dissertation will be on the development of the 'failed state' concept, having its meaning changed

in certain time periods and defined as well as categorized differently by numerous academics. Lastly, the geographic and institutional hypotheses will be put forward as arguments why nations fail. Taking Afghanistan as a study case, we will be applying the theories in its context for us to analyse the extent to which they are applicable.

# 2. The Emergence of the State Concept

In order to explore the fallacy behind the 'failed state' notion one must first analyse the concept of the 'modern state'. Today, in western political thought, it is universally agreed that the 'modern state' is characterized as a "privileged legal or constitutional order"[1] which is capable of "administering and controlling a given territory"[2]. From this definition, it is clear that the contemporary state has two types of roles: "constitutive and infrastructural"[3]. The first refers to a state's capacity to establish a regime where individuals respect the rule of law, whereas the latter is the ability to provide economic, political and social stability to its people. The central question that comes to mind is when and how did the 'modern state' evolve in its current form? In this chapter, we will look at the historical developments and the major political theories that have set the pillars of the 'modern state'.

## 2.1. Historical Development of the 'Modern State'

### 2.1.1. The Development of Territorial Sovereignty

In between the 14th and 17th century, Western Europe was fragmented into many feudal politics[4], in which a hierarchy was established, where the Catholic Church was more powerful than any political entity. [5] The increased dissatisfaction with the established order led to the decline of feudalism and the rise of the bourgeoisie class. With only a single national monarch considered as the ruler of a country, a social organization had to be created to respond to

[1] David Held, *Political Theory and the Modern State* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), 11.
[2] Murray Rothbard, *Anatomy of the State (*Auburn: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2016), 9.
[3] Claudiu Craciun, *Theorizing the Success and Failure of the Modern State* (Bucharest: Theora Press, 2016), 2.
[4] Refer to Figure 1 in Annex.
[5] Andrew Vincent, *Theories of the State* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 13 – 15.

economic and cultural changes. In addition to this, institutions had to be developed that could provide domestic security and guarantee survival from foreign forces.[6]

In 1618, the Thirty Year War commenced as a result of religious civil wars, to maintain the power balance in Europe. The Treaty of Westphalia concluded the war and established the "principle of territorial sovereignty"[7]. Nations had the right to self–determination, being allowed to choose their political status, and develop, without any external influence, economically, socially and culturally. Moreover, the treaty outlined that its signatories should respect each other's territorial rights and not meddle in one's internal affairs. This has been further emphasized through the principle of equality of states which argued that regardless of the territorial size or political influence of countries, no territory had the right to control the internal affairs of smaller states.[8] It can be said that one of the main achievements of this period has been the separation of religious groups from the state institution which has led to improvements towards "secular tolerance"[9]. While wars did not stop from occurring since then, the cause has changed from "religion to politics"[10]. Considering the progressive nature of the treaty, it has undoubtedly been "a cornerstone of the modern state"[11] .

### 2.1.2. The Rise of the Nation–State

While the American Revolution has influenced many revolutions across the world, the French Revolution has genuinely redefined the concept of sovereignty where the 'people' were seen as the true basis of legitimation of states.[12] The main contribution of the revolution has been that the "people became the nation"[13], having access as citizens to inalienable rights. With the

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[6] Claudiu Craciun, *Theorizing the Success and Failure of the Modern State*, 3 – 5.
[7] Hassan Daud, "The Rise of the Territorial State and The Treaty of Westphalia", *Yearbook of New Zealand Jurisprudence*, vol. 9 (2016): 67.
[8] University of Oregon."The Peace of Westphalia", adopted date Oct 24 1648, Holy Roman Emperor, King of France and their respective Allies, art.31, 34, 36, accessed 12 April 2018, http://pages.uoregn.edu/dluebke/301ModernEurope/Treaty%20of%20Westphalia%20%5BExcerpts%5D.pdf.
[9] "The discovery of tolerance", The Economist, last modified December 13 2007, accessed February 15, 2018, https://www.economist.com/node/10281443.
[10] "The Peace of Westphalia – A Turning Point in Europe", The Watchtower, last modified 2004, https://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp–e/2004205#h=2.
[11] Hans, Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, (Caledonia: McGraw Hill Education, 2005*)*, 161.
[12] Peter Taylor, "The State as Container: Territoriality in the Modern World System"*, SAGE Journals* (June 1994): 105.
[13] Ibid.*,* 106.

reformist principles of "liberty, equality, fraternity"[14] people were free from the oppression created by the old monarchs. Furthermore, the foundation of a democratic society was formed where everyone is equal. Lastly, through fraternity, nationalism developed as the proletariat united to fight together to overthrow absolutism.[15] This resulted in the authority through religious claims of the monarch to be discredited, giving rise to the constitutional government.[16]

For the first time, political rights have been institutionalized and the "ideology of national citizenship"[17] has been accentuated. This resulted in groups of people starting to share a common culture and destiny.[18] In Benedict Anderson's words, these groups were an "imagined community"[19]. In short time, religious identity was replaced by national identity which was linked to the land where it developed, creating, therefore, a cultural container. This shift has redefined territoriality and the way borders are drawn. The land was not transferable anymore between states at the end of the war, as it has become the duty of the nation to defend the national homeland.[20] With these in mind, nationalism soon started to be promoted in every type of social institution of a country being seen as a useful tool to mobilise "citizens behind the state"[21]. One can say that the impact of the transformative liberal principles of the French revolution has been highly influential worldwide, especially in Western societies, empowering citizens of states through legal equality, individual liberty, and ethnic nationalism.[22]

### 2.1.3. **The New Global Order**

In the 20th century, the 'modern state' has further developed through multinational treaties which have been heavily enforced after the Second World War. With the foundation of the U.N, the sovereignty of states has been subjugated to international law to ensure global peace.[23] As of

[14] Otto Dan and John Dinwiddy, *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1988), 35.
[15] Ibid., 33.
[16] Ibid., 44.
[17] Roger Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992), 35.
[18] Peter Taylor, "The State as Container: Territoriality in the Modern World System"*,* 106.
[19] Benedict Anderson, *Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* 32.
[20] Peter Taylor, "The State as Container: Territoriality in the Modern World System", 106.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Akshita, Sharma, "Influence of the French Revolution", vol. (April 2017), 1, ttps://sksasc.somaiya.edu/media/pdf/spectrum%20news%20paper%20apr%2017.pdf
[23] "Rule of Law and Peace and Security", United Nations Rule of Law, last modified December 13 2007, accessed 17 April 2018, https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/rule–of–law–and–peace–and–security/.

1945, 141 new states have been formed as a result of their independence as former colonies or as previous Soviet republics.[24] In order to be recognized, these nations needed to declare the intentions of becoming an independent state and satisfy the international laws of the "*Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States*" from 1933. The rules of the Convention are that a country must exist within a defined territory, have a permanent population, have a government and be able to form bilateral relations with other sovereign nations.[25] Noteworthy is also, according to the General Assembly, that in case national authorities "fail to protect their populations"[26] the international community has the right to humanitarian intervention.

Nowadays, many new states that have been externally recognized are part of international organizations such as the U.N, NATO, EU and WTO which grant them status of being part of the global community, offering them a wide range of benefits such as protection under international law, mutual beneficial cooperation with other Members and decision making power when it comes to regional and global issues.[27]

## 2.2. Sociological Perspective of the 'Modern State'

### 2.2.1. Pluralism

One lens that has greatly contributed to the development of the 'modern state' is Pluralism which focuses on the distributive process of power and influence in a state. According to Pluralism, the state is only a neutral space where groups that have their own "interests, agendas and resources"[28] enter electoral contests to influence decision making through public policy. It is significant to observe that there is no all–powerful majority group in the state since power and resources are distributed across "all levels of society"[29]. To stop any majority group from taking over power within the state, Martin Smith (1990) proposed the formation of a legislative power

[24] Refer to Figure 2 in Annex.
[25] ILSA, "Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States," signed at December 26, 1933, Article 1, accessed 12 April 2018, https://www.ilsa.org/jessup/jessup15/Montevideo%20Convention.pdf.
[26] General Assembly Resolution, "Responsibility to protect," adopted 14 September 2009, A/RES/63/308, accessed 12 April 2018, http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/Resolution%20RtoP(2).pdf.
[27] Dukagjin Leka, "Challenges of State Sovereignty in the Age of Globalization", vol. 13, no. 2. (2017): 61 – 70.
[28] Craciun, *Theorizing the Success and Failure of the Modern State*, 6.
[29] Ibid.

which would regulate the interaction between associations by implementing checks and balances.[30] Another characteristic of pluralism is that it puts emphasis on civil rights such as the freedom of organization and expression. These freedoms are made possible through the democratic system in the country which allows regular elections and tolerates differences of opinion.[31]

Pluralism is very relevant to the discussion on the development of the 'modern state'. Today many states around the world are not controlled by one elite but by a multiplicity of groups. The presence of diverse groups with competing interest has led a democratic equilibrium within countries. Furthermore, besides emphasizing the freedoms of citizens, pluralism has also contributed to the engagement of the public in the political process. Whether this is in a representative, participatory or deliberative democracy citizens exercise their rights to vote, associate themselves with groups or form discussions to address differences of opinion in the government's decision making process.[32]

### 2.2.2. **Marxism**

Both Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1848) argued that social classes rival each other since the social order is achieved through the economic order.[33] They claim that before the development of the state, tribal societies were classless as the concept of the private property did not exist since production used communal resources that were shared with the community. Class divisions started to occur once there was a surplus production where the supplier got wealthier and formed a ruling economic and political class. Since the ruling class is exploiting their subordinates, class struggle inevitably starts to occur. Considering the adverse effects of class division, Marx and Engels asserted that the state should treat everyone equally by acting 'neutrally'. If the state is defending private property, it cannot be seen as an independent structure that acts in the interest of the public but only benefits the few. It transforms "universal

[30] Martin Smith, *Pluralism, Reformed Pluralism and Neopluralism: The Role of Pressure Groups in Policy–Making* (Brunel: Brunel University), 302 – 322.
[31] James Nickel, "Freedom of Expression in a Pluralistic Society", *Springer,* vol. 7, no. 3 (1988 – 1989): 286 – 293.
[32] Oliver Escobar, "Pluralism and Democratic Participation: What Kind of Citizen are Citizens Invited to be?", *Brill Rodopi*, vol. 14 (2017): 417 – 430.
[33] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto,* trans. Samuel Moore (Moscow: Progress Publishers, [1848] 1969), 26.

aims into another form of private interest"[34]. For this reason, the state cannot become the "vehicle for the pursuit of the 'common good' or 'public interest'"[35].

The Marxist tradition has contributed significantly to the evolution of the 'modern state' as it creates a strong relationship between "economy, state and power"[36]. This sociological perspective maintains that social order can be preserved through the redistribution of wealth. In its utopian world, private property is abolished and "capital is a collective product"[37]. The capital should be distributed through a "heavy progressive or graduated tax"[38]. One can say Marxian economics influenced the development of modern redistributive policies such as taxation to promote equality. Individuals with more income have higher taxes for the government to redistribute the societal wealth across more impoverished groups of the society.

### 2.2.3. **Weberian Ideal**

Weber was one of the first sociologists to define the 'modern state', the concept of which has been previously abstract. He defined it in terms of territoriality, legitimacy, and violence. According to him, the state dominates over the community whose members are born within the territory over which it rules. Its function is to benefit the general public and maintain law and order.[39] The legitimacy of the state is founded on "legal authority"[40] committing itself to a "code of legal regulations"[41]. Furthermore, the state has the capacity to use "monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force"[42] when necessary. As a "general category of political associations"[43], the administrative staff is the single political organization of the state that could use force to maintain order.

[34] Ibid., 35.
[35] Ibid., 49.
[36] Claudiu Craciun, *Theorizing the Success and Failure of the Modern State*, 6.
[37] Marx, and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, 23.
[38] Ibid., 26.
[39] Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. C. Wright Mills, Hans Gerth (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 91.
[40] David Held , "Central Perspectives of the modern state" *in The Idea of the Modern State* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press), 62.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, 78.
[43] Christopher Pierson, *The Modern State* (New York, Routledge, 1996), 6.

Weber has clearly left a mark on the development of the 'modern state'. His theories of territoriality, "monopoly of violence"[44] and legitimization are interlinked with today's bureaucracy apparatus which conducts various "administrative, judicial, coercive and extractive"[45] functions. For Weber (1922), a modern bureaucracy is a goal–oriented organization based on rational principles characterized by a well–defined hierarchy, division of labour and rules and regulations.[46] As a "unified analytical construct"[47] its functions are an "ideal–type"[48]. Weber's thoughts have later been used in the work of neo–Weberians such as Michael Mann (1993) who asserted that a state with a set of institutions maintains centralization in the "delimited territory over which it has binding powers"[49]. Theda Skocpol (1979) has further argued that states which are centralized are not only strong within their territory but are also autonomous in the international system.[50]

[44] Craciun, *Theorizing the Success and Failure of the Modern State*, 8.
[45] Andreas Anter, *Max Weber's Theory of the Modern State: Origins, Structure and Significance* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014) 64.
[46] Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Rother and Claus Wittich, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 217 – 220.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Max Weber, *Methodology of Social Sciences,* trans., ed. Edward Shils and Henry Finch (London: Routledge, [1949] 2011), 90.
[49] Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power. The Rise of Classes and Nation–States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)*, 1760–1914*, 55.
[50] Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions. A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*, 161 – 162.

# 3. Etymology of the 'Failed State' Concept

When looking nowadays into the Oxford Dictionary, the 'failed state' is defined as a state that has a weak political or economic system and whose "government is no longer in control"[51]. Of course, this is one of many definitions that have been used to describe various historical, economic and social aspects of underdeveloped states since the late 20th century. What is evident, however, from the work of scholars and rhetoric of policymakers, is that the 'failed state' is in an antithesis to the developments of the 'modern state' outlined in the previous chapter. Some aspects of the contemporary state either lack to some degree or are non–existent in the 'failed state'. Without a generally agreed upon definition of the 'failed state' and having the 'modern state' dictate the norm of a 'successful state', the foundation of this following chapter is laid for us. By looking at the evolution of the terminology in different periods of time as well as seeing how academics have aimed to define and analyse the notion, we will be able to critically evaluate the extent to which the 'failed state' concept is fallacious.

## 3.1. Evolution of the 'Failed State' Terminology

### 3.1.1. Inception of the Terminology in the Post–Colonial Discourse

At the start of the 20th century, the international system started to be unstable as a result of the power struggles between the European states. After the Second World War, many European colonies have gained their independence. As of 1945, there were 50 signatories to the United Nations Charter and by 1960 90 states were created.[52] The expansion of the international community has been everything else but positive as it was soon realized that many of the newly formed states were politically and economically unstable having a weak political authority or being in anarchy.

[51] "*Failed State",* Oxford Dictionaries , last modified 2018*,* accessed February 15, 2018, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/failed_state.
[52] Robert Rotberg, *Failed States in a World of Terror* (New York: Brookings Press, 2014), 127 – 140.

Although the term 'failed state' has existed before the 1990's, referred to by Robert H. Jackson (1987) in his work with the term "quasi"[53] states, and was later popularized by Madeline Albright in 1993[54], Gerald Herman and Steven Ratner were the ones who set the tone of the 'failed state' debate. In their widely referenced work "*Saving Failed States*" from 1993 the authors addressed the reason why the rapid increase in the number of nation states has resulted in many of them experiencing weakness. In their view, the issue with this development has been that the right of self–determination, which has been granted to the newly formed states, did not take into account their survivability in the long run. Since the colonial regimes have left behind a heritage which has destroyed the social structures of colonized states, affected countries were unable to develop the standards of the 'modern state'.[55]

### 3.1.2. Continuation of the Terminology in the Post–Cold War era

Herman and Ratner also believed that post–colonial states are not the single ones that could fail but also those which were created after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.[56] As of World War II until 1991 two hegemonic powers, the United States of America (USA) and the former Union of Soviet Socialists Republics (USSR) maintained the balance of the international system. In this period many states were suffering from internal weaknesses, whether this was due to lack of economic development, political corruption or infringement of human rights. These issues were, however, overlooked by these powers in order to maintain these states weaker in their sphere of influence.[57]

During the Cold War era, 'failed states' were not seen as a security threat by Western powers since they were "an external phenomenon in peripheral, faraway places"[58]. Instead, they were seen as an opportunity of influencing the outcomes of the war through proxy conflicts. For this reason, the two superpowers preserved the states as allies by supplying them with arms or

[53] Robert Jackson, *Quasi–States, Dual Regimes, and Neoclassical Theory: International Jurisprudence and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 2012*)*, 528.
[54] Madeleine Albright, " There Is a Reason to Be in Somalia There Is a Reason to Be in Somalia," New York Times, last modified 1993, accessed February 15, 2018 , https://www.nytimes.com/1993/08/10/opinion/yes–there–is–a–reason–to–be–in–somalia.html.
[55] Gerald Helman and Steven Ratner, "Saving Failed States"*, Foreign Policy* (Winter 1992 – 1993): 3 – 16.
[56] Ibid.*,* 4.
[57] Pinar Bilign and Adam Morton, "Historicising representations of 'failed states': beyond the cold–war annexation of the social sciences?", *Taylor & Francis*, no. 23 (2002), 55.
[58] Edward Newman, "Failed States and International Order: Constructing a Post–Westphalian World", *Taylor & Francis* (November 2009): 421 – 443, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13523260903326479.

keeping them by force through "ideology based power structures"[59]. By the end of the Cold War, the total number of states rocketed to 192 leaving "shallow–rooted regimes artificially in power"[60]. Yugoslavia is a great example of how an "artificial entity"[61] has been used as a "buffer state"[62] between East and West. What made the country become unstable has been the inability of the former leader Josip Tito to form a Yugoslav identity. This ultimately resulted in separatist tendencies and hostilities in the country due to ethnic differences which led to Yugoslavia's demise.[63]

### 3.1.3. Revival of the Terminology in the Post September 11 Debate

The current meaning of the 'failed state' has shifted after the 9/11 attacks which resulted in the concept being perceived as an existential threat. Ever since the attack, state failure has been seen as the key threat to the international order. This view is evidenced by the "Commission on Weak States" which argues that "failed governments generate instability"[64], pose a threat to their neighbours and "ultimately threaten US interests in building an effective international system"[65]. Moreover, the "US National Intelligence Strategy of the United States" maintains that 'failed states' are a "breeding grounds of international instability, violence, and misery"[66]. Furthermore, it was proposed by the "National Security Strategy of the United States" (NSS) in 2002 that the US has been threatened more by states that fail than those that conquer.[67] Statements of this kind resulted in the 'War on Terror' where the link between the collapse of states and the rise in global terrorism has been emphasized.

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[59] Daniela Thürer, "*The failed State" and international law", International Committee of the Red Cross,* no. 836 (December 1999), https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/article/other/57jq6u.htm.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Erik Faucompret, "The dismemberment of Yugoslavia and the European Union", University of Antwerp (April 2001): 1 – 34.
[62] Ibid., 3.
[63] Nenad Stevic, "The Nature of Ethnic Conflict During the Breakup of Yugoslavia", (MA diss., Prifysgol Abertawe Swansea University, 2015), 9 – 49.
[64] Commission on Weak States and US National Security, "On the Brink: Weak States and US National Security", *Centre for Global Development* (May 2004): 6, http://www.cgdev.org/doc/books/weakstates/Full_Report.pdf**.**
[65] Ibid.
[66] Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "The National Intelligence Strategy of the United States of America," (October 2005): 2, http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/policy/national/nis–usa_october2005.pdf.
[67] The White House, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," (September 2002): 1 – 35, https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf

This shift in the meaning of the terminology has enabled policymakers to justify policies to intervene in 'failed states' which have become "a primary target for Western state–building initiatives"[68]. An excellent example of a "failed state as a security threat"[69] is Afghanistan. After the fall of USSR, the US was interested in the remaining gas and oil of the former Soviet republics. Since Afghanistan had the best route for a pipeline, it has become of major geopolitical interest. Despite early discussions with the Taliban, the dynamic changed radically with the September 11 attacks. Before 2001 there was no international interest to intervene in the country regardless of the numerous human rights abuses. However, since the attacks, these abuses have been used in the rhetoric to justify the offensive intervention.[70] While prior to the 9/11 intervention the country was relatively stable under the control of the Taliban which managed to maintain some law and order and re–established a central government, today the country is weaker than ever before.[71]

## 3.2. Shift in the Definition of the 'Failed State'

### 3.2.1. Expansion of the Notion

One of the most accepted definition in the 'failed state' discourse can be found in "*Collapsed States*" by William Zartman (1995) where state failure is defined as the situation when "the basic functions of the state are no longer performed"[72]. He approached the 'failed states' debate from a different perspective by focusing on situations where states are unable to maintain their legitimacy analysing different cases studies in Africa to draw similarities on why states collapse. Zartman claims that the reason why state collapse is a result of them not being able to "perform the functions required for them to pass as states"[73]. He concludes that although the term of 'function' can vary, in essence, it relates to the "right to rule"[74]. This loss of the right

[68] Aidan Hehir, "The Myth of the Failed State and the War on Terror: A Challenge to the Conventional Wisdom", *Taylor and Francis,* (September 2007): 308, https://doi.org/10.1080/17502970701592256.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Amalendu Misra, *Afghanistan: The Labyrinth of Violence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 24 – 29.
[71] Hehir, "The Myth of the Failed State and the War on Terror: A Challenge to the Conventional Wisdom", 317 – 320.
[72] William Zartman, *Collapsed States: the disintegration and restoration of legitimate authority* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), 5.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid., 10.

to rule occurs when the state does not act anymore as a sovereign authority, institution or as a symbol of oneness.

His definition has been later criticized that it should not only relate to already 'failed states' due to civil war or anarchy as this does not take into account states which are failing to maintain their responsibilities in the territory over which they are sovereign. In this case, 'failing' or 'weak' states need to be distinguished from 'failed' ones. The first one is a phenomenon where the central government has a poor capacity to keep public order under control, is vulnerable to external threats and provides a low level of economic distribution and human welfare. The latter is completely unable to provide public services and have any central control over its territory.[75]

### 3.2.2. **Taxonomy of the Terminology**

While the expansion of the notion was generally accepted by scholars, it was needed to distinguish between the different degrees of state failure. Previously, in the article of Herman and Ratner "*Saving Failed States*" the authors did not assess the taxonomy of the term 'failed state' accurately. They claimed that Somalia and Liberia are the same cases arguing that both their "governmental structures have been overwhelmed by circumstances"[76] without discussing what these structures are in order to assess the difficulties of these states and how long would it take to rebuild them. Since not all states which are developing are suffering from the same degree of state failure, it was necessary not to put all underdeveloped states into one box but rather "situate them along a continuum"[77]. By distinguishing between states that do not fulfil any of the aforementioned criteria of a successful statehood and those that meet some of the criteria, one could assess the severity of the problem and intervene, if necessary, to aid the states in need.

One academic named Jean–Germain Gros (1996) attempted to develop a "global taxonomy of failed states"[78]. He plots a spectrum to distinguish between several degrees of state failure from extreme to more moderate. The first are those of which borders are internationally recognized, but there is no centralization as seen in Somalia. Furthermore, there are states which

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[75] Turkan Firinci Orman, "An Analysis of the Notion of a "Failed State"", *Red Fame* (November 2015): 78, http://redfame.com/journal/index.php/ijsss/article/view/1199/1229.

[76] Helman and Ratner, "Saving Failed States", 5.

[77] Jonathan Gros, "Towards a taxonomy of failed states in the New World Order: decaying Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda and Haiti", *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 17, no. 3 (September 1996): 457, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3993200.

[78] Ibid., 456.

authority is recognised by the majority of the international community, but its territory is under the judicial control of another country. Other types of states are a bit more moderate since they have "international juridical authority over a given territory"[79] with centralized authority. However, the leaders do not have the capacity to "exercise power in any meaningful way"[80] against possible counter–insurgency groups. Finally, there are states that may have all the necessary formal requirements of statehood according to Weber. Nonetheless, minority groups may not identify themselves with the majority. Stability within these communities is maintained through authoritarian means, and if there is an opportunity for a democratic opening, the minority will break up as soon as possible.[81]

With this spectrum, Gros observes characteristics of state weakness identifying five types of 'failed state': "anarchic, phantom, anaemic, captured and aborted"[82]. According to him 'anarchic states' do not have a centralised government and warlords fight to control parts of the territory. Similar to 'anarchic states' are 'phantom states' which exhibit limited authority in many areas. Another type are 'anaemic states' whose power has been taken by counter–insurgency groups or are unable to control its growing population due to the lack of modernity which burdens the effective control of the state. Besides these, there are also 'captured states' which have a strong centralised authority being controlled by the elites that only focus on the interest of the few. The last ones are 'aborted states' where states experienced failure even before fully becoming a state.

### 3.2.3. Quantitative Analysis and Categorisation of the Concept

It can be asserted that the distinction between 'weak state' and 'failed state' has been more symbolical than analytical. Hence, scholars could not solely rely on definitions to examine what 'failed states' are, being needed to find ways to measure them objectively. Donald Potter (2004) constructed in his work "*State Responsibility, Sovereignty, and Failed States*" a "model based on quantitatively based indicators"[83] where he classified states in terms of their functionality, being able to distinguish between 'weak', 'failing' or 'failed states'. He sees the sovereignty of the state as an internal characteristic where the people are provided with the necessary services and

[79] Ibid., 458.
[80] Ibid., 458.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid, 470.
[83] Donald Potter, "State Responsibility, Sovereignty, and Failed States", *Australian Parliamentary Press* (September 2004): 5 , https://trove.nla.gov.au/version/211271951.

as an external component that is used to form relationships with other states. According to Potter, states are responsible for providing "security, health and education, economic opportunity, good governance, law and order, and fundamental infrastructure requirements"[84]. Once states are unable to carry out these duties they start to fail.

Potter used the following indicators in his analysis: "Governance, Corruption, Economic, and Social Wellbeing"[85]. A numerical value is assigned to each indicator in order to rank states with the aggregated data in accordance with their strength. By using these four indicators, states can be assessed objectively to outline state responsibility placing them into three categories based on their strength.[86] The 'strong states' are in control of their territories and can deliver all the political goods needed at a high quality to their citizens. They are followed by 'failing' states which are weak due to geographical considerations, economic constraints, internal antagonism or external conflict. Lastly, 'failed states' do not meet any state responsibilities being deeply conflicted and often with ongoing civil unrest.[87]

Of course, Potter has not been the only one to have used this methodology. Notably, Valentin Cojanu and Alina–Irina Popescu (2007) have used three ways of measuring the level of state failure. The first has been the 'Governance Indicator' of the World Bank which takes indicators such as political stability, corruption, the effectiveness of government, the degree of lack of violence. It ranks countries according to six aspects of governance: voice and accountability, the absence of violence and political stability, government effectiveness, control of corruption and regulatory quality. Essentially, 'good governance', according to the World Bank, is having predictable policymaking, an executive branch that keeps government accountable for its actions and the ability to maintain the rule of law.[88] Furthermore, they have used the 'Failed State Index' of the Fund for Peace which uses political, economic, social and military indicators to rank states in terms of their vulnerability. From these indicators aspects such as democratic pressure, movement of refugees, unequal economic development across groups, sharp economic decline, the criminalization of the state and the rise of divided elites are

[84] Ibid., 2.
[85] Ibid., 5.
[86] Refer to Figure 3 in Annex.
[87] Potter, "State Responsibility, Sovereignty, and Failed States", 4.
[88] Valentin Cojanu and Alina Popescu, "Analysis of Failed States: Some Problems of Definition and Measurement", *The Romanian Economic Journal*, no. 25 (November 2007): 121 – 123, https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/6320833.pdf.

considered.[89] The last method of measurement has been the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) which uses 'Political Transformation' and 'Economic Transformation' as indices to assess the changing political management of the "market–based democracy"[90]. To obtain a score for 'Political Transformation' the mean value of criteria such as stateness, the rule of law and stability of democratic institutions is taken into consideration. As for the 'Economic Transformation' it is calculated by criteria such as economic performance, the level of socioeconomic development and the stability of currency and price.[91]

## 3.3. Criticism of the 'Failed State' Terminology

### 3.3.1. Umbrella term usage of the concept

One can say that due to the various definitions of the specific conditions of such a state, the 'failed state' can be considered an umbrella term that identifies a phenomenon. In the "post–Westphalian reality"[92] of the 21st–century academics and policymakers are generalizing the violence within 'collapsed states' by speculating that it may lead to inter–state wars. This neorealist perspective of focusing solely on the essential aspects of the international system, mainly on the security and insecurity between states, poses a serious flaw to the 'failed state' concept. Currently, there are more intrastate than interstate armed conflicts. This is greatly evidenced in Figure 4 which illustrates that since the Second World War there has been a steady increase in civil wars and a decline in interstate wars.[93]

Another point worth mentioning is the exaggeration and fallacy arguing that 'failed states' are a security threat due to the existence of terrorist groups. When considering the taxonomies which have been proposed by Gros and Potter one can say that since there are many meanings of state failure, different dynamics formed concerning the debate on terrorism. This can be greatly depicted by Figure 5 which displays the 20 most 'failed states' according to the FSI from 2006 compared to the list of the "Foreign Terrorist Organisations" (FTOs) made by the US Secretary

[89] Ibid, 124 – 125.
[90] Ibid., 125.
[91] Ibid., 125 – 128.
[92] Newman, "Failed States and International Order: Constructing a Post–Westphalian World", 432.
[93] Refer to Figure 4 in Annex.

of State.[94] What can be noticed, however, is that 13 out of 20 states listed in the FSI do not pose any terrorist threat. Hence, the validity of the hypothesis that 'failed states' are "breeding grounds"[95] for terrorist organisations is undermined. Moreover, there is also no correlation between how many FTOs are in a territory and the ranking of states in the FSI. This is evident in Figure 6 that shows countries that are ranked low on the FSI such as India or Israel contain, however, a high number of terrorist groups.[96] When taking these differences between states into consideration, it becomes clear that the validity of this hypothesis is challenged.

### 3.3.2. Valuational and Descriptive aspect of Taxonomies

It has been disputed that the use of the notion 'failed states' and its taxonomies are applied in an arbitrary fashion, discriminating upon underdeveloped states. This has been mentioned by many scholars such as Pinar Biligin and Adam Morton (2002) who state that former colonies are often represented in social sciences as 'incapable' and 'weak'. It is unfair, according to them, to compare the abilities of post–colonial states with that of Western ones which have had a longer time to develop their institutions. The terminologies range from 'anarchic states' in the case of Somalia to 'captured states' in Rwanda. Indeed these representations do address certain characteristic which can help understand the root of the problem in some countries. For instance, the term 'failed state' describes internal issues of a state whereas 'rouge states' is a threat to the international community through dangerous foreign policies. However, these representations only serve the political, economic or security interest of external powers.[97]

Another academic, Rosa Brooks (2005), views that 'failed states' not only emerge due to internal problems within a country but also due to the inequality created in the international system.[98] Her argument is expanded by Ralph Wilde (2003) who states that this inequality is created by political, economic or militarily pressure received externally.[99] Inequality between states occurs as a consequence of taxonomies which compares underdeveloped states with the

[94] Refer to Figure 5 in Annex.
[95] Hehir, "The Myth of the Failed State and the War on Terror: A Challenge to the Conventional Wisdom", 310.
[96] Refer to Figure 6 in Annex.
[97] Bilign and Morton, "Historicising representations of 'failed states': beyond the cold–war annexation of the social sciences?", 55 – 56.
[98] Rosa Ehrenreich Brooks, "Failed States, or the State as Failure?", *Georgetown Law Faculty Publications and Other Works* (2005): 159 – 1196, https://scholarship.law.georgetown.edu/facpub/1108.
[99] Ralph Wilde, "The skewed responsibility narrative of the "failed states' concept", *ILSA Journal of International & Comparative Law*, vol. 9 , iss. 2 (October 2016): 425 – 429, https://nsuworks.nova.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1430&context=ilsajournal.

ideal Weberian–state. By trying to find methods of measuring the degree of failed statehood, through its juxtaposition to the ideal liberal Western state principles, a discriminatory dynamic of 'us' and 'them' is created as a result.

### 3.3.3. **Fallacy of Quantitative Analysis**

It is evident that all the previously mentioned indices do not use a standard definition of state failure or the same methodology in the analysis of the concept. Despite these differences in measurement and definitions, most of the research conducted on this topic has focused on the dysfunctional aspect of the states concentrating primarily on lack of effectiveness of institutions. Besides being patronizing towards underdeveloped states, the sources of the indices used for the analysis of state failure also tend to be biased resulting in an analytical discrepancy in the cause and effect. This is so since analytical approaches mostly focus on indicators of state strength which are measurable and material instead of using a value system.

Moreover, the indices used have been manually created by individuals being improved continuously and adapted over time. Even the authors of these indices claim that there are many standard errors in their results since many variables have been ignored depending on one's interpretation of the 'failed state' concept.[100] This results in many countries being analysed with similar indicators to appear in different ranks in the indices. While some states appear very high in some rankings other are absent altogether. What seems to be similar amongst all the three indices used by Cojanua and Popescu is that the following states are seen amongst the weakest: Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan. Considering all the fallacies of the quantitative analysis of 'failed states', the rationalization of the concept only leads to biased estimates that further continue the discriminatory usage of the terminology.

[100] Cojanu and Popescu, "Analysis of Failed States: Some Problems of Definition and Measurement", 114 – 128.

# 4. Why Nations Fail: The Case of Afghanistan

As previously seen the assumptions from the 'failed state' literature have shown us different aspects of the debate such as the focus on capabilities, degrees of state failure or classification through indices. While all these previous arguments provide us with insights into the typology of states, they do not explain in detail why states have failed to begin with. In this section, the focus will be laid on theories of state failure which will be later applied and critically analysed in the context of the quintessential 'failed state' of the 21st century, Afghanistan.

## 4.1. Theories of State Failure

### 4.1.1. Geography Hypothesis

Traditionally geographic factors have been used to answer the question of why some countries are more developed than others. One of the very first scholars to address this question through the geography hypothesis was Montesquieu (1748) arguing in his work "*The Spirit of the Laws"* that the behaviour of people is influenced by environment.[101] For him, people living in colder climates are more "vigorous"[102] , "courageous"[103] and "cunning"[104] whereas those in warmer areas are cowardly, slothful and politically apathetic. He also added that hot climate makes individuals accept despotism and authoritarianism which impedes development.[105] A further important contribution to the debate has been provided by Diamond (1997) who used the geographic effects on economic outcomes. For Diamond, geography is the main determinant whether a country is rich or will be poor. He maintains that some societies were able to acquire more resources and new technologies due to the geographic conditions of the region in which they resided in.[106]

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[101] Charles de Secondat Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws: A Compendium of the First English Edition*, trans. David Wallace, (California: University of California Press, [1748], 1977), 244 – 252.
[102] Ibid., 244.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid., 48.
[106] Jared Diamond, J. *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (New York: W.W.Norton, 1999), 176 – 191.

More recent literature sees two geographic factors affecting growth. The first is the distance from the equator as wealthier countries are usually located in temperate zones whereas poor countries can be discovered in the tropics. Jeffrey Sachs (2002) postulated the idea that infectious diseases such as malaria are more likely to be found in tropical zones of the world.[107] He found that malaria is correlated with the negative economic and social costs on the population residing in tropical areas.[108] According to Sachs (2001), malaria does not only have demographic consequences but also stops children from attending school and can have severe damages on cognitive abilities. Moreover, high child mortality leads to high fertility rates in order to have some children survive diseases. The consequences of this are the limited role in society for women who benefit from less education, employment and political participation in such circumstances. Also, high fertility rates result in families spending less on their children's education.[109] The second factor has been outlined by Limao and Venable (2001) which argued that landlocked countries are disadvantaged in geographic isolation due to costs in transportation and bad infrastructure.[110] This makes trade more difficult, especially when the neighbours are underdeveloped and cannot provide "integrated transport networks"[111] or transit agreements which can lead to a higher trade volume.

### 4.1.2. **Institutional Hypothesis**

All the terminologies discussed in the previous chapter describe state failure as the inability to "perform the functions required for them to pass as states"[112] or maintain "domestic peace, law and order, and good governance"[113]. In essence, these descriptions identify 'failed states' as either being incapable and/or not willing to provide minimum civil service to its population.[114] It seems that scholars while having different descriptions of what the state is and is not, surround the notion that a state must be able to provide welfare, law and order, and security. Daron

[107] Refer to Figure 7 in Annex.
[108] Refer to Figure 8 in Annex.
[109] Jeffrey Sachs et al., "The Geography of Poverty and Wealth. Scientific American", *Scientific American* (March 2001): 70 – 75, 10.1038/scientificamerican0301–70.
[110] Nuno Limao, Anthony J. Venables, "Infrastructure, Geographical Disadvantage and Transport Cost", *The World Bank Development Research Group Trade* (December 1999): 1– 39.
[111] Ibid., 3.
[112] Zartman, *Collapsed States: the disintegration and restoration of legitimate authority,* 5.
[113] Robert Jackson, *The Global Covenant: Human Conduct in a World of States*(Oxford: Oxford Press, 2003), 296.
[114] James Hill, *Nigeria Since Independence: Forever Fragile?*(New York: Palgrave McMillian, 2012), 10.

Acemoglu and James Robinson (2001) argue that political institutions directly influence economic development. For them, geography also affects development, however, only indirectly as it determines where institutions are established. They assert that the level of disease in a country was interrelated with the settler mortality during the period of colonization. Essentially, the higher mortality rate, the more discouraged were the European colonists from settling, implementing therefore poor institutions that affected the economic development of the country they resided in.[115] In the book "*Why Nations Fail*" the authors differentiate between inclusive and extractive institutions. Inclusive institutions enforced property rights and encouraged investment in new technologies, resulting in more income and better human welfare. They are also a pluralistic system which protects individual rights. Moreover, through centralization, they establish "law and order"[116] and create "an inclusive market economy"[117]. In contrast, extractive institutions have bad economic policies and regulations which cause poor growth. In such a system the elites extract the resources of the many and hold all the power to themselves.[118] These settlements did not arise naturally as settlers would fight for these institutions to be implemented against the wishes of the country they resided in.[119] The European colonialism ultimately led to "institutional reversal"[120] in the countries under their rule. While former colonies such as Australia or the United States, where institutions of private property and law and order have been established by colonialists, form the basis of their present–day institutions, extractive institutions have not led to "new states"[121] but rather to "successors to the colonial regime"[122].

[115] Daron Acemoglu et al., "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation", *The American Economic Review*, vol. 91, no. 5 (December 2001): 1373 – 1375, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2677930 .
[116] Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2003), 80.
[117] Ibid., 430.
[118] Ibid., 70 – 91.
[119] Daron Acemoglu et al., "*The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation"*, 1374.
[120] Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, "Reversal of Fortune: Geography and Institutions in the Making of the Modern World Income Distribution", *The MIT Press*, vol. 117, no. 4 (November 2002): 2, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4132478.
[121] Daron Acemoglu et al., "*The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation"*, 1376.
[122] Ibid.

## 4.2. Reasons of State Failure in Afghanistan

### 4.2.1. Unfortunate Regional Geography

Afghanistan is a country situated in south–central Asia. With an area of 647,500 $km^2$, its neighbours are Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, China, Iran, and Pakistan. Its capital is located in the eastern central area of the country.[123] The country is "completely landlocked"[124] with the Arabian Sea being the nearest coast. The main reason why Afghanistan is landlocked is its very mountainous landscape which covers two–thirds of the country.[125] Its central mountain is the Hindu Kush which separates the southern plateau, consisting mostly of deserts, with the Registan being the largest one.[126] As a matter of fact, one–sixth of its landscape is made of deserts which is inhabitable.[127] Afghanistan's landlocked nature has prevented it from achieving its trade potential since it lacks infrastructure which is very difficult and costly to implement.[128] This results in Afghanistan's trade costs with Central Asia to be very high having tariffs over 150% for its partners.[129] The consequence of this has been a trade deficit for the country with imports totaling $3.77B in 2016.[130]

Afghanistan's poverty today is mostly attributed to its decreasing agricultural productivity. For over a decade Afghanistan's rural population has been continuously stagnating.[131] Moreover, the agricultural growth has also been constantly fluctuating.[132] These trends reflect that poverty is increasing in rural areas in the country.[133] Besides the arid climate contributing to this decline,

[123] Edward Girardet and Walter Jonathan, *Afghanistan* (Kabul: Jehon Printing Press, 2006), 133.
[124] Technology Integration Division, "Afghanistan in Perspective: An Orientation Guide"*, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center* (September 2012): 2102, http://fieldsupport.dliflc.edu/products/cip/Afghanistan/afghanistan.pdf.
[125] Refer to Figure 9 in Annex.
[126] Technology Integration Division, "Afghanistan in Perspective: An Orientation Guide"*,* 2102.
[127] Saba Daud, "Afghanistan: Environmental degradation in a fragile ecological setting", *Taylor and Francis*, vol.8, iss. 4 (June 2009): 281, https://doi.org/10.1080/13504500109470086.
[128] UNESCAP, "Afghanistan and Central Asia: Strengthening Trade and Economic Ties" (2016): 14, http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Afghanistan%20and%20Central%20Asia–Strengthening%20Trade%20and%20Economic%20Ties.pdf.
[129] Refer to Figure 10 in Annex.
[130] Refer to Figure 11 in Annex.
[131] Refer to Figure 12 in Annex.
[132] Refer to Figure 13 in Annex.
[133] Refer to Figure 14 in Annex.

as the lack of rainfall[134] only makes 12 percent of its land arable[135], the environmental crisis has also been man–made. The deregulated use of natural resources, especially wood from forests, has led to desertification. With 70 percent of the forests being cut down, the soil has eroded, and soil fertility has decreased.[136] The decline in forest productivity has pushed farmers to cultivate opium instead.[137] According to the "United Nations Office on Drug and Crimes" (UNODC), 90 percent of all the world's opium is supplied by Afghanistan.[138] The result of this has been further degradation of the once fertile land.

Another point worth mentioning is that the life expectancy in Afghanistan is under 63 years which is below today's world standards.[139] Many factors have contributed to this estimate. Apart from the lack of infrastructure for sanitation, affordable health care and available medication, Afghanistan has "the second highest number of malaria cases in the Eastern Mediterranean"[140] the cause of which originates in mosquito–infested river settlements. Besides HIV and tuberculosis malaria is the largest factor of death in the country.[141]

### 4.2.2. **Extractive Institutions**

As stated before, after the Cold War many governments plunged into civil war, especially in developing nations where the concept of sovereignty was vague and there was a lack of political authority. After this period, Afghanistan was one of the many states which lacked support from the international community after the Cold War. As of 2006, Afghanistan has shifted in the Failed States Index from rank 10 to 9[142] and currently, the Afghan people view their government as "inept, corrupt, brutal, or all three"[143]. One principal issue in the countries is that the political authority in the region is absent since the Taliban have filled in the power vacuum left by the

[134] Refer to Figure 15 in Annex.
[135] Refer to Figure 16 in Annex.
[136] "Environmental crisis looms as conflict goes on", IRIN, last modified July 2007, accessed 12 April 2018, http://www.irinnews.org/report/73481/afghanistan–environmental–crisis–looms–conflict–goes.
[137] Refer to Figure 17 in Annex.
[138] UNODC, "World Drug Report" (2010): 37, https://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr/WDR_2010/1.2_The_global_heroin_market.pdf.
[139] Refer to Figure 18 in Annex.
[140] "Environmental crisis looms as conflict goes on", IRIN, last modified July 2007, accessed 12 April 2018, http://www.irinnews.org/report/73481/afghanistan–environmental–crisis–looms–conflict–goes.
[141] Refer to Figure 19 in Annex.
[142] Refer to Figure 20 in Annex.
[143] Daniel Byman, "The case against involvement in Afghanistan", Brookings, last modified September 2017, accessed February 15, 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order–from–chaos/2017/09/05/the–case–against–involvement–in–afghanistan/ .

Soviet Union.[144] Despite the defeat of the Taliban at the end of 2001 and the establishment of the Islamic Republic in 2004, the influence of the government is currently undermined as the group is controlling over 50 percent of the entire territory.[145] There is also no central authority in rural parts of Afghanistan as tribal leaders are ruling many parts of the country.[146]

The partial defeat of the Taliban presented the international community with the opportunity of shaping the Afghan state in a "liberal democratic mold"[147]. During this period the country has had democratic, developments and its political institutions were gradually rebuilt. The problem, however, with this external intervention is that at the moment the Afghan government mostly survives on international aid and foreign direct investment which is not invested into infrastructure, such as public services, since the majority of the funds only benefit NGOs and international officials.[148] The consequence of this is that political institutions and politicians are perceived as weak by the people in the country. Regardless of this, the power of the Afghan elite has been continuously growing. The group that currently controls the majority of power in Afghanistan are the technocrat elites who have become powerful after 2001, obtaining resources through positions in the government and connections with international actors.With increased political power they have manipulated elections in their favour and have caused widespread corruption.[149] Today Afghanistan is viewed as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. According to the "Corruption Perception Index" (CPI) of Transparency International, Afghanistan has been listed in 2017 on the 177th place in terms of the level of how serious the corruption is in the country.[150] In the country, most bribes are given to officials in the public sector.[151] The main negative effects that result from corruption as in Afghanistan are limitations

[144] Misra, *Afghanistan: The Labyrinth of Violence*, 61 – 65.
[145] Refer to Figure 21 in Annex.
[146] Refer to Figure 22 in Annex.
[147] Sussane Schmeidel, "The contradictions of democracy in Afghanistan: elites, elections and 'people's rule' post–2001", *Taylor and Francis*, vol. 16, iss. 6 (December 2016): 577, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14678802.2016.1248427.
[148] "The hand that feeds", Economist, last modified 2012, accessed February 15, 2018 , https://www.economist.com/node/21558635
[149] Antonio Giustozzi, "'Good' State vs. 'Bad' Warlords? A Critique of State–Building Strategies in Afghanistan", *Crisis Research Centre LSE* (October 2004): 7 – 12, http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/13314/1/wp51.pdf.
[150] Refer to Figure 23 in Annex.
[151] Refer to Figure 24 in Annex.

to public services[152], lack of economic development and exclusion of citizens from the decision–making process which ultimately further develops superficial political institutions.[153]

While the performance of the government and corruption remain one of the most vital issues for Afghanistan, insecurity is seen as the biggest issue the country is currently facing.[154] According to the Asia Foundation, 70 percent[155] of Afghans "fear for their personal safety"[156]. This is so since as of 2017 there have been over 4,000 civilians deaths due to terrorism in the country.[157] The Taliban are responsible for the majority of this incident, increasing the frequency of the attacks each year since 2005.[158] So far, the Afghan National Army (ANA) has proved inefficient in recuperating the territorial gains of the Taliban in the country. Moreover, the current Afghan government is too weak to establish a "political outreach and reconciliation with Taliban"[159].

## 4.3. Analysis of Theories of State Failure in Afghanistan

### 4.3.1. Geographic Hypothesis

While there are indicators that geography may affect economic outcomes, the channel of causality is being challenged in the debate on the reasons for state failure.[160] This is so since the geography hypothesis does not provide a robust explanatory value for the correlation between economic development and geographic factors as it omits a multitude of variables. This is evident in Montesquieu's work where he argues that nature is the primary factor that influences

[152] Refer to Figure 25 in Annex.
[153] Schmeidel, "The contradictions of democracy in Afghanistan: elites, elections and 'people's rule' post–2001", 576.
[154] Refer to Figure 26 in Annex.
[155] Refer to Figure 27 in Annex.
[156] Zachary Warren et al. "Afghanistan in 2016: A Survey of the Afghan People", *The Asia Foundation* (2016): 7 , https://asiafoundation.org/wp–content/uploads/2016/12/2016_Survey–of–the–Afghan–People_full–survey.Dec2016.pdf.
[157] Refer to Figure 28 in Annex.
[158] Richard Ghiasy, "The Afghan people: Observing nearly 40 years of violent conflict", *Stockhom International Peace Research institute,* last modified 5 October 2017, accessed 12 April 2017, https://www.sipri.org/commentary/blog/2017/afghan–people–observing–nearly–40–years–violent–conflict.
[159] Suredini Wijeyaratne, "Afghanistan: A Study on the Prospects for Peace"*, Canadian Council for International Co–operation*, (March 2008): 2, http://www.ccic.ca/_files/en/what_we_do/002_peace_2008–03_afghanistan_study.pdf.
[160] Nathan Nunn and Diego Puga, "Ruggedness: The Blessing of Bad Geography in Africa," *National Bureau of Economic Research*, no. 14918 (Aprile 2009): 14, http://www.nber.org/papers/w14918.pdf

societal development affirming that "the empire of climate is the first of all empires"[161]. While his thoughts were indeed progressive at the time, since he did not see the lack of development in countries due to biological factors, he still failed to explain why countries have started to grow and did not do so before. Afghanistan is a clear evidence for a country which was previously very underdeveloped, however, its economy has been gradually recovering. According to the World Bank, its GDP has increased since 2002 from $4.1B to $19.5B.[162] With the countries accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2016, the country has been integrated into the international market benefiting from international and cross–border trade.[163] With this in mind, it can be said that Montesquieu's approach is rather deterministic since he solely concentrates on environmental circumstances excluding as a result institutional or external factors. The same can also be said about Diamond's work as, according to him, a country like Afghanistan would rarely trade with its neighbours due to its geography. Nonetheless, with improvements in its institutions and increased international aid, the country has gradually become a regional trader of goods. [164]

While proponents of the institutional hypothesis claim that geography only indirectly affects development, those in favour of the geography hypothesis, such as Sachs or Limao, argue that it has direct effects on "both income levels and institutions"[165] through agricultural productivity, the degree of landlockedness and level of disease in a country. However, the issue with their arguments is that they are too general. Geography may be a factor in some countries, although over time their situation would have improved through agricultural productivity and may have adapted to different industries through technological developments. Despite a decrease in agricultural productivity and Afghanistan's dependence on opium production, it has been estimated by the Pentagon that the country has a mineral wealth of around $900 billion. If Afghanistan starts investing in the right mining infrastructure, the country has the potential of

[161] Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws: A Compendium of the First English Edition*, 565.
[162] Refer to Figure 29 in Annex.
[163] Karimi Nasrat, "Will WTO membership boost trade and investment in land–locked Afghanistan?", International Growth Centre, last modified 25 March 2016, accessed February 22, https://www.theigc.org/blog/will–wto–membership–boost–trade–and–investment–in–land–locked–afghanistan/
[164] The World Bank, "Afghanistan Diagnostic Trade Integration Study DTIS", no. 70645 (November 2012), 5.
[165] Lisa J. Piergallini, "An Empirical Investigation of Montesquieu's Theories on Climate," review of *The Spirit of Laws: A Compendium of the First English Edition,* by Charles de Secondat Montesquieu, *International Journal of Economics and Management Engineering*, 2016, 2021.

becoming one of the world's top exporters of lithium.[166] Furthermore, when it comes to countries being landlocked, nations like Switzerland may flourish due to their prosperous neighbours.[167] In Afghanistan's case, its leaders are currently trying to exploit Afghanistan's geographic strategic position to transform it from a 'landlocked country' to one of economic cooperation becoming an essential transit route for its regional neighbours in Asia and creating increased stability.[168] Noteworthy is that as of 2017 Afghanistan's exports have gradually increased to $596.45M despite its negative trade balance.[169]

As for diseases that cause poverty, there is evidence for reverse causality. With 36 percent of the people in Afghanistan living in poverty, one reason being due to war, many parts of the countries currently lack "good sanitation and clean water"[170]. It has been approximated that "less than half the population"[171] can access clean drinking water. This resulted in the country having one of the highest infant mortality rates worldwide.[172] These facts contradict Sachs' thesis as well since diseases are not the main determinant of underdevelopment.

### 4.3.2. **Institutional Hypothesis**

Many scholars have criticized the reversal of fortune thesis of Acemoglu and Robinson claiming that the methodology used is flawed in the determination of causality of institutions for societal development. When applying their theory in Afghanistan's case, the authors seem to be providing a Western narrative that "democracy and prosperity go hand in hand"[173] and that without democratization authoritarian regimes will not be able to develop economically. This is a simplistic narrative which does not explain why some countries have developed and others have not. By solely focusing on political institutions as the main determinant of economic growth they

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[166] SIGAR, "Afghanistan's Mineral, Oil, and Gas Industries: Unless U.S. Agencies Act Soon to Sustain Investments Made, $488 Million in\Funding is at Risk", (April 2015): 1, https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/SIGAR–15–55–AR.pdf.

[167] Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion. Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can be Done About it* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 54.

[168] Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, *Afghanistan's Political Stability: A Dream Unrealised* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009*),* 125.

[169] Refer to Figure 30 in Annex.

[170] "Beyond the War: Poverty in Afghanistan"*,* ChildFund, last modified 20 May 2013, accessed February 22, 2018, https://www.childfund.org/Content/NewsDetail/2147489772/.

[171] Ibid.

[172] Refer to Figure 31 in Annex.

[173] Jeffrey D. Sachs, 2012. "Government, Geography, and Growth, A case study of Afghanistan", review of *Why Nations Fail,* by Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, *Foreign Affairs*, October 2012.

are excluding a multitude of factors such as natural resources, technological discoveries, and geopolitics. Indeed political institutions can explain the differences between the development of countries within a similar geography as in the case of North and South Korea. This is not suitable, however, in regions with different geographical conditions. Afghanistan has always been at a geographic disadvantage when compared to other nations lacking centralization, due to its landlocked nature and being targeted out of geopolitical reasons by external forces.[174]

One can argue that the fortune in Afghanistan has not been reversed by external interventions but in fact, worsened since the country was in poverty before the Soviet invasion in 1979.[175] While the reversal may have happened in some countries, this phenomenon cannot be generalized on a global level. Furthermore, the argument of the authors that the main determinant for economic development is private property rights is incorrect. This is so since many countries developed successfully before private property institutions emerged. Erik Reinert (2006) argues that economic development determines the type of institution and not vice–versa.[176] For Afghanistan, as of 2002, it has experienced "remarkable growth"[177] with a yearly increase of nine percent until 2012. During this period the country has opened schools for 9.2 million students, of which 39 percent were female. It has been reported that there is a definite interrelationship between education and income level in Afghanistan as 56.6 percent of people with basic education earn an income.[178] Hence, the thesis has limited explanatory power in showing that private property is positively correlated with the growth in GDP when investments in infrastructure such as education are evidence to the contrary.

Lastly, the development of countries through history is much more complicated and should therefore not only be attributed to property rights. The two authors should also not oversimplify history by dividing colonies in "settler and non–settler"[179]. Their linear model[180] where European

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[174] Enayatulla Adel, "Understanding and Explaining Corruption" (MA diss., Sodertors University, 2016), 2 – 3.
[175] Sanghamitra Bandyopadhyay and Elliott Green, "The Reversal of Fortune Thesis Reconsidered", review of *Why Nations Fail,* by Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, *The Suntory Centre*, 2016, 1 – 25.
[176] Erik Reinert, "Does wealth entirely depend on inclusive institutions and pluralist politics"*, r*eview of *Why Nations Fail,* by Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, *Technology Governance and Economic Dynamics*, July 2012, 6 – 20.
[177] Gabriel Dominguez , "*Afghan economy at a crossroads*", DW, last modified 25 March 2014, acessed February 20, 2018, http://www.dw.com/en/afghan–economy–at–a–crossroads/a–17477269.
[178] Razia Stanikzai, *"Education a 'Beacon of Hope' in Afghanistan*,*"* The Asia Foundation, last modified December 7 2016, accessed 12 April 2018, https://asiafoundation.org/2016/12/07/education–beacon–hope–afghanistan/.
[179] Ingrid Harvold Kvangraven and Collin Constantine, "How Nations Succeed – A Review of the Reversal of Fortune Thesis", review of *Why Nations Fail,* by Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, *Researchgate,* February 2015, 31.

settlements would establish in terms of mortality rates inclusive institutions that would foster in their current form prosperity and development in the country. The fallacy of this argument is that historically Europeans would settle in environments with diseases, as was the case in the Caribbean, as long the economic returns were positive. In addition to this, colonists did not always bring inclusive institutions in every disease–free region. This has been evident in the US South where slavery has been promoted.[181] In the case of Afghanistan, despite it being a landlocked country with a dry climate and high levels of malaria, external forces still intervened in the region out of geopolitical and economic interest.

[180] Refer to Figure 32 in Annex.
[181] Jeffrey D. Sachs, "Reply to Acemoglu and Robinson's Response to my Book Review", review of *Why Nations Fail,* by Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, Jeffrey Sachs, December 2012, 7.

# 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that the 'failed state' concept is Western–centric since it is being placed in stark opposition to the principles of the 'modern state' which stem from Western political thought. As a standard for newly formed countries, today nations are required to be a territorial container, a cultural container and involved in the international community in order to be considered a 'modern state'. The issue with these requirements is that they are unrealistic. These imposed Western standards are idealistic since the historical process towards modernity for our contemporary state has developed gradually over centuries. After the independence of colonial countries and former Soviet republics which formerly existing under extractive institutions, these new countries simply did not have the time and capabilities, that Western states had, to develop inclusive institutions. Moreover, with regards to the mentioned sociological perspectives, they all contradict each other by focusing on one aspect of the government. For instance, Pluralism focuses on the achievement of a democratic equilibrium through the multiplicity of groups, whereas Marxism argues that social order can be achieved through the redistribution of welfare. Max Weber contradicts both of them since he concentrates on the institutionalization and infrastructure of the state instead of groups or classes competing for the decision making power of the government. While these historical milestones and sociological perspectives have undoubtedly brought many developments to contemporary states such as territorial sovereignty, nationalism, citizenship, opportunities to conduct bilateral relations, multiplicity of groups, redistributive welfare and the public bureaucracy, it remains clear that the standard set is very difficult to be met by underdeveloped countries since it is based on narratives and contradicting ideals.

The 'failed state' debate is further characterized by changes in its meaning across the decades depending which narrative will advantage external actors most. Shifting from periods when extractive colonies were seen as a threat only to themselves and Soviet states were regarded as 'artificial entities', now 'failed states' are seen as a threat to the international community. Furthermore, various terminologies have been used by academics to define the concept. While they are employed in different contexts over the years, their similarity is the

discussion of underdeveloped states not being able to become as developed as 'modern states'. Not only does this create a discriminatory dynamic where countries fear entering in bilateral relations with 'failed states' but also leads to exaggerated claims which justify the interventionist actions of external actors under the pretext of fighting against international security threats such as terrorism. As a matter of fact, nowadays there are more intrastate than interstate wars. Additionally, the data gathered on 'failed states' is inaccurate as indices contradict each other when compared due to various variables used undermining, therefore, interventionist claims. When it comes to explaining the reasons for the underdevelopment of a state, Afghanistan has served in this dissertation as an example for many underdeveloped states that are considered 'failed' today. It goes without saying that to some degree it does not meet the standards of the 'modern state'. The roots of its problems are more institutional than geographic related since many of the issues in the country are infrastructural. Besides not benefiting the general public with basic services, the state has proven unable to implement regulations such as bans on deforestation or opium trade. This goes against the Weberian ideal of a goal-orientated and rational bureaucracy. Moreover, the country lacks centralization not being able to defend itself from external interventions or from the Taliban, not meeting, therefore, the Westphalian principle of territorial sovereignty or the Weberian "monopoly of violence"[182]. Afghanistan also lacks a feeling of oneness due to the elitism in the country which undermines pluralism and civic rights through corruption resulting in higher inequality. While it is clear that Afghanistan deals with geographic and institutional issues, the hypothesis applied in its context have shortcomings. Indeed they provide some explanatory value, however, their channel of causality is challenged as a result of their monocausal and deterministic claims. The geographic hypothesis neglects signs of reverse causality whereas the institutional hypothesis relies too much on certain variables. Both of them do not take into account possible developments in an underdeveloped state such as Afghanistan.

When considering all the points mentioned, one must recognize the challenges of our monocausal world. It is impossible to agree on a universal definition of the 'failed state' concept since the notion is constantly changing in meaning being subject to the forever evolving environment of the international community and to the interpretation of scholars and policymakers who focus on specific variables. Finding the reasons for underdevelopment is

[182] Craciun, *Theorizing the Success and Failure of the Modern State*, 8.

equally difficult since the variables used also lead to discrepancies and reductionist generalisations. Doubtlessly, Afghanistan currently faces major developmental issues, both in terms of its geography and institutions, being easily labelled by academics and policymakers with terminologies and categorized through indices. However, the usage of umbrella terminology and inaccurate categorization, which is further strengthened through the explanations of underdevelopment theories, leads to severe consequences such as justifications for interventions or discrimination of not entering into bilateral relations which hinder a state's development. It becomes therefore necessary for us always to be sceptical in the 'failed state' debate in order to recognize the extent of the fallacy of the 'failed state' concept.

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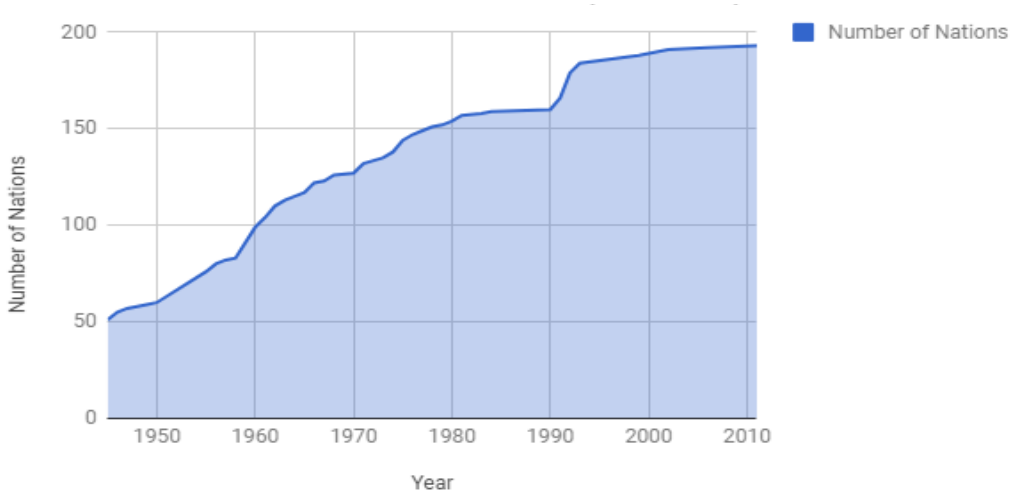
# Annex

***Figure 1:*** European borders during the 14th century.

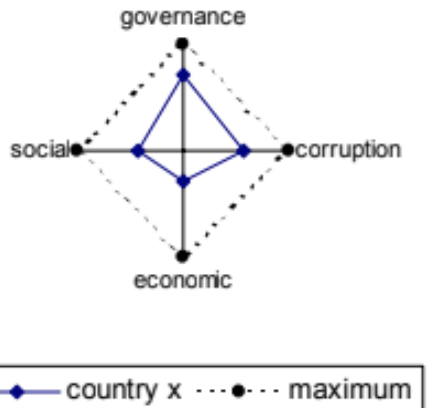

***Source:*** EmmersonKent, 2018.

***Figure 2:*** Growth in the United Nations Membership, 1945 – present.



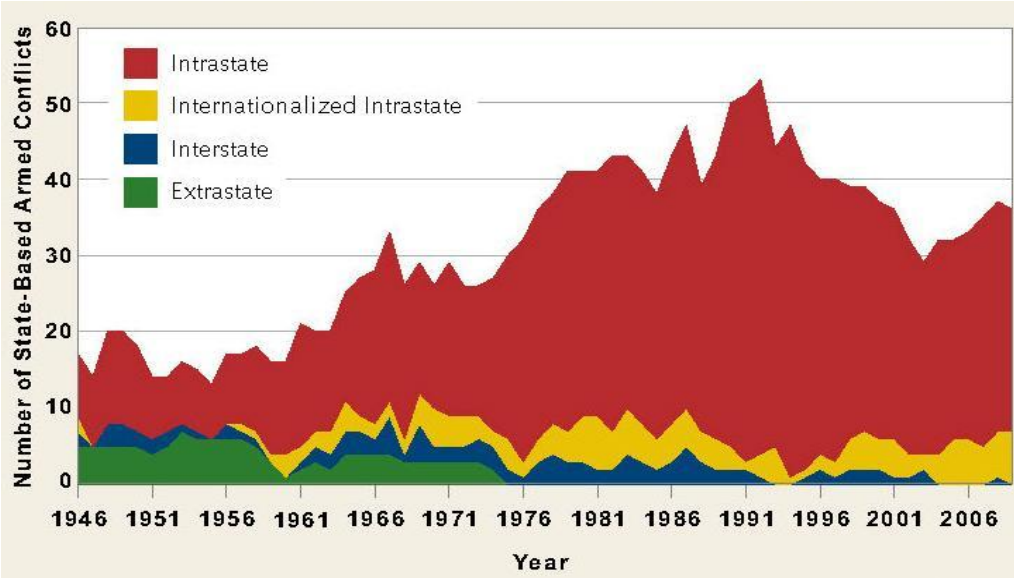

***Source:*** Adapted from United Nations, 2018.

***Figure 3*:** Sample of Potter's State Strength Diamond.




***Source*:** Potter, D.W., 2004.

***Figure 4*:** Trends in State–Based Conflicts by Type, 1946–2009.




***Source:*** ETH Zurich, 2012.

***Figure 5*:** Foreign Terrorist Organizations and the Failed State Index.

| Failed State Index | State | Number/Name of Group(s)[4] |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sudan | (1) al-Qaeda |
| 2 | DRC | (0) |
| 3 | Ivory Coast | (0) |
| 4 | Iraq | (5) Abu Nidal Organization, al-Qaeda organization in the land of the two rivers, Ansar al-Sunnah, Mujahedin-e-Khalq, Palestine Liberation Front |
| 5 | Zimbabwe | (0) |
| 6 | Chad | (0) |
| 7 | Somalia | (1) al-Qaeda |
| 8 | Haiti | (0) |
| 9 | Pakistan | (6) al-Qaeda, Harakat ul-Mujahidin, The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba |
| 10 | Afghanistan | (5) Al-Gama'a Al-Islamiyya, al-Qaeda, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, The Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group |
| 11 | Guinea | (0) |
| 12 | Liberia | (0) |
| 13 | CAR | (0) |
| 14 | North Korea | (0) |
| 15 | Burundi | (0) |
| 16 | Yemen | (1) al-Qaeda |
| 17 | Sierra Leone | (0) |
| 18 | Burma | (0) |
| 19 | Bangladesh | (1) al-Qaeda |
| 20 | Nepal | (0) |

***Source*:** Hehir, A., 2007.

***Figure 6*:** State containing most Foreign Terrorist Organizations.

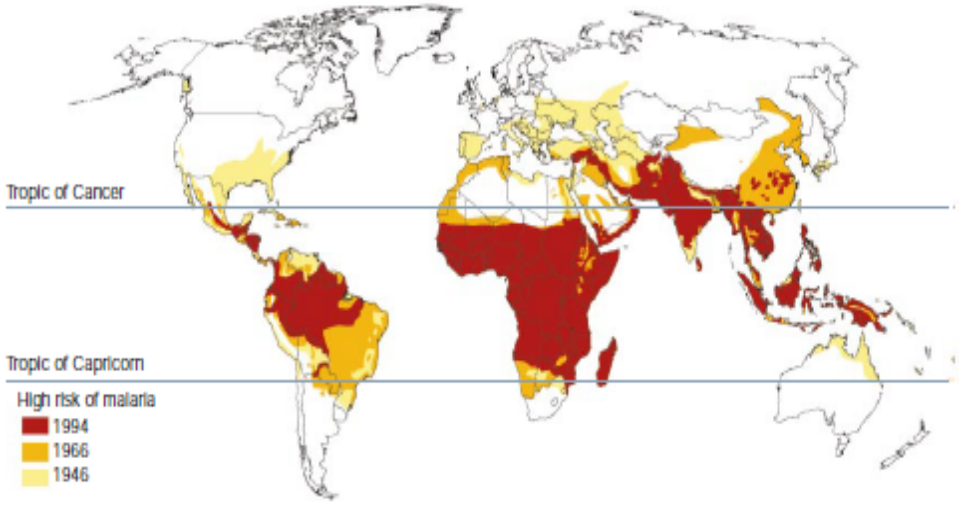
| State | No. of Groups | Name of Groups | Failed State Inde |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lebanon | 6 | al-Qaeda, Asbat al-Ansar, Hizballah, Palestine Liberation Front, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command | 65 |
| Pakistan | 6 | al-Qaeda, Harakat ul-Mujahidin, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Lashkar-e-Taiba | 9 |
| Afghanistan | 5 | al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya, al-Qaeda, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group | 10 |
| **India** (Including Kashmir) | 5 | al-Qaeda, Harakat ul-Mujahidin, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Lashkar-e-Taiba | 93 |
| Iraq | 5 | Abu Nidal Organization, al-Qaeda Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers, Ansar al-Sunnah Army, Mujahedin-e-Khalq, Palestine Liberation Front | 4 |
| **Israel** | 5 | al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, Hamas, Kach, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine | 67 |
| Egypt | 4 | al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya, al-Qaeda, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group | 31 |
| Libya | 4 | Abu Nidal Organization, al-Qaeda, Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, Palestine Liberation Front | 95 |
| **Philippines** | 4 | Abu Sayyaf Group, al-Qaeda, Jemaah Islamiya, New People's Army | 68 |
| **Turkey** | 4 | al-Qaeda, DHKP/C, Kurdistan Workers' Party, Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group | 82 |
| **United Kingdom** | 4 | al-Qaeda, Continuity Irish Republican Army, Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group, Real Irish Republican Army | 128 |
| Algeria | 3 | al-Qaeda, Armed Islamic Group, Salafist Group for Call and Combat | 72 |
| **Colombia** | 3 | National Liberation Army, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia | 27 |
| **France** | 3 | al-Qaeda, Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group, Mujahedin-e-Khalq | 129 |
| **Ireland** | 3 | al-Qaeda, Continuity Irish Republican Army, Real Irish Republican Army | 143 |
| Syria | 3 | Abu Nidal Organization, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command | 33 |
| Uzbekistan | 3 | al-Qaeda, Islamic Jihad Group, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan | 23 |

***Figure 6 (Continued)***

| State | No. of Groups | Name of Groups | Failed State Index |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Australia** | 2 | al-Qaeda, Aum Shinrikyo | 136 |
| **Belgium** | 2 | al-Qaeda, Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group | |
| **Germany** | 2 | al-Qaeda, Aum Shinrikyo | 124 |
| **Greece** | 2 | Revolutionary Nuclei, Revolutionary Organization 17 November | 121 |
| **Indonesia** | 2 | Aum Shinrikyo, Jemaah Islamiya | 32 |
| Iran | 2 | al-Qaeda, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan | 53 |
| Jordan | 2 | al-Qaeda, al-Qaeda Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers | 74 |
| Malaysia | 2 | al-Qaeda, Jemaah Islamiya | 98 |
| Mauritania | 2 | al-Qaeda, Salafist Group for Call and Combat | 41 |
| Russia | 2 | al-Qaeda, Aum Shinrikyo | 43 |
| **Spain** | 2 | Basque Fatherland and Freedom (ETA), Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group | 125 |
| Tajikistan | 2 | al-Qaeda, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan | 42 |
| Tunisia | 2 | al-Qaeda, Palestine Liberation Front | 100 |
| **United States** | 2 | al-Qaeda, Aum Shinrikyo | 128 |

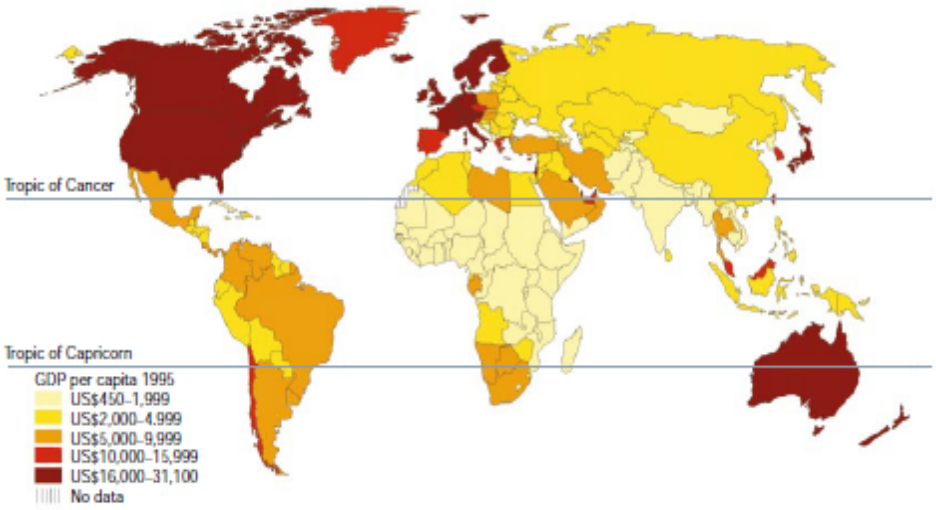
***Source*:** Hehir, A., 2007.

***Figure 7*:** Global distribution of malaria, 1946 – 1994.




***Source:*** Sachs and Malaney, 2002.

***Figure 8*:** Global distribution of GDP between temperate and tropical countries, 1995.

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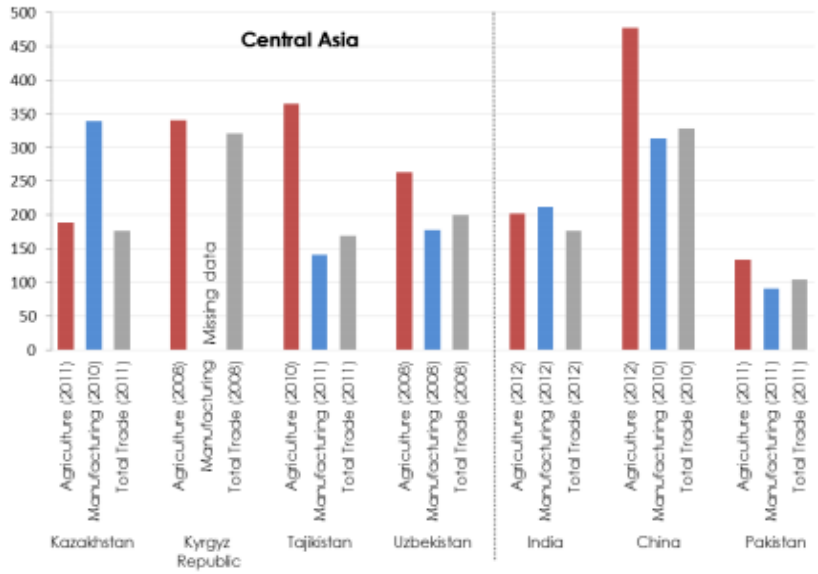
***Source:*** Sachs and Malaney, 2002.

***Figure 9:*** Geography of Afghanistan.

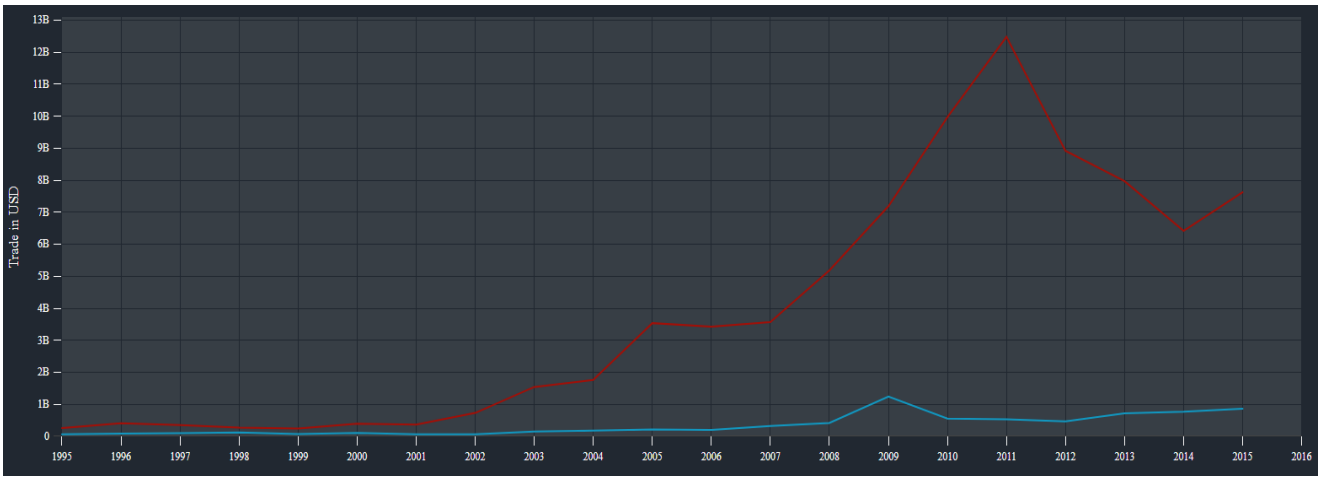
***Source:*** Worldatlas, 2018.

***Figure 10*:** Trade Costs between Afghanistan and Central Asia in comparison with regional partners (Ad Valorem Equivalents).




***Source:*** United Nations ESCAP, 2015.

***Figure 11:*** Trade deficit Afghanistan, 2016.

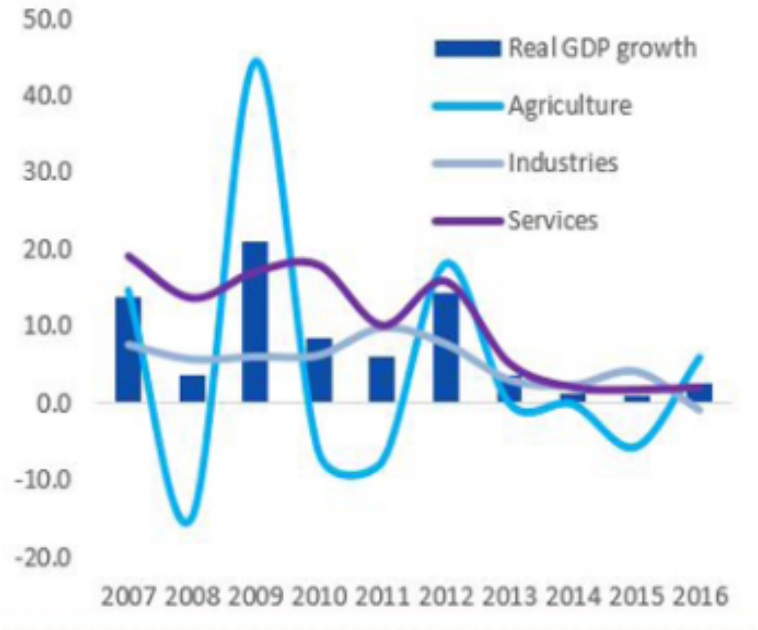



***Source:*** OEC, 2018.

***Figure 12*:** Afghanistan rural population, 2006 – 2016.

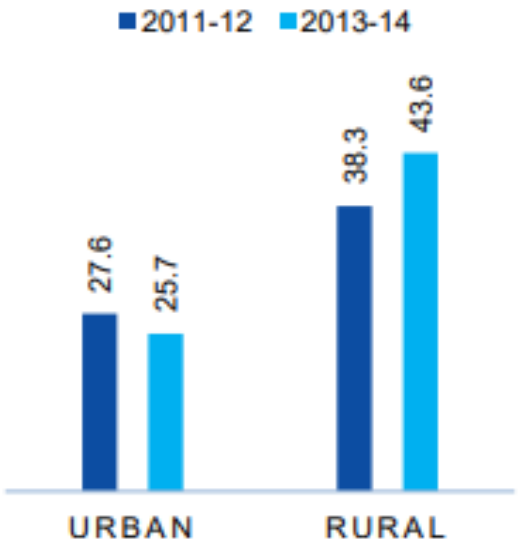

***Source:*** Trading Economics, 2018.

***Figure 13:*** Real GDP and sector output growth (percent).



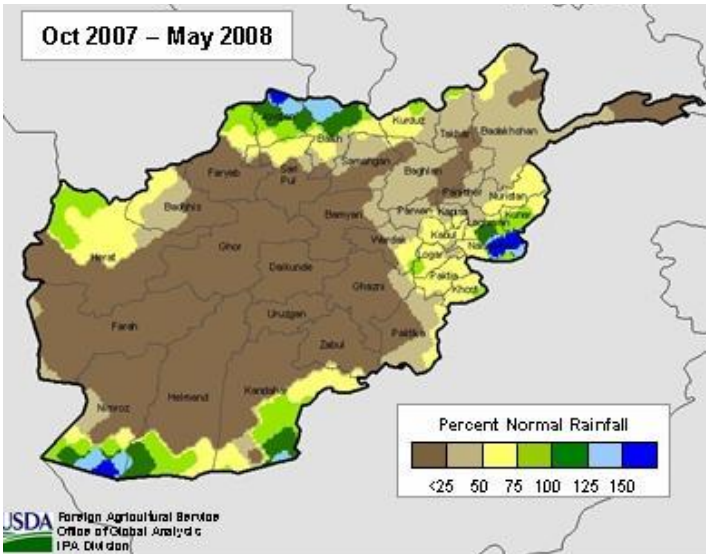

***Source:*** The World Bank, 2017.

***Figure 14:*** Increase in poverty in rural areas, poverty headcount (percent of population), 2011–2012 and 2013 – 2014.




***Source:*** World Bank, 2017

***Figure 15:*** Percent of Normal Rainfall in Afghanistan, 2007 – 2008.

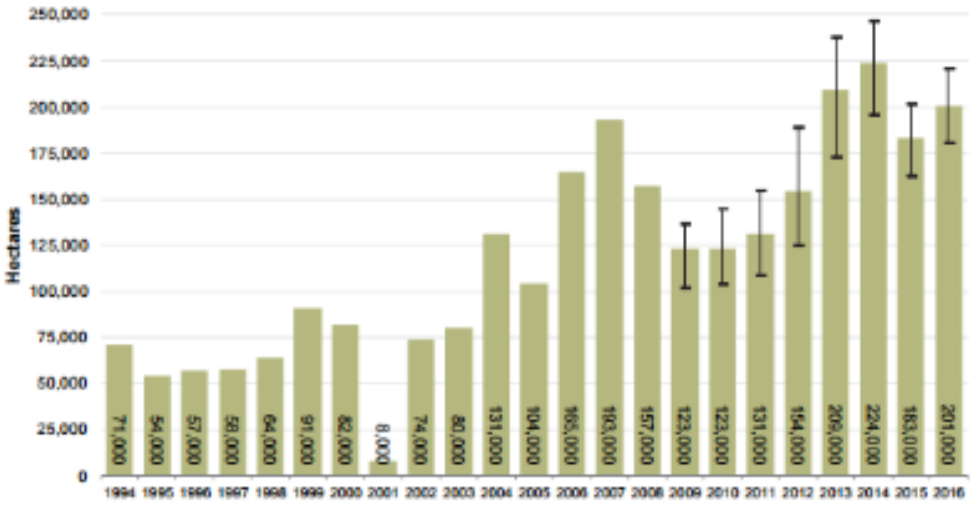


***Source:*** USDA, 2008.

***Figure 16:*** Arable land in Afghanistan (% land area), 1961 – 2015.

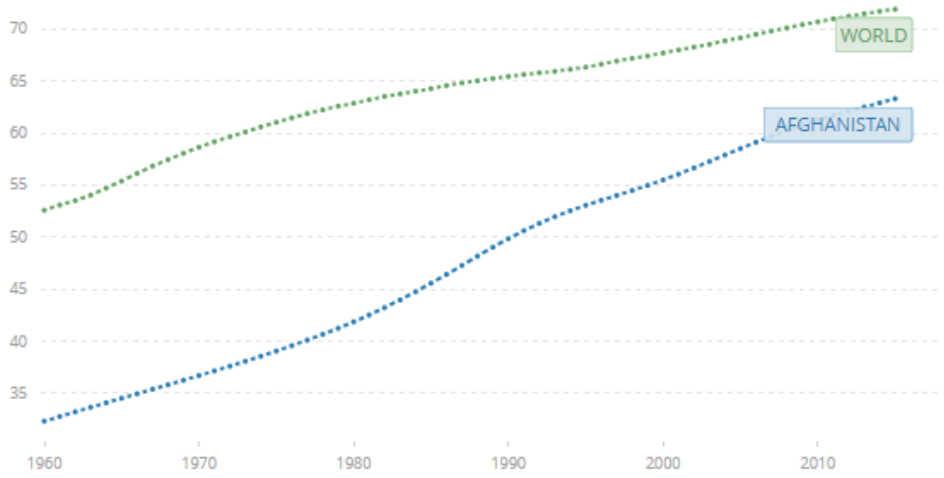

***Source:*** The World Bank, 2015.

***Figure 17:*** Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, 1994–2016 (Hectares).




***Source:*** Chossudovsky, 2005.

***Figure 18:*** Life expectancy at birth in Afghanistan, total (years), 2015.




***Source:*** The World Bank, 2015.

***Figure 19:*** Death by broad cause group in Afghanistan.

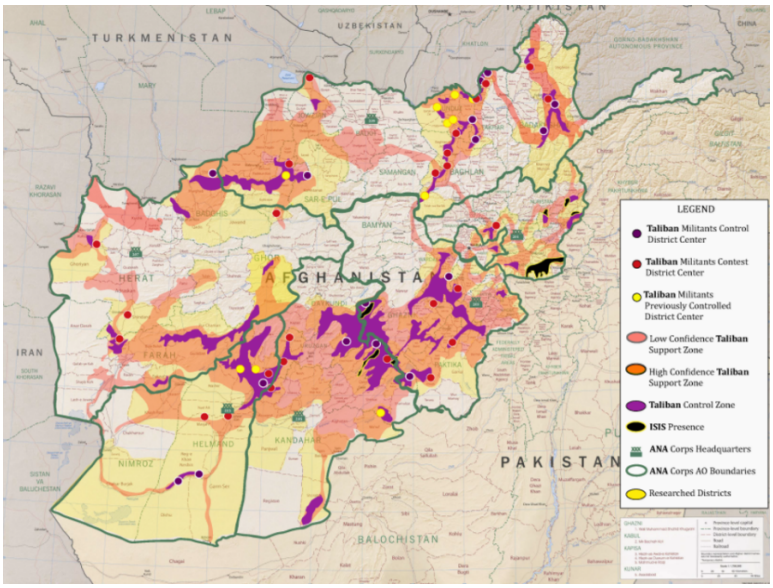

***Source:*** WHO, 2015.

***Figure 20:*** Fragile State Index Afghanistan 2006 – 2017.

| Indicators | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Security Apparatus | 8.2 | 9.7 | 10 | 10 |
| Factionalized Elites | 8 | 9.4 | 9.4 | 8.6 |
| Group Grievance | 9.1 | 9.7 | 8.7 | 8.4 |
| Economy | 7.5 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 8.3 |
| Economic Inequality | 8 | 8.2 | 7.5 | 7.5 |
| Human Flight and Brain Drain | 7 | 7.2 | 7.8 | 8.2 |
| State Legitimacy | 8.3 | 10 | 9.5 | 9.1 |
| Public Services | 8 | 8.9 | 9 | 9.9 |
| Human Rights | 8.2 | 9.2 | 8.3 | 8.5 |
| Demographic Pressure | 7.9 | 9.5 | 8.8 | 9.3 |
| Refugees and IDPs | 9.6 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 9.8 |
| External Intervention | 10 | 10 | 9.9 | 9.7 |
| **Year** | 2006 | 2010 | 2014 | 2017 |
| **Total** | 99.8 | 109.3 | 106.5 | 107.3 |
| **Rank** | 10 | 6 | 7 | 9 |

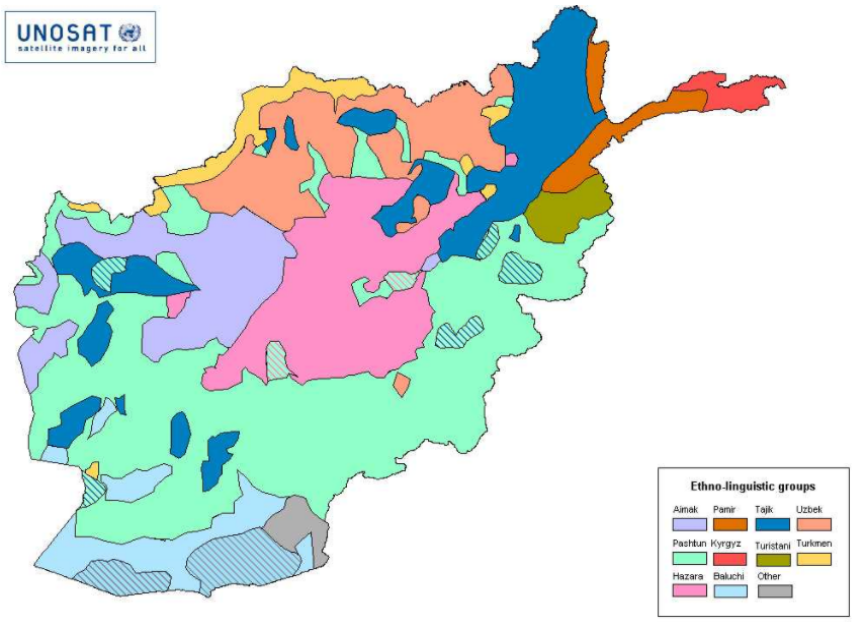
***Source:*** Adapted Fund for Peace, 2018.

***Figure 21:*** Zones controlled by Taliban in Afghanistan, 2015.




***Source:*** Lewis, 2015.

***Figure 22:*** Ethno–linguistic groups Afghanistan, 2003.



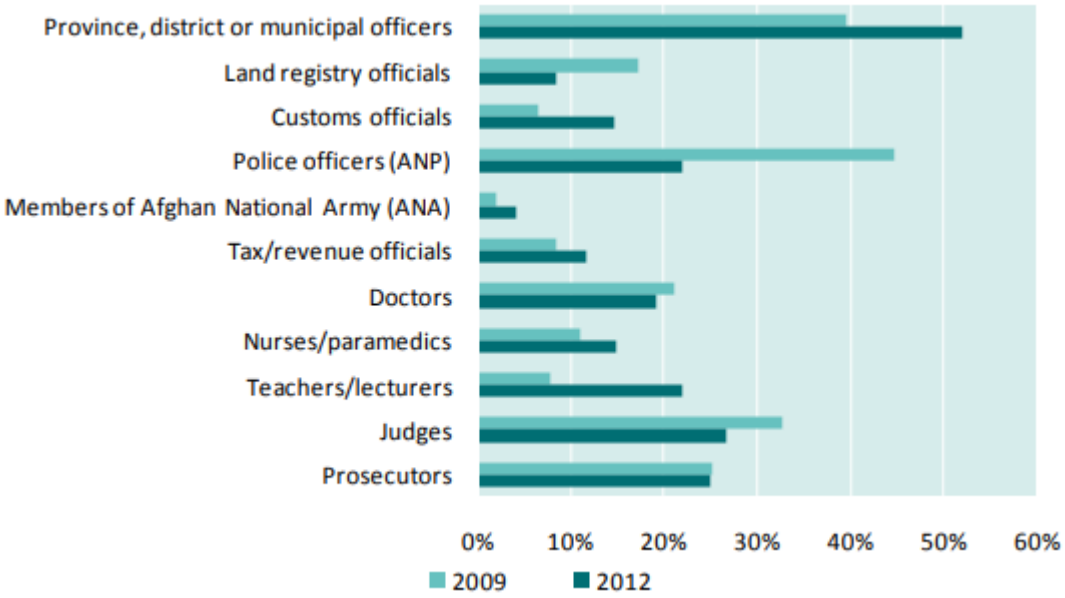

***Source*:** UNITAR, 2003.

***Figure 23*:** Corruption Perception Index Afghanistan, 2017.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 169 | Venezuela | 18 | 17 | 17 | 19 | 20 | 19 | Americas |
| 171 | Equatorial Guinea | 17 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | Sub Saharan Africa |
| 171 | Guinea-Bissau | 17 | 16 | 17 | 19 | 19 | 25 | Sub Saharan Africa |
| 171 | Korea, North | 17 | 12 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | Asia Pacific |
| 171 | Libya | 17 | 14 | 16 | 18 | 15 | 21 | Middle East and North Africa |
| 175 | Sudan | 16 | 14 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 13 | Middle East and North Africa |
| 175 | Yemen | 16 | 14 | 18 | 19 | 18 | 23 | Middle East and North Africa |
| 177 | Afghanistan | 15 | 15 | 11 | 12 | 8 | 8 | Asia Pacific |
| 178 | Syria | 14 | 13 | 18 | 20 | 17 | 26 | Middle East and North Africa |
| 179 | South Sudan | 12 | 11 | 15 | 15 | 14 | N/A | Sub Saharan Africa |
| 180 | Somalia | 9 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | Sub Saharan Africa |

***Source:*** Transparency International, 2018.

***Figure 24:*** Percentage of bribe-payers who paid a bribe to selected types of public official, Afghanistan, 2009 and 2012.



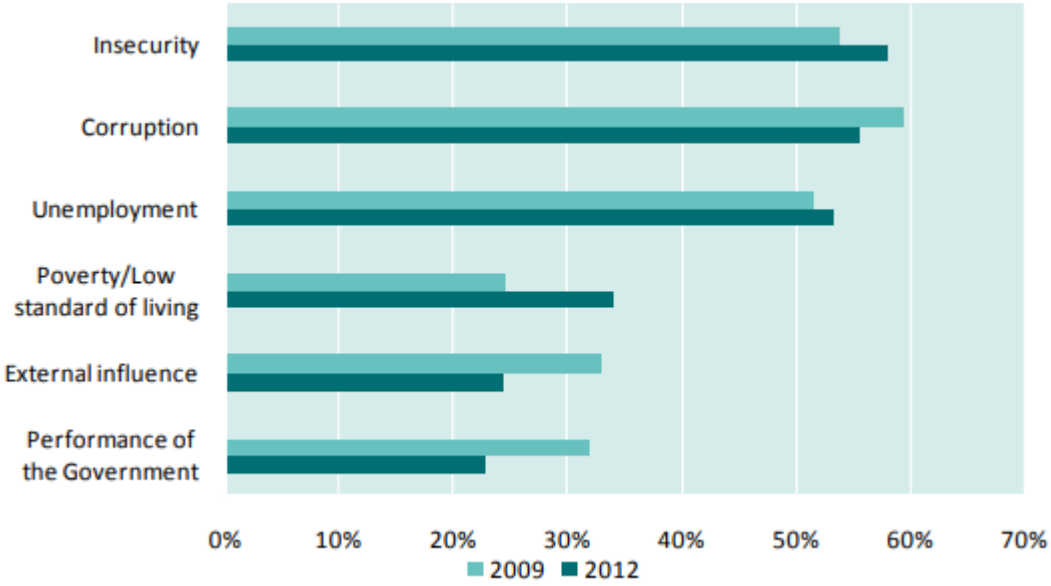

***Source:*** UNODC, 2012

***Figure 25:*** Rural Households' Access to Basic Services.

| Access to basic infrastructure | % of households | Service facilities in community | % of households |
|---|---|---|---|
| Electricity | 16 | Primary school | 48 |
| Non-traditional lighting[a] | 10 | Secondary School | 13 |
| Non-traditional cooking[b] | 0.1 | Health facility | 9 |
| Covered drinking water[c] | 24 | Public transportation | 34 |
| Adequate toilet facility | 7 | Food market | 5 |

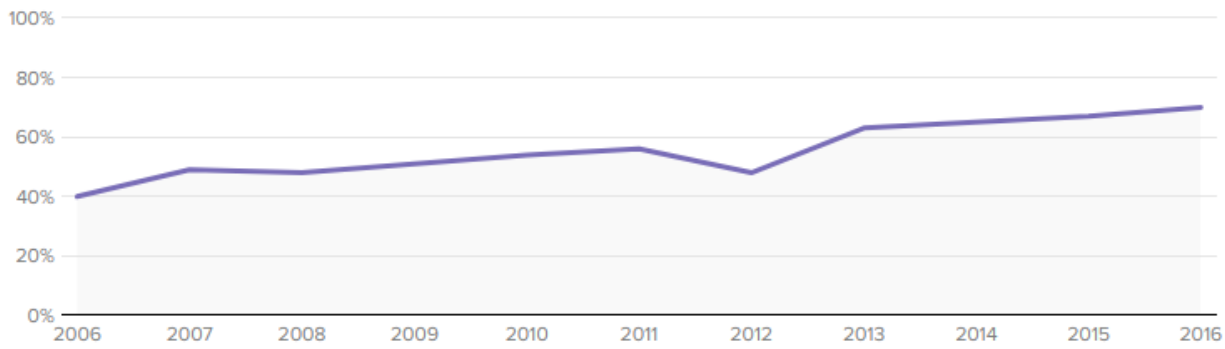
***Source:*** The World Bank, 2005.

***Figure 26:*** Percentage of the adult population considering selected issues to be the most important for their country, Afghanistan (2009 and 2012).



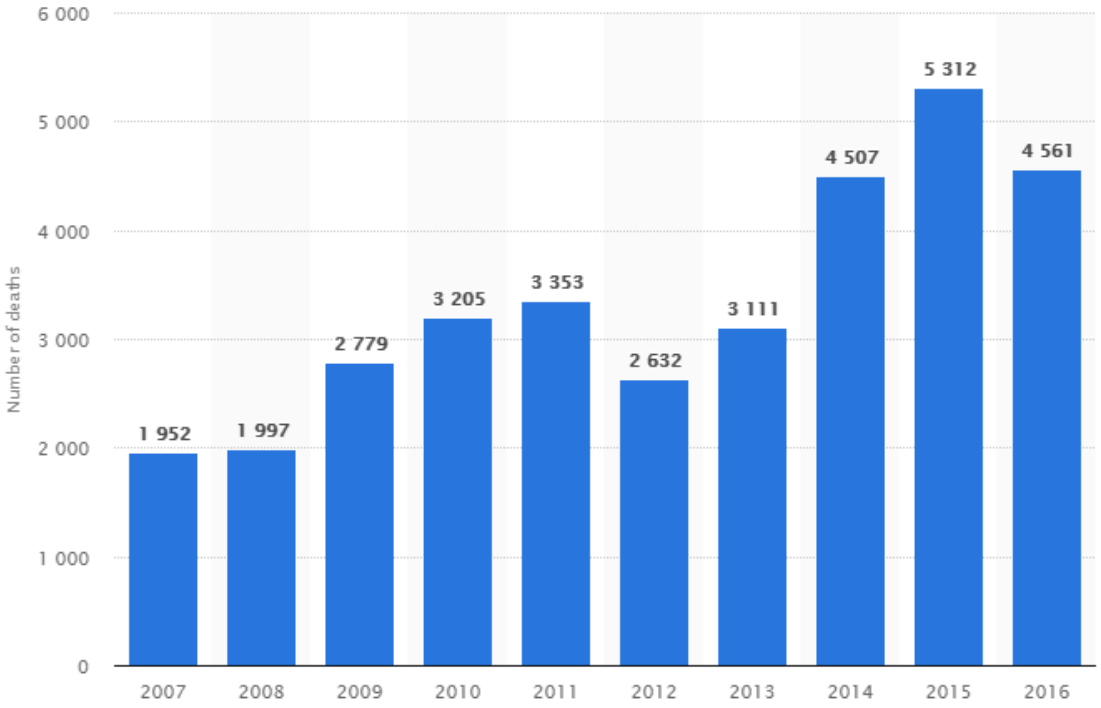

***Source:*** UNODC, 2011.

***Figure 27:*** Percentage of Afghans claiming that they fear for their personal safety, 2006 – 2016.



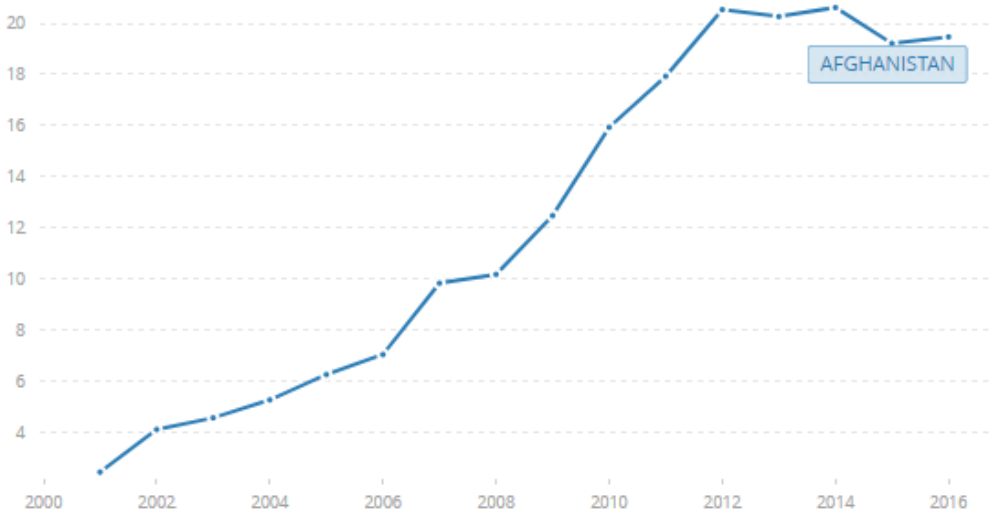

***Source****:* IRIN, 2017.

***Figure 28:*** Number of deaths in Afghanistan due to terrorism, 2007 – 2016.



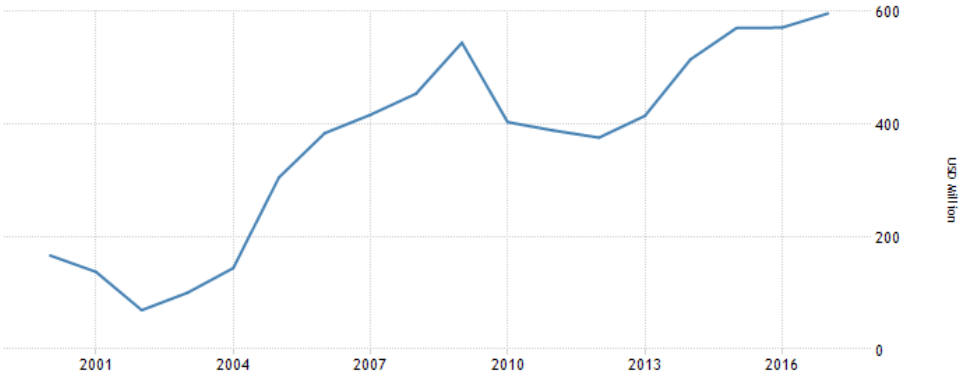

***Source:*** Statista, 2018.

***Figure 29:*** Afghanistan GDP growth (current US$B), 2001 – 2016.



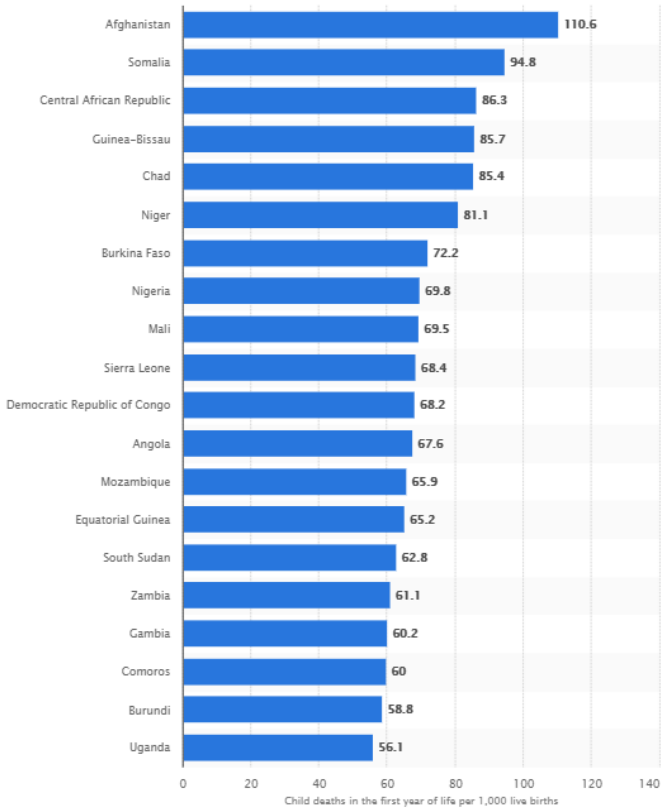

***Source:*** The World Bank, 2016.

***Figure 30:*** Afghanistan Exports, 2000 – 2017.




***Source:*** Trading Economics, 2018.

***Figure 31:*** Ranking of the 20 countries with the highest infant mortality rate in 2017 (child deaths in the first year of life per thousand live births).



***Source:*** Statista, 2018.

***Figure 32*:** The linear model of the economic history of Acemoglu and Robinson.

(potential) settler mortality→settlements→early institutions→
current institutions→current economic performance

***Source:*** Sachs, 2012.



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