Why Taliban Resist Ceasefire?

The US officials and Taliban representatives have not resumed their negotiations in the Qatar capital of Doha to end the conflict in Afghanistan. In the ongoing backdoor negotiations, in which the Afghan government is still not at the table, the US and their Taliban interlocutors are most likely to focus on the four issues - US troop withdrawal, guarantee from the Taliban side not to shelter terrorists, intra-Afghan dialogue, and ceasefire – which have been discussed in the last meetings. Prior to the resumption of peace talks, the US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad and the Taliban leaders included four inter-connected parts - "counter-terrorism assurances, troop withdrawal, intra-Afghan negotiations that lead to a political settlement, and a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire." He added that in the seventh round of talks, the US sought "a comprehensive peace agreement, a non-withdrawal agreement.

The US warned that a Taliban lack of agreement to end the war and return to the negotiating table would lead to the renewal of US military operations, not only against the Taliban bases in Afghanistan, but against them globally. However, the Taliban leadership is said to be under pressure from their military commanders to continue the war and not to cease-fire before achieving their objectives. The Taliban military operations have been increasing in different parts of Afghanistan, within the last few months, which is likely to be worse rather than acceptable ceasefire. If the Taliban adheres to their past stance in the ongoing negotiations, peace talks will reach a deadlock.

Although a regional consensus has not been achieved, the time a larger number of states have vowed to support the peace talks. Recently, with the emergence of mutual trust between Kabul and Islamabad in the wake of President Ghani’s state visit to Pakistan. Prime Minister Imran Khan also affirmed his commitment to supporting a "peace from within the Taliban." For productive peace talks, both national and regional consensus is needed. That is, Afghan officials and political figures, including those political leaders who have to reach national consensus. Last month, President Ghani held a grand economic conference which invited tribal, religious and other leaders to achieve a national consensus. However, the national consensus among political leaders, is flagged as high-ranking politicians, including CEO Abdullah Abdullah and religious leaders to achieve a national consensus. How, Abdullah boycotted the council. Thus, national consensus remains elusive.

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