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GLOBAL FOREIGN POLICIES REVIEW
p-ISSN: 2788-502X
e-ISSN: 2788-5038

# GFPR

## GLOBAL FOREIGN POLICIES REVIEW

HEC-RECOGNIZED CARTEGORY-Y

DOI (Journal): 10.31703/gfpr
DOI (Volume): 10.31703/gfpr/.2024(VIII)
DOI (Volume): 10.31703/gfpr/.2024(VIII.I)

VOL. VIII, ISSUE I, WINTER (MARCH-2025)

Double-blind Peer-review Research Journal
www.gfprjournal.com


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## Article Title

# The Effectiveness of Diplomatic Sanctions on Taliban and Compliance with International Human Rights Regime


## Abstract

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**Keywords:** Afghanistan, Taliban Regime, International Sanctions, Human Rights


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**Pages:** 60-68
**DOI:** 10.31703/gfpr.2025(VIII-I).06
**DOI link:** https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2025(VIII-I).06
**Article link:** https://gfprjournal.com/article/the-effectiveness-of-diplomatic-sanctions-on-taliban-and-compliance-with-international-human-rights-regime
**Full-text Link:** https://gfprjournal.com/fulltext/the-effectiveness-of-diplomatic-sanctions-on-taliban-and-compliance-with-international-human-rights-regime
**Pdf link:** https://www.humapub.com/admin/alljournals/gfpr/papers/A3UujKRJKL.pdf


## Global Foreign Policies Review

**p-ISSN**: 2788-502X **e-ISSN:** 2788-5038
**DOI(journal):**10.31703/gfpr
**Volume:** VIII (2025)
**DOI (volume):**10.31703/gfpr.2025(VIII)
**Issue:** I Winter (March-2025)
**DOI(Issue):** 10.31703/gfpr.2025(VIII-I)

**Home Page**
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**Volume: VIII (2025)**
https://www.gfprjournal.com/Current-issue

**Issue: I-Winter (March-2025)**
https://www.gfprjournal.com/issue/8/1/2025

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www.humapub.com
Doi: https://dx.doi.org/10.31703

## Citing this Article

| 06 | The Effectiveness of Diplomatic Sanctions on Taliban and Compliance with International Human Rights Regime | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Authors | Aamer Raza<br>Urwa Sajjad Ahmed Abbasi | DOI | 10.31703/gfpr.2025(VIII-I).06 |
| | | Pages | 60-68 |
| | | Year | 2025 |
| | | Volume | VIII |
| | | Issue | I |

| Referencing & Citing Styles | |
|---|---|
| APA | Raza, A., & abbasi, U. S. A. (2025). The Effectiveness of Diplomatic Sanctions on Taliban and Compliance with International Human Rights Regime. *Global Foreign Policies Review*, *VIII*(I), 60-68. https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2025(VIII-I).06 |
| CHICAGO | Raza, Aamer, and Urwa Sajjad Ahmed abbasi. 2025. "The Effectiveness of Diplomatic Sanctions on Taliban and Compliance with International Human Rights Regime." *Global Foreign Policies Review* VIII (I):60-68. doi: 10.31703/gfpr.2025(VIII-I).06. |
| HARVARD | RAZA, A. & ABBASI, U. S. A. 2025. The Effectiveness of Diplomatic Sanctions on Taliban and Compliance with International Human Rights Regime. *Global Foreign Policies Review,* VIII**,** 60-68. |
| MHRA | Raza, Aamer, and Urwa Sajjad Ahmed abbasi. 2025. 'The Effectiveness of Diplomatic Sanctions on Taliban and Compliance with International Human Rights Regime', *Global Foreign Policies Review*, VIII: 60-68. |
| MLA | Raza, Aamer, and Urwa Sajjad Ahmed abbasi. "The Effectiveness of Diplomatic Sanctions on Taliban and Compliance with International Human Rights Regime." *Global Foreign Policies Review* VIII.I (2025): 60-68. Print. |
| OXFORD | Raza, Aamer and abbasi, Urwa Sajjad Ahmed (2025), 'The Effectiveness of Diplomatic Sanctions on Taliban and Compliance with International Human Rights Regime', *Global Foreign Policies Review,* VIII (I), 60-68. |
| TURABIAN | Raza, Aamer and Urwa Sajjad Ahmed abbasi. "The Effectiveness of Diplomatic Sanctions on Taliban and Compliance with International Human Rights Regime." *Global Foreign Policies Review* VIII, no. I (2025): 60-68. https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2025(VIII-I).06. |

e-ISSN: 2788-5038 Volume: VIII (2025) Issue: I-Winter (March-2025) p-ISSN: 2788-502x

Global Foreign Policies Review
www.gfprjournal.com
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gfpr

Pages: 60-68 URL: https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2025(VIII-I).06 Doi: 10.31703/gfpr.2025(VIII-I).06

## Title

**The Effectiveness of Diplomatic Sanctions on Taliban and Compliance with International Human Rights Regime**

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**Abstract**

*This research article intricately examines the nuanced landscape of sanctions within the broader context of statehood and international order. The investigation embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the case of the Taliban regime in the post-US withdrawal in 2021 from Afghanistan, meticulously unraveling the historical configuration and evolving geopolitical dynamics that underpin the subject. By critically assessing the effectiveness and lacunae of sanctions imposed on the Taliban regime post-US withdrawal in 2021, the study offers a discerning perspective on the intricate interplay between punitive measures, state governance, and the geopolitical stage. Investigating theoretical literature on diverse diplomatic policies, including sanctions and non-engagement, the research dissects the various approaches adopted within the diplomatic arena.This article thus contributes to the academic discourse by providing a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted dimensions surrounding sanctions on the Taliban regime and offering a prospective pathway for fostering international human rights norms within Afghanistan.*

**Keywords:**

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## Contents



## Introduction

Diplomatic sanctions and nonengagement are traditional strategies aimed at influencing and changing the behavior of states that are seen as ruled by illegitimate regimes or are understood to defy important international norms. Sometimes, the strategies may be employed by only a few states toward a target country or its government. On other occasions, such a strategy is adopted by a sizeable number of states. At the time of writing this, for instance, 26 UN member states have withheld diplomatic recognition from the state of Israel (Jewish Virtual Library, 2021). As an example of a wider nonengagement, during the Taliban's first stint in Afghanistan, all but three countries refrained from extending diplomatic recognition to the Taliban or establishing any meaningful diplomatic interaction with the regime (Rubin, 1999).

Despite widespread strategic use of these measures, the debate surrounding the success of diplomatic sanctions expressed through withholding diplomatic recognition, disengagement, or limiting diplomatic interaction in altering state behavior remains inconclusive. The inherent assumption in undertaking a policy of diplomatic disengagement is that such policy coerces the target governments towards intended behavioral and

policy changes by isolating and delegitimizing them (Maller, The Dangers of Diplomatic Disengagement in Counterterrorism, 2009). However, critics of the approach suggest that denying diplomatic recognition or nonengagement results in a 'diminished ability to influence the target state' (Maller, Diplomacy Derailed: The Consequences of Diplomatic Sanctions, 2010).

Since their seizure of power in Afghanistan in the immediate aftermath of the American withdrawal from the country, the Taliban has not received diplomatic recognition from any state. Several states have initiated diplomatic contacts with the Taliban to varying degrees without extending a formal recognition. For instance, in October 2021, ten regional countries gathered in Moscow to negotiate with the Taliban delegation (Muraviev, 2022). Pakistan and China have engaged in trilateral diplomacy with the Taliban (Ali, 2022). India has also initiated and maintained occasional diplomatic contact with the Taliban (Patil, 2022). Similarly, the European Union and the United States have maintained a diplomatic distance from the Taliban while providing some humanitarian relief to the Afghan people (Dreikhausen, 2022). More specifically, in January 2023, in addition to the EU delegation and the US Interests Section, there were 15 foreign diplomatic missions active in Afghanistan. Across these variations, however, the international community has kept diplomatic contact with the Taliban to a minimum. The underlying assumption for nonengagement or low levels of engagement is that it would coerce the Taliban into changing their policies on human rights concerns, chiefly women's rights, and the establishment of a more inclusive government.

This article contemplates whether the policy of nonrecognition and nonengagement of the Taliban regime will elicit behavioral and policy changes making the Taliban regime more compliant with international human rights norms. To answer this question, the article is divided into four parts: The first part looks at the theoretical literature on various types of policies adopted under diplomatic sanctions and nonengagement. This section will also use examples of some previous cases where the strategy has been used. The second part lays out the core interests of members of the international community towards which each wants to influence the behavior of the Taliban government. This part also analyzes the interests that hold primacy for some states over others, thereby placing the human rights concerns in context. The third and last section assesses the domestic conditions in Afghanistan under Taliban rule and the role regime type, ideological orientation, and organizational constraints play in the Taliban's policy choices. The last section proposes socialization into international human rights norms through integration into international organizations as the only viable solution to the Afghan human rights conundrum.

## Diplomatic Sanctions as Leverage

Diplomatic sanctions refer to a set of measures that include 'severing formal diplomatic ties with a country or significantly downgrading ties from the normal level of diplomatic activity for foreign policy purposes' (Krain, 2014). Diplomatic sanctions are carried out in various ways such as withholding recognition to a new government, recalling an ambassador, shutting down the embassy or diplomatic missions, and adopting a policy of diplomatic nonengagement (Maller, Diplomacy Derailed: The Consequences of Diplomatic Sanctions, 2010). Diplomatic nonengagement, as Maller (2009) points out, may also involve nonrecognition of a new government at the inception, rather than discontinuing existing ties. Building on these descriptions, the current study defines diplomatic sanctions as a set of foreign policy actions that are meant to indicate the lack of legitimacy or seek to bring about behavioral and policy changes in the target government by policies such as withholding recognition, drawing down diplomatic presence, or minimizing diplomatic engagement.

Currently, withholding diplomatic recognition is the most notable international expression of the policy of diplomatic sanctions the international community has adopted towards the Taliban. Diplomatic recognition of a new government is the formal acknowledgment of its legitimacy and a signal of readiness to initiate diplomatic interactions. However, as an academic concept and as a legal institution, the concept has been marred by a lack of conceptual and legal clarity. The situation has not significantly improved since Philip M. Brown lamented almost three-quarters of a century ago that 'diplomats have made [recognition] to mean anything that suited their purpose', and that it has been 'abused as a weapon of diplomatic pressure and intervention' (Brown, 1950). Since there does not exist a multilateral global agency that has the authority to certify that a new regime or government meets the standards to warrant the legal status, each state must individually make such a determination (Peterson, 1982). The only noteworthy exception to the norm is when the United Nations Security Council explicitly declares the new government to be illegal and instructs member states against recognition, such as in the case of Namibia's annexation by South Africa (Widdows, 1978).

Nevertheless, 'Agenda Point 61' of the fifth session of the UN General Assembly of 1950 does lay down criteria for legitimizing new authorities, regimes, and governments that claim to act as agents of states: '(1) effective control and authority over all or nearly all the national territory, (2) obedience of the bulk of the population, and (3) the control, authority, and obedience appear to be of a permanent character (Cristol, 2018). However, it must be noted that meeting these minimum criteria does not automatically entitle a regime to

recognition; and that extending recognition is, at the end of the day, a political decision. There have been instances where an existing authority lost control of most or all of its territories, but members of the international community continue to recognize it as the legal agent acting on behalf of the state – most notably, the Republic of China's (known more commonly now as Taiwan) presence at the Security Council until 1971 (Luard, 1971).

The questions of recognition and international legitimacy do not arise whenever there is a change of government. The undisputed claim of ruling a state is usually sufficient to support the right of an authority to international agentship on behalf of the state (Peterson, 1982). However, the need for formal recognition stems from the ascendence 'of a new government in an existing foreign state after a nonconstitutional change such as a revolution or coup d'état' (Glahn & Taulbee, 2017). Withholding recognition in such cases conveys a negative inference (Franck, 1990). Due to the contested nature of their ascent to power and their reluctance to reassure the international community regarding acquiescence with minimum standards of good behavior, the Taliban regime falls under this latter category.

In the case of Afghanistan, unlike the Namibian case, the UNSC has refrained from preventing UN member states from recognizing the Taliban. However, in its 8848th meeting held on August 30, 2021, the Security Council passed Resolution 2596 to propose the minimum standard for a future Afghan authority's behavior. The resolution demanded that Afghan territory must not be used for harboring and training terrorists or for planning and financing terrorist activities. Further, it insisted on the establishment of an inclusive government, upholding human rights including children's and women's rights, and sustaining gains made towards the rule of law in the past twenty years (United Nations Security Council, 2021). The resolution does not clearly declare that meeting the provisions would lead to the recognition of the regime. However, it does set the benchmark for the international expectations of the Taliban regime.

Diplomatic sanctions are often combined with other types of sanctions. Diplomatic nonengagement typically accompanies measures in military, economic, and strategic spheres (Maller, The Dangers of Diplomatic Disengagement in Counterterrorism, 2009). Analytically, therefore, it is not always easy to discern the effectiveness of diplomatic sanctions, including nonrecognition, on a state's behavior. However, nonrecognition is not a mere diplomatic statement but an effort to isolate the target country in several ways. For example, by the 1960s, when countries opposed to apartheid broke ties with the South African government over the latter's refusal to undertake reforms, the South African government was isolated. The action not only facilitated a substantial drawdown of the economic and political influence of South Africa, but it also allowed the international community to interact with more representative groups within South Africa (Klotz, 1999). Wide diplomatic nonengagement brings a more normative character to nondiplomatic sanctions.

On the part of the target state, especially if it is a revolutionary government or one that faces substantial domestic or international opposition, the advantage of being recognized by other states emerges from the desire to be considered legally equal. Recognition acknowledges the right of governments to enjoy entitlements that, as sovereign actors, are the monopoly of states in international politics (Franck, 1990). At the same token, recognition by influential states conveys a message of durability to other domestic actors. It also deprives opponents of the new regime, especially violent opposition, of the legitimacy of their struggle. Further, De Nevers points out that states that lack formal recognition from important members of international states can be termed *outsider* states. As opposed to the *insider* states that enjoy international legitimacy, the outsider states have a much greater probability of international intervention (De Nevers, 2007).

Wide diplomatic nonengagement, or minimum levels of engagement, has in some instances prompted changes in target states making them more compliant with international human rights norms. South Africa, Chile, and Yugoslavia can be cited as examples of accomplishments towards human rights through diplomatic nonengagement. However, the success of diplomatic nonengagement depends on a number of international and domestic conditions. As Risse and Sikkink point out other cases such as Guatemala, Morocco, and Indonesia where 'less propitious domestic and international situations' make them hard cases for integration of international human rights norms in domestic policies through international diffusion (Risse & Sikkink, 1999). The next sections discuss the prevailing international and domestic conditions to understand whether Afghanistan presents a hard case, and if so, what can be the correct diplomatic policy choices to maximize gains towards human rights in the country.

## Core Interests of the International Community in Afghanistan, the Durability of International Nonengagement, and Taliban's Behavior and Policies

To understand whether diplomatic nonengagement will change the behavior and policies of the Taliban, it is useful to understand what the direction of the desired change is, and to what degree all important states in the international system view human rights as a major concern. The present universal denial of *de jure* recognition gives the impression of rare international solidarity on demands from the Taliban regime. However,

with the passage of time and the diminishing possibility of a viable domestic challenger to the Taliban, divergent geostrategic interests and dissimilar regional realities will persuade some states to be more willing to expand their engagement with the Taliban government. The prospects of future cracks in this solidarity will be crucial to the question of whether diplomatic nonengagement will influence the behavior of the Taliban regime.

The UN Security Council has voiced the expression of the widest global position on Afghanistan under the Taliban. I already noted UNSC Resolution 2596 which set the benchmark for what can be understood as the minimum standard of acceptable behavior by the Taliban. On March 17, 2022, the UNSC passed Resolution 2626 in its 8997th meeting. The Resolution that extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) also laid down a more detailed description of what the international community demands of the Taliban. The resolution once again called for the establishment of an inclusive government, improvement in the situation of women and girls, protection of human rights, improving the integrity of the financial system of the country, and prevention of illicit drug trade and the use of Afghan territory for planning and carrying out terrorist activities (United Nations, 2022).

As a clear sign of departure from harmony among the important countries, the Russian Federation abstained from voting on Resolution 2626. The Russian representative argued that the exercise was futile unless the presence of Afghanistan in the forum was ensured. He termed the policy as 'stubborn ignorance', and the approach to the issue as irrelevant, calling UNAMA 'United Nations mission impossible.' China, although it supported the resolution, welcomed the mention in the resolution of the Afghan assets frozen by the United States, and called on the US to return the assets to Afghanistan. The United Kingdom, unsurprisingly, lamented the Russian abstention from voting (United Nations Security Council, 2022). The Russian abstention from voting and the indirect criticism of the US policy by China contradicts the apparent global solidarity on the question of the recognition of the Taliban regime.

The Russian and the Chinese diversion on the issue should not come as a complete surprise. Although the two countries have so far refrained from extending de jure recognition to the Taliban, they have, along with other important regional states, shown some interest in diplomatic engagement with the Taliban. Russia leads the Moscow Consultation Format on Afghanistan – 'a regional platform on Afghanistan involving the special envoys of Russia, Afghanistan, India, Iran, China, and Pakistan'. The Format was established in 2017 to facilitate dialogue between the Afghan government and the Taliban. However, its focus shifted to persuading the Taliban to adopt a more inclusive government, combat terrorism, and enhance women's rights (Sakhi, 2022). The Moscow Conference on Afghanistan of October 2021, which hosted a Taliban delegation, was attended by ten countries Russia, China, India, Iran, and Pakistan (ANI, 2021). Although the Taliban was denied an invitation to the November 2022 meeting of the Format on the grounds of the failure of the regime to establish an inclusive government and provide greater space to women in public life, the initiatives show that Russia and other regional states have exhibited more openness to the Taliban regime than the US, UK, or the European Union.

These regional countries respond to the Taliban rule in Afghanistan in the context of their own interests. Foremost, the regional states wish to minimize the security threats originating in Afghanistan. For Russia, the threat of militancy in Central Asia and Russia can grow if organizations such as the Islamist movements operating in Central Asia, or the Chechen militants find safe havens in Afghanistan. Russia's National Security Policy of 2021 also mentions the situation in Afghanistan and the threat of terrorism and extremism (Janse, 2021). Similarly, the most prominent Chinese interest in Afghanistan is the containment of threats to Chinese security and to the Chinese interests in the region from groups such as the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) (Noorzai, 2022). The same applies to different degrees to Pakistan, India, Iran, and Afghanistan's neighboring Central Asian States.

In the immediate future, the engagement with the Taliban through regional forums results from the belief that the fallout from Afghanistan can be minimized if the Taliban regime is persuaded to sever links with militant outfits that pose security threats to these states. Security and the threat of terrorism also remain high on the agenda of the United States and other Western states. However, there is a much greater sense of immediacy of the security threat for the regional powers. Therefore, these countries may be ready to engage with, and even appease the Taliban, in more substantial ways. The regional states have, as noted, pointed out the establishment of an inclusive government and ensuring human rights, especially women's rights, as priority issues. However, the evidence reveals that for these states minimizing security threats and maintaining regional stability take precedence over issues of human rights.

For now, the divergence on the issues surrounding the recognition of the Taliban between the United States and Europe, and Afghanistan's regional powers appear marginal. As a matter of fact, about a month after the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov declared that recognition of the Taliban as Afghanistan's legitimate government was not in consideration (Ariana News, 2021). Similarly, Pakistan and China have emphasized a regional multilateral

approach to any understanding of Afghanistan (Express Tribune, 2021) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2022). However, these states have indicated more willingness to engage with the Taliban in exchange for assurances regarding security threats from terrorist groups, even while the regime carries an abysmal human rights policy.

Two other factors will further weaken the international cohesion surrounding the definition and preeminence of human rights concerns in Afghanistan: The power politics between the United States and its Western Allies on the one hand and China and Russia on the other; and the opposing positions of these powers on the notion of human rights in international politics. For the first part, the war in Ukraine has severely dented Western-Russia relations, and the same can be repeated, although to a less visible degree, for the multiple arenas of competition between the United States and China – ranging from trade wars to an increasingly hostile competition in the South China Sea. For the second, Russia and China have often questioned the Western interpretation of human rights and interpreted the American policy of promoting human rights as a tool to expand influence (Chan, 2002).

Past experiences suggest that a divided international community results in diminishing the effectiveness of international sanctions whether diplomatic or of other types. If we understand Russia and China as revisionist states, a position that has been adopted by several scholars of international politics, they will likely try to expand their influence through bandwagoning. Such an international environment provides the Taliban regime with the systemic opportunity to remain noncompliant with international human rights norms without facing significant diplomatic costs. Even if these regional powers continue and expand their 'engage without recognize' policy, it will significantly diminish the effectiveness of the policy of wider nonrecognition and Western nonengagement with the Taliban.

## Regime Type, Concern for International Image, and Human Rights

The Taliban regime is highly autocratic. The Freedom House's Global Freedom Index awards Afghanistan under the Taliban 1 out of 40 points on political rights (Freedom House, 2022). In general, autocratic regimes exhibit less regard for human rights since respect for human rights does not define their identity. Further cross-cutting multi-country studies suggest that states that are 'more autocratic, at lower levels of economic development and engaged in civil conflict are more likely to violate human rights.' Findings also corroborate that states that are less consolidated show a greater propensity to engage in human rights violations (Hendrix & Wong, 2013). Afghanistan under the Taliban shows all the attributes. In addition to being an autocracy, Afghanistan under the Taliban regime presides over a conflict-ridden country with an economy already collapsed. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the human rights situation in Afghanistan presents a bleak picture.

Domestic regime types, especially the degree to which the system allows for civil society groups to hold authorities responsible, influence a ruling group's regard for international diplomatic pressure. As Thomas Risse-Kappen points out, centralized states "provide transnational coalitions with comparatively few access points into the political system (Risse-Kappen, 1994)." Thus, making these regimes more or less immune to international isolation translating into meaningful domestic pressure. Diplomatic nonengagement potentially reduces the remaining access points both to the authorities within the regime but also to the society groups that may be revitalized with international contacts and support. While diplomatic nonrecognition of and nonengagement with the Taliban may be viewed as diplomatic sanctions, for Afghan human rights activists, especially women, the policy is indistinguishable from abandonment (Barr, 2022). Instead of piling domestic pressure on the regime, the nonengagement approach can potentially do the opposite by depriving the civil society of international support.

In addition to being autocratic, the Taliban are a highly ideological regime. Taliban base the legitimacy of their claim to rule on a 'transcendent universality' which makes it difficult to make compromises that the regime and its followers view as worldly (Maley, 1999). The regime interprets and adopts a view of human rights that runs counter to how international human rights have come to be understood in documents such as the Universal Declaration. The Taliban have shown cognizance of this dichotomy. In July 2022, while addressing a gathering, the Taliban Prime Minister Mullah Hasan Akhund responded to the international demands by saying, 'There are two types of human rights - one that non-Muslims have devised for themselves and stand by them. And the rights set by almighty Allah for humanity' (Gul, 2022).

Compliance with international human rights norms, therefore, cuts at the very fabric of what constitutes the Taliban movement. Hence, the imposition of diplomatic sanctions is scarcely expected to make the Taliban compromise on an issue they understand as fundamental to their identity and their brand of governance. Further, as Anchal Vohra wrote for *Foreign Policy*, even when the Taliban leaders who have spent time abroad negotiating with the United States and engaging with diplomats elsewhere, show readiness to embrace a more benign approach to governance, the fear of a rift with the more zealous rank and file may prove too high a price to pay

(Vohra, 2021). For such an ideological regime, rather than weakening the rule, past research reveals that foreign pressure has increased the demand for and the visible display of support in favor of authoritarian rule (Hellmeier, 2021).

Another justification for diplomatic nonengagement with the Taliban is the familiar 'naming and shaming' argument. The inherent logic supporting this line of reasoning is that enhanced interaction with the Taliban will help the group portray their style of governance as legitimate and permanent to the domestic population. The argument is not devoid of merit. Since military intervention is no longer an option, perhaps the concern for its international image might persuade the Taliban to rethink their treatment of the population over which they preside. The limitation of this approach, however, is that the Taliban have shown little regard for how they are perceived elsewhere. As Thomas Risse and Kathryn Sikkink correctly point out, "countries most sensitive to pressure are not those that are economically weakest, but those that care about their international image (Risse & Sikkink, 1999)'. True to form, when the UN special rapporteur on the situation of Afghanistan, Richard Bennett, met Afghan deputy prime minister, Abdul Salam Hanafi, to discuss human rights concerns, Hanafi dismissed these concerns as mere 'Facebook rumors (Eqbal, 2022)'. Whereas from the outside, diplomatic isolation may seem like a catastrophe for the target state, the regime may wear it as a badge of honor, and frame it as 'the threatening acts of [major powers] intent on imperial control' (Hoyt, 2000).

The domestic conditions in Afghanistan make it a particularly difficult country for human rights-related policy change. The virtual elimination of civil society from public discourse, the ideological underpinnings being antithetical to the international notions of human rights, and the lack of regard for international image take the edge of the policy of diplomatic non-recognition and nonengagement. Any diplomatic prescription one might suggest in such a state of affairs will remain at best pragmatic and less than ideal.

## Diplomatic Engagement as Socialization

As the discussion in the above sections indicates, the policy of diplomatic nonengagement and nonrecognition is intended to serve the cause of human rights in two ways: One, diplomatic isolation pressurizes the regime by making the task of governance in an interconnected world difficult, and at least theoretically, pressing the target state into making a compromise; and two, it deprives the target state of legitimacy and labels it as a rogue state. The limitation of the first approach lies in the assumption that influential states agree and will continue to agree on how they define human rights and on the importance they assign to human rights in their interaction with the target state. The second approach does little for the cause of human rights and is often a public diplomacy statement by the state adopting the policy.

The danger of the nonengagement policy is that it defeats its own purpose. Writing in an almost identical context – diplomatic disengagement in counterterrorism – Tara Maller argues that disengagement results in 'loss of valuable intelligence, a diminished public diplomacy capability and the potential radicalization of moderates in the target regime' (Maller, The Dangers of Diplomatic Disengagement in Counterterrorism, 2009). I have made all of these points in the previous sections.

The question, however, remains: if we conclude that diplomatic nonengagement is not the solution to the human rights question in Afghanistan, what should be the course of action? Certainly, as things stand, diplomatic nonengagement, in policy terms, resembles inaction more than it does coercion or persuasion. In situations where coercion is rendered ineffective due to collective action problems, and persuasion has little effectiveness due to the ideological intransigence in the target state, this study argues that socialization through international institutions remains the most efficient means to influence the Taliban into changing their behavior on human rights.

Socialization in this sense is defined as the process whereby a state internalizes norms originating elsewhere in the international system (Alderson, 2001). Socialization has also been defined as the 'induction of new members . . . into the ways of behavior that are preferred in a society' (Barnes et al., 1980). In this context, the term society refers to and assumes the existence of an international society with a level of consensus around specific norms to which the new members are socialized. Albeit the aforementioned differences surrounding definitions and strategic use of human rights, the basic norms are principally recognized by all influential members of the international community, creating a sense of an international society. The purpose of socialization is to embed the norms into the identity of the state to the degree where future compliance does not need external pressure.

As the root word 'social' implies, socialization calls for more integration of the bad actor rather than less. In this sense, what the study argues here, calls for greater assimilation of the Taliban in the international system than less. How does the process take shape without, wittingly or otherwise, enabling the regime? Afghanistan presents a particularly problematic question. This study contends that international organizations hold the solution to our conundrum. Brian Greenhill discovered that integration in multilateral institutions whether primarily meant for the diffusion of human rights such as the International Labor Organization or those that have

human rights norms indirectly integrated into their mandates and operations plays an important role in socializing states into becoming more compliant with international human rights norms. The study points out that states come to respect human rights in multilateral institutions more out of a "logic of appropriateness," rather than a "logic of consequences" (Greenhill, 2010).

Like Afghanistan, on account of the position of its government on ideology and culture, in the 1950s and 1960s, China was deemed the least likely case for international reform. Ann E. Kent credits the 'socializing effects' of China's greater integration into international organizations after 1971 for making the country more compliant with international norms (Kent, 2007). Through her detailed empirical survey of Chinese membership in a wide range of international institutions, Kent found that China joined the organization with little intention to comply with the norms. However, with greater participation, the country went from following the norms procedurally to becoming more instinctively compliant. Other studies have highlighted the importance of peer pressure and imitation in the process of socialization.

More precisely, the study argues that integration into multilateral organizations is the most effective and pragmatic way forward for making the Taliban regime more compliant with international human rights norms. At this point in time, such integration can be accomplished through some form of limited or conditional membership. As stated, observers have noted that the behaviors of Taliban leaders vary on basic norms across the lines of international experience. The solution, therefore, rests in exposing more Taliban leaders to such experiences rather than denying it to those who already have some of it.

## Conclusion

Concerning human rights norms and situation, Afghanistan presents the thorniest challenge in the recent memory. The violations are universally recognized but the tried policy options have shown little potency. To repeat, unfortunate as it sounds, there are no ideal solutions to the state of affairs. Given the possibilities, integrating Taliban into international organizations provide the only diplomatically viable path forward. The policy absolves individual states of the responsibility of enabling Afghanistan while opening up opportunities for a communicative strategy.

The contrary argument can be that under the influence of international organizations, the Taliban might make tactical concessions, shying from real policy reforms. In the current situation, even such tactical concessions will be a step in the right direction. Such concessions will, at the least, draw the Taliban to the rhetoric of international human rights norms. And they can be held accountable against the same rhetoric.

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