

.....**AFGHANISTAN:**

The human rights of minorities

There are no definite statistics about the size of the Afghan population or the distribution of Afghan ethnic groups. The only population survey (sponsored by the UN) was aborted in mid-1979 when the civil war broke out. The war, which has gradually taken an ethnic outlook, has caused people from various localities to flee in search of safety either to other countries or to parts of the country other than their traditional homeland. As a result, various localities have periodically seen fluctuations in the numbers of one or another minority. For example, from mid-1980s, there was a continued decrease in the number of Pushtuns in the central highlands of Hazarajat, where members of the Hazara minority sustained a degree of autonomy from the central administration. Now that the area has come under Taleban control, Pushtuns are returning to settle there.

Estimates by ethnic groups themselves vary as they tend to overestimate the size of their own minority and underestimate the size of the others. The preliminary results of the incomplete 1979 survey suggests a general population of up to 15.4 million with the following ethnic composition.ⁱ

Group	Approx. number	Location
Pushtun	7 000 000	concentrated in south and south-east but settled far and wide
Tajiks	3 500 000	north and north-east and Kabul region
Hazaras	1 500 000	centre (Hazarajat) and in Kabul
Uzbeks	1 300 000	north
Aimaq	800 000	west
Farsiwan/Heratis	600 000	west and south
Turkmen	300 000	north
Brahui	200 000	south-west
Baluchi	100 000	west and north-west
Nuristani	100 000	east

Population of Afghanistan: main ethnic groups, 1979ⁱⁱ

Personal experiences of aid workers, journalists and other visitors to Afghanistan suggest that in the last 20 years, there have been significant changes in the size and location of the ethnic groups in the country. Current published estimates assume a total population in 1996 of about 22,600,000 (excluding refugees), and an ethnic composition in 1990 of 38% Pushtun, 25% Tajik, 19% Hazara and 6% Uzbek - with other ethnic groups making up 12% of the population.ⁱⁱⁱ

RECENT ETHNIC TENSION IN AFGHANISTAN

During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the political and military objectives of the Mujahideen largely overrode their different ethnic backgrounds. Even in the early years following the collapse of the pro-Soviet government, alliances between armed groups - which were short-lived at any rate - were based on loosely shared struggles for power and not on ethnic identities. Since 1995, tension along ethnic lines appears to have sharpened. There have been reports of atrocities committed against members of the

Pushtuns are the largest minority in Afghanistan (possibly 8.5 million) living as a majority ethnic group in the south and east of the country and as a minority ethnic group in some other parts. They have a distinct language, Pushto, which has an Indo-European base. Pushtuns are Sunni Muslims, and they share a common border and language with millions of Pushto speaking people of the North West Frontier Province in Pakistan. Pushtuns are “of Caucasoid stock .. relatively tall and well built with olive skin, dark hair, fine bones” but enumerable exceptions to these may appear.^{iv} Pushtuns consist of “thousands of tribes along a genealogical charter which they use as a basis of unity and solidarity as well as of fission and conflict”^v. At the political arena, there has been a predominance of Pushtuns in the hierarchies of administrative power in recent centuries and with just a couple of exceptions, all recent Afghanistan rulers have been Pushtun.

A prominent feature of the Pushtun tribal culture is a code of conduct known as *Pushtunwali* which is a mixture of a tribal code of honour and local interpretations of the Islamic law. Some scholars maintain that *Pushtunwali* and *Shari'a* are at variance on matters such as the proof of adultery. This in *Shari'a* law requires the evidence of four male witnesses whereas in *Pushtunwali* hearsay evidence is said to be sufficient because it is the honour of the family that is the issue, not the morality of the situation.^{vi} It is argued however that on matters of great political significance, calls by *Ulema* (religious leaders) to abandon tribal enmity based on *Pushtunwali* in favour of defending the *Shari'a* against a common enemy have received popular support - suggesting that in certain areas, *Shari'a* may override *Pushtunwali*.

The Taleban is a largely Pushtun movement. Its edicts such as those banning women's education and restricting their employment and movement, appear to be informed by a mixture of the two value systems, as well as local political interests.^{vii}

Tajiks are said to have been the most numerous among the earliest inhabitants of the modern Afghan area but now they are the second largest ethnic group in Afghanistan (possibly 5.6 million). They are distinct by their language Dari (related to Persian), the non-tribal composition of their communities, their sedentary lifestyle in the rural areas and their concentration in the urban areas of the country. Most Tajiks have black or brownish hair and oval faces but intermarriage with other ethnic groups has resulted in the infusion of a considerable amount of Mongoloid and Tajik physical characteristics.^{viii}

Tajiks are Sunni Muslims, and share a common language and border with the people of Tajikistan. In recent years the concentration of Tajiks in the northern areas of Afghanistan has fluctuated as the Taleban and anti-Taleban forces have fought each other for control of territory.

Two brief periods in recent Afghanistan history have seen national Tajik rulers. The first was Habibullah Kalakani (known as *Bacha-e Saqao* or 'son of the water carrier') who ruled Afghanistan for nine months in 1929 and the second is Burhanuddin Rabbani, who became president in 1992 and was ousted from the capital, Kabul, by the Taleban in 1996.

Hazaras are the third largest ethnic group (possibly 4.2 million) speaking a variant of Dari. They are concentrated mainly in the central highlands of Hazarajat but sizeable communities of Hazaras live also in Kabul and Mazar-e Sharif. The majority of Hazaras are Shi'a Muslims but there are communities of Sunni and Ismaili Hazaras in the country. Hazara people have experienced periods of autonomy in their recent history. They remained independent of non-Hazara ethnic control until 1892 when the Afghan ruler Abdur Rahman captured Hazarajat and replaced local leaders with Pushtun administrators^{ix}, and again from 1979 until 1998 they sustained a degree of autonomy from the central administration.

Current estimates of the number of **Uzbeks** (around 1.3 million) in Afghanistan appear to suggest little change from 1979. Uzbek language is Turkic, and physically Uzbeks display Mongoloid characteristic. They are concentrated in urban areas primarily in the Balkh province. They are Sunni Muslims and share a language and border with Uzbekistan.

ethnic groups after their areas have been captured and re-captured by rival factions. Human rights abuses have included massacres and mass arrests of civilians, brutal ill-treatment of the detainees “disappearances” of many young men and some young women. At times, these atrocities appear to have been based on a mixture of ethnic hostility and political enmity.

‘The loudspeakers of all mosques were used to call on the surviving members of the Shi’a Moslem community at Mazar-I-Sharif to convert to Sunni Islam and to attend prayers five times a day, for their own sake, “unless they wanted to be treated like dogs and shot on the spot”. The Governor of Mazar-I-Sharif appointed by the Taliban, Maulavi Niazi, is said to have announced that “Hazaras can live with us. They have three choices: they can become Sunni, they can go to the Islamic Republic of Iran, or they can be killed.”’^x

Dimensions of the ethnic tension

In almost all cases of hundreds of thousands of internal displacement or flight of refugees in recent years, there appears to have been an element of ethnicity involved. For example, about 8,000 refugees mainly from the non-Pushtun minorities in northern Afghanistan fled to Turkmenistan in late June 1997 expressing fears that they would be treated harshly with the Taleban take-over of the area. They had to return home because of the severe shortage of food and drinking water and the harsh conditions they had to endure in Turkmenistan as the government was not prepared to accept them.

In the same year (1997) There were reports of forcible relocation of non-Pushtuns by the Taleban militia and Pushtuns by the anti-Taleban forces from their localities as the war continued. Thousands of civilians, mainly Tajik, were forced from their homes by the Taleban, in some instances by the deliberate destruction of water supply and irrigation systems. Most of the forcible relocations took place in areas north of Kabul, the capital, including Jabol Seraj, Charikar and Gulbahar where a fierce battle between the Taleban and other forces raged. Forcible relocation of Pushtun families by anti-Taleban armed groups reportedly took place in the province of Badghis.

From 1995 when the Taleban captured Herat, it emerged that Pushtun communities were being treated more favourably and in return these communities were generally supportive of the Taleban resolve to capture other minority populated areas. At the same time, the Taleban were particularly targeting members of the ethnic groups in efforts to suppress possible anti-Taleban rebellion by the non-Pushtun communities. One once occasion, thousands of people were held in Kabul in 1997 for periods of up to several months. Among these were around 2,000 Tajik and Hazara men rounded up from their homes in July that year and held in various jails, including Pul-e Charkhi Prison in Kabul. Most of them were believed to be prisoners of conscience held on account of their ethnicity.

The social costs of two decades of civil war in Afghanistan have been enormous. More than one million civilians are believed to have been killed and countless others injured. During the time of the Soviet occupation, over six million people fled the country. Although many returned after the Soviet withdrawal, there are still over two million Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan, making Afghans the largest single refugee group in the world. Inside the country, the infrastructure and institutions of state have been largely destroyed by the conflict. According to the UN, the socio-economic conditions of the population are amongst the worst in the world. Healthcare is rudimentary and many are without access to basic healthcare provision. Thousands of children die from malnutrition and respiratory infections every year. Maternal mortality is one of the highest in the world. Literacy rates are extremely low and are estimated to have dropped to as low as four per cent for women. Afghanistan is ranked bottom of the UN gender development index.

There were also acts of retaliation against non-Pushtun populations in areas previously controlled by the anti-Taleban forces. In September 1997, about 70 civilians, including women and children, were deliberately and arbitrarily killed in Qezelabad village near Mazar-e Sharif. Survivors said the massacre was carried out by Taleban guards retreating from positions they had captured in the area, but Taleban officials denied responsibility for the killing. All of the victims reportedly belonged to the Hazara minority. Among the victims was a boy aged about eight who was reportedly killed and decapitated; other victims reportedly had their eyes gouged out with bayonets. Two boys aged about 12 were reportedly held by the guards and had their arms and hands broken with stones.

Civil war broke out in Afghanistan in 1979 after Soviet troops invaded the country to back the communist government in power. Islamic and tribal groups opposed to the policies of the communist government and the Soviet occupation responded by mounting armed opposition. For ten years the country became a Cold War battleground, as Soviet and Afghan government troops fought against armed Islamic guerrilla fighters backed by the USA and its European allies, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

After the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, fighting continued between government and opposition forces until the communist government finally collapsed in 1992. The fall of the government did not bring peace, however, as the loosely allied and fractious Mujahideen groups started fighting each other for control of territory and administrative institutions. Despite the formation of a coalition interim government, central political authority was weak and unstable, and Afghanistan plunged into lawlessness.

At the end of 1994, a new political and military force - the Taleban - emerged on to the scene. Stating as their aim to rid Afghanistan of corrupt Mujahideen groups, the Taleban have succeeded in capturing large areas of country from opposing armed groups. They are now said to control around 80 per cent of Afghanistan. Fighting however continues between the Taleban and opposition forces and the political situation remains volatile.

Ethnic hatred has also been reflected in atrocities committed by non-Pushtun forces and communities opposed to the Taleban. In May 1997, the Taleban's first attempt to conquer Mazar-e Sharif was not successful. Thousands of Taleban fighters were reportedly captured by the anti-Taleban forces. Later in November over 20 mass graves were discovered near the city of Shebarghan in the northern province of Jowzjan. The exact number of those buried in the graves could not be established but most reports put the number at around 2,000. The dead were thought to have been among the Taleban militia reportedly taken prisoner after the Taleban entered the city. They were alleged to have been killed deliberately and arbitrarily while in the custody of the forces of General Abdul Malik, an anti-Taleban military commander in control of the area at the time.

Ethnic tension took a new turn in 1998. Non-Pashtun Afghans were barred from moving about the country freely while many continued to be detained solely on the basis of their ethnicity. In July 1998 alone, hundreds of

people fleeing to Pakistan were stopped in the Jalalabad area by Taleban guards who took away Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek and Panjshiri men and boys as young as 12. Pushtun travellers were allowed to proceed. Some of the detainees were classified as "important" and sent to Kandahar, where thousands of such prisoners were held. Some men were released on payment of a ransom. Women, children and the elderly of non-Pashtun families were sent to camps near Jalalabad with no material support.

The same year was marked by sustained refusal by the authorities to allow journalists to visit areas affected by human rights abuses. Despite persistent reports that *Taleban* guards had deliberately and systematically killed thousands of ethnic Hazara civilians in the days following their military takeover of Mazar-e Sharif in August 1998, no journalists or independent monitors were allowed to go there. Testimonies received by Amnesty International indicated that the vast majority of the victims were living in the Zara'at, Saidabad and Elm Arab areas of the city. They were killed in their homes or on the streets, or executed in locations between Mazar-e Sharif and Hairatan. Women, children and the elderly were shot while trying to flee the city. At least one group of prisoners was executed in front of

villagers near the city of Hairatan. About 70 men were reportedly executed by having their throats slit in Mazar-e Sharif.

It emerged later that immediately after their arrival in the city, Taleban guards imposed a curfew. In the Uzbek populated areas, they told people to hand in their weapons, while in the Hazara area, they told people to stay in their homes. They then entered Hazara houses one by one, killing older men and children and taking away young men without any explanation. In some houses, they also took away young women as *Kaniz* (maid-servant) saying they would be married off to the Taleban militia. Detainees, reportedly totalling thousands, were transferred in military vehicles to detention centres in Mazar-e Sharif and Shebarghan. Non-Hazaras were reportedly released after a few days. The detainees were beaten, sometimes severely, during their detention. Hundreds were taken by air to Kandahar and many others taken during the night to fields in the surrounding areas of Mazar-e Sharif and Shebarghan and executed. The vast majority of the civilian detainees numbering several thousand were reportedly non-Pushtuns, particularly Hazaras. In October 1998, the Taleban reportedly took prisoner dozens of civilians, targeting educated people, in the Tajik-populated city of Taloqan immediately before it was recaptured by opposition forces.

Members of the warring factions involved in these gross human rights abuses have never been brought to justice. on the killing of civilians. Amid reports of ill-treatment and killing of prisoners, *Radio Voice of Shari'a* quoted the Taleban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar as saying, "Whoever resorts to killing the prisoners or the war-wounded shall be tried in the Islamic court. Nobody is allowed to kill prisoners unless there is a threat." The pronouncement did not deter later massacres by the Taleban militia who appear not to be told how to differentiate between a clear military threat or a suspected potential threat. Both categories appear to have been treated the same way - often killed.

Former prisoners' testimonies suggest that the distinction between a fighter and a non-fighter, or a fighter and a civilian, is never made after the arrest. This was the case after fierce fighting raged in Bamiyan in early 1999 as the Taleban moved to capture the area from Hezb-e Wahdat, a party drawing support from the Hazara population.

As a result, on 9 May 1999, the majority of the Hazara people fled to the surrounding mountains with whatever belongings they could take with them. Many of those who stayed behind - some of whom could not flee because of old age or other infirmities and were not therefore combatants - were later reported to have become the targets of systematic killings by the Taleban guards arriving in the city. Estimates of the alleged killings varied widely but hundreds of men, and in few instances women and children, were separated from their families and taken away with no further traces of them. These reports followed a disturbing pattern similar to the abuses committed in the northern city of Mazar-e Sharif in August 1998.

War has been the background and context for widespread and serious human rights abuses in Afghanistan for the past 20 years. The conflict, which has so devastated the country, has been fuelled by outside powers who have provided political and military support to their favoured Afghan armed groups, advancing their own geo-political and economic goals at the expense of the suffering of millions of Afghan civilians. For over a decade during the Soviet occupation vast quantities of arms and ammunition poured into the country at a cost of untold millions of dollars. The states primarily responsible were the former Soviet Union (including its successor states of the Commonwealth of Independent States), the USA and its western European allies, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Iran. All seemed indifferent to the fact that the arms they financed were being used to commit human rights abuses on a massive scale. Even today, years after the Soviet withdrawal, outside political and military interference is recognised as being a critical factor in the perpetuation of the conflict, and in the persistence of human rights abuses. As stated by the UN Secretary General in his report to the General Assembly in November 1998.

"Afghanistan, once a flashpoint of superpower rivalry, has now become the stage for a new, regional version of the "Great Game", in which the domestic, economic and national security interests of Afghanistan's neighbours and their supporters are played out. A vicious cycle has developed in which the inability of the Afghan factions to agree to a political settlement is both the cause and the effect of persistent outside interference in the affairs of Afghanistan."

In addition to the killing and detention of Hazara civilians, Taleban guards reportedly resorted to burning more than 200 village homes in various localities in the Bamiyan province as an act of revenge and retaliation. These included houses in the villages of Dukani and Haiderabad in May. Homes in villages along the road between Shiber and Bamiyan including Shaspul and Ahangeran were also reported to have been burnt to the ground in March and April 1999. The Taleban leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, condemned these house burnings, saying they were in retaliation for earlier house burnings by the anti-Taleban forces. His statement, which came after the abuses had occurred, made no mention of the alleged massacres.

Grave abuses on grounds of ethnicity have also been carried out by factions opposing the Taleban. For example, anti-Taleban forces in regaining control of Bamiyan during a three-week period (21 April to 9 May 1999) resorted to severe beating of people from newly settled Pushtun ethnic group or those suspected of collaborating with the Taleban, arbitrary detention of dozens of civilians, and ill-treatment of their family members. Many families fled the area as a result of the harsh treatment they received in the hands of the anti-Taleban forces.

In the last couple of years, ethnic issues appear to have taken yet another turn. Usually, after the capture of an area by the Taleban, people from the Pushtun tribes are reportedly encouraged to settle in the area. Some of the Pushtun settlers claim they had been forced from the area years ago and are now returning to their dwellings. Many, however, are new settlers. One such case relates to Bamiyan. After the capture of the province by the Taleban from the Hazara-backed party Hezb-e Wahdat which was in control of Bamiyan for about 20 years, *Kuchi* nomads (from the Pushtun tribes) were reportedly encouraged to settle there. Some 500 armed men under a *Kuchi* leader were given the charge of enforcing their resettlement in Panj Awe and along the road between Panj Awe and Behsood. *Kuchis* were also settled in Sarcheshma, Laal and Dasht-e Navor. They have confiscated land from Hazaras, in some cases reportedly taking possession of the wheatfields from the Hazara farmers setting *Kuchi* flocks to graze there and treating the owners brutally if they raise objection. *Kuchis* have also claimed compensation from the Hazara people for past use of their land, with no fair mechanism to ascertain these claims. Local authorities reportedly tolerate these actions.

At the time of writing this paper in August 1999, ethnic issues are again highlighted in the context of the recent Taleban assault on positions held by the Tajik commander, Ahmad Shah Masood north of Kabul and in Panjshir in the previous month. Up to 100,000 people were reported to have fled the fighting, some forcibly, toward the Panjshir valley heading for Badakhshan province in the northeast. Thousands more people living in the Tajik inhabited areas of Shamali plains were reportedly displaced forcibly by the Taleban. Some 8,000 men, women and the elderly were reportedly sent to deserted Sarshahi camp near Jalalabad close to the Pakistan border in an area exposed to blazing sun, notorious for scorpions, lacking any major infrastructure, and guarded by Taleban fighters - effectively held like prisoners. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) raised concern about the situation of these people urging the Taleban to "protect, feed and maintain these civilians affected by the conflict".^{xi} On 5 August, the Taleban began to return these families from Sarshahi camp, housing them instead in the bombed-out former Russian embassy in Kabul. Displaced Tajik people who are forced to stay in this compound complained of lack of food and water, saying they had to survive on handouts from the United Nations. They said they had received their first meal in three days on 8 August and that an old man had died of hunger. Among those raising serious concern about the situation of these people was the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, who on 10 August 1999 said:

"Reports of massive forced displacements of civilians from the areas where fighting has been raging are alarming... But the parties responsible for such disasters cannot, cynically, commit such criminal acts, then turn to the United Nations and the international community as a whole to help save their own people from disasters provoked by those who claim to be their country's leaders."^{xii}

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Amnesty International is urging all warring factions in Afghanistan to respect the human rights of members of all ethnic groups in the country. At the same time, the organization believes that the ever deteriorating situation of ethnic groups in Afghanistan, deserves special attention by the international community. The majority are at risk of being massacred, brutally treated or “disappeared”. Others see no option but to flee to neighbouring countries where they are not assured refuge or practical support from the host country, living there in a degrading situation and subjected to all forms of discrimination. The harsh treatment of those who choose to stay behind, does nothing but to fuel a cycle of ethnic violence which threatens not only the security of Afghanistan but the neighbouring region. It is the responsibility of the international community to remind the warring factions that they cannot continue to ignore the human rights of the Afghan civilian population which consists of a wide mosaic of ethnic minorities.

Recommendations to all parties to the conflict:

- State publically that they are committed to safeguarding fundamental human rights of all Afghans in territories under their control;
- Establish and independent an impartial procedure to allow victims or their families to report human rights abuses;
- Put in place a strict chain-of-command control to ensure that their military units abide by the principles of international humanitarian law, in particular those relating to the humane treatment of civilians.
- Bring to justice in a fair trial any militia, commander or authority who has abused the human rights of members of ethnic groups;
- End deliberate and arbitrary killings, torture and ill-treatment;
- Ensure that no one is detained solely on account of ethnic identity, religion or political views;
- Clarify the fate of unacknowledged detainees; allow unimpeded access to humanitarian and human rights bodies;

Recommendations to the International community:

- Put pressure on countries with influence on warring factions in Afghanistan to help end human rights abuses against minorities;
- Ensure that arms supplied to warring factions are not used to commit human rights abuses;
- Support initiatives to promote and protect human rights;

The main countries with influence are brought together by the UN in the “Six plus two” group, which meets regularly under UN auspices to discuss ways of bringing peace to Afghanistan. This consists of the six countries bordering Afghanistan - Pakistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, China - plus the USA and Russia.

Other countries with influence that have attended UN meetings on Afghanistan: Egypt, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Turkey, UK and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

Afghanistan Support Group brings together main donors and organizations working in Afghanistan. These countries overlap with the UN groupings: Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, Britain, the US, Australia, Russia, Canada, Norway, Japan, and the EU's executive commission.

Amnesty International continues to hold the leaders of all warring factions accountable for the human rights abuses committed by their members or sanctioned by themselves now or in the past. It urges that all perpetrators of human rights abuses against the Afghan people should be brought to account and that no one should be allowed exemption from punishment.

Please send appeals based on the recommendations above to:

- YOUR OWN GOVERNMENT**
- THE EMBASSIES OF PAKISTAN, SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN, AND THE USA IN YOUR OWN COUNTRY**
- THE TALEBAN :**

Alhaj Mullah Mohammad Rabbani

Salutation: Dear Mullah Rabbani

**(Chairman of the Taleban Caretaker Council)
Embassy of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan
House No 8, Street No. 90
G-6/3 Islamabad
Pakistan**

and

**Mullah Mohammad Omar
(leader of the Taleban)**

Salutation: Dear Mullah Omar

**Embassy of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan
House No 8, Street No. 90
G-6/3 Islamabad
Pakistan**

- THE UNITED FRONT (ANTI-TALEBAN ALLIANCE):**

Embassy of the Islamic State of Afghanistan

**31 Prince's Gate
London
SW7 1QQ
United Kingdom**

ENDNOTES

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1. Anthony Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-81*, Macmillan, London and Basingstoke, 1982, p.10 It assumes an approximate ethnic composition of: Pushtun 45.4%; Tajik 22.7% ; Hazara 9.7%; Uzbek 8.4%; Aimaq 5.1%; Herati 3.8%; Turkmen 1.9%; Brahui 1.2% ; Baluchi 0.6%; and Nuristani 0.6%. Today, rough estimates for the total population of Afghanistan average around 18 000 000 of whom over 2 million are outside the country.
 2. Ibid, p.11
 3. Encyclopaedia Britannica 1994 - 1998, Online.
 4. Harvey H Smith et al, *Area Handbook for Afghanistan*, US Government Printing Office, Washington DC, 1973, p.65.
 5. William Maley (ed), *Fundamentalism Reborn? Afghanistan and the Taleban*, Hurst & Co, London, 1998, p.169.
 6. Peter Marsden, *The Taliban: War, religion and the new order in Afghanistan*, Zed Books, London & New York, 1998, pp.85-86.
 7. See Marsden, *ibid*, p.91: "One problem has been the foot soldiers have taken a simplistic view of the Taliban gender policy; it has thus been easier to impale an absolute prohibition on women working than to grapple with nuances as to whether it is appropriate for women to work in particular sectors or with foreign agencies". See also Nancy Hatch Dupree, "Afghan women under the Taliban", in Maley , *op cit*, p.151: "In short, although official pronouncements regarding women may be couched in Islamic rhetoric, the web of hidden attitudes governing official action and colouring public statements is woven of many complexities".
 8. Smith et al, *op cit*, p.69.
 9. Bernt Glatzer, "Is Afghanistan on the brink of ethnic and trival disintegration?" in Maley , *op cit*, p.171.
 10. Interim report on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan submitted by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/145 and Economic and Social Council decision 1998/267- United Nations A/53/539, General Assembly, Distr. General, 26 October 1998.
 11. Reuter: *Afghan Taleban scrap refugee camp plan - sources*, 5 August 1999
 12. SG/SM/7090: *SG urges end to 'senseless self-destruction' in Afghanistan*, Category: UN Secretary-General/Statements, Country profile: Afghanistan, 6th August 1999