
RESEARCH ARTICLE

China's New Approach to Neighborhood Diplomacy: Analyzing the Economic and Political Relations with Afghanistan in the Post-2014 Period

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, Sino-Afghan relations have seen unprecedented growth, with China actively involving itself in Afghanistan's political transformation due to its longstanding friendly ties with the country. This marks China's efforts to play a proactive role in Afghanistan. The gradual withdrawal of NATO and US forces since 2014 has prompted China to adopt a new geopolitical approach towards the region. The new phase of Afghanistan-China relations has the potential to transform China from a mere observer into a constructive and intervening force in Afghanistan. This article aims to shed light on China's new diplomatic strategy in Afghanistan by examining its characteristics and implications. It is predicated on the belief that constructive engagement with Afghanistan will yield strategic, economic, and security benefits for China, which directly impact its national security risks and economic opportunities.

KEYWORDS

Afghanistan, China, Economic relationships, New Neighborhood diplomacy, Economic and security cooperation, NATO.

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1. Introduction

The peaceful coexistence of countries is one of the major aspects of international relationships. There are so many kinds of literature that have been written about relationships that exist between countries and nations and how these relationships have been able to impact them positively. Geographic factors, especially neighborhoods, continue to play an important role in relations between countries, and it is impossible to assess their security and national interests without considering the relations between countries and their neighbors.

Understanding the degree of ability and vulnerability of countries is subject to the geographic and geopolitical conditions of each country, but as a general principle around the world, neighbors have a unique and specific role in the strategic policies of each country (Etmad Jawad, 2015).

This is not a coincidence but a historical and geographic issue. With more than 22,000 km of land borders with 14 countries, China has the largest extension of borders with other countries in the world (Jinghan Zeng Yuefan Xiao and Shaun Breslin, 2015). Geographically, China's neighbors are extremely complex. Some of these countries are in critical locations near China, such as the Korean Peninsula, Afghanistan, the East China Sea and the South China Sea (Morton, 2016). All the neighboring countries of China, many of which are post-colonial states, are insecure and insecure. In addition, territorial conflicts and historical borders between China and its neighbors have created challenges for Beijing. As a result, Beijing's Neighborhood Diplomacy has become more active than ever in strengthening relations with its neighbors. The new diplomacy of China's Neighborhood refers to a number of initiatives that, under the direction of Xi Jinping, have become part of its regional policy (Huasheng Z. , 2016). This new policy does

not mean that previous policies have been suspended but rather that the regulation, development and promotion of policies are still based on their core principles. In this regard, Xi Jinping fully acknowledges that good neighborly relations will contribute to China's own development and succeed in achieving the goals of creating a modern and stable country.

On October 24, 2013, when the Political Bureau of the CPT Central Committee set up a meeting on diplomatic work with neighboring countries, Jinping said in his important political statement that interacting with neighboring countries should be three-dimensional, beyond time and space, and security co-operation with Neighbors must be deepened. Given the geopolitical and geo-economic importance of the region, Xi Jinping is seeking common ground and convergence of interests of China and other countries in the region. The new diplomacy of the Neighborhood has significant features, the most important of which are relations with neighbors in the main foreign policy priorities. In the past, relations with major powers were of particular importance, but over time, neighborhood policy has become a new dimension in China's foreign diplomacy and foreign policy. This priority change was specifically endorsed at the "Central Conference on China's Neighborhood Diplomacy" held by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in October. Without positive neighborly relations, China cannot become a coherent, peaceful power. If the neighbors of China are insecure and insecure, national security will be threatened. If the neighbors' relations are intimately bound up with China, China will be closed to expand cooperation and stability, and diplomatic activity and Beijing's foreign policy initiatives in the region and the world will most likely be disgraceful (Mark Beeson and Fujian Li, 2015).

Afghanistan has a special place in China's diplomacy, given its shared borders, While China has very little common border (92 Km) with Afghanistan. During the presidency of Xi Jinping, the importance of Afghanistan in China's foreign policy and diplomacy is increasing and has taken a much more positive stance on reconciliation between Afghans. China is trying to encourage Pakistan to play a constructive role in facilitating participation in Afghan peace talks. This is not the only result of the power vacuum caused by the withdrawal of US forces and the changing situation in Afghanistan itself but because Afghanistan has become part of the new diplomacy of China's Neighborhood (Zhenmin, 2013). While Beijing does not want the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to have a permanent military presence in Afghanistan. And from the other hand, China's concerns that the full withdrawal of NATO troops from Central Asia perhaps help the instability and the growth of terrorist groups in the region (Kim, 2013).

2. Theoretical framework

This paper adopts the theoretical framework of the Copenhagen School, which draws upon two key theoretical approaches: Realism and Constructivism. The Copenhagen School is associated with renowned theorists such as Mac Sweeney, Eli Weaver, and Barry Buzan. Their collective efforts within the Copenhagen School have focused on developing a comprehensive theory or framework for security analysis rooted in the constructivist tradition. Within this framework, Buzan introduces the concept of "regional security complexes" as a new level of analysis. According to him, a regional security complex refers to a group of countries whose security concerns are closely interconnected. The security issues faced by these countries cannot be studied in isolation but must be understood within the context of their mutual relationships. By utilizing the Copenhagen School's theoretical perspectives, this paper aims to provide a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of security dynamics, emphasizing the interplay between Realism and Constructivism and shedding light on the complex nature of regional security arrangements (Vosoughi, Saeed, and others., 2005). The belief in the existence of states, the realization of national interests, and the centrality of the issue of security in the works of Copenhagen are the realist foundations of this theoretical approach. In this paper, Afghanistan and China are considered as two governments; they put national interests at the signal of their guidance among the various national interests; national security for China and economic and political security for Afghanistan are the focal points. These two countries are neighbors, and insecurity in Afghanistan is considered a common threat and must find common solutions to these common threats (Shafiee, Nozar. Salehi Dolat Abadi, Ruhollah., 2017).

Relations with neighboring states have always been important in China's foreign policy. This is not a coincidence but a historical and geographic issue. China has more than 22000 Kilometers of boundary with 14; the country has the greatest extension of borders with other countries in the world (Zeng, 2015). The new diplomacy of the Neighborhood has significant features, the most important of which are relations with neighbors in the main foreign policy priorities. Without positive neighborly relations, China cannot become a coherent, peaceful power. If the neighbors of China are insecure, national security will be threatened. If China's neighbors' relations with China are not good and tight, China will be closed to expanding cooperation and stability, and diplomatic activity and Beijing's foreign policy initiatives in the region and the world will most likely be sterilized (Beeson, 2015).

3. Background of Afghan-China Relations

Afghanistan and China are two neighboring countries with a long history of friendly relationships. Historically, Afghan-China relations date back to ancient times, when the transport of caravans to China and the presence of Chinese merchants and tourists through the Silk Road in Afghanistan played a significant role in fostering this relationship. Throughout history, Afghanistan and China have maintained friendly political relations, exchanging envoys, with the exception of the so-called Taliban period, which

lasted from 1996 to 2000. However, since 2002, the relationship between Afghanistan and China has been strengthened once again (Bashardost, Introduction, 2019).

Afghanistan can be considered the only neighbor of the People's Republic of China that does not have a negative historical mentality in the minds of both nations. The aim of establishing strategic partnerships and cooperation between Afghanistan and China is to further deepen the long-standing friendship and cooperation between the two countries (Zamani, 2017).

Afghanistan and China's official relations in the 20th century started on 30 August 1922 when Mohamad Sharif Khan was nominated in China as Afghanistan's envoy. In 1934, Habibullah Khan Tarzi was nominated in Nanjing as Afghanistan envoy. In March 1944, a friendship treaty was signed by the two sides. The modern diplomatic relations were marked by both countries in 1955 and posted their Ambassadors to Peking and Kabul. Meantime, China established diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Afghanistan based on the five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence and respect for each other, support, and trust; these elements led to a deepening of the traditional friendship on January 20, 1955.

Afghanistan and China resumed a new wave of political ties in 2002 that came to a halt during the Taliban era. After the fall of the Taliban regime, the Afghanistan provisional government after the Bonn Summit was established in 2002, and the bilateral diplomatic relations were restarted and developed greatly on the ambassadorial level. Afghanistan and China have kept their official ties at a high-level, and official visits such as those conducted by the Afghan president to Beijing in 2002 and later in 2010. Overall, President Karzai has visited China 7 times; Chinese governmental officials also have visited Kabul several times. In 2010 Yang Jiechi, the Chinese minister of foreign affairs, visited Kabul to participate in a conference. In September 2012, Zhou Yongkang, a fixed member of the Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC), made a visit to Afghanistan and met with the former President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai. Zhou said that it was a priority of China's foreign policy to strengthen relations with neighboring countries (Aria, 2019).

4. The dynamics of China's diplomacy towards Afghanistan

While Afghanistan in the decade 90 was plunged into a civil war, the Taliban took control of this country in the year 1996; at that time, China's security concerns intensified in Xinjiang (Waldman, 2014). China was also worried that the chaos and instability of Afghanistan would expand to Xinjiang. This caused China to distance itself from the Taliban regime and cut its ties with Afghanistan. China did not recognize the Taliban regime and did not attempt to improve its relations with it. After the formation of the new government in Afghanistan in 2002, Relations between China and Afghanistan changed, and the two countries resumed their relationship again. China strongly supported and assisted the new Afghan government and President Hamid Karzai¹ and heavily invested in the Afghan economy (Huasheng Z., 2012).

In the year 2012, Beijing decided to establish the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and he agreed to Afghanistan to be a member of the observer in the organization. As a result, relations between China and Afghanistan have become widespread, and the importance of Afghanistan has risen in China's eyes (Cordesman, 2014).

Afghanistan has always been inclined to build a direct road link between China and Afghanistan through the narrow border from Wakhan Corridor. Wakhan border is located near the city of Kashghar and its economic zone. China hopes to bring Kashghar to its former position in the era old Silk Road returns (Lin, 2011). Such a route to China, Central Asia, Europe, and warm waters, the Persian Gulf connects through Afghanistan. In other words, Afghanistan will provide a new Eurasian territorial bridge for China in the form of the World Silk Road (Kuhn, 2009).

President Ashraf Ghani's visit to China in October 2014 suggested to Xi Jinping that both countries should try to transport a short transport route along the eastern tip of Wakhan, a mountainous and rugged area to create.

According to the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Kabul, on October 28, 2014, President Xi Jinping met with President Ashraf Ghani from Afghanistan in the Great Hall of the People. President Xi said that Afghanistan is now experiencing a threefold shift in politics, security, and the economy and that China supports Afghanistan in its support for national independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, as well as the peaceful settlement process of Afghanistan (China -Afghanistan relationship, 2014).

In November 2014, Qi Jianguo, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army as Special Envoy to the President of China, travelled to Afghanistan and met with Afghan National Security Advisers, Defense Secretary, Interior Minister, National Security Directorate and Chief of Staff of the Afghan Army. In F. Brewer 2016, Fang Fenghui, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Central Military Commission, met with Ashraf Ghani.

¹ Former president of Afghanistan

Several meetings of senior diplomats and Chinese defense and security officials have been unprecedented in two years since the formation of the government in Afghanistan and clearly highlight the importance of Afghanistan in Beijing's eyes. Choosing China as the first foreign destination of Ashraf Ghani shows that the Afghan government is well aware that China can play an important role in the future of Afghanistan. China, according to its international business role, is following a profitable foreign policy through its investments in Afghanistan. Obtaining profits in a short time in Afghanistan is not impossible. Afghanistan's people are hoping China will follow a supportive or creative engagement in Afghanistan. It is clear in the long-term, China will be one of the important countries which can make enough profits through its projects in Afghanistan (Munadi, Main finding in Afghan-china relations 2016) (Munadi, Main finding in Afghan-china relations, 2016).

5. The pursuit of security in the light of economic cooperation

China's engagement with Afghanistan can be viewed from three perspectives. The first view looks from the security perspective. From this perspective, with the onset of US attacks on Afghanistan, China, like other countries in the region, including Iran, saw one of its most serious security threats, the Taliban, but its military presence in its neighborhood was a much bigger threat. It must be managed and resolved in an appropriate manner. It was posted. Therefore, China was not pleased with the presence of US troops in the region and Afghanistan, but an early departure of US troops from the region and Afghanistan was not well understood because of the persistence of instability and insecurity in this country. Thus, during this period, the Chinese government tried to provide itself with development assistance as a responsible neighbor alongside the Afghan government and to exploit its economic opportunities in a desirable manner (Aria, Asadullah, and Li Xinlei., 2019).

Afghanistan's contribution to building the new Silk Road is essential, especially with regard to infrastructure development and connectivity. Afghanistan is one of the gates through which China can access Iran and Western Asia. Looking at the volume of trade between China and Afghanistan points to the fact that the environment is conducive to the economic cooperation between Afghanistan and China. Only between the years 2002 to 2010 the trade between the two countries substantially reached its highest level, and the volume of Chinese exports from 19.91 million dollars to 704 million dollars rose. There is also a significant increase in the volume of Chinese imports from Afghanistan from 0.8 million dollars to 11.7 million dollars (Huasheng Z., 2012).

The general impression is that the Chinese offer widespread economic assistance to Afghanistan to compete with other foreign companies. On the other hand, China, in the year 2009 it has proposed to the Government of Afghanistan to build a power plant and a railroad for mineral services that can provide more investment and facilities for local people. Given the presence of US troops in Afghanistan, they are Chinese companies that gain economic benefits. In addition, China is strategically seeking to turn Afghanistan into a bridge between Southwest and Southeast Asia. Afghanistan is the right gateway across the Indian Ocean and a key area for economic development, and China's estimate is that it can be achieved through stabilization in Afghanistan. China believes that Afghanistan is an economic route to Central Asia and an important destination for investment opportunities. Beijing has used a lot of economic potential to build the infrastructure that links North Afghanistan to Central Asia itself.

Since 2001 Afghanistan has been an important stage between regional states with the United States to negotiate and increase their mutual interests and understandings. Under the circumstance of the US military withdrawal from Afghanistan, the United States tried to integrate Afghanistan with regional economic initiatives, but it was not successful. Therefore, the US withdrawal did not happen completely. While China needs a stable region and the US wants Afghanistan to be integrated with regional economic routes to maintain security, it seems there is a common goal between the US and China, and Afghanistan can be a good stage to cooperate (Munadi, The OBOR Project. Economic Initiatives around Afghanistan. Cooperation or competitions between stakeholders, 2018).

Finally, it should be noted that Afghanistan lies at the intersection of Central, Western, and South Asia and therefore has a geopolitical specificity. Afghanistan is an inevitable factor in any kind of cooperation in these areas. From a negative point of view, Afghanistan is like a lock that can cut Central Asia, South, and West. On the positive side, Afghanistan is key to opening the door to cooperation between the two regions. This country can be linked to both the Silk Road Economic Belt. Only when the Afghan lock is opened can the Silk Road Belt of China be able to communicate economically, financially and socially, but if the lock is closed, it will to a large extent, hinder any progress in the implementation of this plan (EPRC 2015).

6. The ultimate and strategic goals of China in Afghanistan

Active diplomacy is just one tool, not one goal. What will lead to China's active diplomacy in Afghanistan? What is the strategic goal of China? There are two international and domestic principles for answering these questions.

The international principle stems from the concern about the vacuum of power resulting from the withdrawal of US and NATO forces from Afghanistan, which creates an uncertain future for Afghanistan as well as challenges to the security architecture of the region. It forces China to take on more regional responsibility. The domestic principle relates to China's security concerns in

Xinjiang. Afghanistan's contribution to building the new Silk Road is essential, especially in terms of substructure development and connectivity.

Afghanistan is one of the gates through which China can access Iran and Western Asia. Geographically, there are several routes; a route directly through Pakistan and Afghanistan to Iran; another route through Kazakhstan or Uzbekistan to Turkmenistan and Iran. China's priority is for the transit of goods from Tajikistan and Afghanistan to Iran (Ministry of Transport, 2015). The benefits of this short path are China's ability to expand its plans in Tajikistan and Afghanistan. China also pursues economic interests in its investments in developing Aynak copper mines and Amu Darya oilfields in northern Afghanistan (IRA, 2013).

Here, Afghanistan is a good market for both commodity consumption and China's energy needs because in Afghanistan, according to the geological survey of Afghanistan, the value of oil and gas in Afghanistan has been estimated at \$1131.840 trillion, and in Afghanistan, 1,400 types of minerals have been identified. On the other hand, Afghanistan gains a large of its consumer goods from China, bypassing the second or third countries; if Afghanistan gains the One Belt One Road project, this will be considered an economic development and transformation in Afghanistan.

7. Is China concerned with NATO's presence in Afghanistan?

Since 2014, China has exhibited renewed interest in Afghan affairs. Amidst rising speculations of a complete withdrawal of NATO forces, China grew extensively concerned with a strategic vacuum that loomed in Kabul. With the US retaining just 9,500 NATO troops in Afghanistan, Beijing did not just vaunt its strategy of calculated accommodation and is instead attempting to secure a unique status in the regional realm. While China condemned the presence of the Permanent NATO Mission, it supported US attempts at reconciling with the Taliban to achieve a degree of stability and allow a phased withdrawal of foreign troops (Mohanti, 2017).

But it seems that the US presence in Afghanistan defined a potential threat to China-Afghanistan relations. The main purpose of the United States in Afghanistan is to interact with and influence neighboring Afghanistan to be effective in the region. The United States is trying to reduce the role of neighboring countries in their relationship with Afghanistan, and this effort has been fully seen in the US program in Afghanistan yet (Bashardost, The presence of the US in Afghanistan, 2019).

In the United States, some may be worried about China's growing influence in Afghanistan because of some of their influence in Afghanistan (Khalilzad, 2014). However, since the departure of most US troops from Afghanistan in December 2014, bilateral relations between Afghanistan and China have been developed, but for some reason, China will not have the former US position in Afghanistan. First, China does not want to send troops to Afghanistan. In addition, Chinese forces cannot replace US and NATO forces, even if Beijing had the will to do so. Beijing also does not seek to engage with the Afghan army in any way.

Second, China does not want to have an exclusive influence on Afghanistan or treat it as part of its sphere of influence.

Third, China has no desire to issue its economic and political model to Afghanistan. Therefore, the United States, which has a Bilateral Security Agreement with Afghanistan, continues to exercise its widespread influence on Afghanistan's security and political affairs.

This vision made clear that China is willing to strengthen its engagement with the United States to play a constructive role in Afghanistan's political reconciliation and reconstruction. In fact, China and the United States are already working together in Afghanistan, including training Afghan diplomats. China and the United States were the two major powers present in Afghanistan's peace talks between the government and the Taliban in July 2015 Held in Pakistan. In January 2016, China, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the United States formed a Quartet Coordination Group, which held five meetings in less than six months. China also expressed its appreciation for the triangle of cooperation with Afghanistan and the United States in terms of development. China and the United States are trying to develop their cooperation on political reconciliation and sustainable political transition in Afghanistan. With the threat of terrorism and international extremism, which has become the spur of all countries, the promotion of the peace process in Afghanistan and the maintenance of stability in this region are of particular importance to the two great powers (Huasheng Z., 2016).

8. Change in China's regional responsibility

Afghanistan, as a country in the heart of Asia, plays an important role in geostrategic and geopolitical competitions. In this regard, it is clear that the major powers, including China, need to focus and regulate their strategic views and approaches to Afghanistan's situation and developments in order to form political and security balances.

For a rising power like China, the increasing significance of Afghanistan in the regional strategic realm has spurred an accommodation strategy intended to enhance the former's status aspirations. While China did not indulge directly in the protracted

Afghan civil war (neither aiding nor siding militarily with any faction), it has nonetheless occasionally played a prominent role in the Afghan conflict.

As China's focus intensifies on Afghan territory, concerns on the part of other major players proliferate in equal measures. Russia and India have set distinctive goals in Afghanistan, and in the forthcoming decades, multilateral transactions over Afghanistan will generate larger global repercussions as China continues to battle for an elevated status and enhancement of its global position (Mohanti, 2017, p. 23). In this scenario, China can emerge as a game-changer. In the period after 2014, it is assumed that China will take great steps because of its major responsibility for balancing Afghanistan, but Beijing is still inclined to keep abreast of the consequences of the war and the security vacuum, while the long-standing US presence confirms in Afghanistan.

China has always been seeking to have Central Asia as its backyard instead of Russia, and it is a specific regional responsibility that China has not yet achieved. Because of the security issues, the economic benefits and the new Silk Road initiative, as well as the competition with the great powers of China, it will have to adopt a strategy for Central Asia and Afghanistan (Muhammad Khan, 2015). In these issues, what has happened in Central-Asian countries is that China is the only actor who can provide the needed investment in Central Asia and Afghanistan and succeed (Stratagem, 2013).

9. The new face of China's neighborhood diplomacy toward Afghanistan after 2014

The implication of the two propositions means that the two categories of "new Chinese foreign policy goals" today intersect with "Afghanistan's new value and position." So, it is quite obvious that China has a strong desire to play a role in the Afghan political scene. The question now is, what are the nature and characteristics of the new role China seeks in the Afghan scene, and what are its consequences?

In answer to the first part of the above question, first, we must say that China-Afghanistan relations are affected by some factors, such as the neighborhood principle of having about 80 km of the common border, historical and cultural interactions, and so on. In addition, Afghanistan's role in the Silk Road and China's need to preserve this road is significant. At present, Afghanistan also seems to be of geostrategic importance to China in the heart of Asia. However, China's relations with Afghanistan can be divided into two main periods, given the history of Afghanistan's new political life:

A. Between 2001 and 2014, Afghanistan was the scene of a bloody war that the United States waged with the participation of international allies, including NATO, under the pretext of combating terrorism. During this period, China largely lacked any serious pro-active stance on the Afghan scene and, in line with the complexities of its foreign policy, pursued a policy of patience and anticipation. Of course, China's focus during this period has been on intelligence and security monitoring, with the aim of managing and controlling terrorist activities.

B. The second phase of these relations began around 2014. During this period, China pursued a policy of expanding its presence and influence in Afghanistan. As many experts predict, China is becoming a major player in Afghanistan's development process.

In this regard, some factors that contribute to enhancing China's role in Afghanistan include:

1. Economic Factors - This means that Afghanistan, with its rich mineral resources, has great potential to help China's economic growth and development.
2. The political factors and the role that China plays in the Afghan peace and security process today.
3. The US official withdrawal from Afghanistan and its impact on the goals and objectives of Afghanistan's new foreign policy, which largely seeks to attract new partners.
4. China's efforts to manage and prevent the spread of terrorist insecurity from Afghanistan into China.
5. Pakistan's attempt to involve China in Afghan processes.

In addition, China's security concerns in Afghanistan appear to be more important and of higher priority than its economic interests, as from the Chinese perspective, among the existing threats, the secession of ethnic groups is the single most important and greatest threat to stability considered the interior of this country (Shafiee, Nozar, and Roohallah Salehi Dolat Abad, 2016).

But about the consequences of China's new presence in Afghanistan, China's security approaches in Afghanistan do not seek to increase the level of challenge with other powers and will focus mainly on monitoring. At the same time, China is seeking strategic leverage, such as Pakistan, for political balance in Afghanistan, with strategic caution. From an economic point of view, cooperation with Afghanistan will focus on the development of investment in mining and economic and commercial resources sectors.

China, with stabilization in Afghanistan, seeks to improve its economic progress and believes that the people and the Afghan government must adopt a kind of economic model that is in line with its specific conditions and characteristics and can fulfill its national aspirations (The World, 2014).

10. Conclusion

Since 2012, Afghanistan has held a special place in China's foreign policy. This is partly due to the new leadership in China under Xi Jinping, who introduced the concept of neighborhood diplomacy in 2013, making friendly relations with its neighbors a top priority. The effort to build a new Silk Road has further increased the importance of this neighborhood diplomacy. The geo-economic significance of Afghanistan, along with the significant investments made by China in that country, demonstrate that the two countries are inclined to promote their relations and support economic cooperation. Of China's neighboring states, Afghanistan is one of the most dangerous areas, but it has gained new importance to the Chinese government, which is actively engaging with Kabul on this basis. Using regional cooperation mechanisms, the complex situation, uncertain security conditions, fragile economies, and fragmented Afghan society can return to normal, allowing fruitful relations with the rest of the world. To this end, China needs to continue its policy of stability in Afghanistan after the 2014 Design through economic investment and reconstruction. It also needs to provide necessary facilities, such as communication networks, educational and health services, and training for Afghan police and the Afghan National Army in cooperation with the United States and other international and regional countries. China has other options ahead, including limiting military involvement and strengthening the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to launch counter-terrorism operations on Afghanistan's soil. China's close relationship with Afghanistan has been built through widespread interactions between the two countries leaders and senior officials. On this basis, Beijing has increased bilateral assistance to Afghanistan and has close consultations with its neighbors to support political transition and national reconciliation in Afghanistan. China has even played a significant mediator role with Pakistani cooperation, bringing the Afghan government and the Taliban to the negotiating table.

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