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## **Afghanistan Timeline**

A chronology of events since the end of the Soviet occupation. It does not include many of the attacks on civilians that have happened since 2001 and have been blamed on both the United States and Taliban.

**1989** - Last Soviet soldier leaves under 1988 agreement. Moscow-installed Najibullah government remains in place in Kabul

**1992** - Communist government collapses. Mujahideen groups set up a government which is riven by factionalism. Country disintegrates into civil war

**1994** - Battles reduce much of Kabul to rubble. Mullah Mohammed Omar, a Muslim cleric, sets up Taliban movement of Islamic students, who take up arms, capture Kandahar and advance on Kabul

**1996** - Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, who fought with mujahideen groups against Soviet occupation, returns to Afghanistan. Taliban take Kabul, hang former President Mohammad Najibullah and set up Islamic state

**1997** - Afghanistan renamed Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Taliban impose their version of Islam. But ethnic Uzbek factional chief Abdul Rashid Dostum retains control in five northern provinces

**1998** - Taliban take northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif, massacring at least 2,000 mainly ethnic Hazara civilians, according to Human Rights Watch. Bamiyan, a Hazara stronghold in the centre of the country, follows. Taliban later destroy colossal stone Buddhas of Bamiyan

Northern Alliance, made up of non-Pashtun mujahideen militias, fights back against Taliban

U.S. forces bomb suspected al Qaeda bases in southeast in reprisal for bombings of U.S. embassies in east Africa

**1999** - United Nations imposes sanctions to force Taliban to turn over bin Laden

### **2001**

**Sep** - Al Qaeda-linked suicide bombers assassinate military head of Northern Alliance, Ahmad Shah Masood

**Sep 11** - Al Qaeda suicide plane hijackers attack New York and Washington, killing thousands

**Oct** - U.S. begins bombing Afghanistan to root out bin Laden and his Taliban protectors

**Nov** - Northern Alliance forces enter Kabul as Taliban leaders flee

**Dec** - Afghan groups sign deal in Bonn on an interim government headed by Hamid Karzai, a leader from the biggest ethnic group, the Pashtun

First members of multinational peacekeeping force arrive

Interim authority takes power. Bonn plan says an emergency Loya Jirga, or grand assembly, must be held in six months

## **2002**

**Jun** - Emergency Loya Jirga agrees on a transitional authority. Karzai sworn in as its head

## **2003**

**Nov** - French UNHCR worker Bettina Goislard shot dead by suspected Taliban militants in Ghazni town, leading to suspension of many aid missions in south and east

## **2004**

**Jan** - Rival factions at the Loya Jirga agree on a constitution, paving way for first free elections

**Oct** - Presidential elections. Karzai sworn in on Dec 7. Parliamentary vote is put off amid security concerns and logistical problems

## **2005**

**Sep** - Elections held for a lower house of parliament, the Wolesi Jirga, and provincial councils. Former commanders of military factions, three ex-Taliban officials and women activists win seats

**Dec** - Parliament sits for first time

## **2006**

**Jan** - International conference in London promises Afghanistan economic and military support in return for pledges to fight corruption and drugs trade

**Aug** - Suicide bomber rams his car into a NATO convoy in Kandahar killing 21 civilians in the worst suicide attack to date

**Oct** - NATO assumes responsibility for security across the whole of the country after taking command in the east from a U.S.-led coalition force

**2007** - Taliban step up suicide attacks throughout the country

**Jan** - Karzai says he's open to talks with Taliban

**Feb** - Taliban threaten a spring offensive of thousands of suicide bombers as U.S. doubles its combat troops and takes over command of NATO force from Britain

**Mar** - NATO and Afghan forces launch Operation Achilles, targeting Taliban and allied drug lords in Helmand

**Nov** - More than 70 people, mostly schoolboys are killed, in a suicide bombing in the northern town of Baghlan. The dead include six members of parliament

**Dec** - Afghanistan expels two senior EU and UN envoys after accusing them of making contact with the Taliban

## **2008**

**Feb** - A suspected suicide bombing kills more than 100 people in Kandahar in the most deadly attack since the ousting of Taliban.

**Jun** - Donors pledge around \$20 bln in aid at Paris conference

**Sep** - Karzai offers peace talks and asks Saudi Arabia to help with negotiations. Taliban however refuse to negotiate

**Dec** - Afghanistan and Pakistan decide to form joint strategy to fight militants in their border regions

## **2009**

**Feb** - U.N. says 2,100 civilians killed in 2008 - a 40 percent rise on 2007

U.S. President Barack Obama announces he plans to send another 17,000 U.S. troops. Karzai says Afghanistan turning a new page in relations with United States

**May** - U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates replaces commander of U.S. forces with Gen Stanley McChrystal, saying the battle against the Taliban needs "new thinking"

**July** - U.S. army launches major offensive against Taliban in Helmand province

Taliban call on Afghans to boycott presidential and provincial elections

**Aug** - Elections marred by widespread Taliban attacks, low turnout and claims of serious fraud

**Oct** - Electoral Complaints Commission declares tens of thousands of votes invalid and calls for a run-off election

**Nov** - Run-off presidential vote cancelled after Karzai's remaining challenger Abdullah Abdullah pulls out saying the vote cannot be free and fair. Karzai declared president for a second term

**Dec** - Obama decides to raise troop numbers to 100,000 and says will begin withdrawing forces by 2011

## **2010**

**Feb** - Taliban reject Karzai's invitation to a peace council

NATO-led forces launch Operation Moshtarak to try and secure Helmand province

Karzai takes control of the U.N.-backed Electoral Complaints Commission, which helped expose massive fraud in October presidential election

**Jul** - International agreement to transfer control of security from foreign to Afghan forces by 2014. General David Petraeus takes command of U.S. forces

**Aug** - Independent Election Commission says over 900 polling centres will be closed due to security fears during Sep. parliamentary elections

United States says Karzai ban on all foreign private security firms may affect aid and development work

United Nations says civilian casualties up by 31 percent since 2009, with Taliban responsible for 76 percent of deaths

Unidentified gunmen kill 10 aid workers, including 8 foreigners, in Badakhshan province

**Sep** - Parliamentary elections pass off relatively smoothly despite a Taliban threat to disrupt the poll

**Nov** - NATO agrees plan to hand control of security to Afghan forces by 2014-end

**Dec** - Final election results announced

## **2011**

**Mar** - The number of civilians killed by fighting rose 15 percent in 2010, compared with 2009, United Nations says. A total of 2,777 civilians were killed during 2010, 75 percent of them by Taliban

**Apr** - Violent protests break out against Koran burning in a U.S. church. At least seven foreign U.N. workers are killed when protesters storm the U.N. compound in Mazar-e Sharif

**May** - Bin Laden shot dead by U.S. special forces near Pakistan's main military academy in the northwestern garrison town of Abbottabad  
Taliban launch "spring offensive"

**Jun** - U.S. President Obama announces 10,000 U.S. troops to leave during 2011, and another 23,000 by Sep. 2012

U.S. says it is participating in Afghan Peace Council talks with Taliban

268 civilians reported killed in May, highest monthly toll since 2007

**Jul** - Senior government officials assassinated, including Karzai's half-brother who was governor of Kandahar

ISAF forces hand over security of seven regions to Afghan troops

United Nations says 1,462 civilians killed by conflict during first half of 2011, a rise of 15 percent from the same period in 2010 and the highest since 2001

General John Allen replaces General David Petraeus as head of ISAF, U.S. forces

**Sep** - Militants carry out major attack on U.S. embassy and NATO headquarters in Kabul, killing 27 people. Officials blame Taliban-linked Haqqani Network, and U.S. top military commander accuses Pakistan of backing attack

Human Rights Watch report says Afghan militias and police are committing serious abuses

**Oct** - India and Afghanistan sign strategic partnership

Bomb near U.N. housing and assault on NGO offices in Kandahar kill at least five people

U.N. report is released, detailing torture of detainees by Afghan security officials

Karzai says the government is to abandon peace talks with Taliban and focus on dialogue with Pakistan

**Nov** - Hundreds of political elite attending a loya jirga traditional assembly endorse Karzai's bid to negotiate a 10-year military partnership with the United States

**Dec** - Pakistani Sunni militants Lashkar-e-Jhangvi claim responsibility for attacks on Shia holy day Ashura, killing more than 80 people and injuring at least 100  
Pakistan boycotts Bonn conference on Afghanistan

## **2012**

**Jan** - A leaked NATO report says the Taliban, with Pakistan support, is poised to retake control after NATO withdrawal

Taliban said had opened an office in Qatar as part of confidence building measures agreed on with U.S. and German govts

**Feb** - Reports of NATO troops burning copies of Koran trigger violent country-wide protests

NATO, UK and France recall civilian staff from ministries after two senior U.S. military officers killed in Afghan Interior Ministry. Taliban claim responsibility

United Nations says the civilian death toll rose in 2011 to 3,021

**Mar** - U.S. soldier Robert Bales shoots 17 villagers including 9 children in Kandahar's Panjawi district.

Taliban break off prisoner exchange talks with U.S.

**Apr** - U.S. and Afghanistan agree a strategic partnership deal

Taliban launches a multi-city "spring offensive" in Kabul, Nangahar, Logar and Paktika provinces

Pakistan, Afghanistan and United States discuss reviving peace talks

**May** - NATO summit says 2014 withdrawal of troops "irreversible"

ISAF announces al-Qaeda second-in-command killed in Kunar province

Arsala Rahmani, a former Taliban minister and key member of the High Peace Council, is killed in Kabul. The Taliban deny responsibility

**Jul** - Tokyo donor conference pledges \$16 billion in aid, and promises to channel more aid through the Afghan government if Afghanistan does more to tackle corruption

**Aug** - U.S. military discipline six soldiers for inadvertently burning copies of the Koran in February

## 2013

**Mar** - Two former Kabul Bank chiefs are jailed for a massive fraud that nearly led to the collapse of the entire Afghan banking system in 2010

**Jun** - NATO forces hand over command of all military and security operations to Afghan army

**Aug** - Robert Bales is jailed for life for massacring unarmed villagers in March 2012

## 2014

**Jan** - A Taliban suicide attack on a restaurant in Kabul's diplomatic quarter kills 21 people, including the IMF country head. It is the worst attack on foreign civilians since 2001

**Feb** - The number of Taliban attacks rises with the start of the presidential election campaign

**Apr** - Presidential election

Number of civilians killed since the 2001 invasion hit record levels in 2010, Afghanistan Rights Monitor reports.