

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, The Most Compassionate

نهضت اعتماد ملی - "نام"

طرح عبور از بحران و ایجاد حکومت منتخب فراگیر ملی

Nahzati A'timadi Milli (NAM)—National Trust Movement of Afghanistan's

Proposal for Overcoming the Crises & Creating Inclusive National Elected Government

Executive Summary:

Origins and impetus: The National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM) emerged in response to the demonstrably failed international efforts to quell terrorism and establish stability in Afghanistan. These efforts, spanning decades and incurring immense financial and human costs (primarily borne by Afghans themselves), culminated in the country's relinquishment to the Taliban on August 15, 2021. This event deeply disillusioned Afghanistan's educated youth and shocked the global community.

Vision and Hope: NAM's members, though disheartened by this tragic outcome, retain unwavering hope and optimism. They believe that Afghanistan's future can still be secured, and genuine, lasting peace with justice can be achieved, contingent upon the international community's genuine support for this new Afghan initiative. This novel political vision is informed by a comprehensive and systematic analysis of Afghanistan's tumultuous past, its present critical challenges, and its potential for a brighter future.

Critique of Afghanistan's Political Landscape: Afghanistan's historical and contemporary political culture has demonstrably rewarded self-serving, identity-centered politics, emphasizing tribal, ethnic, and religious affiliations. This approach has fostered a profound trust deficit, breeding suspicion, uncertainty, discrimination, and social fragmentation. This dysfunctional political system has not only plunged the country into violence, insecurity, and instability but has also served as a catalyst for decades of international conflict.

NAM's Proposed Political System: NAM advocates for the establishment of a legitimate and inclusive elected political system that enfranchises all segments of Afghan society, irrespective of ethnicity, language, religion, sect, gender, or any other social marker. We adhere to the principle of community self-governance without reference to *qawmiyat* (ethnicity) and polycentric governance structure. We serve as the voice for the unheard Afghan masses.

Beyond Political Parties-A Movement for Trust-Building: NAM distinguishes itself from a traditional political party, functioning instead as a political current that seeks to cultivate and solidify trust at the national, regional, and international levels. We firmly reject a centralized, leader-centric, and identity-based political system. In its place, we champion a decentralized, values-driven, program-centered, and citizen-oriented inclusive political system that celebrates unity in diversity and offers a viable path towards rescuing Afghanistan from its ongoing crises.

Envisioned Democratic System: Our core objective is to establish a democratic alternative that guarantees social justice, human dignity, rationality, adherence to the principles of constitutionalism, *shura* (consultation), and the equal rights of all citizens.

Rejection of Imposed Regimes and Advocacy for Legitimate Governance: NAM unequivocally rejects any regime imposed through violence or terror. While we abhor endless wars, we recognize the necessity to defend the rights of our citizens by all legitimate means possible when the fundamental principle of political legitimacy through free and transparent elections is disregarded and social justice is violated.

NAM's Core Objectives: Our primary goals are to illuminate the deep-seated problems plaguing Afghanistan's political culture, propose practical solutions, and ultimately pave the way for the establishment of an inclusive and legitimate elected government.

Core Values: NAM cherishes and upholds fundamental human rights. We denounce claims of social or political supremacy based on tribal/ethnic affiliations, gender apartheid or religious sects. We advocate for the rights of all citizens and tirelessly pursue the realization of just and sustainable peace. We believe that political legitimacy can only be restored through free and fair elections adhering to the principles of polycentric community self-governance. Additionally, we champion freedom of speech, a free press, and freedom of conscience. Integrity, truthfulness, and rationality are the cornerstones of our value system. We value and reward knowledge, skills, dedication, experience, and moral-ethical rectitude in both word and deed.

Articulating Endemic Problems in Afghanistan's Political Culture:

Governance and Politics: A defining feature of Afghan political behavior is its prioritization of rent-seeking, self-interest, and ethnic/tribal hegemony over adherence to principles, values, and programmatic approaches to community self-governance. This fosters a system characterized by exceptionalism, the retention and reward of criminals within government structures, and rampant administrative corruption perpetrated by high-ranking officials. Furthermore, a culture of power-sharing among ethnic warlords undermines national unity, while insecurity of person and property inflicted by ruling officials themselves breeds widespread fear. Centralization of power in the hands of small cliques fosters political instability, compounded by an overdependence on external powers that exacerbates internal divisions.

Economics: Afghanistan faces a multitude of interconnected economic woes. Ongoing humanitarian crises and extreme poverty create a desperate situation for the populace, further compounded by a collapse in investor and consumer confidence. The lack of effective policies and strategies tailored to Afghanistan's specific socio-economic realities exacerbates these issues. Low national income and limited domestic spending fuel a severe trade balance deficit. Additionally, the prevalence of a shadow and illegal economy, including the cultivation, production, and trafficking of illicit drugs, alongside embezzlement, the illegal extraction and smuggling of minerals, and an unfair distribution of wealth and income, hinders sustainable development. Finally, Afghanistan's overdependence on foreign aid creates a fragile economic system susceptible to external pressures.

Education and Culture: Widespread illiteracy, poor quality education, and a lack of essential skills development hinder progress. A prevalent culture of violence and coercion, prioritizing the "ruler's law" over the rule of law, perpetuates a cycle of instability. Furthermore, Afghanistan grapples with the coexistence of xenophobia and a superficial emulation of Western culture ("Westoxification"). The systematic exclusion of women from religious teachings, education, employment opportunities, and social and economic integration hinders national development. Extremist and uninformed interpretations of foundational Islamic texts fuel radicalization, while a largely uninformed public, particularly regarding authentic Islamic teachings, remains vulnerable to manipulation.

External Affairs: The ongoing conflict has inflicted severe damages upon Afghanistan's material and spiritual culture. External actors, prioritizing their own interests, often pursue policies of "creating crises and managing them," further destabilizing the region. Support for centralized tribal/ethnic regimes, neglecting the promotion of a citizen-oriented, decentralized governance structure, undermines efforts towards lasting peace. Moreover, the absence of a resolute international commitment to end proxy wars and terrorism perpetuates the cycle of violence.

Proposed Strategies for Addressing Endemic Problems of Afghanistan's Political Culture:

Enhancing National Trust: Building a just constitution that fosters national trust is paramount. This necessitates active citizen participation in political decision-making processes at the local/community levels. Free and fair elections at all levels of government are crucial in ensuring the selection of capable leaders. Sharing power effectively between a central government and elected provincial administrations is critical for promoting national unity. Additionally, introducing mandatory draft service can contribute to reducing security costs and lessen dependence on foreign financial support.

Education and Public Awareness: Improving literacy rates and raising public awareness are essential for fostering a more informed citizenry. Urgent initiatives are needed to educate the public on the true content of the Qur'an and its emphasis on justice and humane values. This will be vital in dismantling the culture of violence and religious extremism.

Economic Development: Restoring Afghanistan's political neutrality is necessary to attract foreign investment. Long-term strategic development plans are crucial for building a sustainable economy. Ensuring mandatory public education up to ninth grade for both boys and girls will equip future generations with the skills needed for national development. Creating jobs with security and safety measures will provide much-needed economic opportunities, while poverty alleviation strategies can lead to self-sufficiency. Formalizing currently illegal economic activities can generate legitimate income streams. Developing plans for efficiently extracting and utilizing minerals and effective uses of water resources will contribute to long-term economic growth. Finally, Afghanistan's strategic location can be leveraged to participate in regional economic cooperation, cross-border trade initiatives, and the development of economic corridors between regions.

Stages of Forming an Inclusive, Professional, Committed and Elected Government:

International Peace Commission: The first stage involves establishing an International Peace Commission for Afghanistan (IPCA). This commission's mandate will be to find ways to engage with the Taliban and pave the way for all Afghan stakeholders to participate in finding a national solution that facilitates the implementation of a just peace.

National Peace Committee: Once established, the IPCA will work towards the creation of a National Peace Committee for Afghanistan (NPCA). This committee will be comprised of nominees chosen from the Afghan provinces and diaspora, with representation proportionate to population sizes.

Transitional Government: Finally, the NPCA will be responsible for establishing a Transitional Government of Afghanistan (TGA). Similar to the NPCA, the TGA will be formed through nominations solicited from within Afghanistan (provinces) and from the millions of Afghans residing outside the country. This inclusive and representative government will be tasked with overseeing the transition towards a stable and democratic Afghanistan.

The Basic Duties of the Transitional Government of Afghanistan

Central to the mission of the Transitional Government of Afghanistan lies the crucial task of reforming the nation's legal framework. This necessitates a two-pronged approach: either undertaking a revision of the existing 2004 Constitution or embarking on the development of an entirely new one.

Concurrently, the Transitional Government must prioritize the creation of other essential laws, including a revamped Elections Law. Ultimately, these legal reforms aim to pave the way for the establishment of a government elected through a constitutional process facilitated by the newly established Elections Law.

The success of this legal reformation hinges on a comprehensive understanding of Afghanistan's historical and contemporary challenges. The National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM), an initiative born from the disillusionment with the international community's efforts in the country, underscores the critical need for such an approach.

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1. Introduction

The National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM) stands as a response by Afghan intellectuals, both within the country and in diaspora, to the failed international efforts of the past two decades. These efforts, despite expenditures exceeding two trillion dollars in resources and lives (primarily Afghan with some international involvement), culminated in the relinquishing of Afghanistan to Taliban rule on August 15, 2021. This event has deeply shaken the Afghan people and the international community alike, profoundly disillusioning Afghanistan's growing educated youth.

NAM acknowledges the disheartening outcome of international intervention. However, the movement remains hopeful and optimistic. It believes that, with the unwavering support of the Afghan people for its proposal, Afghanistan can still be salvaged. Peace with justice can prevail, particularly if the international community offers genuine backing for the implementation of this plan.

NAM's optimism stems from a meticulously formulated new political vision for Afghanistan. This vision is grounded in a comprehensive and holistic analysis of the nation's darkest historical chapters, its current daunting challenges, and its potential for a brighter future. Among the many ills plaguing Afghanistan, NAM identifies a past and present political culture that has rewarded self-serving, individualistic, tribal, ethnic, and identity-based politics. This has fostered a pervasive nationwide climate of distrust, suspicion, insecurity, and social division. These factors, in turn, have fueled decades of domestic violence and instability, ultimately inviting the scourge of global conflict that has ravaged Afghanistan and its surrounding region for nearly half a century.

Composed of individuals dedicated to the well-being of all Afghans, NAM members boast a clean record, free from criminal activity and crimes against humanity. The movement is firmly committed to Afghanistan's independence, security, peace, and prosperity. It aspires to establish a legitimate, inclusive, and elected political system that truly represents all segments of Afghan society – ethnic, linguistic, religious, and both men and women. NAM serves as a voice for the silenced masses, both within Afghanistan and abroad.

Currently, NAM operates not as a formal political party, but rather as a potent political current. Its primary mission is to facilitate the creation of a viable alternative to Taliban rule. This alternative will be built upon a foundation of national, regional, and international trust, consolidated through a commitment to decentralized (polycentric) governance, a values-based approach, program-centered policies, and a citizen-centric orientation. Ultimately, NAM advocates for an inclusive political system that celebrates unity in diversity, offering a path for Afghanistan to escape its current predicament. Central to NAM's vision for Afghanistan's future lies the establishment of a democratic government grounded in fundamental Islamic values. This envisioned government would enshrine social justice, human dignity, political piety, and rationality, while adhering to the principles of constitutionalism, shura (consultation), and equality for all citizens – men, women, and all religious and sectarian communities. Informed by the experiences of the past few decades, NAM explicitly rejects theocratic,

religious, ideological, and secular political systems that seek to control religious institutions or are anti-religious. These approaches have proven ineffective in addressing Afghanistan's complex challenges.

NAM posits that a new governance initiative requires fresh leadership. This leadership should be comprised of experienced, honest individuals who command the respect of the Afghan people, including men, women, and youth – those who have borne the brunt of the past four decades of war and instability. Notably, this new leadership must demonstrably exclude those who were complicit in the past era's turmoil. Furthermore, NAM emphasizes that secular political systems that aim to control religious institutions or are anti-religious are not suitable solutions for Afghanistan.

However, NAM acknowledges that continued illegitimate military rule, disregard for citizens' rights (including voting rights), erosion of social justice, neglect of national interests, and threats to Afghanistan's territorial integrity necessitate a response. In such a scenario, NAM believes that the Afghan people, united in their diversity, possess the right to defend their rights and principles through all legitimate means available. Crucially, they emphasize that no linguistic, ethnic, religious, or political group should resort to violence and armed conflict once again. History, NAM argues, has demonstrably shown that violence begets only further violence.

The National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM) Vision

2. NAM's General Purpose:

Having diagnosed the deeply entrenched problems within Afghanistan's political culture, NAM proposes practical and achievable solutions for establishing a legitimate, inclusive, and elected national government. This envisioned government would be led by individuals who will fulfill their duties with honesty and fairness, guaranteeing equal rights for all Afghan citizens.

3. NAM's Commitment to Core Principles and Values:

- i. **Adherence to International Norms:** NAM champions compliance with international human rights standards and core humane values, including rationality, social justice, human dignity, piety, the principle of shura (consultation), freedom of choice, non-discrimination, and equal rights for men, women, and all religious and sectarian communities as citizens of Afghanistan.
- ii. **Meritocratic Governance:** Rejecting any privileges based on ethnic or tribal claims or exclusive ethnic-based governance, NAM advocates for a meritocratic system that prioritizes professionalism, dedication, and a commitment to serving the nation with fairness and justice.
- iii. **Unity in Diversity:** NAM promotes national unity while embracing diversity and safeguarding Afghanistan's territorial integrity.
- iv. **Peace and Stability:** The movement actively supports the pursuit of a just and sustainable peace, prioritizing the prevention of violence and war.
- v. **Democratic Legitimacy:** NAM recognizes the principle of political legitimacy solely through free, fair, and transparent popular elections.
- vi. **Empowering Citizens:** To ensure a citizenry empowered with their rights, NAM advocates for a new constitution that facilitates the transformation of the Afghan population from mere subjects (*taba'a* and *ra'yat*) to empowered citizens (*shahrwandan/watandaar*) with the right to elect political officers and hire professional/sectoral government officials at all levels (local, district, provincial, municipal, and national).

vii. **Balancing Freedom and National Interest:** Recognizing the importance of intellectual, political, and religious freedoms, NAM emphasizes the need for their application within the framework of Afghanistan's national interests.

viii. **Multiculturalism and Pluralism:** The movement embraces and supports multiculturalism and pluralism, encompassing ideological, political, religious, linguistic, and sectarian diversity.

ix. **Community Self-Governance:** NAM champions the principle of community self-governance (polycenterism), advocating for the election of political officers and the hiring of professional staff by peer committees within government offices across all levels, replacing the practice of appointments dictated from Kabul.

x. **Freedoms and Rights:** Upholding freedoms of speech, press, and conscience is paramount for NAM. However, these freedoms must be exercised in accordance with Afghan national human rights, Islamic principles, and values recognized by the universal declaration of human rights.

xi. **Merit Recognition:** NAM emphasizes the importance of honoring and rewarding expertise, professionalism, commitment, experience, dedication, and honesty within the ranks of the public servants.

xii. **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** National decision-making should be informed by scientific evidence, including a comprehensive national demographic and household census.

All subsequent policies, strategies, procedures, and programs, including the new national Constitution and its appendices, should be developed and implemented while rigorously adhering to these core principles and values.

Diagnoses of the Endemic Problems of Afghanistan's Political Culture

Afghanistan's political culture and economic system have been historically susceptible to both internal and external factors, each leaving a profound mark and inflicting severe damage on the very fabric of Afghan society. These detrimental influences have significantly impeded the nation's growth and development in the political, social, and economic spheres. Here's a closer examination of the nature and impacts of these factors:

4.1 Internal Factors

4.1.1 In Governance and Politics

- A pervasive political culture characterized by rent-seeking, individual-centeredness, and self-interest, prioritizing personal gain over adherence to values, principles, and programmatic approaches. This behavior often stems from claims of superiority and privilege based on ethnicity, religion, language, or tribal affiliation.
- A crisis of national identity fueled by the irrationality of ethnonationalism, leading to divisions and hindering a shared sense of Afghan nationhood.
- The lack of legitimacy plaguing Afghan governments, primarily due to their perception as externally imposed and maintained leased/rented regimes by foreign powers.
- A culture that decriminalizes crime and criminals, even allowing them to retain positions of power.

- Rampant administrative corruption, embezzlement, and abuse of public power, often relying on the whims of the ruler ("ruler's law") rather than submitting to the rule of law. This phenomenon is particularly concerning among high-ranking officials, including presidents and amirs.
- The monopolization of power based on claims of tribal, ethnic, religious-sectarian or party superiority, further marginalizing other groups.
- The instrumental abuse of language by rulers, discriminating against other linguistic communities and jeopardizing national unity. This fosters tensions and aggravates relations between different ethnolinguistic groups within the country.
- The persistent insecurity of life and property faced by Afghan citizens, creating an environment of fear and instability.
- The abandonment of a non-aligned (neutral) foreign policy, leading to Afghanistan's involvement in the power struggles of major world powers. This has had detrimental consequences for the nation's stability.
- The chronic instability of governments due to the over-centralization of power in the hands of a single individual or a small clique.
- An entrenched dependency on foreign governments for political, economic, defense, and security needs, with few exceptions. This chronic dependence has stifled Afghanistan's national sovereignty, self-reliance and development.
- An endemic political culture causing the ultimate destruction of the very fabric of Afghan society - economic infrastructure, social cohesion, cultural vibrancy, and civic life. The aftershocks of these devastating internal factors continue to resonate deeply within the nation under the Taliban rule.

4.1.2 Economic Challenges

The National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM) identifies a multitude of critical economic challenges facing the nation. These stem from a combination of factors, including:

- **Absence of a Robust Economic Framework:** A clear lack of comprehensive economic policies and strategies tailored to Afghanistan's specific socio-economic realities has hampered progress.
- **Widespread Economic Crisis:** The collapse of domestic markets, coupled with a dearth of domestic and foreign investment, has plunged Afghanistan into a full-blown economic crisis. This is further compounded by the financial and banking sector crises currently gripping the nation.
- **Acute Humanitarian Crisis:** The economic devastation has triggered a severe humanitarian crisis, with many Afghans facing immense hardship including large scale malnutrition.
- **Stagnant Economic Growth:** Economic projections paint a bleak picture, with growth expected to remain negative or stagnant in the coming years. This prolonged economic depression threatens to escalate into a full-blown economic and humanitarian disaster,

potentially leading to increased violence, extremism, and recruitment by terrorist groups such as ISIS.

- **Erosion of Investor Confidence:** The absence of political stability has severely undermined investor confidence, acting as a major deterrent to domestic private investment, a crucial driver of economic growth.
- **Poverty and Unemployment:** Low household incomes, widespread poverty, and a dearth of employment opportunities have created a significant budget deficit for Afghan families forcing many to search work in the neighboring countries.
- **Vulnerability to External Shocks:** The nation's vulnerability to economic fluctuations caused by drought and natural disasters has exacerbated existing scarcities and heightened societal hardship.
- **Shifting Forms of Corruption:** The nature of corruption has evolved from the bribery and internal revenue expropriation that characterized the Islamic Republic to new forms under the current regime. These include forced taxation of the already-impooverished population, theft and looting of national mines, and ethnically motivated bribery, extortion and unprofessional regulations.
- **Brain Drain and Resource Loss:** Afghanistan has suffered significantly from brain drain, losing a considerable portion of its human capital (skilled labor, talent, and expertise). This exodus, coupled with the loss of financial and natural resources, further weakens the nation's economic foundation.
- **Unequal Wealth Distribution:** Wealth in Afghanistan is concentrated in the hands of a select few who have amassed significant wealth through illicit activities such as drug production and mineral smuggling, land grabbing, and monopolizing government and foreign supply contracts over the past two decades.
- **Incomplete Census and Political Manipulation:** The failure to conduct a comprehensive and timely population and housing census has created fertile ground for political manipulation. The resulting perception of ethnic majorities and minorities, both domestically and internationally, has been exploited for political gain.
- **Trade Imbalance and Unprocessed Exports:** Afghanistan faces a severe trade deficit, with exports heavily skewed towards unprocessed primary materials like medicinal herbs and precious and smiprcious stones and minerals. This stands in stark contrast to the import of manufactured goods that the nation could potentially produce domestically.
- **Shadow Economy:** The cultivation, production, and trafficking of illicit drugs, alongside the illegal extraction and smuggling of minerals by mafia groups, contribute to a thriving shadow economy that undermines the legitimate economy.
- **Low Government Revenue:** The Afghan government struggles to generate sufficient internal revenue, further hindering its ability to address the nation's economic challenges.

- **Unequal Distribution of Wealth and Reliance on Foreign Aid:** The chronic problem of unfair wealth and income distribution, coupled with an overdependence on foreign economic aid, exacerbates Afghanistan's economic woes.

4.1.3. Education and Culture

NAM identifies several critical challenges within Afghanistan's education and cultural spheres. These include:

- The widespread prevalence of forced illiteracy, particularly among girls denied access to education. This results in a critical deficit of essential skills and expertise within the population.
- A pervasive culture of violence and coercion that undermines the rule of law and fosters discrimination.
- A paradoxical coexistence of xenophobia and an unhealthy fascination with Western practices (Westoxification). Additionally, NAM criticizes the detrimental effects of implementing ill-conceived plans and policies originating from foreign countries with malicious intent.
- Un-Islamic and detrimental practices that prevent women from obtaining advanced religious education, acquiring necessary skills, and participating productively in society through gainful employment.
- The misuse of religious texts by those who prioritize force, wealth, and deception (*zar, zoor, and tazwir*) to control others. These interpretations represent absolutist readings that disregard the spirit, wisdom, and authentic values enshrined within the Qur'an.
- A general lack of awareness regarding the Afghan people, including their genuine religious teachings, history, and cultural heritage. This deficiency extends to the exploitation of identity politics within the country.

4.2. Foreign Factors

NAM acknowledges the right of all nations to engage in international relations based on mutual interests and adherence to international law. However, the people of Afghanistan have endured a long and bitter history of intervention from superpowers, yielding minimal benefits and significant hardships.

Specifically, NAM identifies the following foreign interventions as having caused extensive damage to Afghanistan:

- The destruction and looting of Afghanistan's material and spiritual heritage. This began with British aggression in the late 19th century and continued with the Soviet invasion in the 20th century, fueled by both expansionist aims and the miscalculations of Afghan communist leaders who invited Soviet intervention in 1978.
- The deliberate creation and management of crises in Afghanistan by the United States and other countries in the region and beyond to further their regional strategic objectives.
- The bolstering of harmful governance structures based on ethnicity and tribalism ("rented or leased regimes"). NAM criticizes the lack of genuine support for establishing legitimate, democratic, and inclusive governments.

- The failure to address the root causes of violent conflict, terrorism, and proxy wars in Afghanistan, with repercussions extending throughout the region and beyond. This lack of determination has perpetuated instability.
- The cultivation of "leased/rented power elites/leaders" who act as local collaborators for foreign interests.

1.5 In Governance and Politics

Drawing on the lessons learned from the past few decades, NAM proposes a multifaceted approach to reforming Afghanistan's political culture and governance structures. Central to this vision is the establishment of a decentralized (polycentric), citizen-centered, and democratic system that fosters trust between the population and the government. This system would derive its legitimacy from transparent and democratic elections, with citizens actively participating as partners rather than passive subjects.

1.5.1 Building Trust and Decentralization

To achieve this trust-based partnership, NAM emphasizes the need for a complete and comprehensive national census. This data would be instrumental in national and local planning and serve as a foundation for ensuring equality of citizens' rights, dismantling the system of abusive ethnic politics. Local communities would be empowered through the principle of direct self-governance, with the right to freely and transparently elect their own leaders.

1.5.2 Reforming Elections and Representation

NAM proposes a shift from the potentially misused institution of the Loya Jergah to a system of council elections (shuras) at all levels – from the smallest administrative unit to the National Parliament. Additionally, they advocate for recourse to referendum or plebiscite on critical national issues, promoting direct citizen participation.

1.5.3 Meritocratic Civil Service and Decentralized Power

A central tenet of NAM's vision is the dismantling of the current, nepotistic, and ethnocentric civil service structure. They propose replacing the system of appointments from Kabul with a meritocratic approach. Recruitment for all professional positions within government departments – both centrally and at provincial and district levels – would be carried out by hiring committees or commissions comprised of peers within each ministry. These committees would vet applicants based solely on qualifications, ensuring that any qualified citizen, regardless of ethnicity, religion, language, or location, has the opportunity to serve their country. This, NAM argues, is the key to decentralizing power and transforming subjects into empowered decision-makers, fostering a sense of shared national identity.

1.5.4 Separation of Powers and Local Governance

NAM advocates for a clear division of responsibilities. The National Parliament in Kabul would retain the authority to legislate all national laws, while implementation would be entrusted to locally elected governments in provinces, municipalities, and districts, with central government oversight. National defense, security, foreign policy, and border protection would remain under the purview of the central government. To bolster national security, NAM proposes a system of obligatory military service for eligible citizens. Additionally, local communities would be empowered to establish their own police forces, trained and equipped by the national security apparatus according to newly established regulations.

1.5.5 Human Rights and Confronting the Past

The establishment of a truly independent Human Rights Commission is central to NAM's vision. This commission would safeguard citizens' civil, political, social, and economic rights. To address the legacy of past violence, NAM urges a thorough investigation into **crimes against humanity** perpetrated by the PDPA regime and its successors. This would include identifying and documenting mass graves across the country, and restoring the dignity of victims and their families through appropriate memorials.

By implementing these multifaceted reforms, NAM believes Afghanistan can build a more stable, just, and inclusive future for all its citizens.

1.5.2 Education and Culture

Enhancing Literacy and Public Awareness:

The National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM) prioritizes raising the level of literacy and public awareness across Afghan society. This focus encompasses cultural, historical, and political sectors, aiming to cultivate a more informed and engaged citizenry.

Universal Primary Education:

NAM advocates for mandatory general education up to the ninth grade for all Afghan children, encompassing both boys and girls. This commitment to universal primary education serves as a cornerstone for fostering a more equitable and empowered society.

Multilingualism and National Identity:

NAM recognizes the importance of strengthening official, national, and local languages in a balanced manner. They believe in promoting multiculturalism through a process of constructive competitive integration. This approach fosters respect for Afghanistan's diverse linguistic landscape while fostering a sense of national identity.

Civic Education and Countering Extremist Interpretations:

NAM emphasizes the importance of civic education programs. These programs aim to cultivate a deeper and more accurate understanding of the Quran and its core values. The focus lies on adherence to the humane Islamic and civil values enshrined within the text. This approach seeks to prevent the justification of violence in the name of Islam. Additionally, NAM advocates for the correction of misinterpretations of foundational Islamic texts. They believe such misinterpretations have contributed to atrocities in families, educational institutions, and society at large, often perpetrated under the guise of religious authority.

Establishing an Independent Islamic Studies Institute:

To combat the influence of unqualified religious leaders and promote informed religious guidance, NAM proposes the establishment of an independent, advanced "Islamic Studies Institute" (Darul Iftah). This institute would be staffed by scholars, encompassing both Shia and Sunni denominations. These scholars would possess the necessary specialized qualifications, determined in accordance with Afghanistan's legal framework. The primary function of the institute would be to issue fatawa (authoritative legal opinions/edicts) on specific issues raised by Muslims within Afghanistan or elsewhere. This initiative aims to eradicate reliance on fatawa issued by unqualified individuals claiming religious authority. It is crucial to reiterate, as NAM highlights, that fatawa

issued by individuals or groups of experts do not hold the status of law. The government is not obligated to enforce them. Acting upon the fatwa of a mujtahid (a qualified Islamic scholar) or mufti (a scholar empowered to issue legal opinions) remains a personal and optional choice. Only laws approved by elected representatives of the people, ratified by the legitimately elected head of state, hold mandatory force for all citizens.

Community-Based Mosque Management:

NAM advocates for a shift in the management of mosques and the appointment of prayer leaders (Imams). They propose a system where local communities, adhering to Islamic guidance, beliefs, and practices, hold the responsibility for these decisions. This approach aims to prevent illiterate or extremist individuals from gaining access to and abusing places of worship for the purpose of preaching violence and terrorism.

Curriculum Reform and Educational Oversight:

Finally, NAM emphasizes the need for reviewing and revising school curricula across all educational levels. This includes providing clear guidelines and regulations for both private and public institutions of higher learning. These reforms aim to ensure educational quality and alignment with national priorities.

5.1.3. In the Economy

Drawing on the lessons of the past few decades, the National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM) prioritizes a comprehensive economic development plan for the country. This plan would mark a significant first for Afghanistan – a long-term economic and development strategy spanning 15 to 20 years. Crucially, NAM proposes that this strategy be developed and approved alongside the new constitution, ensuring accountability for future governments in its implementation.

The core objectives of this economic plan encompass a multifaceted approach:

- **Job Creation and Safe Workplaces:** NAM emphasizes the creation of employment opportunities with a focus on providing suitable and safe working conditions for the Afghan workforce.
- **Strategic Trade and Development:** Planning and formulating commercial policies will be paramount. This encompasses import substitution (encouraging domestic production to reduce reliance on imports), poverty alleviation measures, and initiatives promoting overall economic self-sufficiency and development.
- **Social Safety Net:** Establishing a robust safety net is crucial for supporting Afghanistan's underprivileged and destitute citizens, especially in rural areas.
- **Formalizing the Informal Economy:** Eradicating illegal commercial activities is a priority, with the goal of transforming them into legitimate enterprises, contributing to the formal economy.
- **Sustainable Resource Management:** NAM advocates for the responsible exploration and utilization of Afghanistan's mineral wealth and untapped natural resources, including its rivers. This would be undertaken in accordance with detailed plans prioritized for the nation's long-term benefit. Transparency is paramount – when conditions are ripe, including the necessary

soft and hard infrastructure, the Afghan people will be directly informed, or through their elected representatives (Parliament), regarding the exploitation of these resources.

5. Strategic Solutions

5.1. Domestic Policies

- **Combating Drug Cultivation and Addiction:** NAM prioritizes a serious and sustained fight against drug cultivation and trafficking. This battle must also address the significant problem of drug addiction, with estimates from United Nations sources suggesting the number of afflicted individuals exceeding three and a half million.
- **Sustainable Resource Management:** Afghanistan's unexplored mines and reserves represent the nation's untapped wealth. NAM advocates for their cautious and prudent management to facilitate the conversion of resources into finished products within Afghanistan. This shift would stimulate rapid economic growth, development, and self-sufficiency. Additionally, the movement emphasizes the importance of maximizing the utilization of Afghanistan's river waters, adhering to both national and international legal frameworks.

5.2. External Affairs

- **Border Resolution:** NAM advocates for the resolution of the disputed eastern border with Pakistan (Durand Line) based on international law. This process would necessitate cooperation between the legitimately elected governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan, with the United Nations acting as a supervisory body.
- **Restoring Neutrality and Regional Engagement:** Efforts should be made to re-establish Afghanistan's principle of political neutrality. This would allow the nation to function as an independent state prioritizing its national interests in the 21st century. NAM envisions Afghanistan optimizing its geopolitical location to become a valued economic and cultural corridor, actively engaging in regional economic cooperation and cross-border trade.
- **International Collaboration:** NAM, on behalf of the Afghan people, implores the international community, the United Nations Security Council, and other international organizations to support the implementation of this proposal to establish an inclusive democratic system of governance in the country. Such efforts require the elimination of unhealthy competition within Afghanistan and the broader region. These rivalries have demonstrably fueled insecurity and confrontation among nations, ultimately contributing to the rise of extremism and the perpetuation of seemingly endless wars.
- **A Stable Afghanistan: A Platform for Cooperation:** A non-aligned, democratic, stable, values-centered, and citizen-oriented Afghanistan can serve as a secure platform for fostering healthy competition based on shared and balanced interests. This foundation would cultivate productive relations with neighboring countries, the region, and the wider world.

5.3. Call to Action:

To overcome Afghanistan's current crises and implement these proposed strategic solutions, NAM seeks the concerted collaboration of the international community. This collaborative effort would entail

undertaking specific measures to assist the Afghan people in finally ending their four decades of hardship.

6. Steps towards Forming an Inclusive, Professional, and Committed Government

Informed by the experiences of past decades, the National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM) advocates for a multi-pronged approach to establishing a stable and legitimate government in Afghanistan.

Firstly, NAM proposes the formation of an impartial national interim administration. This administration, comprised of Afghans both inside and outside the country, would be tasked with either revising the existing 2004 Constitution or drafting a new one entirely. Crucially, this process necessitates the "rigorous assistance" of international and national bodies to ensure its legitimacy and pave the way for the next crucial step – the formation of an inclusive, elected, and legitimate national government. This comprehensive approach, NAM argues, offers a viable path towards finally resolving Afghanistan's protracted political crisis.

Mobilization and Trust-Building:

NAM actively seeks to garner national support for its vision by mobilizing the Afghan people – particularly women and youth. They are confident that Afghans will embrace their proposal for a decentralized, value-driven, program-oriented, and citizen-centered political system led by "new and honest leadership." They believe this roadmap fosters trust and harmony not only within Afghanistan but also internationally.

Recognizing the detrimental effects of past foreign interventions, NAM emphasizes Afghan self-determination. They urge their neighbors and the international community, this time, to prioritize supporting Afghans in leading their own recovery through the implementation of a nationally constructed roadmap inclusive of NAM's "Proposal". Acknowledging the need for international cooperation, they specifically request assistance from regional powers, the United Nations, and neighbors in establishing an inclusive, professional, and accountable elected Afghan government.

Collaboration with the International Community:

To facilitate this process, NAM outlines key actions for the international community:

6.1. Establishment of an International Peace Commission for Afghanistan (IPCA):

NAM considers this the critical first step. They believe that without the IPCA, the continuation of Taliban rule, further marginalization of women, escalation of violence, and regional instability are inevitable. They propose the UN Secretary-General, UN Security Council, UNAMA Mission in Afghanistan, and other key international stakeholders collaborate to establish the IPCA.

NAM, as the initiator of this proposal, expresses its commitment to collaborating with the IPCA to safeguard the interests of the Afghan people and ensure the successful implementation of their plan.

1. The International Peace Commission for Afghanistan (IPCA): Composition and Duties

Informed by the experiences of the past decades, the National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM) proposes the establishment of the International Peace Commission for Afghanistan (IPCA) as a critical body to facilitate lasting peace in the country. This commission would be comprised of representatives from key global institutions, including the United Nations Security Council, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the European Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank. To bolster the commission's impartiality and effectiveness, NAM

suggests that Amnesty International and Transparency International serve as advisory bodies. Additionally, the IPCA would benefit from the expertise of 3 to 5 advisors, both Afghan nationals and international figures with relevant experience, commitment, and a positive reputation. These advisors would not only provide valuable guidance to the IPCA but would also monitor and evaluate the activities of the National Peace Committee for Afghanistan (NPCA), a body to be established by the commission.

The IPCA's core mission would be twofold. First, it would endeavor to develop effective strategies for engaging with the Taliban, even amidst the challenges posed by their current dehumanized approach. This initial task is crucial to pave the way for the inclusion of all Afghan stakeholders in the peace process. Second, the IPCA would then facilitate the formation of the National Peace Committee for Afghanistan (NPCA) – a body tasked with realizing the possibility of a just and lasting peace for the nation.

To ensure broad representation within the NPCA, the IPCA would advocate for a nomination process that considers the demographic makeup of each Afghan province. This would involve soliciting potential candidates from trusted members within Afghanistan, as well as from displaced Afghans residing in Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Europe, and the United States. Following a rigorous vetting process by the IPCA to assess each nominee's character, national reputation, competence, and commitment to peace, a select group would be chosen to serve on the National Peace Committee for Afghanistan.

2. National Peace Committee for Afghanistan (NPCA): Composition and Responsibilities

Upon its establishment, the NPCA would work closely with the IPCA. As its first order of business, the NPCA would establish an advisory and technical team of 5-10 individuals. This team would be comprised of experienced Afghans and international figures (excluding any members of the IPCA's advisory group) and would provide crucial support to the NPCA's endeavors. Subsequently, the NPCA would initiate a nomination process for membership within the Transitional Government of Afghanistan (TGA). This process would involve soliciting nominations from various civil and political organizations, each Afghan province, and the Afghan diaspora, ensuring representation proportionate to their demographic size.

The nominees for the TGA would be meticulously vetted based on their experience, honesty, trustworthiness, and professional competence. The NPCA would prioritize the inclusion of women and young generations alongside men in the leadership positions. Following a thorough examination of each nominee's record, expertise, work experience, and trustworthiness, the NPCA would select the most qualified individuals for the posts of head of government, deputies, ministers, and heads of independent departments and commissions. The selection criteria would emphasize the following:

1. **Professional Competence and Adherence to Values:** Nominees should possess demonstrable professional competence and relevant expertise. They must also demonstrate a commitment to upholding Afghanistan's national and religious values, while exhibiting the necessary political astuteness.
2. **Exclusion of Divisive Figures:** The NPCA would purposefully exclude remnants of the top echelons of the People's Democratic Party (PDPA), particularly those associated with the party's intelligence division and its documented war crimes. Similarly, individuals who played a significant role in the country's bloodiest internal conflicts, such as leaders of certain political

parties, jihadi military commanders, and specific members of the Taliban, would be ineligible for positions within the TGA.

3. **Rejection of Corruption and Incompetence:** The NPCA would also exclude individuals deemed by the Afghan people to be national traitors. This extends to former officials from the Karzai and Ghani regimes who were known for administrative incompetence or implicated in financial corruption.
4. **Exclusion of Criminal Elements:** The NPCA would uphold the highest ethical standards by excluding known narcotics traffickers, members of the drug mafia, kidnappers, individuals affiliated with organized crime, and perpetrators of crimes against humanity.

By adhering to these rigorous selection criteria, the NPCA can ensure that the Transitional Government of Afghanistan is comprised of individuals who are not only highly qualified but also possess the integrity and commitment necessary to lead the nation towards a lasting and just peace.

To prevent a recurrence of the issues that plagued post-Bonn Afghan governments, the National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM) proposes a key stipulation regarding the future leadership prospects of the Transitional Government's (TGA) high-ranking members. This stipulation dictates that these individuals will be barred from assuming leadership positions, either through election or appointment, for a minimum of five years following the conclusion of their service within the TGA. This proscription aims to foster a political environment that facilitates the emergence of new leadership figures, fostering a more dynamic and inclusive political landscape in Afghanistan.

Establishment and Responsibilities of the Transitional Government

The National Peace Committee for Afghanistan (NPCA) will be tasked with establishing the Transitional Government of Afghanistan (TGA) through a suggested process. This process will emphasize the selection of honest, patriotic, and competent individuals, including both women and men, who will serve for a limited five-year term. The NPCA, in collaboration with senior members of the United Nations, international stakeholders, and respected, honest figures from Afghanistan, will introduce this government.

The Transitional Government of Afghanistan will have the following key responsibilities during its tenure:

A) Amending the Legal Framework: Constitution and Election Law

While administering the day-to-day affairs of governance, a central task for the TGA will be the formation of a commission. This commission will undertake the critical task of either revising the existing 2004 Constitution or drafting an entirely new one. This process will also encompass the creation of new by-laws, including a revamped Election Law. The amended or newly drafted constitution should reflect the values, principles, and mechanisms outlined in this proposal for decentralization (polycenterism). This decentralization should be based on the principles of self-governance at the district and provincial levels, along with clear divisions of power and responsibilities between the central government in Kabul and the outlying regions.

B) Designing Long-Term Strategic Plans

The TGA will also be responsible for establishing commissions dedicated to developing long-term strategic plans (envisioning a timeframe of 10-15 years) for the nation's future in various areas. These areas include economic, cultural, and political development, as well as national security. When

formulating these strategic plans, the commissions must consider the specific economic, geographical, and environmental realities of Afghanistan. Subsequent, legally elected governments will then be obligated to design and implement five-year medium-term and short-term plans based on the established long-term plans.

7. Elected Government Established Through Free and Fair Elections

Following the conduct of national elections based on the newly established constitution and election law, the announcement of the final results will mark the transfer of state power to the elected government. The Transitional Government will then be dissolved. The new government will possess the authority to design and implement laws, regulations, and adaptable plans within the framework of the new constitution, secondary laws, and the long-term and medium-term strategic plans. Furthermore, the legally elected government will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the long-term strategic plans developed by the TGA.

Note: The National Trust Movement of Afghanistan (NAM) welcomes constructive criticism, suggestions, and opinions from both our compatriots within or outside Afghanistan and our international friends. These contributions are valued as they hold the potential to improve and enhance this proposal and subsequent documents in the hope of creating a national roadmap for achieving peace with justice and citizen-focussed stable political system in Afghanistan.

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