On August 16, 2021, the entire world was stunned by gruesome footage from Kabul. Locals, struggling to leave the country, run after a US Air Force plane, trying to get a hold of it to leave Afghanistan, overrun by the Islamist terrorist movement Taliban (banned in Russia). Washington’s failed policies are resulting in massive flows of refugees from that country. The Taliban are dictating new laws to Afghanistan that all its citizens will now be forced to live by. A large part of the 40 million Afghan population wants to leave the country because they fear for their security. Representatives of some states have already declared that they are not ready to accept Afghan refugees, while leaders of some countries have already developed programs to help people forced to leave their homeland.

The Taliban, who took control of most of Afghanistan in August 2021, significantly restricted civil rights and freedoms based on their understanding of Sharia law. Many everyday things have been banned. The national anthem has been outlawed because the Taliban disapprove of music. Since usury is considered unworthy under the Shariah, the entire banking system has fallen under the ban. Although the Taliban promise to make some concessions, such as granting women the right to work and have education up to university level, many Afghans still do not trust the organization. Many citizens believe that by making such statements, the Taliban are simply trying to whitewash themselves in the eyes of the world community so that foreign powers will stop considering them a terrorist movement. According to some locals, when the increased global attention on the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan diminishes, they will again impose harsh restrictive measures and start persecuting people who do not agree to live
On August 20, 2021, there were media reports that the Taliban had completely shut down access to the Kabul airport. Terrorists are preventing Afghans who want to leave the country from entering the facility. As of the second half of August 2021, tens of thousands of Kabul residents are trying to leave Afghanistan. US Army soldiers fire warning shots to stop the crowd. The US military has reportedly given more comfortable seats on planes to service dogs than refugees from the country where they started the war. Many Afghans who used to cooperate with US troops are especially anxious to leave the country because they fear retaliation by the Taliban. However, Americans are not ready to accept all Afghan refugees.

Washington’s attitude towards Afghans is most clearly and vividly demonstrated by the words of Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield US Representative to the United Nations New York, who stated that America’s allies and friends “will not hang on to airplanes.” Nothing is surprising in these words since Washington, having withdrawn its troops from Afghanistan, officially crossed it off the list of friends and allies, thus abandoning any plans to establish “democracy” in that country. This is mainly because there are now quite a few internal conflicts in the US that interfere with previous aggressive policies. The weakening level of the US economy also plays a significant role.

Information agency of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) reported that the country would temporarily host about 5 thousand refugees from Afghanistan, which the US Air Force evacuated in connection with the capture of the country by the Taliban. “The main Afghan refugee” within the UAE can be described as former Afghan President Ashraf Ghani. According to media reports, the former head of state fled the country with significant money. According to a statement by the UAE foreign office, Ashraf Ghani is staying in the country for “humanitarian reasons”. The former president has promised to return to Afghanistan, but such a scenario is unlikely: Ghani is elderly, in poor health and has a relatively low approval rating among Afghans.

EU countries have been reluctant to accept refugees from Afghanistan on the pretext that many EU countries still have relatively strong restrictive measures in place to combat the coronavirus pandemic. Some European countries are not ready to host Afghans because they have already received many refugees from Syria and Iraq. Offers to help Europe were made to Turkish President Recep Erdoğan, who rejected them and said Turkey had done enough to dampen the waves of refugees. Erdoğan also said he had no intention of turning his country into “a repository of Afghan migrants for Europe.” The position of the Turkish leader is understandable because many European states, allied with the United States, first got involved in the Afghan war and then withdrew their troops from the country together with Washington.

On August 21, 2021, Colombian President Ivan Duque announced that his country is ready to temporarily host refugees from Afghanistan who will soon be sent to the United States. However, the head of state did not name the exact number of refugees. Washington has committed itself to cover the logistical costs. How long Afghan refugees will stay in Colombia, how much their stay will cost the country, and whether the US will compensate them are still open questions.

In Indonesia, which has the largest Muslim population globally, the Geutanyoe Foundation has advised citizens to show compassion and be prepared to do what they can to help refugees from Afghanistan. Some of them are likely to arrive in their country. Some Indonesians are calling on the authorities to get involved in supporting refugees.

In conclusion, the world will soon have to face a rather severe humanitarian crisis caused by the waves of refugees from Afghanistan. Against the backdrop of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, this will be a significant challenge for the international community. It could also serve as a prime example to other countries of how Washington’s military adventures, which sometimes set itself and its allies unrealistic goals, can end up hitting innocent people.

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