At the end of December 2021, the Biden administration, in another of its now blatantly false propaganda campaigns, tried to convince the world of the supposedly “humane treatment of the people of Afghanistan.”

It should be recalled that at the time the matter concerned the delivery of one million doses of coronavirus vaccine produced by the US company Johnson & Johnson to Kabul as part of US humanitarian aid. Moreover, the damaging health effects of this particular US vaccine were openly discussed in the US itself even back then, leading, among others, to the closure of vaccination centers in North Carolina and Colorado, which was covered by none other than The Wall Street Journal. Even then, about a hundred complaints received by the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention after the use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine prompted its medical staff to take a closer look at this anti-Covid-19 drug and “duly appreciate” the Biden administration’s “humanitarian gift” of this brand of vaccine to Afghanistan. At the time, there were also suspicions as to whether this “donation move” was not only a way for the United States to get rid of a failed vaccine, but also an opportunity to thereby “punish” Kabul for the scandalous expulsion of the US troops from that country in August.

And here is new evidence of the alleged “humane attitude of the White House towards the Afghan people” demonstrated on February 11 by President Joe Biden signing an executive order blocking $7 billion in assets of the Central Bank of Afghanistan, which are held in American financial institutions. As a result, these assets of the Central Bank of Afghanistan will remain in the US. Half of them will be held “for possible compensation of claims in US courts,” and about $3.5 billion will be put into a US trust fund “to help Afghans.”

It is remarkable that Biden signed the order just hours before the US Department of Justice was to present to a
federal judge an action plan regarding the frozen funds, amid urgent calls from US lawmakers and the UN to use them to address the dire crisis that has worsened since the Taliban (a movement banned in Russia) seized power in August last year. According to senior US administration officials, the money blocked on US territory was deposited in Kabul’s accounts as a result of two decades of foreign financial support, thus legally justifying the US’s right to solely dispose of these finances. With the signing of this order, all of the foreign holdings of the Central Bank of Afghanistan held in the US will now be transferred to a single consolidated account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Washington notoriously froze Afghan funds held in the US since the Taliban came to power, explaining that the new Afghan government is not recognized as legitimate by the world community. However, the worsening humanitarian situation in Afghanistan has led to increased pressure on Washington by the UN and other states not indifferent to the plight of ordinary Afghans.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova has already accused Washington of exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and hindering the restoration of normal life in the republic, as the situation is largely the result of a failed US and NATO campaign. “The $7 billion seizure of assets held by the Central Bank of Afghanistan in the United States, announced by President Biden’s executive order, raises questions about the sincerity of White House statements about the desire to help stabilize the country,” Zakharova said.

The decision by the head of the White House to divide the amount in half is also noteworthy: the first half is to be distributed to the families of the victims of the 9/11 attacks. However, there were no Afghan nationals among the perpetrators of the biggest terrorist attack in US history. “Why should the Afghan people, who were in no way involved in organizing these attacks, now have to pay for them?”, Zakharova notes. In addition, according to Maria Zakharova, Washington’s claim that it has the right to give the second half of the $3.5 billion in aid to Afghans as humanitarian aid cannot be called anything but a mockery, as the money already belongs to the Afghan people.

But another remarkable thing is that when Joe Biden blocked the Afghan funds held in the US, he did not say a word about the reparations to be paid to Afghanistan by the US itself for the military and material damage that the US-led armed coalition was inflicting on this country and its people for 20 years!

The US administration’s decision not to return the assets of the Central Bank of Afghanistan is no different from the “behavior of bandits,” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said on February 15. The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said that such an example once again confirms that the “rules-based” world order, which the US allegedly advocates, does not protect the rights of the weak and justice, but only supports the hegemony of the United States. He added that as a party to the crisis in Afghanistan, the US should stop exacerbating the suffering of the Afghan people, release those assets, lift unilateral sanctions and acknowledge its obligations to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in that country.

Commenting on Washington’s actions, surprising unanimity was shown by the Taliban and the country’s former authorities. “The theft by the US of money blocked and belonging to the people of Afghanistan and taking possession of it is an indicator of the human and moral decline of the country and the people,” Mohammad Naeem, spokesman for the Taliban’s political office in Qatar, wrote on Twitter. At the same time, former Afghan President Hamid Karzai, according to Tolo News, said: “Washington, for the sake of future generations of Afghans, must immediately return the funds that belong to the people of Afghanistan, not the governments.”

Meanwhile, US and international media stress that the decision to transfer billions in frozen assets from the account of the Central Bank of Afghanistan to other uses is plunging the country deeper and deeper into economic disaster. Not only that, but also that the move will effectively bankrupt the country.

Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the United Nations Secretary-General, recalled regarding Joe Biden’s decision on the Afghan assets: “We have said on several occasions and we’ve called many times for the release of Afghanistan’s frozen assets.” He said the UN believes that humanitarian aid alone is not enough to cover the needs of the Afghan people.

And against this background, attention is drawn to a February 16 initiative by British Foreign Secretary Elizabeth Truss, who, on behalf of Britain and with the UN, intends to hold an international virtual conference “to help Afghanistan,” in the hope of raising $4.4 billion. Meanwhile, Elizabeth Truss, true to her servile allegiance to Washington, did not even attempt to criticize the blatantly inhumane move by the Biden’s administration to block the Afghan fund, the tightening of the humanitarian disaster in that country by the United States, clearly expressing “solidarity” with the actions of the current US administration. In addition, Elizabeth Truss does not even indicate
where or how she expects to use the international funds raised in this way, or whether they will once again be blocked by Washington “for domestic needs” and to at least partially cover the costs of the predatory Afghan military campaign. All this is especially so in view of the provisions of the order signed by Joe Biden on February 11, under which all the foreign holdings of the Central Bank of Afghanistan held in the US will now be transferred to a single consolidated account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Vladimir Odintsov, political observer, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook”.