

# Afghans Between the Hammer of Pakistani Politics and the Anvil of the Regional Agenda

(Translated)

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Since 2023, the Pakistani government has intensified the deportation of Afghan refugees, a move aimed at pressuring the Taliban-led Afghan interim government in Kabul to fully submit to American will. The waves of Afghan displacement to Pakistan have historical roots dating back to the Jihad against the Soviet Union in the 1980s, the subsequent civil war, and the US invasion and military occupation of Afghanistan from 2001 to 2021. Pakistan has historically provided strategic depth for Afghan Muslims, thanks to the close tribal ties extending across the so-called Durand Line.

According to statistics from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan peaked in 2002 at approximately three million, of whom approximately 1.35 million were officially registered. Over the past two decades, Pakistan has continued to deport Afghan refugees at varying rates. The International Crisis Group estimates that Afghan refugees in Pakistan fall into three categories:

- 1- Holders of Proof of Registration (PoR) cards issued by UNHCR.
- 2- Holders of Afghan Citizen Cards (ACC) issued by the Pakistani government.
- 3- Large numbers without any official documents.

**Pakistan's policy toward Afghan refugees has gone through three main phases:**

**Phase 1: The Afghan Jihad against the Soviet Union (1980s and beyond):** During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan opened its borders to Afghan refugees, in line with the American strategy that sought to turn Afghanistan into the "Soviet Union's Vietnam." These refugees were used to form and train combat units known as the "Afghan Mujahideen" to carry out operations against Soviet forces. The border remained open even after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, with minimal controls imposed to avoid any clash with Afghanistan.

**Phase Two: Post-September 11, 2001:** With the arrival of President Pervez Musharraf, a pro-Washington figure, Pakistani policy toward the Afghans changed radically. The once-celebrated fighters were now labeled "terrorists." Pakistan was required to support the US invasion of Afghanistan and prevent Pashtun tribes from supporting the Taliban. The border was partially closed, media campaigns began linking refugees to crime and drugs, and legal amendments were introduced that revoked the special status of the tribal areas (FATA) and incorporated them into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The goal was twofold: to pursue mujahideen leaders hiding among the refugees, and to create a permanent rift between Muslims on both sides of the border, to thwart any project of Islamic unity, especially under the umbrella of the Khilafah (Caliphate), whose very name terrifies the West and its allies.

**Phase Three: Post-US Withdrawal (2021):** The US withdrawal in August 2021 led to escalating tensions between Pashtun tribes on both sides of the border, who held Pakistan responsible for the widespread destruction inflicted on their areas during military operations since 2002. With the Pakistani Taliban resuming attacks against Pakistani Army in response

to military pressure and the marginalization of their areas, the authorities tightened their security measures, and turned the refugee issue into a tool of pressure on the Afghan Taliban, deepening the division between the two peoples.

**Current Policy:** The first phase of the new deportation plan began in November 2023, targeting approximately 1.3 million undocumented Afghans. By February 2025, Pakistan had forcibly deported more than 800,000 of them. In January 2025, Afghans residing in Islamabad and Rawalpindi were forced to leave by March 31, subject to a nearly impossible “no-objection certificate” (NOC). In March, the Ministry of Interior cancelled their residency cards (ACCs) and ordered their holders to leave by the end of the month. It also stopped renewing Proof of Registration (PoR) cards after June 30, threatening the deportation of an additional 1.6 million refugees. According to Amnesty International, Pakistan forcibly deported at least 844,499 Afghans between November 2023 and February 2025, and extended the deadline for deporting the remainder to September 1, 2025.

Thus, the Pakistani state, which was originally established on the basis of uniting Muslims in the Indian Subcontinent into an entity with a Muslim majority, is today deporting Muslims who fled the horrors of the wars waged by the Soviet Union, and then the United States, against Afghanistan and its people, ignoring the fact that Muslims are one Ummah, with no difference between an Afghan and a Pakistani, or an Arab and a non-Arab, except in piety, as the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, *يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، أَلَا إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، وَإِنَّ أَبَاكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، أَلَا لَا فَضْلَ لِعَرَبِيٍّ وَلَا لَأَسْوَدَ عَلَى أَحْمَرَ إِلَّا بِالتَّقْوَى* **“O people, your Lord is one, and your father is one. There is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab, nor of a non-Arab over an Arab, nor of a red person over a black person, nor of a black person over a red person, except in piety.”** (Narrated by Ahmad)

The Qatar regime, imposed by Western colonialism, exists to sow border crises within the Muslim World and waste resources guarding nationalistic borders instead of directing them to Jihad. For example, Pakistan spent \$500 million building a border fence along the Durand Line, instead of investing it in training fighters to liberate Occupied Kashmir. Furthermore, the tightening of border and refugee policies has begun to sow hatred toward Pakistan and its people in Afghanistan, harming trade between the two countries and with Central Asia. Thus, the disputes generated by forced deportations serve the interests of the Ummah’s enemies, primarily the United States and India, and hinder any rapprochement or unity between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Finally, it must be remembered that the concept of “refugee” does not exist in Islam. Muslims are one Ummah, and a Muslim moves between the regions of the Muslim World, as one moves between the rooms of one house. Security and stability are not achieved by dividing the Ummah into small states separated by colonialist policy, but rather by the Deen of Islam and adherence to Islamic Shariah Law. The absence of a unifying political ideological state is the fundamental cause of the chaos currently plaguing Pakistan and other Muslim countries. Hence, working to establish the Khilafah Rashidah (Rightly-Guided Caliphate) on the Method of Prophethood, is both a security necessity and a Shariah obligation, *﴿إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِ﴾* **“Indeed, this, your community, is one community, and I am your Lord, so worship Me.”** [Al-Anbiya:92].