Unraveling the Economic Crisis in Afghanistan: Legal, Economic, and Political Insights

The political crisis of 2021 precipitated an economic collapse in Afghanistan. Within a span of one year, the country witnessed a decline in GDP by more than 20 percent. The inflow of foreign funds abruptly ceased, Afghanistan’s foreign exchange reserves were frozen, and sanctions imposed. However, in the fiscal year 2021-2022, the ruling Taliban managed to generate approximately US$2 billion in revenue. As a result, the Afghan economy has reached a fragile state of equilibrium at a significantly lower level.

Despite tentative signs of stabilization, individual Afghans struggle with immense economic pressures. The GDP per capita plummeted from US$517 in 2020 to US$369 in 2021. Even before the regime change, half of the population lived in poverty. Presently, more than two-thirds of Afghan households cannot afford essential food and other basic necessities required for survival and well-being. Consequently, international aid has resumed, amounting to approximately US$3.5 billion in 2022 (compared to US$9 billion in 2020).

The persistently high price levels, coupled with the absence of employment opportunities and business prospects, deter foreign investors from engaging in a country where women are marginalized from participating in the economy. Moreover, the adverse effects of climate change, such as drought and environmental degradation, further exacerbate the situation.

ILSAF’s 2023 Annual Conference aims to foster discussion among economists, legal scholars, academics, and practitioners on these critical issues. From microeconomics to macroeconomics, from international sanctions to Islamic finance, from illicit drug production to mining contracts with neighboring countries, all topics related to Afghanistan’s economy are welcome. The conference organizers plan to curate panel discussions that encompass contributions from various disciplines, including economics, law, and beyond.

Call for Papers:

We cordially invite the submission of thematic proposals, consisting of up to 300 words in the English language, by 31 July 2023. Please email your proposals to conference@ilsaf.org.

Save the conference date

29-30 SEPTEMBER
PADERBORN AND ONLINE

The event is open to academics from Afghanistan and any other country.

For more information about the Institute for Law and Society in Afghanistan (ILSAF) and details on becoming a member, kindly visit our website at www.ilsaf.org
Panel I — The Afghan Economy: Current Challenges, Possible Responses and Prospects
Chair: Dr. Suhailah Akbari

2.00pm - 2.05pm  Welcome Note  
    Prof. Dr. Idris Nassery, ILSAF Co-director
2.05pm - 2.15pm  Introduction and conference procedure  
    Dr. Tilmann Röder, ILSAF Co-director
2.15pm - 2.20pm  Introduction to the panel
2.20pm - 2.50pm  Presentation 1: Economic Sanctions: The Case of the Afghan Central Bank Frozen Asset  
    Dr. Golnoosh Hakimdavar, LLM, Cornell University
7. Q&A session
2.50pm - 3.05pm  Presentation 2: Water Insecurity in Afghanistan  
    Dr. Susanne Schmeier, LLM, Associate Professor of Water Law and Diplomacy, IHE Delft Institute for Water Education
3.05pm - 3.35pm  Presentation 3: Navigating Transboundary Water Management in Afghanistan: Pathways to Regional Economical Cooperation  
    Dr. Najibullah Sadid, University of Stuttgart
7. Q&A session
3.35pm - 3.50pm  Presentation 4: Political Change and Poverty among Rural Households in Afghanistan: Evidence from Marmul District, Balkh Province  
    Ahmad Waliid Barlas, PhD candidate in Economics and Law, Greifswald University
3.50pm - 4.20pm  Presentation 5: Political Change and Poverty among Rural Households in Afghanistan: Evidence from Marmul District, Balkh Province  
    Ahmad Waliid Barlas, PhD candidate in Economics and Law, Greifswald University
4.20pm - 4.35pm  Presentation 6: International Community’s economic engagement in Afghanistan post 2021  
    Tahar Qadriy, Afghan Ambassador to Poland, Phd Candidate in International Relations, Jindal Global University
4.35pm - 5.05pm  Presentation 7: Impacts of foreign direct investment on economic growth: a case study of Afghanistan  
    Abdel Qayyum Shafiga, Ph.D candidate, Ondokuz Mayyas University
5.05pm - 5.20pm  Q&A session
5.20pm - 5.30pm  Wrap up and end of day 1

Saturday, 30/09/2023

Panel II — Economic Governance, Finance, and Investment
Chair: Dr. Tilmann Röder

9.30am - 9.35am  Introduction to the panel
9.35am - 10.05am  Presentation 5: Understanding economic indicators better: the case of Taliban’s economic governance  
    Dr. Lutfi Rahimi, Biruni Institute
10.05am - 10.15am  Q&A session
10.15am - 10.45am  Presentation 6: International Community’s economic engagement in Afghanistan post 2021  
    Tahar Qadriy, Afghan Ambassador to Poland, Phd Candidate in International Relations, Jindal Global University
10.45am - 11.00am  Q&A session
11.00am - 11.30am  Presentation 7: Impacts of foreign direct investment on economic growth: a case study of Afghanistan  
    Abdel Qayyum Shafiga, Ph.D candidate, Ondokuz Mayyas University
11.30am - 11.45am  Q&A session
11.45am - 12.15am  Presentation 8: Islamic finance in Afghanistan  
    Dr. Nazrul Haizi Noordin, Professor of Islamic banking and finance, IIUM Institute Islamic Banking and Finance, Maylisia
12.15am - 12.30am  Q&A session
12.30am - 2pm  Lunch Break

Panel III — Women and Economy in Afghanistan post 2021
Chair: Maria Karimzad

2pm - 2.05pm  Introduction to the panel
2.05pm - 2.35pm  Presentation 9: Economic Consequences of Women’s Exclusion from Education in the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan  
    Dr. Muhammad Zubair Abbasi, Lecturer, Oxford Brookes University
2.35pm - 2.50pm  Q&A session
2.50pm - 3.20pm  Presentation 10: Mitigating the effects of restrictions on women in Afghanistan through Women’s Economic Empowerment initiatives  
    Zainab Hassanpoor, Dr. Bezhahn Ayubi, Hannah Lane, When Women Work Org
3.20pm - 3.35pm  Q&A session
3.35pm - 4.05pm  Presentation 11: The impact of the current Defacto regime on the level of Afghan women’s employment and income  
    Sara Ghoharhy, MBA, Kazak Americom Free University
4.05pm - 4.20pm  Q&A session
4.20pm - 4.30pm  Wrap of day 2 and end of the conference  
    Prof. Nassery & Akbari