

## Society-Centric Warfare: Lessons from Afghanistan

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**Abstract :** The government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was expected to keep the Taliban insurgents at bay after the departure of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led forces in 2021, especially given the two decades of effort to establish security forces to safeguard Western-backed governing institutions. This article reviews the reasons for the failure of the much larger and better-equipped Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to stop the Taliban from taking over the Afghan capital of Kabul in a few days and analyzes the often-forgotten dimension of strategic calculations in this dialogue—namely the societal dimension. In this article, the author argues that this is one of the primary reasons that the ANSF and the Afghan government collapsed.

**Keywords :** societal warfare, Afghanistan, NATO, Taliban, military strategy

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