بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Policy of Internal Division and the West's Approach toward the Taliban

(Translated)

News:

The Afghan Minister of Interior has been in Dubai for over a month and has not yet returned to his ministry. The Minister of Justice also resigned after his trip to Dubai, and Abbas Stanikzai, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Taliban government, remains in the same city. The media have interpreted these developments as a sign of dissatisfaction among these officials with Sheikh Haibatullah Akhundzada, the leader of the Taliban, and have described them as indications of internal divisions within the group's leadership.

Comment:

After realizing that they had limited options for exerting pressure on the Taliban, the group's opponents and Western powers adopted a policy of fostering internal divisions. This policy, primarily driven by the media, focuses on promoting the idea of discord within the Taliban. The media attempt to depict the Taliban as being split into two factions: "moderate" and "extremist." They portray the Taliban leadership in Kandahar as extreme and isolated from the world, while presenting the Taliban in Kabul as moderate and inclined toward engagement with the West. This strategy aims to create internal conflicts and destabilize the group.

The West's long-term objective with this policy is to use the so-called "moderate" faction to weaken and restrain the leadership in Kandahar. A similar strategy was previously employed against communist groups, where the United States divided them into "moderate" and "radical" factions, using the moderate wing to undermine and eliminate the other. This approach is not new in Afghanistan either. During the Afghan civil wars, Zalmay Khalilzad sought to justify Western policies by promoting such a distinction. In the same context, his wife, Cheryl Benard, published a book in 2004 through the RAND Corporation titled *Civil Democratic Islam*, in which she categorized Muslims into four groups and recommended that the United States support pragmatic and moderate factions to control and weaken ideological groups.

This strategy demonstrates that political engagement within the framework of nation-states reshapes individuals' political standards. Even if these politicians are Muslim, their policies will not necessarily remain Islamic. To maintain power and engage with the world, such figures may be willing to alter their values and principles—even playing a role in fostering division. Ultimately, historical experience has shown that, aside from the Khilafah Rashidah (Righteous Caliphate), any political system, whether nationalistic or ideological, not only erodes Islamic values but also leads politicians and political standards away from their correct path.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Yusof Arsalan

Member of the Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir in Wilayah Afghanistan