**UN Memorandum**

**“The Cold War’s Relevance in the Current Geopolitical Climate”**

**Hamid Karzai, President of Afghanistan**

Ladies and Gentleman,

Thank you for hosting me during this summit on the relevance of the Cold War in today’s geopolitical climate. If you consider my country’s history regarding geography, political systems, human rights and economics, I believe that my paradigm is quite clear.

**Geography**

Our nation has always been blessed with the great fortune of geography. Our nation was a major hub of trade on the Silk Road during Ancient times. More recently, Afghanistan’s geographic assets have been of interest to Western Europe and Russia since the beginning of the 19th century. Russia has always been interested in Afghanistan’s access to warm-water ports and the British Empire wanted hegemony over Afghanistan due to its proximity to India, the “jewel in the crown of the British Empire.” Russia’s quest for a warm water port, a port that does not freeze in winter time, in addition to England’s desire to use Afghanistan as a “buffer state” to India proves geography’s role in the geopolitics of the region is pivotal. If economics was the motive for both of these empires, then geographical stategy was the means for securing control of the area. Historians dub this rivalry between Imperial Russia and the British Empire the “great game”, but in many ways it foreshadowed the “East vs. West” nature of the Cold War.

 In regards to geopolitics, Afghanistan was a member of the Third World after the commencing of the Cold War in 1947. After western nations aligned themselves with the United States, they were given the label of “first world”, which typically evoked thoughts of capitalism and democracy. In response to the First World, countries that aligned themselves with the Soviet Union were given the label of Second World and were communist by definition. Third World Countries were stigmatized with this name because they did not align themselves with the capitalist First World or Communist Third World. These countries were overwhelmingly seen as “developing countries.” During the Cold War, Afghanistan was geographically bordered by First World Iran to the west, Second World Soviet Union in the North, and Third World Pakistan to the East. Afghanistan was not drawn into the Cold War, also seen as part of the “Great Game part 2”, until the Soviet-Afghan war of 1979.

 My great country is often called the “graveyard of Empires” because no occupying force has ever been successful in controlling our country. Our nation did not face any actual “heat” from the Cold War until the communist People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan came to power in the Saur Revolution of 1978. During this time the Soviets supported the communist government and the United States supported the extremist Mujahideen, an organization that included Osama Bin Laden. Bin Laden founded Al-Qaeda in 1988 during the historical context of the Soviet War in Afghanistan. In the United States’ efforts to stem the spread of communism they inadvertently fostered the rise of terrorism.

**Political Changes**

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**Human Rights**

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**Economics**

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**Conclusion**

 You ask me if I believe that the Cold War is an open and shut case. Do I believe that Afghanistan is still fighting the Cold War today? I can only speak for Afghanistan, and to me, my country has been the victim of imperialism for 2 centuries. We have survived the British and the Russians. We had a communist government for a decade but we prevailed. We used terrorists to rid the country of the communist problem. Now we have a terrorist problem. The Cold War was just another event in a long line of struggles for outsiders and insiders to hijack Afghanistan for their own economic or political gain, regardless of what the majority of Afghans desire. With the help of the United States we have overthrown the Taliban but we have not ended terrorism. This question of the Cold War is moot for my country. We need to defeat all interlopers so we may finally have an Afghanistan for Afghans!

Hamid Karzai,

President of Afghanistan