



# AFGHAN RESEARCH INITIATIVE

## Afghanistan Research Initiative

The University of Central Asia’s Afghanistan Research Initiative (ARI) aims to help sustain the research and capacity gains made over the last decade and continue producing knowledge critical to the country’s present and future. ARI, a programme of the University’s Graduate School of Development, is supported by a three-year grant from Canada’s International Development Research Centre and the Aga Khan Foundation of Canada. ARI is based at the University’s main office in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic.

## ARI Non-Resident Research Fellows 2024

ARI announces four non-resident research fellowships for 2024. The fellowship of up to \$18,000 to Afghan scholars and researchers in the diaspora supports research on a subject that fills knowledge gaps. ARI will prioritize original, intellectually ambitious projects in any humanities, social or environmental sciences field. A final manuscript draft must be completed by 31 December 2024.

Applicants should provide a statement (up to 1,000 words) outlining the candidate’s research proposal, a CV, and a sample of recent writing submitted to [ari@ucentralasia.org](mailto:ari@ucentralasia.org) (subject header: Fellowship).

Deadline: **31 March 2024** (early submissions are encouraged).



ARI’s monthly online public lecture series features leading experts who present new research on Afghanistan. The January and February lectures, summarized below, are posted on [UCA’s YouTube channel](#).

30 January 2024 **Surviving the Crisis: A Socioeconomic Assessment of the Middle Class in Kabul**

**Dr. Omar Joya**, Assistant Professor of Economics, University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, former World Bank Country Economist, Afghanistan

**Dr. Lutfi Rahima**, Head of Research at Biruni Institute, former senior policy advisor to the Ministry of the Economy and Assistant Professor of Economics at the American University of Afghanistan

The urban middle class, rarely studied, is now as vulnerable as the urban poor general population. The lecture presents findings of a 2023 in-person survey of nearly 300 professionals that sheds light on the socioeconomic status of the middle class and how they cope with institutional changes and economic challenges.

Watch the full lecture [here](#).

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The University of Central Asia is a private, not-for-profit, secular, regional university founded in 2000 through an International Treaty signed by the Presidents of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, and His Highness the Aga Khan, ratified by their respective parliaments and registered with the United Nations. The Graduate School of Development is the home for multi-disciplinary research on Central Asia’s social, economic, and cultural development conducted by five entities ([www.ucentralasia.org](http://www.ucentralasia.org)).

27 February 2024 **Mapping Futures for Afghanistan**

*The lecture features authors of two chapters of 'Mapping Futures for Afghanistan', a forthcoming book edited and written by scholars from Afghanistan in the diaspora.*

### Political Regimes, Contentious Politics, and the Future of Afghanistan

**Dr. Niamatullah Ibrahimi**

Senior Lecturer

La Trobe University, Australia

The presentation summarizes the historical and dynamic interplay between political regimes and contentious politics in Afghanistan. It analyses post-2021 protests and the impact of such grassroots activism on the long-term stability and potential avenues for political change.

### Negotiating a Post-Taliban Futures

**Dr. Farkhondeh Akbari**

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Monash University, Australia

The return of the Taliban once again sets Afghanistan on a quest to achieve sustainable peace. The presentation examines peacemaking attempts over the last four decades. It suggests the critical requirements for negotiations and how and with whom peacemaking can be negotiated for a better future for Afghanistan.

Watch the full lecture [here](#).

## PROFILES OF SCHOLARS IN THE DIASPORA



### Mohammad Dawood Qayomi

Mohammad Dawood Qayomi is a researcher at Laurentian University, currently engaged in completing his PhD dissertation in Human Studies and Interdisciplinary research, focusing on areas

of peace and conflict resolution. Prior to his academic pursuits, Qayomi held several diplomatic positions including serving as the Acting Ambassador and Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of Afghanistan in Ottawa, Canada. He also served as the Deputy and Acting Director General of the Center for Strategic Studies at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan. Additionally, Qayomi contributed to academia by teaching Political Science and International Relations at the University of Afghanistan in Kabul.

Qayomi obtained his Bachelor of Arts in Law and Political Science from Kabul University and a Master's degree in International Relations from Ferdowsi University in Iran. He furthered his academic pursuits by earning a second Master's degree in Conflict Studies from Saint Paul University in Ottawa. Qayomi's scholarly contributions are notable, demonstrated through his authorship of several research papers examining themes of peace and conflict within the context of the Afghanistan conflict. These publications have been featured in esteemed international journals, highlighting his dedication to advancing our understanding of intricate geopolitical matters. His publications are available on his [Google Scholar](#) profile.



### Jawad Zawulistani

Jawad Zawulistani is a researcher and policy analyst currently based in Canada, with a focus on understanding hate and the resettlement and integration experiences of newcomers in Canadian

society. Most recently, he has worked as a researcher and analyst for Mosaic Institute and Network for Economic and Social Trend (NEST)'s joint project Understanding Hate in Ontario, providing valuable insight into the real experiences and understanding of hate in the province. Jawad is also currently working on a project collecting narratives of human rights defenders who have been displaced to Canada following the return of the Taliban to power in 2021.

In addition to his research work, he volunteers with education programs that offer both in-person and online education for girls in Afghanistan, advocating for human rights-centered approaches and inclusive processes for the future of the country.

Previously, Jawad served as the Managing Director of Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization in Kabul, focusing on empowering victims of war and promoting their inclusion in peace-building efforts, as well as working on projects addressing ethnic conflict through dialogue and exchanges among youth from different regions and ethnic groups. Jawad holds a master's degree in *Research for Policy and Evaluation* from Western University in London, Ontario.

## Maiwand Rahyab

Maiwand Rahyab is the founder and CEO of Resilient Societies, a global hub for enhancing the agency, voice and relevance of democracy and civil society activists from repressive civic spaces. Maiwand brings decades of experience and expertise in civil society, democracy and media development. Maiwand served as the Resident Country Director for the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Kyrgyzstan, where he led programs on electoral integrity, political development, women empowerment, and youth civic engagement.

Maiwand served as a member of the Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission in the former government of Afghanistan. He also served as the inaugural Executive Director of the Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society, where he led research and policy advocacy on the state of enabling environment for civil society.

Maiwand led Counterpart International's Afghanistan Programmes, supporting and collaborating with over 300 civil society and media organizations.

Maiwand was a Fulbright Scholar at Middlebury College, where he received a Master of Public Administration. He was a Democracy and Rule of Law Chevening Fellow at the University of Birmingham, UK, where his research focused on human rights protections in Afghanistan. Maiwand's research interests focus on the intersection of civil society, human rights, democracy and development. His commentary has appeared in many publications, including the Ottawa Citizen, Montreal Gazette, and The Diplomat.



## PUBLICATIONS BY ARI RESEARCH & DOCTORAL GRANT PROGRAMMES

Surviving the Crisis: A Socioeconomic Assessment of the Middle Class in Kabul  
Authors: Lutfi Rahimi & Omar Joya.

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National Budgeting and Revenue Collection under the Taliban. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 7(1), 122134, 2024.  
Authors: Hamoon, W., & Tawakkoli, A. O.

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

The Fall of the Republic Government in Afghanistan & the Current Taliban Rule: A Survey of Public Attitudes. *Research in Social Sciences and Technology*, 8(4), pp. 172-195.  
Authors: Ramazan Ahmadi & Chman Ali Hikmat.

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The Impact of University Closures on Students' Motivation After the Fall of the Afghan Government by the Taliban. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 6(4), pp. 47-59.  
Authors: Hikmat, C. A., & Ahmadi, R.

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

Democratic Governance and Paradoxes on Women's Political Rights in Afghanistan. *International Journal of All Research Education and Scientific Methods*, 11(8), pp. 1768-1775.  
Authors: Benafsha Yaqoobi & Gurjeet Kaur.

The Struggle for Women's Political Rights in Afghanistan: A Review of Legal Frameworks and Implementation Challenges (2001-2021). *International Journal of Research Culture Society*, 7(12), pp. 10-13.  
DOIs: 10.2017/IJRCS/202312003.  
Authors: Benafsha Yaqoobi & Gurjeet Kaur.

## UPCOMING EVENT



MACFEST 2024

Online | Zoom | Free



Sunday, 28 April 2024  
08:00 – 09:00 (GMT-5)

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

### AFGHANI WOMEN ARTISTS: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION THROUGH ART

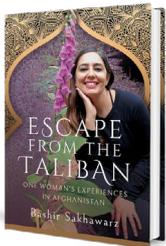
Join us for an exciting panel with 4 women artists from Kabul. The Afghani women artists will share their individual exhibitions of paintings. They will also discuss what it is like as artists, as women creatives, living in Afghanistan under the Taliban rule.

## EVENT



The International Republican Institute hosted the Unifying Our Voices event, “Afghan Women 2024: Allies and Opportunities,” featuring a compelling keynote speech by the U.S. on February 7, 2024. Special Envoy delivered the opening remark of Kimber Shearer and the exceptional intervention with the participation of Adela Raz, Nader Nadery, Sami Mahdi, Manizha Wafeq, Dr. Nasir Andisha, Mirwais Balkhi, Dr. Nilofar Sakhi, and some speakers from inside of Afghanistan, moderated by Valerie Dowling. In the event, speakers and invitees discussed not dwelling in grief, blame, accusation, or negativity, but rather strategically envisioning how women of Afghanistan can push back and resist adversity, seize opportunities and male alliance, realize their potential, and retake their highjacked democracy.

## NEW BOOKS



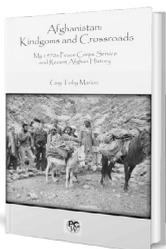
### **Escape from the Taliban: One Woman's Experiences in Afghanistan**

By *Bashir Sakhawar*

A rare first hand account of the US withdrawal from Kabul through the eyes of a civilian. Deeba first left Afghanistan in 2002, fleeing a war torn country and an abusive husband shortly after she was captured by the Taliban and nearly sold to an Arab Shaikh narrowly escaping due to a small twist of fate.

Published: November 2023.

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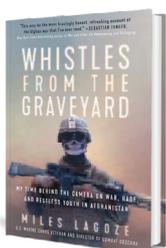
### **Afghanistan: Crossroads and Kingdoms: My 1970s Peace Corps Service and Recent Afghan History Kindle Edition**

By *Guy Toby Marion*

At the time Afghanistan was desperately poor, characterized by an ancient Islamic culture, a Pashtun monarchy and Farsi-speaking minorities descended from ancient Central Asian empires.

Published: January 2024.

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### **Whistles from the Graveyard: My Time Behind the Camera on War, Rage, and Restless Youth in Afghanistan?**

By *Miles Lagoze*

The book shows the parts of the Afghanistan War we were never meant to see.

Published: November 2023.

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## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



**AZERBAIJAN**

**POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP**

**for Female Student 2024-25  
by Nailekhanim Foundation**

**Study Level:** PhD & PostDoc.

**Fields:** Various.

**Fund:** Fully funded.

**Deadline:**

1 June 2024.

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**FBA Folke Bernadotte Academy**

**2024 ZAIDA CATALÁN  
SCHOLARSHIP**

**for Young Peacebuilders  
in Afghanistan and DRC**

**Study Level:** Peace-building  
scholarship.

**Fields:** Peace studies.

**Fund:** Fully funded.

**Deadline:** Open.

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ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

**ADMISSION**

**to Business & Economics,  
Management & Economics**

Call for applications for students, refugees, and Afghan or Iranian female students residing in their home country for the academic year 2024/25.

**Deadline:** April 2024. [LEARN MORE >>](#)



**United  
Nations**

**OPPORTUNITY  
FOR YOUNG AFGHAN GRADUATES!**

Applications are open for United Nations Office at Geneva 62nd Graduate Study Programme, the UN's educational initiative. This intensive two-week summer seminar provides an opportunity for participants to deepen their understanding of the United Nations and “International Geneva” through first-hand observations, lectures, research, and networking.

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