

NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE: PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

AFGHANISTAN

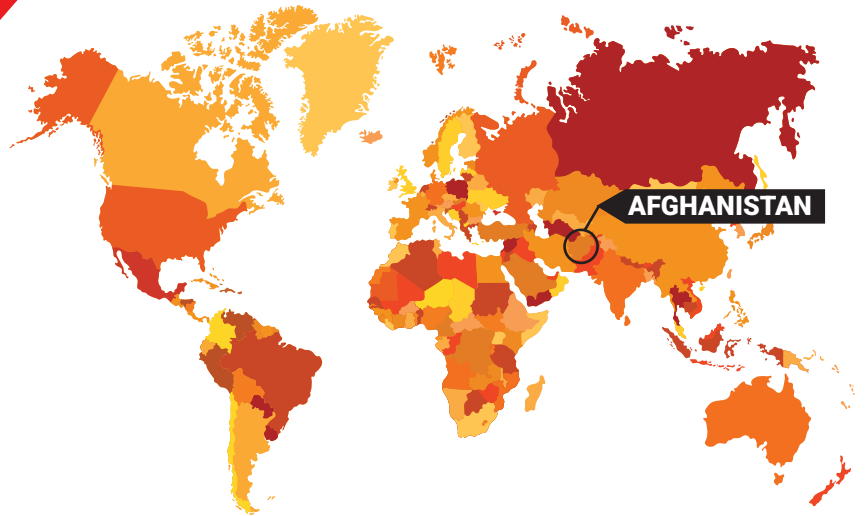
WHERE:

Afghanistan is a landlocked country in south-central Asia. It has borders to Pakistan in the east and south, Iran to the west, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan to the north, and China to the extreme northeast.

Bamyan (Bamian/Bamiyan) is a region in central Afghanistan. Bamyan is 130 km northwest of Kabul.

Kabul (Bagram Air Base – United States (US) Air Base) is the capital of Afghanistan, in the eastern-central region.

Kandahar is a region in the southeast corner of Afghanistan.



WHEN:

The Taliban (Taliban) forced President Rabbani out of office in Kabul in September 1996.

The United States wanted Osama Bin Laden handed over after Al Qaeda attacks on US Embassies around the world. Bin Laden was seeking refuge in Afghanistan. After the terrorist attack in America on September 11, 2001, the Taliban still refused to hand over Osama Bin Laden, and the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom was launched. The first attacks on Taliban and Al Qaeda happened in October 2001.

WHO:

The people of Afghanistan – Pashtun, Hazara, Tajik, and Uzbek people.

Al Qaeda, the Taliban (an Islamic student movement), and Mujahideen ((Mujahadeen) a military force of Muslim guerrilla warriors factions).

WHAT:

After President Rabbani (a Mujahideen leader) was ousted from Kabul, the Taliban started to enforce their strict interpretation of Islamic Law, the Sharia. The Taliban gained control due to the absence of security and, after many years of civil war, the people were too exhausted to fight back.

WHY:

There was infighting within the Mujahideen as factions separated along ethnic and religious lines. During this volatile time, the Taliban emerged in Afghanistan. The Taliban watched for those who may have been breaking Sharia law and executed harsh punishments on those people.

There was also fighting over territory and power between the factions.

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NZDF PEACEKEEPING IN AFGHANISTAN PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM

WHERE:

Bamyan (Bamian/Bamiyan).
Kabul, Afghanistan (NZSAS).

WHEN:

Operation Enduring Freedom 2001:

- NZSAS deployed from 2001 - 2012.
- NZ took command of Bamyan Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) on September 23, 2003 and withdrew in April 2013.

WHAT:

PRT came under the UNAMA (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan) mandate, which included:

- Promoting national reconciliation.
- Fulfilling tasks and responsibilities entrusted to the UN including human rights, the rule of law, and gender issues.
- Managing all UN humanitarian, relief, recovery, and reconstruction activities in Afghanistan, in coordination with the Afghan Administration.

NZ deployed over 3500 NZDF personnel over the 10 years in Afghanistan. The majority of these people were deployed as part of the Bamyan PRT. There was a small team (up to 12) based at Bagram Air Base, Kabul, as a National Support Element (NZNSE), and two NZ medics were attached to Canadian forces in Kandahar.

Major projects carried out:

- An extension to Bamyan Boys High School.
- A dormitory for the Teacher Training College.
- Construction of five District Police Headquarters.
- A Health Clinic built in Doju Doshak.
- A new health clinic, maternity block, and kitchen at Bamyan Hospital.

WHY:

To assist the central government of Afghanistan in extending its influence and control in the regions where the PRT operates in order to mitigate the causes of instability. PRT aimed to promote security, the influence of the central government, and the conditions for economic recovery. PRT in Afghanistan helped to extend the authority of the government beyond Kabul, facilitated construction, and dampened violence.

FATALITIES:

New Zealand had 10 fatalities (eight to combat).