

SAW

Soviet-Afghan War





Davis Model United Nations Conference XV

May 20, 2017 - May 21, 2017

Letter from the Head Chair

Hello, delegates!

My name is Aubrie Bryant, and I'd like to welcome you to DMUNC 2017! I will be your Head Chair for this weekend, and I look forward to experiencing the excitement of this committee with you all. I am currently a third-year student at UC Davis double majoring in International Relations and Global Disease Biology with an emphasis in public health. I joined MUN here at Davis in early 2016, and my only regret is not joining this wonderful organization earlier. While the topic of this committee doesn't necessarily fall within my line of study, I love staffing and participating in crisis committees, and this is a period of time that I find fascinating and still relevant to modern international policies and actions.

This historical crisis committee will ask you to use knowledge of the time period and pre-existing Cold War tensions to further your character's agenda and seize power in the unstable political and social environment of Afghanistan. While "The Kite Runner," is an excellent book that describes parts of the Soviet-Afghan War (I'd recommend reading it for fun if you haven't already done so!), it does not encompass the many varied perspectives and events that occurred during this conflict and it alone will not be sufficient to guide you through this committee. Delegates in this committee will be expected to bring knowledge of this topic guide as well as their own personal research and be prepared to utilize it in creative and conniving ways.

I very much look forward to your lively debate and hope that we can have an informative, fun, and entertaining weekend. Do not hesitate to contact me or your Crisis Director with any questions or concerns.



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Best,

Aubrie Bryant
Head Chair, SAW, DMUNC XV
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Letter from the Crisis Director

Delegates,

My name is Ryan Brobst, and I'd like to welcome you to DMUNC 2017! I will be your Crisis Director for this weekend, and I look forward to providing plenty of exciting crises for you all. I'm a third year at UC Davis with a double major in International Relations and Middle East/South Asia Studies and a double minor in East Asian Studies and European history. I joined MUN in 2015 and prior to that did Speech and Debate for four years in high school. This topic is extremely interesting to me as I have focused my studies primarily on the Cold War in the Middle East and South Asia. This will be my second time Crisis Directing and my fourth time staffing a conference, and I am looking forward to doing it again!

This crisis committee will require you to have extensive background knowledge of the Cold War, the Soviet-Afghan conflict, and your own character's interests. A wide variety of knowledge will be critical to your success in this committee as the crises that you will encounter will encompass a wide range of topics. An essential skill that will be necessary to do well is the ability to improvise and think on your feet, as many events will not be telegraphed to you before the conference. It is my philosophy that a good MUN delegate should be able to react to events with little to no warning and I intend to test that skillset among all of you. In return, you will have the ability to test my abilities to react to your wild and sneaky schemes! I am a huge fan of creativity, and the more innovative an idea is, the more I will appreciate it.

I am very excited to read your notes and directives, and I hope that the weekend will be fun, educational, and improve your skills as delegates. Please let myself or your Head Chair know if you have any questions.



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Best,

Ryan Brobst
Crisis Director, SAW, DMUNC XV
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About the Committee

In the mid-20th century, one of Afghanistan's primary goals was the reunification of the Pakistani Pashtuns with Afghanistan. However, this task would be unattainable with the resources of Afghanistan. In order to reintegrate the Pashtuns, the government wanted to reintegrate portions of Pakistani land with Afghanistan, taking it from the country. This reclamation was complicated by the existence of the Durand Line, a border division between Afghanistan and Pakistan initially agreed upon in 1896.¹ The Durand Line was problematic for both countries because neither one had been independent at the time that the Line was drawn, rather, it had been an agreement between British colonialists in Afghanistan and Northern India. While neither country was exceedingly fond of the division, both respected it for a time, as it guaranteed Pakistan sovereignty and kept Pakistani-Afghan relations amicable. As time went on, Afghanistan grew more and more frustrated with the Line, as it was drawn right down the middle of the main Pashtun tribes, dividing them into two different countries and placing them under the jurisdiction of two different governments. Afghanistan hoped to reunify Pakistani Pashtuns with Afghan Pashtuns, but because of the Durand Line, they were not able to claim the people or the land back without starting a major conflict, at least not without the help of more powerful players.

Thus began Afghanistan's relationship with Soviet Russia. Because Pakistan had American aid at the time, Afghanistan felt that they needed the assistance of a country with more resources and money than theirs, and utilized Soviet funding and aid to support active militias near the Line. While the King and Prime Minister were focused on the reunification of the

¹ Qaseem, Ahmad Shayeq. "Pak-Afghan Relations: The Durand Line Issue." *Pak-Afghan Relations: The Durand Line Issue*. Islamabad Institute of Policy Studies, 2008.



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Pashtuns, the USSR took advantage of their distraction to gain access to important trading hubs in Asia, as well as oil reserves in the country.² They understood the vulnerable state of a country with an unstable government, and use Afghanistan's reliance on military resources and monetary aid to gain influence. When Pakistan closed their borders to Afghanistan in 1961 as a response to militarization near the Line, the Afghans grew even more reliant on the USSR due to the resulting decrease in trade loss of an economic relationship with Pakistan and their allies. The USSR's power in Afghanistan grew stronger as time went on, and governmental instability gave them further opportunity to seize power in an unstable environment. Their presence within the country led to the formation of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in 1965, and though it was initially a small movement, the party gained more and more traction over time. Their presence and authority were solidified with their involvement in the coup of Afghanistan's King.

Afghanistan had been a constitutional monarchy for nearly fifty years before the coup overthrew the king, Mohammed Zahir Shah, in 1973. Led by his cousin Mohammed Daoud Khan, then the Prime Minister of Afghanistan, and with the support of the PDPA, this coup drastically changed the structure of Afghan government and helped set the stage for the events leading to the Soviet-Afghan war. Rather than declare himself king, Daoud became the first President of Afghanistan, abolishing the monarchy and implementing the Republic of Afghanistan. Daoud was a fierce proponent of the reunification of the Pakistani Pashtuns and had previously worked closely with the USSR to funnel money and other resources to the Durand Line in an effort to intimidate Pakistan or forcefully take back the land that Afghanistan believed

² PBS. "The Soviet Occupation of Afghanistan." *PBS*. 10 Oct. 2006. Web. 24 Jan. 2017.



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it rightly deserved.³ Though Daoud had the backing of the USSR and the PDPA in his claim to power, he soon grew to oppose their involvement in government affairs, working to strengthen Afghan independence and make the country more self-reliant. In 1977, Daoud organized meetings with Leonid Brezhnev, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to discuss Soviet involvement in Afghan affairs and attempt to curb their influence. He no longer needed the support of the USSR, as he had been in talks with Iran and other Middle Eastern countries to gain their aid, and upon Brezhnev's suggestion that Daoud cut ties with such countries, Daoud stated that Afghanistan would remain free, and that the Soviet Union would never be allowed to dictate how the country should be governed.⁴ After this interaction, Daoud returned to Afghanistan and took executive action to distance the country from the USSR and closer to countries like Egypt and Iran, actions which would cause the PDPA to stage a coup of their own, and later, the Soviets.

The Saur Revolution took place on the 27th and 28th of April in 1978, beginning with the violent storm of Kabul. PDPA militants assassinated Daoud and most of his family, killing many members of the Presidential Guard in the process. Rebels used Soviet-provided automatic rifles, tanks, and airstrikes to gain control over the region and maintain it for just over a year. The administrations of PDPA leaders Nur Muhammad Taraki and Hafizullah Amin were highly unstable, with the latter assassinating the former to come into power and the division between the PDPA and Afghan citizens growing even wider. As Amin's actions and policies indicated that he wanted to distance Afghanistan even further from Soviet influence, the USSR became fearful that Amin would enter into dealings with the US and that the Soviets would lose their foothold in

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Pazira, Nelofer. *A Bed of Red Flowers: In Search of My Afghanistan*. New York: Free, 2005. N. pag. Print.



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East Asia. On December 27th, 1979, the USSR deployed 700 Soviet troops to invade and take hold of Kabul, as well as the Tajbeg Presidential Palace, with the goal of assassinating Amin and taking control of the Afghan government. Their operation was successful, and Babrak Karmal was named the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the new Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (the DRA). Here began the Soviet reign over the common people of Afghanistan, and the peak of PDPA power and influence.



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Terms and Blocs

The Mujahideen

Various organized guerilla groups in and around Afghanistan devoted to fighting against the Soviet-controlled DRA. Though warfare was initially carried out locally and by small groups commanded by a single warlord, Mujahideen groups grew more powerful and prominent, often gaining the support of external forces such as the United States or Saudi Arabia. They eventually came together to form the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen, composed of 7 pre-existing groups that banded together to carry out more efficient and cohesive operations.⁵ The seven groups are as follows:

- The Khalis Faction- A group considered part of the conservative moderates, its membership was comprised of many educated citizens who had graduated from governmental or religious schools. It was led by Mohammad Yunus Khalis, a man whose education was based on Islamic Law, and who supported the implementation of a conservative Islamic society.
- Hezbi Islami- Hezbi Islami found its beginnings in the Muslim Youth organization and functioned as a group of Muslim students and teachers fighting against the communist regime. This group was considered very moderate and open to compromise with their adversaries if need be.
- Jamiat-i-Islami- Considered one of the strongest Mujahideen groups of the time, Jamiat-i-Islami was founded by students and professors of Islamic theology. Based in the Parwan

⁵ Grau, Lester W. "The Soviet-Afghan War: A Superpower Mired in the Mountains." *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 17.1 (2004): 129-51. Web. 9 Feb. 2017.



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province during the Soviet occupation, this group gained thousands of fighters and soon came to control many surrounding provinces, protecting the people from Soviet violence.

- Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan- This group's primary goal was to bring together Islamic fighters against the DRA, pooling men and resources to reduce their influences in various provinces and throughout Afghanistan overall. They were able to use their power to attract support from Arab nations, not only financially, but through volunteer military men as well.
- National Islamic Front for Afghanistan- This group was formed in 1979 following the rise of the PDPA to power in Afghanistan. This group was known to have strong ties to the royal family and were moderate in their policies and actions. They worked closely with Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence to smuggle and distribute weapons provided by the CIA into and throughout Afghanistan.
- Afghanistan National Liberation Front- Unlike many of the other groups in the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen, this group had mostly secular interests and held more traditional ideals. They were more sympathetic to Afghan tribes and their practices and had fewer young supporters than most other Mujahideen groups.
- Islamic and National Revolution Movement of Afghanistan- Led by Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi, this group fought to restore and preserve Islamic traditionalism back to Afghanistan. They felt that the DRA had abandoned much of the teachings of Islam in their administration, and that it was their responsibility to implement Islamic law and restore faith.



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The USSR

Existing in Russia for nearly a century before it was dissolved, the Soviet Union was a communist state that relied on a command economy. The leaders of this form of government felt that socialism was highly efficient and effective at allocating resources equally and fairly to its citizens who helped contribute to the progress of the economy. Throughout the 20th century, the country sought to spread its ideals throughout the world and attempted to convert other governments to socialism. They aided countries in East Asia and the Middle East and fueled and supported emerging communist parties who could pose a threat to the governmental status quo in select regions. Afghanistan reached out to the USSR to help them regain territory in Pakistan because they feared that the United States were threatening their interests. By relying on the Soviets for finances and manpower, Afghanistan gave them access to some of the inner workings of the country and gave them the opportunity to influence the creation of the PDPA. Though historically, the Soviets were pushed out of Afghanistan and the PDPA fell from power, in this committee, it will be up to the delegates to decide if the USSR maintains its footholds in the country or if it is flushed out.

The DRA

The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was the governmental system implemented after the Saur Revolution in 1978. Babrak Karmal was initially named the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the DRA, and he worked closely with the Soviets to maintain control over a nation razed by violence and rebellion. Though the intention of the DRA was to make Afghanistan a socialist country, they did not have enough time or citizen support to become a fully fledged communist state. Their liberal and socialist leanings initially bought them leniency with the USSR, as they believed in independence, sovereignty, and democracy. They controlled the



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majority of the provinces within Afghanistan, though the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen threatened their claim to many regions. It was the governmental system from 1978-1992, but for the purposes of this committee, it is not known whether or not the PDPA will be removed from power or persist in establishing a more solidified regime.

The Current Situation

Our crisis opens in the summer of 1980, about six months after the Soviets gained control of Kabul and installed Karmal as the president of the DRA. Though thousands of citizens have fled the country, many individuals, families, and resistance groups remain. Efforts to fight the Soviets and the radical PDPA are small within Soviet-controlled areas but are passionate and fierce. Various Mujahideen groups provide support to the resistance, but mostly avoid major cities, seeking refuge near the border or in the foothills. Though your main and overarching goal is to expel the Soviets from Afghanistan and remove the PDPA, there are many aspects of the war that you must keep in mind and work to stop.

Refugee Concerns

Out of fear for their lives and well-being, thousands upon thousands of Afghans fled the country as the Soviets and the PDPA rose to power. Toward the end of the 20th century, over half of the refugees throughout the world were from Afghanistan, seeking safety in countries ranging from Pakistan to the United States.⁶ For the purposes of this committee, refugee numbers have not yet reached such levels, but are rising at a rate that concerns many foreign countries. It is up to you to balance international refugee concerns, but your primary goal is to eliminate the threats that drive these people from the country.

⁶ Kaplan, Robert D. *Soldiers of God: With Islamic Warriors in Afghanistan and Pakistan*. New York: Vintage, 2001. Print.



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Civilian Atrocities

While many Afghans have taken flight, many more without the resources to escape remain, and are subject to the Soviet reign of terror. The Soviets and radical members of the PDPA often attacked and massacred innocent civilians as well as rebels, kidnapping, raping, shooting, bombing, and torturing these innocents frequently and without mercy. By the end of the war, the death toll in Afghanistan is estimated to reach as high as 2 million people, a tragedy that has few parallels.⁷ It should be one of your top priorities to preserve the safety of as many people as possible, and certainly to keep the Soviets from committing such atrocities in committee.

Soviet/PDPA Resources

Before the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, they supplied the country with a significant amount of funding, manpower, and weaponry. It is safe to say that the Soviets stockpiled many resources within the country for their use before they took over, and amassed even more after securing major cities and trading hubs. It is known that the Soviets supplied their soldiers as well as PDPA fighters with assault rifles, explosives, tanks, and other dangerous weapons. Both groups were known to possess and utilize lethal chemical weapons, brutally killing thousands.⁸ It will be a committee-wide responsibility to match these groups in arms and resources and work toward limiting the resources of your enemies in any way you can.

Committee information

For the purpose of having a functional committee, all groups listed above have been fully formed by the time committee begins on the first day of the conference. We are aware that this slightly

⁷ Sliwinski, Marek. "Afghanistan: The Decimation of a People," *Orbis* (Winter, 1989), p.39.

⁸ CIA. *Use Of Toxins and Other Lethal Chemicals in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan*(n.d.): n. pag. CIA, 2 Feb. 1982.



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diverges from the historical timeline, with some resistance groups forming in the months after the summer of 1980, but in this historical contingency, the groups form quicker and outside governments get involved immediately. This will ensure that committee hits the ground running and that everyone can be included from day one. We will provide portfolio powers to each delegate when committee begins that will explain what powers and resources you have under your control, and you will be able to start using them immediately.

Questions to Consider

1. How can pre-existing tensions and relationships help you to gain power or take it from your opponents?
2. What kind of internal or international relationships can your character rely on based on shared interests, whether for personal benefit or for Afghanistan's benefit?
3. Each party within the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen maintains different ideologies but shares a similar goal. How can you work cohesively within and without the group while furthering your own agenda?
4. Does the PDPA feel stronger obligations to Afghanistan or the Soviets? How can this be used to your advantage?
5. Is it possible to place a wedge between the Soviets and their allies in order to gain the upper hand?



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Character list

A brief disclaimer: Much of the information surrounding these characters and their groups' involvement in the Soviet-Afghan war is not widely publicized. Please, do not be concerned if you google your character's name and don't get much information on them! We highly recommend researching the groups or countries that these characters are aligned with and using that information to determine your position in this crisis. For example, if you are a Pakistani ambassador to Afghanistan, focus your research on Pakistan's position and involvement before and during the war to gain some insight, not necessarily your specific character's opinions.

Mohammad Yunus Khalis

The leader of the Khalis Faction, one of the groups in the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen, Khalis fought on behalf of the moderate conservative interests of Afghan citizens. Khalis had an extensive background in Islamic theology and preached for a return to traditional governmental and societal practices. He was considered to be a staunch opponent of Shia groups and was reluctant to work in collaboration with them.

Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi

A highly popular and charismatic leader, Mohammadi was the face of the Islamic and National Revolution Movement of Afghanistan. He was highly influential among youth groups, and most of his supporters were students and young religious scholars. His influence extended across national borders, and he was a major factor in garnering support for the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen. Long before the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, he preached against communist practices and maintained a highly negative stance toward them throughout his life.



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Sayyid Ahmed Gailani

Gailani was the appointed leader of the National Islamic Front for Afghanistan, a group whose loyalties stayed true to the prior royal lineage of Afghanistan. Much unlike many of the other Mujahideen groups, NIFA did not support the implementation of an Islamic state and called for a movement towards nationalism and democracy. Though Gailani had many connections that granted him lots of power and influence, his group was rampant with nepotism and excluded many grassroots fighters.

Sibghatullah Mojaddedi

The leader of the Afghanistan National Liberation Front, Mojaddedi strayed from common Islamic ideals and instead focused on tribal groups and their practices. He felt that a return to traditional Afghanistan before the monarchy was even established, was the best way to bring peace back to the country once more. He was extremely opposed to communist practices and felt that they corrupted traditional Afghan ways.

Abdul Rasul Sayyaf

Sayyaf had immense influence and ties in Saudi Arabia and used these connections to fuel the efforts of the Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan. He assimilated refugees and fighters in training camps and brought people together to carry out operations for the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen. He had deep religious beliefs and was a member of many significant international Muslim organizations.



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Burhanuddin Rabbani

Rabbani was the leader of Jamiat-i-Islami, often considered the most successful Mujahideen group in the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen. His followers followed Islamic teachings very closely, often being students of theology and religion. In addition to his contributions to the Mujahideen, he was also a significantly influential political figure and had strong international connections and support.

Gulbuddin Hekmatayar

Gulbuddin was the highly successful head of the Hezbi Islami group, a Mujahideen faction that split off from several other prominent Mujahideen groups. He had a reputation of being a strong and volatile general who would use any means to accomplish his goals. Though he was a member of the Islamic Unity of Afghanistan Mujahideen, he did not necessarily consider them his allies, rather, he took advantage of their assistance (along with international agents) and used it according to his own personal interests.

Sayyid Ali Beheshti

Unlike the other Mujahideen groups in this committee, Beheshti represented the Revolutionary Council of Islamic Unity of Afghanistan, a Shia group whose interests conflicted those of the other groups and often impaired their relations. They were vehemently opposed to any leftist communist activity and sought a return to Islamic tradition. Beheshti was a speaker in the Afghan parliament before the Soviet invasion, and therefore had many significant political connections, both internationally and domestically.



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Abdul Ahad Karzai

A former politician who was imprisoned for speaking out against the evils of communism, he has since escaped. He is an important member of the Poplazi Pashtun tribe and commands significant respect. He will need to win over any dissenting Pashtun members and convince them to fight with him against the Soviets. He can also rely on his family members to aid him in his struggle.

Huang Mingda

The Chinese ambassador to Afghanistan, he secretly agreed to stay on despite the danger the breakdown of society posed to his personal safety. Relocating to less dangerous areas, he forms the primary bridge between the Chinese government and the Mujahideen forces they seek to aid. The Chinese government opposes the Soviet invasion and is attempting to thwart it. Huang's cunning and ability to rally the mujahideen will be required to come out ahead.

Howard Hart

The CIA station chief in Islamabad at the beginning of the war, he was immediately flooded with requests from ISI and mujahideen groups for American aid. He directed a massive program to give the Afghans all the supplies they wanted and to undermine Soviet rule. As a former soldier in the 11th airborne division, he is a weapons expert and relishes the opportunity that this job provides him. He is the primary contact between the US and the groups in the area.

John Donald Garner

The British ambassador to Afghanistan at the time of the Soviet invasion. Garner was extremely concerned about the expansion of Soviet military power, a sentiment he shared with the rest of



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the British government. Garner acted as one of the primary coordinators between Afghan forces and MI6. His diplomatic and tactical skills will be put to the test as the war expands.

Akhtar Abdur Rahman

The head of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence during the Soviet-Afghan war, he gained worldwide prestige for his efforts to defeat the Soviet invasion. Working with many other countries in the region, ISI funneled massive amounts of cash and supplies to various groups fighting the Soviets. Clever schemes and trickery were his specialties, and his superiors will expect to see such action from him. He represents the intelligence block of the Pakistani government

Turki al-Faisal

In 1979 al-Faisal became head of Saudi Arabia's General Intelligence Directorate (GID). While new at his job in 1980, al-Faisal displayed incredible aptitude in his position and guided Saudi Arabia through the turbulent 1980's. He began to work immediately with the CIA to arm the mujahideen against the Soviets in Afghanistan. The expansion of the Soviet Union towards the Persian Gulf region filled him with dread, and he was personally driven to halt it.

Mohammad Reyshahri

He was imprisoned for years under the Shah of Iran and started working for the revolution as soon as it began. Mohammad Reyshahri kept Khomeini in power by ferreting out coups and acting as a makeshift intelligence chief. He ran significant spy networks within the country to defeat political rivals and cement the Islamic Republican Parties (IRP) power over Iran. At the



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time of this committee, he has expanded his networks into Iraq and Afghanistan and is functionally the director of Iranian intelligence.

Mulavi Dawood

Headed the Afghanistan Mujahedin Freedom Fighters Front (AMFFF) during the Soviet-Afghan war. This was a Maoist group within Afghanistan that fought against the Soviets and their Afghan allies. He commands a fairly small but very dedicated group of insurgents. Great skill will be needed to bring the principles of Mao to the people of Afghanistan.

Abdul Majid Kalakani

Led the Liberation Organization of the People of Afghanistan (SAMA) during the Soviet-Afghan war. This was part of a small number of Maoist groups that fought against the Soviet invasion. SAMA specialized in guerilla warfare, pulling off raids that impressed observers throughout the world. SAMA is driven to convince all Afghans to adopt its ideology.

Faiz Ahmad

Founder of the Afghanistan Liberation Organization (ALO) which was a Marxist-Leninist organization that saw the Soviet Union as oppressing the people of Afghanistan. The organization was primarily based out of Kabul and draws its support from that area of the country. The ALO is keen to try and work with other groups that share its goals. It would like to expand to the rest of the country as rapidly as possible.



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Ahmad Shah Massoud

An ethnic Tajik, Massoud immediately started resisting the Soviets in Panjshir when they invaded. His attacks against convoys struck fear into the Soviets and caused shortages among their forces. He must uphold his reputation as a brilliant tactician and avoid being surrounded by the Soviets more numerous forces.

Sawar Khan

The vice chief of army staff under President Zia, Sawar handled much of the Pakistani government's support of the Mujahideen. He was the Soviet expansion to Afghanistan as a direct threat to Pakistan that threatened to encircle the country. He represents the Pakistani armed forces' view of the conflict, which may or may not be the same as the ISI's view.



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