

# Taliban government faces challenges

The Taliban's immediate goal is to secure essential services such as food and medicine for the Afghan population, otherwise discontent could increase resistance to their control



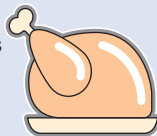
- 1** **Power players – Sheikh Hibatullah Akhundzada:** Leader of Taliban
- 2** **Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar:** Negotiated 2020 U.S. withdrawal deal
- 3** **Hamid Karzai:** Qatar and Pakistan want former president in government
- 4** **Abdullah Abdullah:** Jamiat-e-Islami party – Qatar peace negotiator
- 5** **Gulbuddin Hekmatyar:** Hezb-e-Islami party – jihadist warlord



■ **“New” Taliban:** Claims it will be more inclusive to women and offer amnesty to those who fought against them are likely to drive splits within ranks and create internal challenges



■ **Agriculture: 7 million**  
Afghan farmers and herders face drought – harvest expected to be **20% lower** than in 2020



■ **Food prices:** Up by **35%** since Taliban takeover. Cooking oil and gas have risen as much as **50%**



■ **Food insecurity:**  
One in three Afghans face crisis levels of food insecurity



■ **Central bank reserves: \$9.5 billion** frozen – held almost entirely in U.S.

■ **International Monetary Fund:** Has blocked Kabul from accessing **\$440 million** of IMF emergency Special Drawing Rights

■ **Trade:** IMF projects exports at less than **\$1.6 billion** while country needs imports of **\$7.4 billion** in 2021



■ **Economic aid:** Aid flows represented **42.9%** of Afghanistan's **\$19.8 billion** GDP in 2020, according to World Bank data

■ **International aid:**  
Taliban is reliant on foreign governments and NGOs for aid