S. HRG. 110–612

THE STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN AND RECENT REPORTS BY THE AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP AND THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

FEBRUARY 14, 2008

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FEBRUARY 14, 2008 (P.M. SESSION)

THE STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN AND RECENT REPORTS BY THE AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP AND THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2008

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:15 a.m. in room SD–106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Warner, Inhofe, Sessions, Collins, Thune, and Martinez.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Evelyn N. Farkas, professional staff member; Michael J. McCord, professional staff member; and William G.P. Monahan, counsel.

Minority staff members present: Michael V. Kostiw, Republican staff director; William M. Caniano, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, minority counsel; Lynn F. Rusten, professional staff member; Sean G. Stackley, professional staff member; and Dana W. White, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Kevin A. Cronin, Ali Z. Pasha, and Benjamin L. Rubin.

Committee members' assistants present: Sharon L. Waxman, assistant to Senator Kennedy; Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed; Bonni Berge, assistant to Senator Akaka; Christopher Caple, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Tim Becker, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Jon Davey, assistant to Senator Bayh; Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Anthony J. Lazarski, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Todd Stiefler, assistant to Senator Sessions; Mark J. Winter, assistant to Senator Collins; Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune; Brian W. Walsh, assistant to Senator Martinez; and Erskine W. Wells III, assistant to Senator Wicker.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody.

First, let me welcome our witnesses. We very much appreciate their being with us today. They're adjusting their schedules to accommodate ours. There is a memorial service going on for Con-

gressman Tom Lantos, which is the reason that I, at least, had to delay this until now. We very much appreciate, as always, the cooperation and advice of Senator Warner as to how to approach these delays in the scheduling today.

Senator WARNER. But, this was very, very well-deserved. Congressman Lantos was an extraordinary member; and you and I, throughout our long careers, have intertwined our official duties with him many times in many places of the world.

Chairman LEVIN. Indeed, we've traveled with Tom Lantos, and know him and Annette well. The eloquent testimony that's now being delivered about his life goes on as we speak here, and we shall all miss him, his committee, and his love of this Nation.

The committee, today, receives testimony on the situation in Afghanistan, including the assessments contained in two recently released reports from the Afghanistan Study Group and The Atlantic Council of the United States.

Our witnesses on this morning's panel are Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs, James Shinn; Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Richard Boucher; and Lieutenant General John Sattler, the Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, J–5, of the Joint Staff.

This afternoon at 2:30, this committee will hear from two experts who participated in preparing the independent reports on Afghanistan, Retired General Jim Jones, chairman of the board of directors of The Atlantic Council, and Ambassador Rick Inderfurth, professor of the Practice of International Affairs at George Washington University. Both General Jones and Ambassador Inderfurth participated in the Afghanistan Study Group, which is established under the auspices of the Center for the Study of the Presidency.

The American people understand the stakes in Afghanistan. Unlike the war in Iraq, the connection between Afghanistan and the terrorist threat that manifested itself on September 11 has always been clear. American support for the mission in Afghanistan remains strong.

Last week, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), Admiral McConnell, reiterated the significance of the threat emanating from the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region. He told the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that al Qaeda's central leadership based in the border area of Pakistan is al Qaeda's, "most dangerous component." He added that the safe havens that extremists enjoy in the tribal areas along the Pakistan border serve, "as a staging area for al Qaeda's attacks in support of the Taliban in Afghanistan, as well as a location for training new terrorist operatives for attacks in Pakistan, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and the United States."

For too long, U.S. military operations in Afghanistan have taken a backseat to the war in Iraq, leaving our forces in Afghanistan short of what they need. Admiral Mullen acknowledged as much in December, calling the Afghanistan mission an, "economy-of-force operation." He added, "it is simply a matter of resources, of capacity. In Afghanistan, we do what we can; in Iraq, we do what we must."

Last year, Congress took action to strengthen the focus on Afghanistan. The National Defense Authorization Act included sev-

eral measures to increase transparency and expand congressional oversight, including establishing a special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction, requiring the President to submit a comprehensive strategy for security and stability in Afghanistan, and provide regular updates on the progress of that strategy, and requiring a report on plans for the long-term sustainment of the Afghanistan National Security Forces. The President continues to paint a rosy picture of the situation in Afghanistan. Last Friday, he said that, in Afghanistan, "the Taliban, al Qaeda, and their allies are on the run." But, the reports by the Afghanistan Study Group and The Atlantic Council provide more sobering assessments of the situation on the ground. Among the findings of those reports are the following:

Efforts to stabilize Afghanistan are, quote, "faltering," according to the Afghanistan Study Group report. That report finds that, since 2002, "violence, insecurity, and opium production have risen dramatically as Afghan confidence in their government and its international partners falls."

The Atlantic Council report states that, "Make no mistake, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is not winning in Afghanistan." Instead, the security situation, according to The Atlantic Council report, is "a strategic stalemate, with NATO and Afghan forces able to win any head-to-head confrontation with the Taliban, but not being able to eliminate the insurgency, so long as the Taliban enjoys safe haven across the border with Pakistan."

The antigovernment insurgency threatening Afghanistan "has grown considerably over the last 2 years," according to the Afghanistan Study Group. Last year was the deadliest since 2001 for U.S. and international forces. The Taliban are relying increasingly on terrorism and ambushes, including over 140 suicide bombings in 2007. The Afghanistan Study Group report also finds that "the Taliban have been able to infiltrate many areas throughout the country," intimidating and coercing the local Afghan people.

The reports find that more U.S. and international forces are needed for Afghanistan. The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) currently consisting of more than 43,000 soldiers from 40 countries, remains short of the troops and equipment that it needs to meet mission requirements. These shortfalls include maneuver battalions, helicopters, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets.

The United States has announced its intention to deploy an additional 3,200 marines, and other NATO members have upped their contributions, including Britain and Poland. Yet, as the Afghanistan Study Group points out, more NATO countries need to share the burden and remove national caveats that limit the ability of their troops to participate in ISAF operations.

Opium production continues to be at record levels. The Atlantic Council calls drug production "the most striking sign of the international community's failure." That report cites World Bank estimates that around 90 percent of the world's illegal opium comes from Afghanistan. A report this month from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime finds that cultivation levels this year are likely to be similar to last year's "shockingly high level."

The Afghanistan Study Group finds that the need for greater international coordination is "acute," in their word. Contributors to Afghanistan reconstruction include over 40 countries, the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Unfortunately, the recent withdrawal of the widely respected Paddy Ashdown from consideration for the position of United Nations International Coordinator for Afghanistan, reportedly at the request of the Karzai Government, is a real setback. The Atlantic Council report concludes, "In summary, despite efforts of the Afghan Government and the international community, Afghanistan remains a failing state. It could become a failed state."

We look forward to hearing from our witnesses this morning concerning recommendations for getting Afghanistan on the right track. I hope they'll address the assessments and recommendations of the reports of the Afghanistan Study Group and The Atlantic Council. These reports highlight the urgent need for the administration to reassess its approach, to ensure that Afghanistan moves towards a stable and progressive state, and never again becomes a safe haven for terrorists intent on exporting violence and extremism.

[The prepared statement of Senator Levin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Good morning and welcome to our witnesses.

Today, the committee receives testimony on the situation in Afghanistan, including the assessments contained in two recently-released reports from the Afghanistan Study Group and the Atlantic Council of the United States.

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For too long, U.S. military operations in Afghanistan have taken a back seat to the war in Iraq, leaving our forces in Afghanistan short of what they need.

Admiral Mullen acknowledged as much in December, calling the Afghanistan mission an "economy of force operation." He said, "It is simply a matter of resources, of capacity. In Afghanistan, we do what we can. In Iraq, we do what we must."

Last year, Congress took action to strengthen the focus on Afghanistan. The National Defense Authorization Act included several measures to increase transparency and expand congressional oversight, including: establishing a Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction; requiring the President to submit a comprehensive strategy for security and stability in Afghanistan and provide reg-

ular updates on the progress of that strategy; and requiring a report on plans for the long-term sustainment of the Afghanistan National Security Forces.

The President continues to paint a rosy picture of the situation in Afghanistan. Last Friday, he said that in Afghanistan "The Taliban, al Qaeda, and their allies are on the run."

But the reports by the Afghanistan Study Group and the Atlantic Council provide more sobering assessments of the situation on the ground.

Among the findings of the reports are the following:

- Efforts to stabilize Afghanistan are "faltering," according to the Afghanistan Study Group report. That report finds that since 2002 "violence, insecurity, and opium production have risen dramatically as Afghan confidence in their government and its international partners falls."
- The Atlantic Council report states, "Make no mistake, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is not winning in Afghanistan." Instead, the security situation is "a strategic stalemate," with NATO and Afghan forces able to win any head-to-head confrontation with the Taliban, but not being able to eliminate the insurgency so long as the Taliban enjoys safe haven across the border with Pakistan.
- The anti-government insurgency threatening Afghanistan "has grown considerably over the last 2 years," according to the Afghanistan Study Group. Last year was the deadliest since 2001 for U.S. and international forces. The Taliban are relying increasingly on terrorism and ambushes, including over 140 suicide bombings in 2007. The Afghanistan Study Group report also finds that "the Taliban have been able to infiltrate many areas throughout the country," intimidating and coercing the local Afghan people.
- The reports find that more U.S. and international forces are needed for Afghanistan. The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) currently consisting of more than 43,000 soldiers from 40 countries, remains short of the troops and equipment it needs to meet mission requirements. These shortfalls include maneuver battalions; helicopters; and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets. The United States has announced its intention to deploy an additional 3,200 marines and other NATO members have upped their contributions, including Britain and Poland. Yet, as the Afghanistan Study Group points out, more NATO countries need to share the burden, and remove national caveats that limit the ability of their troops to participate in ISAF operations.
- Opium production continues to be at record levels. The Atlantic Council calls drug production "the most striking sign of the international community's failure." That report cites World Bank estimates that around 90 percent of the world's illegal opium comes from Afghanistan. A report this month from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime finds that cultivation levels this year are likely to be similar to last year's "shockingly high" level.
- The Afghanistan Study Group finds that the need for greater international coordination is "acute." Contributors to Afghanistan reconstruction include over 40 countries, the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union, and nongovernmental organizations. Unfortunately, the recent withdrawal of the widely-respected Paddy Ashdown from consideration for the position of United Nations International Coordinator for Afghanistan, reportedly at the request of the Karzai Government, is a set back.
- The Atlantic Council report concludes, "In summary, despite efforts of the Afghan Government and the international community, Afghanistan remains a failing state. It could become a failed state."

We look forward to hearing from our witnesses this morning concerning recommendations for getting Afghanistan on the right track. I hope they will address the assessments and recommendations of the reports of the Afghanistan Study Group and the Atlantic Council. These reports highlight the urgent need for the administration to reassess its approach to ensure that Afghanistan moves toward a stable and progressive state and never again becomes a safe haven for terrorists intent on exporting violence and extremism.

Chairman LEVIN. I will now submit Senator Byrd's statement for the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Byrd follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD

Thank you, Secretary Shinn, Secretary Boucher, and General Sattler, for updating us on progress being made in Afghanistan. I am particularly concerned by the continuing reports of a lack of coordination among the international coalition on a plan of action for Afghanistan, as well as continuing reports that progress among civilian reconstruction efforts and local police security efforts lag so far behind progress in fielding an Afghan National Army.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Warner.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER

Senator WARNER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to ask unanimous consent that my entire statement be placed in the record this morning.

Chairman LEVIN. It will be.

Senator WARNER. Given that we started at a late hour, I'm going to abbreviate my comments here.

But, I'd like, first, to begin by commending Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. By the way, we all wish him well with his current problem with his arm. But, I want to commend him for his efforts over the past few weeks to impress upon our NATO allies the importance of the NATO mission in Afghanistan. He also emphasized that militant extremists, either in Afghanistan or elsewhere, still pose a significant threat. The threat posed by these extremists may be greater in Europe than some in Europe may now believe.

The debate on the importance of the mission in Afghanistan may be among the most complicated that the NATO allies have faced since the alliance was formed to counter the Soviet Union threats.

Mr. Chairman, I request unanimous consent to place the entire statement of Secretary Gates, on February 10, when he addressed the Munich Conference on Security Policy, into the record (see Annex A).

Chairman LEVIN. That will be made part of the record.

Senator WARNER. In addition to expressing my strong support for Secretary Gates's remarks, I'd like to highlight a few matters concerning Afghanistan.

First, I concur with those who assert that the credibility of NATO, the most successful political and military alliance in contemporary military history—that credibility is at stake as they continue to perform their missions in Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan today, there's been no doubt that progress has been made since 2001, that the Taliban's recent resurgence in Afghanistan, the escalating opium economy, and the presence of cross-border sanctuaries in Pakistan threatens to challenge positive momentum and potentially lead Afghanistan to slip back into the pre-September 11 role as a safe haven for terrorists.

You mentioned General Jones; I'll overlook that part.

I also want to point out that we should never forget that the failure of Afghanistan would be a significant boost to militant extremists. Secretary Gates said that the Islamic extremist movement, so far, was built on the illusion of success, that all the extremists have accomplished recently is the death of thousands of innocent Muslims. Secretary Gates went on to say, "Many Europeans question the relevance of our actions and doubt whether the mission is worth the lives of their sons and daughters." Well, the bombings in Madrid and London, and the disruption of cells and plots

throughout Europe, should remind all of us that the threat posed by the extremism in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Europe, and globally, remains, as Secretary Gates said, "a steep challenge."

I'll put the balance of my statement in the record, so we may get started.

[The prepared statement of Senator Warner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR JOHN WARNER

Mr Chairman, thank you.

I join you in welcoming our witnesses here today and I thank you for scheduling the two panels for this very important hearing.

I would like to begin by commending our Secretary of Defense, Robert M. Gates, for his efforts over the last few weeks to impress upon our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies the importance of the NATO mission in Afghanistan. He also emphasized that militant extremists, either in Afghanistan or elsewhere, still pose a significant threat and that the threat posed by these extremists may be greater in Europe than some in Europe may believe.

The debate on the importance of the mission in Afghanistan may be among the most complicated that the NATO allies have faced since the alliance was formed to counter the Soviet threat.

Mr. Chairman, I request unanimous consent to place the entirety of Secretary Gates' February 10 address to the Munich Conference on Security Policy into the record (see Annex A).

In addition to expressing my strong support for Secretary Gate's remarks, I would like to highlight a few matters concerning Afghanistan.

First, I concur with those who assert that the credibility of the NATO—the most successful political organization and military alliance in recent history—is at stake in Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan today, there has no doubt been progress since 2001: but the Taliban's recent resurgence in Afghanistan; the escalating opium economy; and the presence of cross-border sanctuaries in Pakistan threatens to challenge positive momentum and potentially lead Afghanistan to slip back to its pre-September 11 role as a safe haven for terrorists.

General Jim Jones, the former NATO supreme allied commander, and co-chair—with Ambassador Thomas Pickering—of the Afghanistan Study Group Report which was sponsored by the Center for the Study of the Presidency, has said: "Make no mistake; NATO is not winning in Afghanistan."

In his recent remarks in Munich, Secretary Gates reiterated a warning he made last Wednesday in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee. In that testimony, Secretary Gates expressed concern about "the alliance evolving into a two-tiered alliance, in which some are willing to fight and die to protect people's security, and some are not."

Over the past 6 years NATO forces have grown from 16,000 to 43,000. The ground commander is now calling for another 7,500 troops. This is a troop requirement NATO should work vigorously to meet.

All of the nations of NATO should reexamine their contributions to military operations in southern Afghanistan and lift the incapacitating restrictions, known as national caveats, on where, when, and how their forces can fight.

Second, we should never forget that failure in Afghanistan would be a significant boost to militant extremists.

Secretary Gates said that the Islamic extremist movement so far was "built on the illusion of success" and that all the extremists have accomplished recently is "the death of thousands of innocent Muslims." Secretary Gates went on to say: "Many Europeans question the relevance of our actions and doubt whether the mission is worth the lives of their sons and daughters."

The bombings in Madrid and London and the disruption of cells and plots throughout Europe should remind all of us that the threat posed by global extremism in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Europe, and globally remains, as Secretary Gates said, "a steep challenge."

In his Munich speech, Secretary Gates said extremist success in Afghanistan would "beget success on many other fronts as the cancer metastasized further and more rapidly than it already has." I fully agree with this assessment by Secretary Gates.

Third, and concomitantly, we should not forget that Afghanistan and Iraq are very distinct missions. Failure in either would be disastrous for the other, the region

as a whole, the U.S. and Europe. However, the more we tie the two fronts together we may unintentionally be creating false and misleading impressions.

In very frank comments on Saturday, Secretary Gates said, and I believe correctly, that many Europeans "have a problem with our involvement in Iraq and project that to Afghanistan, and do not understand the very different kind of threat."

Afghanistan has its own strategic importance which should not be confused with Iraq's strategic importance. It is therefore important that we find ways to decouple our strategies, policies, and funding for Afghanistan from those for Iraq.

Next, we must wholly engage Afghanistan's neighbors and fully enjoin them in the plans for the future security and stability of Afghanistan. This specifically includes the development of an effective strategy to dislodge al Qaeda and Taliban sanctuaries in Pakistan's tribal areas along the Afghanistan border.

Finally, there is little doubt about the strong link between instability in Afghanistan, poppy cultivation and drug trafficking. I do not believe there can be lasting stability in Afghanistan until these links are disrupted.

Afghanistan supplies about 93 percent of the world's opium supply. While poppy cultivation has decreased in the north-central Afghanistan, it has dramatically increased in the southwest. In 2006, the drug trade was estimated to total more than $3 billion—money that continues to fund Taliban and al Qaeda insurgents.

Breaking the nexus between the insurgency and opium production requires a coordinated counternarcotics strategy that must be integrated with our counterinsurgency strategy and linked to the economic revitalization of Afghanistan's rural economy that includes alternative livelihood programs.

In closing, the United States, our NATO allies, Afghanistan's neighbors, and international organizations all have roles to play. Each, and all, should recommit to the development of a comprehensive, urgent, and long-term strategy for Afghanistan. This long-term strategy should be one that integrates political and developmental features that complement the military counterinsurgency strategy.

This recommitment should, as I have already discussed, include increasing NATO forces in southern Afghanistan and suspending national caveats. We should also expand the training and equipping of the Afghan National Army and the police through a long-term partnership with NATO to make it professional and multi-ethnic, and deploying significantly more foreign trainers.

This recommitment must also address deficiencies in judicial reform, reconstruction, governance, and anticorruption efforts, and here the other elements of so-called 'soft power' should be marshaled effectively. The international assistance effort should be reenergized and managed efficiently. The efforts to appoint a United Nations High Commissioner should be revived immediately.

After 6 years of international involvement, Afghanistan may be nearing a defining moment. Regretfully, I add, so too may NATO.

Secretary Gates' comments this weekend brought these issues to the fore. I vigorously laud his efforts to speak openly to our allies and to make an effort to ensure that the troop burden in Afghanistan does not divide the NATO allies.

The witnesses on this first panel should be prepared to discuss, among other issues: the current situation in Afghanistan; our current strategies and policies there; the contributions of our partners and allies; the role played by Afghanistan's neighbors to foster stability and security in Afghanistan; and how the drug trade has undermined the Government of Afghanistan's drive to build political stability, economic growth, and rule of law.

This panel of witnesses should also be prepared to respond to questions about three reports released last month. These reports conclude that a new effort is required to succeed in Afghanistan. The reports were the Afghanistan Study Group report sponsored by the Center for the Study of the Presidency (see Annex B); the Atlantic Council report on Afghanistan (see Annex C); and a paper by Dr. Harlan Ullman and others titled, "Winning the Invisible War: An Agricultural Pilot Plan for Afghanistan (see Annex D)."

I request unanimous consent that each of these reports be entered into the record. Mr. Chairman, thank you, and I look forward to the testimony from our witnesses today.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Warner.

By the way, I do concur with your remarks supporting the comments of Secretary Gates. I think they're very significant and accurate.

Secretary Shinn, I think you are going to go first, followed by Secretary Boucher. General Sattler, do you have an opening statement?

General SATTLER. I'll just introduce myself, sir; that's it.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. We already know you and appreciate your work, but we'll get to you, then, in that order.

Secretary Shinn?

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES J. SHINN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ASIAN AND PACIFIC SECURITY AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY

Dr. SHINN. Thank you, Chairman Levin, Senator Warner, members of the committee. We appreciate the opportunity to discuss Afghanistan with you today.

If I may just submit some written remarks for the record, and use the time efficiently to respond and build on comments made by both you and Senator Warner, so we can leave time for questions.

Chairman LEVIN. We would appreciate that, and all your comments and statements will be made part of the record.

Dr. SHINN. Great.

If I may, with regard to the Afghan Study Group study, as well as The Atlantic Council report that you made reference to, we concur with many of the conclusions of those reports. To the degree that the reports suggest that our strategy in Afghanistan needs to be fundamentally changed, I believe that we would submit to the committee that U.S. strategy in Afghanistan is sound. The real challenge is execution of that strategy—resourced and done systematically, sustained over time.

Two weeks ago, Afghan Defense Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak, who's known to some of you, gave a speech to the NATO ministers, and he described the strategy in Afghanistan in terms of clearing, holding, and building. I'd like to very briefly touch on those three aspects of the strategy.

With regard to the clearing part of the strategy, we would submit to you that we believe we are winning, slowly and painfully. As the chairman mentioned, and quoting the report, I believe where the Afghan forces together meet the Taliban who stand and fight, we always prevail. Much of this is due to the Afghan National Army (ANA)—and General Sattler can speak more to how that was trained into a disciplined and effective organization—but also by U.S. and alliance troops. Currently, we have 27,500 troops in Afghanistan, and another 3,200 marines on the way.

We would point out that the success in the clear part of the strategy has been purchased at a horrible price: 415 Americans have been killed in and around Afghanistan, another 1,863 wounded, some of them very seriously.

Our analysts have concluded that the Taliban usage of assassinations, of terrorism against soft civilian targets, and even, to some degree, the use of suicide bombs is really, in part, a reaction to the success of the clearing strategy.

But that brings us to the hold and then to the build part of the puzzle. We would submit to you that both of those pieces of the strategy are both harder and slower to make progress in. It's inher-

ently more ambiguous and hard to measure when you're making progress.

One example, probably known to most of you, of course, is that much of the hold part of the puzzle devolves around the Afghan National Police (ANP). As an institution, the ANP has a much spottier record than the ANA, less credibility with the Afghan citizens, some reputation for corruption in some districts. Again, General Sattler can speak to some of the reforms underway. We are encouraged by efforts by the Ministry of the Interior in Kabul, with our assistance, to pay and rank reform of the ANP, to train and equip them better, and, in particular, a program called the Focused District Development Program, where they go to a district, they take out the existing police corps, they put in a trained and vetted temporary police force, and they take out the existing police corps, and vet them for corruption or involvement in trafficking; they train them, equip them, and put them back in, with mentors. We're in phase 1 of this program, and we look forward to the results.

Moving to the build part of the puzzle, this starts from a very tough base. I know many of the Senators on the committee, and staff, have been to Afghanistan. When you see it with your own eyes, you realize how much of the physical and human capital has been destroyed by the three decades of war and civil war. It's really pretty striking.

The good news is that the GDP is growing now. It's between $8 and $9 billion a year now. But, if you divide that by the Afghan population of about 32 million, that gives the average Afghan an annual income of about $300, less than a dollar a day, which is crushing poverty. If, into that mix, you then add the trafficking problem, the narcotics problem, you have a seriously corrosive effect on already weak state institutions.

We have a five-part counternarcotics substrategy to deal with that. Secretary Boucher can speak to that, because that's principally in the State Department lane. It involves both public education, alternative livelihood, eradication, interdiction, and law enforcement, on the back end of that. This is going to take time, patience, and a sustained effort.

I conclude by just pointing out, again, that this part of the execution puzzle, as well as the other two pieces, is not solely, nor, in many cases, is it even primarily, the responsibility of the United States, that execution on these three pieces involves us, our NATO allies, the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) partners, certainly the United Nations (U.N.), the international community writ large, and, of course, most importantly, the Government of Afghanistan and its citizens.

Maybe I could close with another quote from Minister Wardak, who said, "In my opinion, the war in Afghanistan is eminently winnable, but only if the Afghans are enabled to defend their own homeland. The enduring solution to this war must be, in the end, an Afghan solution."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Shinn follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY DR. JAMES SHINN

Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, and members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Afghanistan.

You have had heard from a number of witnesses recently who have challenged our strategy in Afghanistan. I would submit to you that the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan is largely sound. The challenge lies in properly executing elements of the strategy. Execution requires the right amount of resources—both military and non-military—and then using these resources in a disciplined, coordinated fashion, over a sustained period of time.

Our basic strategy is to use U.S. and international forces, partnered with Afghan units, to counter the insurgency, while building up the capacity of the Afghan Government to govern. As Afghan Minister of Defense Wardak told North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Ministers last week, "The simple counterinsurgency prescription is to Clear, Hold, and Build." I emphasize the "build" part here. International Crisis Group put it succinctly in their November 2006 report, Countering Afghanistan's Insurgency: No Quick Fixes, when they observed that: "Fighting the insurgency and nation-building are mutually reinforcing." [1]

I would emphasize that this isn't only, or even primarily, a U.S. task. This is a task for the international community, our NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) partners, the United Nations, and above all the government and people of Afghanistan. Because there are multiple actors, there are some differences with regard to the basic strategy; the U.S. and some of our key partners put a higher priority on implementing a traditional counterinsurgency approach. Other partners, however, place a greater emphasis on the "nation-building" aspect of the mission. These differences are an inevitable part of coalition warfare, but there are steps we can take to enhance unity of effort. For instance, Secretary Gates is working with his counterparts on an ISAF "vision statement" that lays out what we want to achieve collectively in Afghanistan, and how we intend to get there.

Developing the Afghan National Security Forces is a critical element in this strategy. The Afghan National Army (ANA) is increasingly assuming a leading role in the planning and execution of operations. 49,400 personnel are currently assigned to the ANA, with a projected increase of between 10,000 and 15,000 personnel per year. To date, the U.S. has invested about $8 billion on the Army's development.

Secretary Gates has agreed to support an Afghan-proposed expansion of the Army by 10,000 personnel, above the previously authorized 70,000 force structure. This increase was recently approved by the Afghanistan Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board that met in Tokyo on 4–5 February.

Further consideration is being given to the Army's longer-term end strength. I expect it will eventually grow beyond 80,000 as the Afghans assume greater responsibility for the security situation in their own country and both Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and ISAF troops withdraw over time, though I know of no timetable for withdrawal. I don't know what the likely "end state" number for the ANA will be, nor how it would be funded, other than the fact that these security forces are likely to exceed the ability of the Afghan Government to pay for itself, thus requiring some kind of sustained international financial assistance.

In contrast, the Police lag behind the Army in both capability and effectiveness. The Police have not been able to hold areas cleared of insurgents by ISAF and the ANA—the Hold part of Minister Wardak's "clear, hold, build." Furthermore, the Police have a history of corruption that has undermined their credibility.

The Afghans, with considerable support from the U.S., are taking steps to fix these problems. These steps include: better weapons and equipment for the Police, leadership changes within the Ministry of Interior, pay and rank reform (including pay parity with the Army), integrating Police Mentoring Teams with ANP units, and executing the Focused District Development (FDD) plan. The FDD is an initiative to temporarily insert teams of highly proficient Afghan National Civil Order Police into selected districts while the regular ANP are immersed in 8 weeks of intensive refresher training before resuming their positions.

So far, the U.S. has invested $5 billion in Police development. There are some 75,000 personnel assigned to the ANP, of a projected 82,000 end strength. I'd like to note the sacrifices that the Police have made. Over a 4-week period between December and January, for example, the ANP suffered 54 killed in action, compared to 13 ANA soldiers killed in action over the same time.

ISAF is fighting alongside the ANA and ANP. NATO's ISAF mission currently includes 44,000 troops from nearly 40 countries, in NATO's first deployment outside the European theater. Some 16,000 U.S. troops are under the ISAF command struc-

[1] ICG, Countering Afghanistan's Insurgency: No Quick Fixes, page ii.

ture, led by General Dan McNeill. An additional 3,200 U.S. marines will soon deploy to Afghanistan, of which about 2,200 will join the fight in the south, while the other 1,000 will be partnered with Afghan units, primarily the ANP.

Among the Alliance members, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Romania are engaged in intense combat operations in the south, and Poland fights as an integrated member of the CJTF–82 team in RC East. But some others have not been willing to deploy their soldiers to Afghanistan's hot spots. Secretary Gates recently expressed his concern about "the Alliance evolving into a two-tiered Alliance, in which you have some Allies willing to fight and die to protect people's security, and others who are not," a concern he has raised with his NATO counterparts during the recent NATO ministerial meeting in Vilnius.

The U.S. currently has about 27,500 troops deployed in Afghanistan. To date, 1,863 U.S. soldiers have been wounded in action, and 415 of our soldiers have been killed. Some 280 of our ISAF and coalition partners have been killed.

Despite these sacrifices, the Alliance has fallen short of meeting its stated commitments in several areas. Afghanistan needs more maneuver forces, Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), aviation assets, and mentors for the Afghan National Security Forces. Some Allies also need to remove restrictive "caveats" on their forces, which all too often preclude their troops from taking on certain missions or deploying to particular regions.

Some recent reports, like the Afghanistan Study Group, focus on the command and control arrangements of the military and the civilian structures of international forces. The reporting structures of ISAF and OEF are complex, and there is no clear point where authority for both the military and international reconstruction efforts comes together in country. Some military commanders have told me the current arrangement is awkward but it works. It's my view that having an integrated campaign plan is more important than devising alternative command and control arrangements. Getting Allies to agree to an ISAF vision statement will be the first step in enabling us to develop this type of integrated plan—a plan that integrates the "clear, hold, and build" parts of the strategy.

As I noted earlier, military means alone will not prevail in this contest. In fact, the overall trend we've seen in the preceding years is a transition by the enemy from conventional engagements to greater reliance on asymmetric tactics—for example, suicide bombers and improvised explosive devices. They recognize there's no possibility to defeat ISAF and the ANA on the battlefield, so they resort to terror to intimidate the population and create the impression that the Afghan Government can't provide security.

In order to defeat the insurgents, the population has to believe that the Afghan Government offers the best hope of a brighter future, or at least a better shot at basic security for them and their families. That means they need to see improved governance and rule of law, accelerated development, a stronger economy, and positive steps to tackle corruption and narcotics trafficking. Where we've undertaken a concerted effort to tackle these issues, such as in Regional Command East, and with the support of strong local leadership, this approach clearly works.

The Department of Defense and a number of our partners in ISAF play a role in the reconstruction activities that have led to kinds of successes we've seen in Regional Command East—for instance, the Department of Defense (DOD) is significantly involved in PRTs. However, civilian expertise has to be integrated with the military's capabilities. State, United States Agency for International Development, and Department of Agriculture personnel are partnered with U.S. military officers in most of our PRTs. I believe the civilian elements of the interagency need to be able to deploy more of these experts into conflict zones like Afghanistan.

Appointing a senior international civilian coordinator would also help us improve the effectiveness of our overall effort—and, perhaps even more importantly, help make the case for sustained investments by the international community of both military and economic assistance to Afghanistan. There is some lack of coherence among the various nations and official organizations involved in Afghanistan, which a senior coordinator could help fix.

I am also concerned by signs of questioning of the long-term commitment to Afghanistan by both politicians and citizens in some ISAF-contributing nations. Both the Afghan Government and the insurgents follow any signs of wavering commitment with intense interest—as do both the Pakistanis and Iranians. A senior coordinator, especially one with U.N. credentials and credibility among NATO Alliance members at home, could help counter this softening of will.

The narcotics trade is a huge headache with no easy solutions. We have a counternarcotics strategy with five pillars—public information, alternative development, eradication, interdiction, and justice reform. These five pieces come together to form a comprehensive strategy that presents incentives to Afghans to encourage them to

participate in legal livelihoods while providing disincentives that deter them from participating in all aspects and levels of the narcotics industry. Implementing this long-term strategy is challenging, particularly in the insecure south of the country where poppy cultivation is highest. For example, without an adequate alternative livelihood, we risk creating insurgents out of ordinary farmers whose sole source of feeding their families has been taken from them. I saw that Senator Hagel zoomed in on this problem in his comments at the Foreign Relations Committee January 31 hearings.

Another significant challenge is external—namely, the Taliban safe-haven in Pakistan, and the willingness of the Iranians to provide weapons and other assistance to the Taliban. Both Senators Biden and Lugar highlighted this concern in their comments and questions at the SFRC hearings on January 31.

Everyone agrees that we—the U.S., the international community, and above all the Afghan Government—need to work with the Government of Pakistan to eliminate safe-havens in the border areas. But this is going to take a long time, and—as in Afghanistan—is not going to be achieved by military force alone. It will require helping Pakistan to build up its own capabilities to wage a counterinsurgency.

As for the Iranians, intercepting and capturing arms convoys to the Taliban may be the most effective local tactic for the time being. We need to do this aggressively, but we also need to monitor the trends for indications that this is turning into a strategic problem. Our international partners, along with the Afghan Government, can also play a productive role in convincing Iran that a stable and peaceful Afghanistan is very much in everyone's interests.

In conclusion, I would endorse another point made by Minister Wardak in his speech to the NATO Ministers, when he said that "the war in Afghanistan is eminently winnable. But only if the Afghans are enabled to defend their own homeland. The enduring solution must be an Afghan solution."

Thank you. I look forward to your comments, concerns, and questions.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Secretary Shinn.

Secretary Boucher?

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD A. BOUCHER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS

Ambassador BOUCHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Warner, and distinguished members of the committee, I thank you for having us over today.

This is a subject of vital national interest to all of us, and, as the chairman referred to, I think we all understand the danger of renewed terrorist attacks to the Homeland stemming from this part of the world. I think it's also good to keep in mind the opportunities of creating a stable, peaceful, strategic hub in Afghanistan for Central and South Asia, for new routes for energy, trade, ideas, and people, and also the opportunity to see to the welfare of some 30 million people in Afghanistan, who, as my colleague pointed out, are suffering from great poverty. Afghanistan, in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, was one of the poorest countries in the world, and then they've gone downhill for 20, 25 years, and it's no wonder that the challenges of development alone are enormous, and development, given fighting and the circumstances now, is even a harder task.

We're doing this task. We have, I would say, many achievements, but not yet success, in this task. The focus is, increasingly, on the people of Afghanistan, the people that I said are largely rural, they learn to rely on local and traditional structures over the last several decades. They've seen too much fighting, and, frankly, too little benefit from government. That's the situation we're trying to

Note: ISAF consists of both NATO Alliance members and non-NATO contributors. The term "Coalition" generally refers to those forces deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).

change. I think, to fundamentally win this war, to stabilize Afghanistan as a peaceful nation, we need to provide those people with security, with justice, with economic opportunity, and with good governance, just what anybody in the world expects from their government.

So, how are we doing? My summary is that we're doing what works, we're getting the job done, but we need to do it more broadly, we need to do it better. I'll talk about that, as well. As Secretary Rice said last week, our counterinsurgency effort is having good effect, but the work is not complete.

We've seen, now, more and more police, more and more military available to the Afghan population to provide them with security. As you travel around Afghanistan—and I've been there twice in the last month—you see the green police trucks that we've provided with our supplemental funding from last year, new policemen out on the streets, new trucks out on the street. We know the numbers are still low, the quality is still not what it should be, but they're getting out there, and they're more and more visibly providing security for the population. You see new governors and new district chiefs. The government is extending itself, including a renewed effort on local governance, on working with local populations in the districts, and providing better personnel through the Office of Local Governance that has been set up in President Karzai's office.

You do see economic growth. Every time I've gone, for the last 6 years, you see different products being sold, you see Internet cafes starting up, you see oranges in the market, better quality stores, people no longer selling from containers, but selling from buildings. There's economic growth. The legitimate economic growth last year was estimated to be 13 percent, really remarkably high. You see the other aspects of this—3.5 million cell phones. Whereas, 5, 6 years ago there was virtually—a very small phone system that really didn't work.

There are now 4,000 kilometers of roads, versus 50 in 2002—50 kilometers of roads, to 4,000. Those roads have a transforming effect. I was up in the district of Kunar, on the Pakistan border, and you see there, they're no longer talking about the number of insurgents in the Konar valley, they're talking about the number of gas stations, the number of Internet cafes along the road that was built by the U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and the local governor's office.

You see education, healthcare being delivered to the population—5 million kids in school now, versus about 900,000 in 2001. Health care now reaches 80 percent of the population. The real effect of this is that there are 85,000 babies and children every year who survive in Afghanistan who would not have survived without that service.

All those things said, all those achievements listed and seeing them around the country, you can see them have an effect in districts, you can see them have an effect in provinces, where they've been done in a coordinated and concentrated fashion. But, we still have enormous challenges through the country as a whole.

As my colleague, Mr. Shinn, referred to, we've routed the enemy from their strongholds, but they've now turned more and more to tactics of pure terror—to bombs, kidnaping, things that make the

population feel unsafe, and things that we need to prevent. In some cases, we're able to prevent those, because we get tips from local populations. I've heard that story in districts of Afghanistan. In other places, it's harder to prevent, because we don't really have solid government control, police control and governance, in all the areas of the country yet.

The narcotics problem is still enormous. We're pleased to see the U.N. early assessment for this year that says there's probably going to be a slight decrease, but what it also says is that the high levels of poppy production in the south are going to stay that way, and that the link between the insurgency and the narcotics production is even more focused, even tighter.

Where we establish good governance and are able to carry out the full scope of antinarcotics programs, we can see a decrease in the poppy cultivation; where, because of insecurity, we're unable to do all the things that government would like to do and all the aspects of the narcotics program, we're still seeing a very high level of counterproduction. We not only need to get a hold of these areas, but also to carry out this full-scope counternarcotics effort in those areas.

Finally, weak government, and particularly, corruption, remains endemic. The reform and training of government ministries, of local officials, and of police forces have to be a high priority, because what the Afghan people expect from their government, they expect basic decent government, they expect government to be on their side, and not to try to take advantage of them through corruption and other means.

In 2008, therefore, we're trying to deal with all of these problems, and attack both the enemy and the problems with all our various tools. I'd say there are four main tasks this year.

One is to concentrate and coordinate our efforts. If you look through the reports that you've been talking about, a lot of the recommendations have to do with, how do you tighten the coordination in the international community? How do you tighten the coordination between civilian and military activity? How do you tighten the coordination between the international effort and the Afghan Government? Those are all tasks that we're concentrating on.

Second is to try to focus our resources, focus police, justice, roads, electricity, governance, the things that people want in the most troubled area. So, we bring all those things to bear in the district of Musa Qala in Helmand, which was a Taliban stronghold, which they have been pushed out of in recent weeks and the Afghan Government's going in with police and local government, we're going in with electric generators, with projects for the local population, to try to help stabilize those areas by bringing all our tools to bear.

Second is that you'll probably see a dramatic expansion of the availability of electricity in Afghanistan this year, dramatic expansion that reaches, still, a minority percentage of the population, but people on the grid in Afghanistan—it's about 6 percent of the population. We have some major projects cutting in this year in Kabul, bringing electricity down from countries in the north, getting Kajaki Dam in the south back on, that should let us provide a lot more electricity to people in Afghanistan. That turns on the lights

for kids to do homework, but it also gives farmers opportunities to do things like cold storage and marketing of their products in a way that they haven't been able to do, and, therefore, to increase their yields from legitimate crops instead of poppy.

Third, there's a real focus on the narcotics problem, I think, especially in two ways. One is stepping up the interdiction of networks and traffickers, and, second of all, to go into these denied areas where the poppy production is protected by large landowners or protected by the insurgency, and to make sure that we can go into those areas and demonstrate that we can get the poppy that's grown in those places.

Fourth, I'd say, there are increasingly good signs of cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and we want to work with both countries so that, instead of having the insurgents use these territories in Pakistan to push out in two directions, that between what's going on, on the Pakistan side and what's going on, on the Afghan side, we are, in fact, pushing in on them from two directions, and that they have to deal with that situation.

I think we have, as I said, enormous challenges that remain, but we have good programs to deal with them, we have a focused strategy that needs to be concentrated and coordinated better, but that we could really have an opportunity here in Afghanistan this year to put the government in the ascendancy.

The Taliban no longer control territory, but they're able to operate very widely throughout the country, and I think this has to be the year where the government is able to implant itself and bring stability to the key areas of Afghanistan. I think we have the programs to do that, if we do them properly, if we do them well.

That's about all I'd like to say at the beginning. I'd be glad to take questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Boucher follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR RICHARD A. BOUCHER

Chairman Levin and members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to address you today on progress and strategy in carrying out U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. I am just back from a trip to Kabul and Kandahar and look forward to sharing my impressions.

Let me begin by posing two very fundamental thoughts about our involvement in Afghanistan: What is our objective and what strategy are we pursuing to get there?

After September 11, the United States helped Afghan partners topple the Taliban regime and joined with international partners to ensure that Afghanistan would never again become a sanctuary for terrorists. We remain committed to the goal of building long-term stability based on Afghan national sovereignty, democratic principles, economic development, and respect for human rights. Afghanistan has achieved many successes in their fight against the Taliban and al Qaeda—establishing infrastructure, securing territory, providing education, health care, and training, but we have not won yet. Our shared goal of stability requires a large commitment from us and our Allies, and will continue to require this for a considerable time.

When we speak of our commitment, we are speaking of an investment in the future. Afghanistan is not just a battle theater to fight enemies, but a place of strategic opportunity. Afghanistan represents an opportunity to have a close, democratic ally in the heart of a continent with unmatched political and economic capital and potential. Afghanistan has the potential of becoming the linchpin for regional integration in south and central Asia. The past 6 years have showed us that it has the potential for transformation from a broken, failing state that harbored terrorists into a democratic, prosperous land bridge between the south and central Asian regions—regions that were virtually disconnected until 2001. A free and secure Af-

ghanistan provides new opportunities for growth in trade and security, for the benefit of the region and the world.

Comparing Afghanistan to what it was under the Taliban regime just 6½ years ago, we have made serious progress on a broad range of fronts. Sustained successes on the battlefield have deprived the Taliban of their ability to move freely about the country and spread their extremist writ. Thanks to economic growth and strengthened local institutions, we are seeing support for the insurgency decline and support for the Afghan Government increase in most areas of Afghanistan. The recent visit of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to Kandahar, which was once the insurgent groups' home base, indicates the progress we have made and our continued commitment to support Afghanistan in completing its transition from tyranny to stability and a constitutional government.

At the same time we must recognize that important challenges remain. The recent reports by the Afghanistan Study Group and the Atlantic Council of the United States are accurate in their assessments that narcotics production and trade, widespread corruption, cross-border flow of insurgents from Pakistan, and lack of international donor coordination require our full attention. Many of the reports' recommendations for the way ahead are already being implemented: A resolute and comprehensive approach to counternarcotics; an economic and social development plan for Pakistan's border regions; diplomatic efforts to strengthen North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) involvement in Afghanistan; and support for a United Nations Special Representative with a strong mandate.

SECURITY

As Secretary Rice said during her trip to Afghanistan last week, our counterinsurgency efforts in Afghanistan "is having good effect, but the work is not complete." We have made considerable progress against the Taliban and other insurgents. U.S.-led NATO forces in the East have successfully linked security operations with governance and reconstruction initiatives in a full-spectrum counterinsurgency campaign. Afghan army, police, governors, tribal leaders and citizens are standing against the Taliban. In the south, Afghan and Allied forces have taken the fight to the Taliban, recently recapturing the restive district of Musa Qala in Helmand province and helping establish Afghan Government presence. We and our NATO and Afghan partners continue to work together to consolidate and extend those gains by bringing in governance and development.

Due to their inability to win on the battlefield, the Taliban have resorted to terrorist tactics such as improvised explosive devices, suicide bombs, kidnapping, and direct targeting of foreign civilians. The attack on the Serena Hotel in Kabul on January 14 is but the most recent example. Of course, these indirect tactics can be deadlier than open combat for our troops. We are also battling a cynical but effective Taliban communications strategy.

The United States, our Allies, and Afghan officials share the desire to see the Afghan Government assume greater responsibility for its own security. Our training and equipping programs for the Afghan National Security Forces are showing results: We have trained and equipped more than 49,400 Afghan National Army personnel. The Afghan National Army is now a respected institution amongst Afghans and is increasingly taking the lead in planning and executing operations.

We have a comprehensive program in place to develop the Afghan police and to increase policing capacity at the district level called the Focused District Development Plan. Through better training and leadership, improved pay and electronic distribution of salaries, and provision of better equipment, we are working to ensure that the police are ready and motivated to do their jobs. But it takes time to transform a system of militias loyal to local commanders and warlords to a professionally led force acting on behalf of the Government of Afghanistan that respects and enforces rule of law and human rights.

We are committed to NATO's mission and are increasing American support to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force with more troops and resources. The United States will deploy an additional 3,200 marines to Afghanistan this spring. 2,200 marines will be deployed to Regional Command South. The remaining 1,000 marines will train and develop Afghan National Security Forces.

Without doubt, success is possible but not assured. Therefore, the international community needs to continue and expand its efforts. The greatest threat to Afghanistan's future is abandonment by the international community. As Secretary Gates has made clear in testimony here and in other public comments, meeting the requirements identified by NATO commanders remains a challenge. The mission in Afghanistan needs more forces, equipment (such as helicopters), and trainers for the Afghan army and police. We have promised the Afghan people to assist in stabi-

lizing their country and NATO needs to provide the personnel and the tools to make good on that promise. As we look to the upcoming NATO Summit in Bucharest in April, we will continue to work with our 25 NATO Allies and other International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) partners in Afghanistan to meet the requirements needed to succeed in the NATO ISAF mission.

GOVERNANCE

Lasting stability will only come when the Afghan Government can step in to fill the void that is left when an area is cleared from insurgents. We must, therefore, focus on the less tangible but equally critical goal of extending the government's influence nationwide. In order to persuade Afghan citizens to side with their government against the insurgents, Afghans must see that their government has the ability to deliver basic services, provide the rule of law, uphold human rights, and extend economic opportunities effectively, transparently, and responsibly throughout the country. Our foreign assistance programs help achieve the objective of visible and viable Afghan governance at the local level. We are funding local projects developed by community and provincial councils that play an increasing role in responding to the people's needs. We are also helping the Ministry of Education create a network of public service academies and the Ministry of Justice to promote rule of law at the local level.

We support honest and competent governors that respond to the needs of the people and respect human rights. In this context, we welcome the establishment of the Independent Directorate for Local Governance that has already achieved encouraging results. We hope that this institution will continue to be instrumental in building public confidence in the Government of Afghanistan.

RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction and development work remains on track in much of the country and the Afghan economy continues to grow at impressive rates, with licit Gross Domestic Product more than doubling since 2002. The lives of millions of Afghans have improved considerably: Up from 8 percent of Afghans in 2001, more than 80 percent of the population now has access to medical care. Almost 11,000 medical professionals have been trained. More than 680 hospitals and clinics have been built and outfitted. For the first time in 10 years, the grain harvest was sufficient to meet consumption needs inside Afghanistan. In 2001, 900,000 children—almost exclusively boys—were enrolled in school. Now, there are more than 5 million and more than 1.5 million of these (34 percent) are girls and young women. Since 2001, there has been a 22 percent decline in mortality rates for infants and children under 5 years of age—we are saving 85,000 more young lives every year. More than 70 percent of the population—including 7 million children—has been inoculated against the Polio virus. In 2001, there was a dysfunctional banking system. Now, Afghanistan has a functioning Central Bank with more than 30 regional branches and an internationally-traded currency. There are now 3 mobile telephone companies serving more than 3.5 million subscribers—this is almost 11 percent of the population. In 2001, there were 50 kilometers of paved roadway in the country, now there are more than 4000 kilometers of paved roads.

We plan to allocate close to $600 million of our fiscal year 2008 base foreign assistance budget to reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, which will support programs ranging from education, health, agriculture, infrastructure, and the activities of Provincial Reconstruction Teams. In the fiscal year 2008 supplemental, we have also requested about $500 million to build roads and power infrastructure and another $50 million to expand our successful health and education programs. These initiatives are connecting the Afghan people to their government and are creating an environment in which they have the basic services and infrastructure necessary to prosper.

We are not alone. Our programs are part of a broad international assistance effort. The Government of France has indicated its willingness to host an international conference this summer that will provide an opportunity for significant new pledges of international assistance for Afghanistan over the coming years. We are confident that this conference will demonstrate once again the depth of international support for Afghanistan.

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Our support for democratic stability and constitutional government in Afghanistan is also yielding positive results. The Afghan Parliament is assuming its appropriate role as a deliberative body and Presidential and Parliamentary elections are due in the next 2 years. Given that voter registration will take about a year to com-

plete, it needs to begin soon. The Afghans will have to make key decisions on election dates and the electoral system. In the fiscal year 2008 supplemental, the President requested $100 million for critically needed election-support programs.

A transparent and fair justice system is critical to ensuring that the people of Afghanistan respect the authority of the central government and to ensuring that the rights of Afghan citizens are protected. We have established a public-private partnership with American law firms and schools to help advance rule of law and establish a strong core of legal professionals.

The development of an independent, active Afghan media has been remarkable. However, there is still room for improvement. We are concerned about the deterioration of media freedom over the last year, including an increase in detention of journalists and government interference in media coverage over the past year. Also troubling were the deaths of two female journalists last summer and the recent death sentence of a young Afghan journalist. We are working with the Afghan Government and the Afghan Parliament to emphasize the importance of the new media law currently in the legislative process meeting international standards regarding, in particular, the legal protection of journalists and removing vague content restrictions, establishing a fair, independent licensing system and an independent body to govern Radio Television Afghanistan.

A peaceful and stable Afghanistan cannot be secured without the active political and economic involvement of women. Although women's political participation has gained a degree of acceptance, women who are active in public life continue to face disproportionate threats and violence. Furthermore, women and girls continue to face severe discrimination and both formal and customary justice mechanisms that fail to protect their rights. The United States is firmly committed to support for Afghan women and integrates women's issues into virtually all of its programs, aiming to increase female political participation, education, economic opportunities, and their role in civil society.

COUNTERNARCOTICS

Although the number of poppy-free provinces more than doubled in 2007, total opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan grew significantly. The Afghan Government, the United States, and the international community are alarmed about this development. Afghanistan's poppy production fuels corruption and narcotics addiction, and is a significant source of financing for criminal and insurgent groups. In order to prosper, Afghanistan must rid itself of the opium poppy. President Karzai and his top leaders recognize this.

Countering poppy growth requires a multi-faceted approach. We are pursuing precisely such an approach with our comprehensive five-pillar strategy involving public information, alternative development, law enforcement, interdiction, and eradication: We are reinforcing the message that poppy cultivation is immoral, illegal, and un-Islamic. We are helping farmers gain access to other means to feed and clothe their families—access to alternative crops and other means of livelihood, to roads that will allow them to move their crops to market, to advice concerning markets for their new crops and to legitimate sources of credit. We are also helping the Afghan Government to increasingly provide credible law enforcement, interdiction, and eradication. The disincentives for poppy cultivation must be bigger than the potential profit. The credibility of our counternarcotics efforts depends upon making the risks of growing poppy unacceptable.

Local governance structures and counternarcotics are closely interconnected. Where government has control and has placed good administrators, poppy production is down. Where the insurgency rages, poppy production is up. This trend is likely to deepen in 2008. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime projects an increase in poppy cultivation in several southern and western provinces and sustained decreases in the East and the North. Overall cultivation is expected to decrease slightly. Given the record cultivation numbers last year, a slight decrease is clearly not satisfactory. We will continue our efforts to counter the narcotics cultivation and trade.

RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN

A strong, cooperative bilateral relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan is a crucial precondition if we are to see a decline in the cross-border flow of insurgents and progress toward security on both sides of the Durand Line. Afghanistan's relations with Pakistan moved forward in 2007 with several summits, the productive August bilateral peace jirga in Kabul, and President Karzai's successful visit to Islamabad in late December. Both sides agreed at the August peace jirga to hold routine mini-jirgas. Pakistan has offered 1000 scholarships to Afghans in a good

step toward increasing positive connections. Despite recent political events in Pakistan, its security forces continue to combat extremism, as demonstrated by their operations to flush out militants in the Swat Valley. Close cooperation with Pakistan remains key to the success of U.S. strategic goals in the region and we continue to explore ways to help the Pakistani military and local security forces improve their counterinsurgency and counterterrorism skills.

We are and have been encouraging the Government of Pakistan to take sustained and aggressive actions against violent extremists. At the same time we recognize that a purely military solution is unlikely to succeed. We therefore strongly support the Government of Pakistan's efforts to implement a comprehensive and long-term strategy to combat terrorism in the border regions, which include the federally Administered Tribal Areas, parts of the Northwest Frontier Province, and Baluchistan. We are committed to supporting this initiative to bring economic and social development and effective governance, making these remote areas less hospitable to violent extremists. We are also looking forward to working with Pakistan's new civilian government on this important initiative after the February 18 parliamentary elections.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion, let me repeat my earlier observation that in Afghanistan we have had a lot of successes, but we are far from success. We should not lose sight of the progress that has been made and that we continue to make year by year. Broad swaths of Afghanistan—especially in the north, the west and even the east—are hardly recognizable by comparison with where they were 7 years ago. We do no-one a service by ignoring this progress.

Nonetheless, there remain daunting challenges—especially with respect to security, counternarcotics, and governance. For millions of Afghans, life remains bitterly difficult—especially during this exceptionally cold winter.

We and our international and Afghan partners have our work cut out for us, but we have a solid foundation of progress on which to build. I am convinced we have no choice but to meet the remaining challenges head on. With a sustained investment of resources and effort, we have every prospect of securing a stable, democratic and lasting ally in Afghanistan, and an important lynchpin for regional stability and economic integration.

I would be pleased to respond to your questions.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Secretary Boucher.

General Sattler, would you like to add anything?

General SATTLER. No, Mr. Chairman. I'm ready for questions, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

We'll try a 7-minute round, if that's all right.

Senator Warner made reference to Secretary Gates's comments about NATO and the need for NATO to step up and provide a greater share in their commitments. Secretary Shinn, is NATO at risk of failing if alliance members do not come forward with the resources to meet the requirements of the ISAF mission?

Dr. SHINN. I believe that's something very close to what the Secretary mentioned in his comments to the NATO ministers, week before last. My understanding is that he was talking about the future, and that it hadn't happened yet, but that there was a real risk to the alliance if, as he said, it evolved into one set of members who will fight, and others who will not put their troops in harm's way.

Chairman LEVIN. Would you agree, Secretary Boucher, with Secretary Gates, that NATO is at risk of being a two-tiered alliance, for the reason that Secretary Shinn just gave? Is that a real risk?

Ambassador BOUCHER. It is, sir. I think we have to remember that there are difficult tasks throughout Afghanistan, and we have to value the contribution that everybody's making. But, one of the things our commanders keep telling us is, they need the flexibility to use the different forces in different parts of the country——

Chairman LEVIN. They don't have that——

Ambassador BOUCHER.—and they don't have that flexibility, both through caveats, people who put their troops in a certain place and want them to stay there, and just through the overall manning levels that haven't been reached yet.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Chairman Mullen, said that the coalition forces are facing a classic growing insurgency. DNI, Admiral Michael McConnell, testified on February 5, that "The security situation has deteriorated in the south, and Taliban forces have expanded operation into previously peaceful areas of the west and around Kabul." Do you agree with that? Secretary Boucher, do you agree with that? That's the DNI saying that.

Ambassador BOUCHER. I'll always agree with DNI, but I think we——

Chairman LEVIN. You don't have to agree with him. I'm just asking, do you agree with him?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I think the answer is "yes and no." What we've found is, the Taliban set out last year to take territory. They set out to put a ring around Kandahar and see if they could take Kandahar. They set out to strengthen their hold on particular strongholds. What we showed last year is, they were unable to achieve those goals. They failed in their goals, as they stated them for last year. The spring offensive never happened.

So, we have, last year, pushed them out of strongholds—the Panjwayi district, near Kandahar, Musa Qala district, in northern Helmand, the Sanguin district, in northern Helmand. Those were strongholds. Those are heartland for Taliban. They've been unable to hold them.

On the other hand, they have been able to change their tactics, adjust their mode of operations, and they've adopted tactics of bombings and kidnapings and intimidation of villagers. They have been able to do that more broadly.

Chairman LEVIN. Have the Taliban forces expanded operations into previously peaceful areas of the west and around Kabul, as Admiral McConnell said?

Ambassador BOUCHER. They've been able to carry out attacks in those areas, yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. General Sattler, do you believe the antigovernment insurgency in Afghanistan has been contained?

General SATTLER. Mr. Chairman, it goes back to your previous question. NATO has expanded their operations, doing more distributive operations outside major bases, which means you obviously encounter more enemy forces in locations they may have declared safe havens previously, but now you're there. So, our engagement with the enemy, as was already articulated, sir, each and every time we do encounter the enemy, mano-a-mano, that they come out on the short end. So, I would say, contact with the Taliban and the insurgent forces has been greater over the course of the last year. But, once again, I cannot confirm, sir, that either they may have been there and now we're operating in areas which were previously perceived as safe havens, or if, in fact, they've grown, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. So, you're not able to tell us that, as of now, antigovernment insurgency in Afghanistan has been yet contained. You cannot tell us that.

General SATTLER. Mr. Chairman, in the areas where we have forces, it is contained. Where we have been able to do the clear and the hold, it is contained. In other areas, I cannot comment on, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. You can't comment, or you can't tell us that it has been?

General SATTLER. I can't tell you that it has been contained, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, The Atlantic Council report says that the future of Afghanistan is going to be determined by progress or failure in the civil sector. I think a number of our witnesses have confirmed the importance of that. The reconstruction effort has been criticized for the lack of international coordination among contributors, which include over 40 countries, the U.N., the European Union, NATO, and a number of NGOs. Both the Afghanistan Study Group and The Atlantic Council reports recommend the appointment of a high-level U.N. international coordinator. Paddy Ashdown, former high representative for Bosnia, was considered for this position, but, apparently, the Karzai Government nixed it. Do we know, Secretary Boucher, why that appointment was nixed? Does that represent a setback?

Ambassador BOUCHER. First of all, I think it's regrettable that the Karzai Government didn't accept Paddy Ashdown as the international senior civilian. We very much looked forward to having him in that role.

We've heard a lot of explanations and discussions, mostly having to do with the domestic political environment. But, ultimately, I think it's for them to try to explain, rather than me.

But, at the same time, we've sat down with them, subsequently, both in the Secretary's talks last week and in my subsequent follow-up with the Foreign Minister. They tell us they do agree on the need for a strong international coordinator, they will look forward to working with an appointment by the U.N. Secretary General, and we're now engaged in the process of identifying the proper person.

Chairman LEVIN. The Atlantic Council report finds that less than 10 cents of every dollar of aid for Afghanistan goes to the Afghan people directly. One program that has worked, we believe, successfully to establish community development councils to identify local priorities and implement approved sub-projects, that has been the National Solidarity Program. Now, according to a press release from December, the National Solidarity Program has provided $400 million in payments disbursed to 16,000 community development councils in Afghanistan. These payments have financed more than 30,000 community development sub-projects to improve access to infrastructure, markets, and services. The program draws resources from the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, which is administered by the World Bank, by distributing funds directly to districts at the lowest level, which are the villages. By bypassing the central or provincial governments, the National Solidarity Program reduces corruption and misappropriation, and avoids unnecessary contractual layers.

I'm wondering, Secretary Boucher, whether or not you are familiar with the National Solidarity Program, and would you comment on it? If it is successful, can you tell us if the Afghan Government supports the program and their use of community development councils? Do we support the program?

Ambassador BOUCHER. The answer is: yes, yes, yes, and yes. This is one of the more successful programs in Afghanistan. Ten days ago, when I was out there, I met with the Minister for Rural Rehabilitation and Development, who runs this program. His updated numbers are 35,000 projects in 25,000 villages around the country. These are mostly small projects. They're wells, they're roads, they're retaining walls—schools, sometimes—things that are done in consultation with local people, with local villagers, through the community development councils. That's a mechanism that we think works. We think the projects are done well. It delivers what people need and what people want from their government, which is, as I said in my opening statement, really the nub of the matter.

So, we have put money in this program, ourselves. I think we've put about $10 million in. But, we have another $50 million for this program in our budgets this year. I think much of it's in the supplemental funding that hasn't been passed yet, but we would hope to get that money and be able to expand our contribution.

Chairman LEVIN. I'm glad to hear that because apparently it does not have the problems of corruption and bureaucratic layers that these other programs have, and I'm glad to hear there is support for it. We will continue to look for that money to be flowing in that direction.

Ambassador BOUCHER. Yes. There are a number of ministries in Afghanistan that have gone through the reform process, that have improved their capabilities, and that are really able to deliver projects at a local, provincial, and district level. This is one of them. Education's another one. Health's another one, and one of the things we're trying to do this year is concentrate international and Afghanistan resources, so that all those programs can work to stabilize an area.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator Warner.

Senator WARNER. Mr. Chairman, Senator Inhofe has asked that he take my spot in the rotation.

Senator INHOFE. Senator Warner, thank you very much for allowing me to do this, and I won't take all of my time, here.

When OEF begain in October 2001, all the journalists were buzzing around, and then all of a sudden it seemed to have lost its sex appeal and they all went to Iraq. Now they have talked about rediscovering Afghanistan; it's the forgotten war. Having made several trips to both Iraq and Afghanistan, I don't think that's the case. Let me just share a few memories, here.

Early on, I was there when they turned over the training of the ANA to the ANA. It was very meaningful to me, I say, Senator Warner, because it was the Oklahoma 45th that was in charge of the training. I've talked to these kids, they're very much impressed with the type of warriors these guys are. Then I was honored to be with General Jones on his last trip that he took.

One of the things that I haven't heard much in the testimony here, that was a problem in those early years, and apparently still is, or at least it was, according to General Dan McNeil on December 1, is that there's a unique problem of corruption at the local level, that there's not really a central authority that you can get in there and try to address the corruption problem, because it's the mayors and those—is this a problem?

Ambassador BOUCHER. It is endemic in Afghanistan, and when people look to their government for fairness and decency and services, that corruption is really one of the things that separates people from their government, instead of pulling them together. There are a lot of efforts made to improve the quality of government services, the audits and the accounting, the insulation of the government against corruption. It's an active program that we have with the Ministry of Finance to try to track money better, keep it from being stolen.

We have a lot of support for the attorney general and the prosecutors, who have started going after corruption. But, it is deeply rooted, it's longstanding, and it's something that we need to get at.

One of the features of the current police program, I think, is to really go into the district and, as we pull out the current police, they're then not only retrained, but reformed and vetted, so that when they go back, they will behave differently than they did before.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, and that's essentially what General Eikenberry said in this report that we're looking at today.

General Sattler, I know what your answer is, but I have to get it on the record, so, here it comes. My favorite programs, as I've gotten from the commanders in the field, are 1206, 1207, 1208, and train and equip, and then, of course, the Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP). We tried to get these programs expanded during this last go-around, but the 1206, –7, and –8 will expire at the end of this year. I'd like to know, from your perspective, how significant this is, that we get these, not just reauthorized, but also expanded.

Then I would ask the same thing about the CERP, because right now, while it is only good for Afghanistan and Iraq, we were trying to make it global, and this really came from the commanders in the field. Could you respond to that?

General SATTLER. Yes, Senator Inhofe. Thanks for the opportunity.

The 1206 is the global train and equip, which the Armed Services Committees have given us the authority, but not appropriations, to reprogram up to $300 million, globally, to go ahead and take a look at problems, to home in, along with the chief of mission—it's a combination program that is actually executed by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense. The two secretariats gives us the flexibility for the combatant commander to get with the country team and the ambassador and look at a problem that might exist, either a problem that's sliding towards becoming a crisis, or to take advantage of an opportunity. Because the budgeting cycle takes a period of time, you can't really get in and fix, train, and equip local forces on a normal budget cycle. So, this is that malleable tool, that

flexibility, that permits the two Secretaries to help a troubled spot anywhere in the world.

Senator INHOFE. Okay. I'd ask, since we have both State and the Department of Defense represented on this panel. I think it was put together in such a way so that the commander in the field makes a recommendation, then it goes, and it's a real fast track, just a matter of a very short period of time. Yet, it ensures the cooperation of both State and Defense. Any comments from either State or Defense on this?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Sir, if I can echo everything General Sattler said, the 1206 in particular, is really important to us in fighting terrorism around the world and really being able to bring some resources to bear fairly quickly on particular problems that confront us. So I think there's excellent interagency cooperation in targeting and focusing those funds.

I want to just praise, as much as I can, the CERP. We decided, last year at the beginning of the year, that we really needed to expand the money that we spend through PRTs, to help extend the government and help the Afghan Government do things on the ground in key areas. CERP has come through. I've been out to these PRTs. They're building dams, they're building schools, they're building bridges, they're building roads, they're changing the environment, really transforming the situation. It's a combination of the reservists in the U.S. Army, the people who know how to build bridges and plan cities and conduct—plus the CERP.

Senator INHOFE. What about the idea of making it global so it's not confined to just those areas?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I think the more, the better. It's money well spent. Some of the best-spent money in Afghanistan is CERP money.

Senator INHOFE. That's good. I appreciate that very much.

Do you agree with those comments?

Dr. SHINN. Yes, Senator, I'd agree with that and point out, to the earlier question about the alliance, the CERP has all the merits that you described, but it's largely limited to the 12 PRTs that the U.S. manages. We've been pressing our NATO allies, those who run the other 13 PRTs, to come up with something similar to that, that would have the same positive effects without all the central bureaucracy and within the short decision cycle that CERP does.

Senator INHOFE. All right. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Warner.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Ben Nelson.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for convening the hearing.

I'd like to thank and welcome the witnesses today.

I think it's helpful for us to hear what you are telling us about Afghanistan in relationship to that part of the world, and as well as what we can expect with respect to NATO's participation. It appears to me that the strategy, thus far, has left us a path with insufficient military force and inconsistent strategy to combat the Taliban and al Qaeda, and, as a result of that, they are reconstituting themselves, both in the area and on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

The challenge we have is, we've either been unwilling or unable to get the expansion of the capabilities of NATO, over the last several decades, at the level that we've needed it in order to be able to deal with an issue like we have in Afghanistan. I don't know whether we've kidded ourselves or whether we've known this; but, I can tell you, I don't think the American people have realized how inadequate NATO may have been.

Fortunately, and thankfully, Secretary Gates has spoken out on this. As he said, nobody's united the NATO forces more than he has with his remarks in the last several weeks. But, thank goodness somebody has spoken out to at least get the subject out before us so we can begin to deal with it.

Now, my question, to begin with, is, as we look at the strategy in Afghanistan today, do we have an inverted triangle that we're building, the base being very unstable, a base that continues to have an agrarian economy that is structured on poppy, as opposed to a true agricultural base that is sustainable in the long term? Either we're going to have to wipe out their poppy crop or we're going to have to see them change to a different kind of agricultural system. I've been worried about getting a farm bill over here. Maybe we ought to be worrying about getting a farm bill over there, to be able to restructure their agricultural base, because if we don't do that, all that we're doing over there is fundamentally based on agriculture that is not sustainable, by any imagination, if it's based on narcotics and if that is what is sustaining Taliban and al Qaeda and other terrorist activity as the fundamental source of the funding.

So, I guess I'm going to start with you, Secretary Shinn. What are your thoughts, do we have a base being built over there, or is it all on the wrong premise?

Dr. SHINN. You're certainly right, Senator, on your two major points, that it's an agricultural economy, and——

Senator BEN NELSON. Sort of.

Dr. SHINN. It has a narrow base, and much of that base is narcotics, it's growing poppy. There is no easy solution to that problem, other than widening out the bottom of that triangle with the Alternative Livelihood Program.

Senator BEN NELSON. Do we have a farm bill over there?

Dr. SHINN. I'm not sure we have the equivalent of a farm bill, but——

Senator BEN NELSON. We'll let Secretary Boucher speak to that.

Ambassador BOUCHER. I guess I'd have to say I'm not familiar enough with a farm bill to tell you exactly——

Senator BEN NELSON. A farm bill. Do we have an agricultural plan there to change the base of the agriculture from narcotics-driven production agriculture to something that is sustainable into the future? Because we cannot permit them to sustain this form of agriculture.

Ambassador BOUCHER. Yes. I think you've put your finger on it. But, it's broader than just agriculture. There's probably no single crop that's as easy to grow and as lucrative to a farmer as growing opium poppy. But, what we've seen in the experience of other countries—if you take Turkey, Thailand, or Pakistan, places that had been, at one point in time, the major suppliers of opium or heroin

to the world, what you see there is, the transformation of the rural economy has been a key factor. So the effort of bringing in roads, electricity, irrigation programs, and fruit trees, transforms the rural economy, so you get a better market for the vegetables and fruit that you grow. Your brother-in-law drives a truck, makes some money; your sister-in-law, she has a handicraft store, where she is able to supply things to the local area, or even the export market. The whole rural economy changes, and that's how people get out of poppy production.

Unfortunately, what we've seen is the concentration of poppy in the insurgency areas in the south. This new U.N. drug estimate report has some very interesting statistics. We're actually doing a lot of assistance in the areas that have now become the major producing areas for poppy: there are alternative livelihoods available, there is assistance, there are education programs. But, nonetheless, some of these surveys show 70 percent of the villages that have received some kind of assistance are still growing poppy in the south. That's different from the whole rest of the country. You have to, essentially, establish government control, and build a different economy.

Senator BEN NELSON. But, if you look at the economics of it, isn't it true that the money to be made in poppy production is not at the agricultural level at the base for the farmer. They're told what they're going to get. They have to do it. But, the money is to be made by the narcotics ring, Taliban and the others that are generating great sums of money for their own evildoing.

So, wouldn't it be wise for us to have a broadbased agriculture plan within the area? I heard the President, the other evening, speaking about agriculture. Unfortunately, it wasn't about American agriculture, it was about agriculture in other parts of the world. Perhaps we ought to have a plan there that we can articulate, that we can facilitate, and we can measure, after the fact. Because, what it seems to me is, we're fiddling, and Rome is burning internally there as we see the enemy regenerate itself from right in the midst of what we're watching, as we try to continue to put bandages and Band-Aids on hemorrhaging arteries.

Ambassador BOUCHER. I agree with you, Senator, on what we have to do. I think there is a broadbased agricultural and rural development plan for the country, and including for those areas where the poppy is most prevalent.

Senator BEN NELSON. But, how soon and how long?

Ambassador BOUCHER. In order to apply it, and apply it thoroughly, you need to get security, and you need to get the government in there. That's where this nexus between insurgency and narcotics—it's areas of insecurity, where the government is—where there's lack of governance, that we've not been able to bring the poppy problem under control.

Senator BEN NELSON. Even if we don't require the NATO countries to put up guns, can we help them get involved with helping the Afghans with butter, in terms of supporting that level? That's some of the soft power that I've heard Secretary Gates talk about in dealing with the challenge we have in the world today with asymmetrical warfare, that it has to be a much broader base. So, maybe we don't have to ask them to send guns, maybe we can have

them come and help us with the Afghans so they can create their own butter.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time's up.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Warner.

Senator WARNER. I'm to, again, yield to my colleague Senator Sessions, in that you have to go to the 12:30 meeting with General Cartwright, as you are the ranking member on our subcommittee on that subject.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Warner.

I want to ask some questions that concern me. I truly believe that it would be a tragedy of monumental proportions if we were to somehow allow Afghanistan to sink into the chaos it was in before. It would be bad for the world and for the 30 million people there, and bad for the United States.

I want us to be successful. We've been at it quite a while. I think, one thing that's clear, that creating an operating, efficient government in an area of the world that's never had one before is very, very difficult. It's just hard. We can place blame anywhere we want to place it, but it's not easy. Corruption is not something we can just pass a law and have it end; it's part of the cultural history that's risen from the oppression and so forth that they've suffered.

But, I guess I'm looking at The Atlantic Council report that indicates on the security side, that a stalemate has taken place, and then they say, "However, civil sector reform is in serious trouble. Little coordination exists among the many disparate international organizations, agencies active in Afghanistan. To add insult to injury, of every dollar of aid spent on Afghanistan, less than 10 percent goes directly to Afghans, further compounding reform and reconstruction problems."

Now, the three of you have talked about that, and our two secretaries, mostly, have discussed it. Secretary Boucher, who is in charge of this, from the United States side, on the civil responsibilities in Iraq?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I guess I'd say the chief people are myself, in Washington, and our ambassador, in the field.

Senator SESSIONS. What other responsibilities do you have, in addition to Afghanistan, in your portfolio?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I have India to Kazakhstan, but I also have an Afghan coordinator, working in my front office, who spends all his time on Afghanistan.

Senator SESSIONS. If a decision has to be made about how to distribute our assets or set priorities, who makes that decision?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Primarily our ambassador in Kabul. They get the funding, and they try to allocate it where it's most needed.

Senator SESSIONS. But, ambassadors are, on the scheme of things, pretty far down the line, are they not, in terms of requesting the resources and reprogramming monies? Are they able to effectively make the decisions, and does our ambassador understand that he has that authority?

Ambassador BOUCHER. He very much understands he has that authority. I think, if you look back at the funding requests that we've made to Congress, and Congress has funded, most of those

originated at our Embassy in Kabul, and our ambassadors very much understand and put their requests directly to us and at a high level. Our job is to get the money that the people on the ground need to do their job.

Senator SESSIONS. You indicated, I believe, or maybe Secretary Shinn, that tightening coordination, focus resources in troubled areas, increasing electricity, poppy eradication, and better cooperation with Pakistan are priorities in Afghanistan. Who is in charge of executing that, and what name do they have?

Ambassador BOUCHER. The people I just talked about, I guess, would be in charge of executing that: the Embassy in Kabul, Ambassador Wood, out there, myself, and our Afghan coordinator, Pat Moon.

Senator SESSIONS. It's my observation that our American public is a little bit confused. We look to our military to take care of Afghanistan. We are looking to our military to take care of Iraq. But, large parts of the effort that's necessary to success depends on the civil infrastructure. So you acknowledge that that is the State Department's, primarily, responsibility.

Ambassador BOUCHER. Yes, our primary responsibility—we work with people from all the agencies.

I have to say, the coordination on the ground between the U.S. military, U.S. agencies, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs, handled by the Ambassador and General McNeil and the other generals out there, is very, very good. I think the key problems of coordination involve getting all the international community together to focus on some of these goals and do things in a standardized and focused way.

Senator SESSIONS. Let me ask you, these four goals that you mentioned, I guess that's a plan, although it is not particularly specific. I sense that it's an objective report that I'm getting here from you, Secretary Boucher and Secretary Shinn, we're sitting back, and you're discussing all of this, with wisdom and observation from afar, but I'm interested in who is in charge of fixing it, who has direct responsibility, who understands it's their responsibility, who understands, if we fail, civilly, we place our soldiers at greater risk to be killed, or our allies to be murdered. It furthers the progress of the Taliban if we're unsuccessful. Do we clearly understand that? I guess, again, our ambassador, you say, is the primary point person on the ground, but how long does an ambassador serve there, and when do you expect a change in that office?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Ambassadors serve at the pleasure of the President. It has generally been 2 years in Afghanistan. Ambassador Wood started earlier in 2007, late spring, if I remember correctly.

I think we all understand, whatever department, whatever agency, whatever job we have in Washington or in Afghanistan, the stakes involved and the need for success and the way that we have to operate in order to achieve success. Any problems that come up in that process are the responsibility of me and the ambassador and others involved in the chain, to make sure they get fixed.

Senator SESSIONS. A little while ago you said, "I guess," in referring to responsibility, and you began listing a group of people with vague responsibilities. I would just suggest one of the weaknesses

we have is, we don't have a clear chain of command, that there's one person that we can look to, by name, and who's responsible for the constant adjustments and changes and reallocation of resources necessary to be successful in a difficult situation like this. My only other question would be, how would the role of someone like Paddy Ashdown, the international coordinator, be able to focus our resources more effectively?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Sir, this is a complex problem, and there are a lot of moving pieces to it, there are a lot of people involved in trying to solve it. If anybody's going to be held responsible in Washington, it ought to be me, and that's why I'm here talking to you. So, I'm happy to have my name attached to any success or failure that we achieve out there.

I'd say, we do think that having a senior international civilian would help with that broader effort to coordinate the international community, coordinate the civil and military operations, and to coordinate between the internationals and the Afghans. Ultimately, our job, his job, is to support the Afghan Government in building and extending its capabilities.

So, that, we think, would be a boon, not only to us, but also to the Afghans and the international community, as a whole, and that's why we're working on getting somebody who's a strong figure to perform that job.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Senator Levin, let me, first, thank you for convening the hearing.

It strikes me, as I listen to our colleagues ask questions, Mr. Chairman and Senator Warner, that the situation on the committee and in Congress with regard to Afghanistan is quite different from with regard to Iraq. These two conflicts are different, although, I think, part of a larger war that we're in with Islamist extremism and terrorism. But, what I'm saying, in brief, is that, while we have had a lot of division of opinion on Iraq—unfortunately, too much of it on partisan lines—there does seem to be a kind of unanimity of purpose here with regard to Afghanistan, about how critical it is for us to get it right, and how we all know how harmful it will be if we fail. I do want to, in that spirit, thank you for convening these two hearings today, and to express the hope that, under the leadership of the two of you, this committee can play a very proactive role with regard to Afghanistan, in support of the work that these three gentlemen, and all the many who work under you, both here and in Afghanistan, are doing on our behalf.

I was in Afghanistan about a month ago. Just to state an impression briefly, there are a lot of people worried about where this is going in Afghanistan. My own conclusion was that this is nowhere near as on the edge as, for instance, Iraq was in 2006, that our forces and the coalition forces, NATO forces, are holding our own, but we're facing an insurgency that is revived, we're operating in an unbelievably poor country, which has a proud history, but not so much of a governmental history, so it gives us great challenges. I think what we want to see happen—I know, we do and you do—

is to see us begin to turn the tide toward more success in Afghanistan, as we've begun to see in Iraq.

So, I want to begin with a question to Secretary Shinn. In your prepared testimony, you state, and I quote, "that the simple counterinsurgency prescription is clear, hold, and build." It's my observation, based on a couple of visits there and, just, what I hear and read, that in the south of Afghanistan, in fact, coalition forces are clearing, but they're not really holding and building. I wanted to ask you—which is to say that they clear a district, withdraw, the Taliban retakes it, and obviously there's no opportunity for us to build. I wanted to ask you if my impression is correct. If so, why is it so, and what can we do to change it?

Dr. SHINN. Senator, I think your impression is correct. It is exactly the clear, hold, and build problem, particularly the hold part of it, that we agree with you, is what constitutes much of the problem in the south. Shortly, we're going to have a test case of this in Musa Qala, where, essentially, it was, for a period of time, under Taliban control; they were cleared out; we have backfilled, now, with ANP, for the hold part. Perhaps Secretary Boucher could expand on this. We're starting to, with the Afghans, flow in the resources for the build, the third piece of the equation, but the jury is out on how hard it's going to be for the reformed, or, in the process of being reformed, ANP, along with elements of the ANA, to hold Musa Qala long enough, and at a big enough of a scale, so that the rebuilding and the governance part can take place.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Secretary Boucher, do you want to add a quick word?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I think, Senator, for a variety of reasons, the training of the police has lagged behind the training of the military.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

Ambassador BOUCHER. I think we have it right, both in numbers and quality. There's still the national apparatus that we've built with the military—the payroll systems, communication systems, command systems—that is still weak on the side of the police; and that's an essential part to being able to coordinate and use police well. Perhaps the job of building police is inherently more difficult, because you have a lot of people with some very bad habits who need to be reformed, retrained, weeded out, et cetera. But, I do think we have formulas, now, for really doing the job of the police training right. We've already seen some signs of success with this Focused Development District concept, and it's going forward in a big way this year. So, proof of the concept will be seen this year on the ground.

Senator LIEBERMAN. General Sattler, let me ask you a related question, which really goes to the clear, hold, and build. It's my impression that the comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy that our forces are employing so successfully in Iraq is being employed successfully also in Regional Command (RC) East by American forces. But—and which is to say, they have a campaign plan, and they are executing it, and they're executing it successfully—it's also my impression that there's no comparable campaign plan for the contested provinces of southern Afghanistan, where NATO forces are in the lead. I want to ask you to talk a little bit about whether

that impression of mine is correct. What's prevented that from happening, and what can we do to get the south heading in the right direction—south of Afghanistan?

General SATTLER. Senator Lieberman, when ISAF took over, they have an operational plan, which has, basically, the same three lines of operation—security, reconstruction, and governance—as they move forward.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General SATTLER. When they came onboard 18 months ago, when ISAF took control of all Afghanistan, at that point most of the countries, when they signed up, they believed they were coming in for security and stability operations, or stability and reconstruction operations. Over a period of time, especially in RC South, the RC South countries have realized that it is a counterinsurgency in the south. They use the term "comprehensive approach to the challenge" in the south. The Canadians, the Brits, the Dutch, and the Danes have all stepped up to the plate and are doing more counterinsurgency-like operations.

Secretary Gates just submitted a paper to the RC South countries, which is a counterinsurgency-type strategy that takes credit for what's being done, talks about what is going on right now in RC South, and also looks towards the future. That paper was submitted by the secretary to the RC South countries at the same time that the NATO, the North Atlantic Council (NAC), and the Secretary General have come forward with a campaign architecture to now take all the international instruments of national power, and the lines from security to economic to governance, to come up with a comprehensive approach across the country. So, right now, NATO is taking a hard look at that comprehensive approach, sir.

So, we feel very comfortable that the RC South countries are doing what needs to be done, but what we need to do is get a more coherent—it was already articulated a more coherent approach to use all the resources—U.S., NATO, partnership countries, and international organizations—to come together. That's being worked on right now, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right. So, and just a final quick question, you think we're in reach in time of seeing—having a campaign plan by NATO in the south of Afghanistan that's comparable to the one we're executing in the east of Afghanistan?

General SATTLER. Sir, I believe it'll be—it'll go beyond RC South. It'll be a comprehensive plan for the country of Afghanistan, of which RC South and East, sir, are components, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. That would be good. That's certainly what we need. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Warner.

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to start with Mr. Boucher, to be followed by Secretary Shinn. Using, as an example, the steps that are being taken by our government in Iraq to establish written and agreed-upon documents between the two governments—namely—you saw that, I hope, editorial by the Secretaries of State and Defense outlining how they're going to write two documents, one being a status-of-force agreement (SOFA). Would you recount for us exactly the legal

authority by which NATO is now operating in a sovereign nation of Afghanistan, and the United States is operating as a part of NATO, as well as conducting its own separate operations of a security and antiterrorist nature?

Dr. SHINN. To be as precise as you are requiring us to respond, has to do with some of the technicalities of the U.N. Security Council strategy.

Senator WARNER. That's what I want to sort through.

Dr. SHINN. Right.

Senator WARNER. We're engaged in active combat operations in a sovereign nation. What is the basis on which that is being done?

Ambassador BOUCHER. The basis is U.N. resolutions and, of course, the consent, of the Afghan Government for those kind of operations and that kind of support. But, actually, to get to a precise legal answer, I'd probably have to go back to my lawyers and go through it once again.

Senator WARNER. I think it's important that the record, Mr. Chairman, have that in as a part of our deliberations here today.

So, I recognize that there are some U.N. resolutions. What are the expiration dates on this, given that the operations in Iraq are dependent on a resolution which is going to expire at the end of this calendar year?

Ambassador BOUCHER. The U.N. mandate has generally been, I think, a 1-year resolution, comes up for renewal about March-April of every year, and we'll look at renewal every year, again this year, with whatever extensions or revisions it might need for this operation over the year to come.

Senator WARNER. Are we contemplating a status-of-forces agreement?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Again, that's something I'd have to check with the lawyers on.

Senator WARNER. Mr. Shinn, do you have any comments?

Dr. SHINN. Yes, sir. One of the core points you're making is a valid one, and it's an important one, which is that we are going to have to regularize and scale up the legal foundation for activities in Afghanistan, similar to the way that we're doing it in Iraq. It's our intention to use some of the same models; for example, a SOFA. It's all the more important because, as you implied, we have the NATO piece of the puzzle that we also have to factor into the equation.

Senator WARNER. I think it's essential that we put that together, because our forces are fighting, taking casualties, and, I must say, regrettably, it happens in all conflicts, inflicting casualties on the civilian population, destruction of civilian property, which, unfortunately, is in the path of the combatants. I think we'd better be all signed up and—to the dotted line on this, to protect not only the credibility of our Nation, but also the military individuals, the civilians, and others from our government who are, really, in a courageous way, taking their own risks and sacrifice to make this a successful operation in Afghanistan. I think we owe them no less than to have complete clarity and openness on this issue.

So, you will provide that, in due course, for the record.

Dr. SHINN. Yes, sir.

Ambassador BOUCHER. Yes, sir.

[The information referred to follows:]

[Deleted.]

Senator WARNER. Good.

General Sattler, I asked this question of Secretary Gates recently, and he was very forthright in the answer, and that is that Congress and the general public here in this country have been informed that we're going to send in two augmented marine battalions to become a part of the force-structure contribution by the United States in Afghanistan. I understand part of that force will be utilized to augment our current level of force structure within NATO. Is that correct?

General SATTLER. That's correct, Senator. Of the 3,200 soldiers in the Marine Expeditionary Unit, about 2,200 of them will be under ISAF command and control to be part of the ground forces, correct, sir.

Senator WARNER. The balance will augment the existing force structure that we have, that are performing various security and antiterrorist operations. Is that correct?

General SATTLER. The remaining 1,000 will work under Admiral Fallon, under OEF. They will be tasked under the train-and-equip mission, working for General Cone. So, for their period of time, they will be enablers and facilitators, coaches, mentors, and security, to take the police, which we've already talked about, to permit them to get out into some of the areas where it's not safe and secure now. So, the marines will have police trainers and mentors with them. The preponderance of their mission will be security. But, because of their ability to handle and teach weapons, tactics, et cetera, they will probably be dual-use, sir.

Senator WARNER. Now, Secretary Gates, in consultation with the NAC and others, recognized the need for these forces. Is that correct?

General SATTLER. That's correct, sir. This is fully coordinated with the NAC.

Senator WARNER. Right. But, the fact that the United States has to completely fulfill this requirement by NATO, and also our own separate command, it was because the NATO forces have not lived up to their commitments. Isn't that the blunt truth?

General SATTLER. Sir, part of the requirement for the train-and-equip, the coaching and mentoring piece, it is a requirement that has come forward from Admiral Fallon to the U.S. side; but, the Marine Expeditionary Unit—even though the 3,200 went together, the Marine Expeditionary Unit was Secretary Gates's contribution, to ensure that the proper firepower, et cetera, would be in place in RC South or wherever the ISAF commander wants to use it, sir. So, it was a unilateral placement of those forces by Secretary Gates. That's a correct statement, sir.

Senator WARNER. But, again, it's because of the shortfall of earlier commitments made by our NATO partners, am I not correct?

General SATTLER. Sir, there is a requirement on the books, for approximately three battalions, that is unfilled. But, this is not being placed against that requirement, no. It's going into an area where ISAF wants to place it. So, I guess the answer to your question, Senator, to be straight, would be not directly correlated; but,

if the other units were there, would the Secretary have had to come forward? Sir, I would only be speculating. So, this is not being placed against the three-short battalions on the NATO requirements, sir.

Senator WARNER. I'll go back and get exactly what he said, but his answer was fairly crisp and to the point, "Yes, Senator, that is the reason we're sending those forces in, to make up for the shortfalls."

Ambassador BOUCHER. Sir, if I could make one comment. Last year, our experience was, the U.S. increased its forces by about 3,500, and, in turn, then other NATO allies, other allies, Australia included, stepped up and matched that pledge, if you want to say that, and we ended up with an increase, last year, of about 7,000 in the overall force levels. We are now actively engaged in the diplomacy, particularly leading up to the NATO summit in Bucharest in April, to try to leverage this contribution of 3,200 marines with the other allies to get them to step up and both follow on and meet some of these other requirements.

Senator WARNER. We may be working on that, and leveraging that, but the plain, blunt fact is, the troops were needed, and the U.S. was the one that came forward and made that contribution. It's as simple as that.

Do you wish to add anything, Secretary Shinn? We have an obligation to the American people, when we make additional force commitments, to say precisely why we're doing it.

Dr. SHINN. We do.

Senator WARNER. We're doing it, because it's the judgment of the military commanders, (a) they need forces, and (b) no other nation was willing, in a timely way, to come forward with that force structure, and force structure that has no national caveat. The U.S. structure does not have a national caveat, and they can be employed by that NATO commander to meet all the contingencies, a full spectrum of contingencies facing NATO. Am I correct in that?

Dr. SHINN. You are, sir.

General SATTLER. Yes, sir.

Dr. SHINN. It's a clear fact that there are shortfalls in resourcing the military side of Afghanistan. It's also, I think, true that the Secretary committed those incremental troops in the expectations that our NATO allies would be more forthcoming. I would also point out that the NATO resourcing story is not over yet. As Secretary Boucher mentioned, this is part of the long negotiations that will, hopefully, produce incremental results at the Bucharest summit, which is in April.

Senator WARNER. Okay. Let the record note you're struggling with a response, but I think we got it all out.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Let the record also show that the Secretary of Defense was very direct. As Senator Warner says, when asked whether or not the reason we had to send the 3,200 troops is because the allies didn't come forward with their part of the deal and what they committed to and need to supply. He was very direct. Senator Warner is correct. I don't know why you're dancing around something which the Secretary of Defense was very clear on.

By the way, this is all being done, filling in the gap left by our NATO allies, at a time when we're overstretched in Iraq, which everyone acknowledges.

So, Senator Warner's right, we will get the record on that, and put that right at this spot in the record (see Annex E).

It's very important that the American people know. As Senator Lieberman says, there is support for doing this. This is not an area where there's great division. I think there's kind of a need to fill in where our NATO allies failed, but there's no use mincing words on it. They have failed, and we should put maximum pressure on them to come through with what they need to come through with.

So, I just want to support what Senator Warner has said.

Senator WARNER. I thank the Chair.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Shinn, Secretary Boucher, and General Sattler, welcome to the committee today, and thank you for your service. Up here, sometimes we don't always agree, but there is certainly bipartisan agreement on one thing, and I think that is how important it is that we win in Afghanistan. I think there's also consensus in the international community about how important it is that we succeed there.

One of the questions that I think has been touched on a little bit already today, that seems to be right at the heart of getting a private economy going in Afghanistan and helping our efforts succeed, has to do with the whole question of counternarcotics and the direct correlation between the narcotics trade and financing for terrorist activity. I guess I'd like to direct a question to Secretary Boucher, if I might, because there is some question about whether or not there ought to be use of military when it comes to eradication efforts, and some contradictory-type, I guess, opinions on that issue.

From The Atlantic Council report, on page 10, it says, and I quote, "Some have suggested that ISAF take on an aggressive drug eradication role. This is not a good fit for ISAF. Armed forces should not be used as an eradication force," end quote.

The Afghan Study report, however, makes what seems to be a contradicting conclusion on page 32. There again, it says, "The concept of integrating counternarcotics and counterinsurgency by using international military forces to assist interdiction is welcome and overdue."

So, I guess, I understand the need for military forces to take extreme care during these eradication/interdiction types of operations, and the need for integration with Afghan forces, but, in terms of how you would respond to these two conflicting or contradictory reports, do you think we should use our forces for eradication purposes, or not?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I think there's actually a subtle language difference between the two things you quoted, and therein lies the answer to the question. No, I don't think we should use NATO or U.S. forces to eradicate, but I do think there's an appropriate role, and it's actually part of the NATO mandate, for our forces or NATO forces to provide a secure environment in which the Afghans can go in and eradicate, so that the Afghans have about a 500-man

Afghan eradication force. They're prepared to go out in the field and eradicate poppy. If they are provided with the appropriate security environment, they can do that in denied areas, areas where the Taliban operate or where there are local drug lords. So as we've seen the increasing nexus between poppy-growing and insurgency, it's become even more important that we have a secure environment for the eradicators to go into those tough areas, and that's where NATO can play a role, that's where the Afghan army can play a role, but the actual eradication would be done by the Afghan eradication force.

Senator THUNE. I think this question was touched on earlier, maybe by Senator Nelson, but I posed a question a while back to Eric Edelman, who, at that time, was Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, about this transition of getting the Afghan economy, particularly the agricultural economy, transitioned from poppy production to some other types of things that we can grow in this country. The climatic conditions are very similar there. I guess the question is, is enough effort being made on that level to start making that transition so that we don't have to have as much of the hard power, the military, even if it's the Afghan military, involved? Is there enough effort on that front? My impression was, the last time I asked this question, that the answer was no, and I'm just wondering if that's changed? Are we making an aggressive effort to try and transition their agricultural economy to more legitimate types of production?

Ambassador BOUCHER. There is an aggressive effort on the rural economy. First and foremost, you have to get in roads, you have to get in electricity, you have to build the irrigation systems, in addition to providing agricultural extension crops and other industries—cold storage, things like that—that can operate in those areas.

We're in the process now of trying to beef up our State Department, USAID, and Department of Agriculture personnel at the PRTs, at the provincial level, so that they can do more of that. It also rests on being able to bring that stuff in, along with military activity, the hold part, so that we can—you can't always build a road or start a new economy or clear the irrigation ditches if there is an insurgency raging in that district, so you have to be able to do these things in a very coordinated fashion, that's sequenced, but very, very close together. So, the answer is yes, there is an aggressive effort, but no, it's not being done everywhere, because it's not able to be done everywhere, at this moment.

Dr. SHINN. Senator Thune, could I just amplify a little bit? It depends where you are. If you're in Nangahar, for example, in the eastern side of the map, where the security situation is stable enough so that we could succeed in putting in the roads and the infrastructure, so you could begin the conversion from poppy to real agriculture, you'll see that the poppy production, when the data comes out, has gone way down. But, conversely, we'll see the poppy production in Helmand, in particular—in Helmand, and in Kandahar, to some degree, going up, for just this reason. Yes, you can't get in there, because of the security situation, to begin that conversion. So, no matter how many resources you throw at roads

and cold storage, if you can't actually deliver them to the population, it won't have the desired effect.

Senator THUNE. Have you seen the connection between this narcotics—the poppy production and insurgent funding and all that sort of thing going up? I know there's always been a fairly established connection there, but what's the trend line with regard to the illegitimate activity, in terms of that industry, and a lot of the other issues that we're fighting with regard to the insurgents?

Dr. SHINN. It's a pretty murky picture. There's not enough evidence—first of all, we don't know very much about how they actually fund the Taliban insurgency, either as an aggregate or in the groups. It's not clear whether the trend is up or down, in terms of cash flow. My personal inference is that that nexus is growing; then, it's probably becoming increasingly important to them to fund the insurgency. But, I don't have a lot of intelligence information to support that.

Senator THUNE. That's my impression, too, just from observation of media reports and that there seems to be a growing connection, or relationship, between that narcotics trade and the insurgency.

Dr. SHINN. Yes.

Ambassador BOUCHER. I think it may actually be the other way around, that we've always known that the narcotics trade and the insurgency would feed off each other. That's been especially true in the south. What we've seen is, where we've been able to establish good governance and establish policemen and establish an overall climate of development, the poppy has gone way down. So, if you start looking at it on a map, you have more and more poppy-free provinces and poppy reductions in the east and the north of the country; and, in the south, where the insurgency is, you're left with the poppy and the insurgency feeding off each other. So, whether that's actually grown or that's been the case, it's just we've been able to eliminate it on these areas, and we haven't eliminated here yet, I think, is probably hard to say. But, yes, the connection between the two is increasingly clear.

Senator THUNE. Do you think that there is sufficient support from the government there? I was there a while back, and again, my impression was that they know this is a problem, and they're at least verbally committed to fixing it. But, do the actions follow that? Are they taking the steps that are necessary to help deal with that?

Ambassador BOUCHER. In a general sense, yes. I think it's especially true in the provinces, where we've seen big reductions and that have gone poppy-free last year. One of the biggest factors have been the governors and the people on the ground. There is even, now, a good-performers fund, so the governors that achieve a decrease can get some money to spend on local projects.

So I think that remains one of the key factors, including the lack of good governance, in addition to the lack of security in the provinces where poppy is still a big problem. So, it's something we're still working on.

Senator THUNE. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I think my time has expired. Thank you.

Thank you, all.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Thune.

Let's try a 4-minute second round.

As I mentioned, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mullen, before the House Armed Services Committee a few months ago, described the war in Afghanistan as "an economy-of-force operation," and said that, "It's simply a matter of resources, of capacity. In Afghanistan, we do what we can; in Iraq, we do what we must."

General Sattler, can you tell us what Admiral Mullen meant when he said the war in Afghanistan is an "economy-of-force operation"? What does that mean in military terms?

General SATTLER. Sir, an "economy-of-force" would mean that you would have two challenges, and you would put a priority of effort on one of the two. In this particular case, as Admiral Mullen alluded, that the priority now for resources is going towards Iraq, at this time. But, sir, I would also like to stress that the resources that are in Afghanistan, that there is no man or woman, no warrior, who goes forward on an operation where they are not fully resourced to accomplish the mission at hand. But, that being said, sir, as you're alluding, there are some things we could do, and, as Admiral Mullen said, we would like to do that we can't take those on now, until the resource balance shifts, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. The Afghanistan Study Group recommends a number of diplomatic steps to be taken to strengthen a stable and a peaceful Afghanistan, including the following. This is for you, Secretary Boucher. This is what they recommend: reducing antagonism between Pakistan and Afghanistan, including by having Afghanistan accept the internationally recognized border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the so-called Durand Line, as the official border; next, getting Pakistan to remove restrictions that burden the transportation of goods through Pakistan to and from Afghanistan, including from India; and, third, having the United States and its allies develop a strategy to convince Iran to play a constructive role with respect to Afghanistan, including the possibility of resuming direct discussions with Iran on the stabilization of Afghanistan.

I'm wondering, Secretary Boucher, whether you would support those, or whether the administration would support the diplomatic initiatives outlined in the Afghanistan Study Group report that I've just quoted.

Ambassador BOUCHER. Generally, yes, but not exactly the way that they recommended, I have to say. We've put a lot of effort into reducing tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan. We all remember last year, March and April, when things really flared up, and not only was there shooting across the border, but one of our U.S. officers got killed at a flag meeting that was held to try to reduce that shooting. It has been a very dangerous situation. I'm happy to report that the situation seems to have turned around quite a bit. Last fall, there was a jirga of the tribes from both sides of the border, where peaceful people on both sides stood up together and said, "We don't want the insurgency, we don't want the extremists in our midst, and we're going to work to accomplish that." That's a process that we're confident will continue to go forward between the two countries. President Karzai and President Musharraf met at the end of December, the day after Christmas,

had a very good meeting, and there have been subsequent followup meetings and cooperation between the two sides.

We've also promoted border cooperation, economic cooperation, and other areas, so we see things going, I'd say, a lot better between the two countries, both starting to realize, and starting to act upon the realization, that these people are enemies of both nations, and these people need to be dealt with from both sides, by both countries.

Frankly, we haven't taken on the issue of the Durand Line. It's a problem that goes back to 1893, to the colonial period. I think both sides do operate with that as the border. They shoot across it to protect it. They operate border posts on it. Our goal has been: try to reduce those tensions and get them to work in a cooperative manner across that line.

Pakistan's restrictions on transit trade from India, truck transit from India, is an issue that we have taken up, and we continue to take it up, because, frankly, we think it's in Pakistan's overall economic interest to capture that transit trade and to have it go through Pakistan and not have it go through Iran. It was something we continue to raise. Pakistani government keeps telling us it's really a matter that's determined by their bilateral relationship with India, and not even by the broader global interest, but it's something we do continue to push, because we think it would be not only helpful to us and allies and others who operate in Pakistan, but it would be helpful to Pakistan itself.

The strategy for Iran, we certainly keep in very close touch with the Afghans on their relationship with Iran. We see Iran doing a lot of different, and sometimes contradictory, things. They do participate in support for the Afghan Government. They participate in the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board of donor countries that are trying to support Afghanistan. But, they're also undermining the politics, and, in some cases, even supplying arms to the Taliban. So, we've had, I think, a comprehensive response to that.

At this point, I think, the issue of whether we sit down and talk to Iran about it is more one that needs to be looked at in the broader context of our relations with Iran. We have had such discussions in the past. But, really, Iran needs to cooperate with the international community and with the Afghan Government, not just with the United States, and that's where we think the pressure ought to be on Iran.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator Warner.

Senator WARNER. General Sattler, I've had the privilege of visiting with you in your own office in the Pentagon of recent, and we had some lengthy discussions about my grave concern about the drug problem, and the fact that the continuously rising revenues from this drug problem are, in part, filtering their way back into the hands of the Taliban, enabling them to have greater purchasing power for weapons and other pieces of equipment to engage, not only the NATO forces, but our forces within NATO and our forces that are not a part of NATO, and that, therefore, it's incumbent upon the United States to really sit down with our NATO partners, in particular, and work out some sort of an arrangement to begin to curtail this flow of funds from the poppy trade.

We keep going around in a circle on this issue. Originally, it was going to be Great Britain, "This is your problem." I think they still have some portfolio investment in trying to solve it, but I'm not here to point fingers, they've just not been successful.

What are we going to do? Because we're putting at risk the loss of life and limb of our own American GIs as a consequence of the funds flowing from the poppy trade.

General SATTLER. You're absolutely correct, Senator Warner. The United States has come up with a five-pillar comprehensive strategy to go in and take on the counternarcotics challenge inside of Afghanistan. It goes back to Senator Lieberman's point—we can have a strategy, but it needs to be executed by all elements that are on the ground inside of Afghanistan. The sovereign country of Afghanistan obviously has to buy into it, sir. Then our NATO partner countries, too, who are on the ground beside us. It has an eradication piece to it. It has an interdiction piece to it. It has a rule-of-law and justice piece to it. It has a public information piece, to illuminate the Afghan public as to why this must be undertaken. The last thing it has, which has already been discussed here, an alternate-livelihood piece—What other crop do I grow? How do I get it to a market?

Senator WARNER. Those are the pieces, but your operative phrase is that the Afghan Government has to "buy in" into this program. So, I would turn, now, to Secretary Boucher. Where are we, in terms of their "buying in" to begin to lessen this risk to our forces?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I think the Afghan Government has basically bought into the strategy. The strategy evolved from their program, which they say has eight pillars. We talk about five pillars. But, essentially, it's a common strategy between us and the Afghans to get at the narcotics problem, both through all the tools mentioned, but also just the basic security and government—governance activity. As I said, it is Afghans who go out and destroy the poppy in the fields. We're a long way from reducing it, but it at least seems to have peaked out this year. But there is also an effort, a diplomatic effort, underway with other governments to go after the funding and to get at the money that the traffickers use, move around, and sometimes supply to the Taliban.

Senator WARNER. I'm not trying to put you on report. You're a fine public servant, doing the best you can. But we don't see any results. What's the increase this year over last year? About 20 percent, isn't it?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Last year's increase was 34 percent. Half of that was yield, and half of that was hectarage. The early estimates for this year are that it'll be a slight decrease overall, including stabilization in Helmand, in the south. But, obviously it's still at a very high level that needs to be, not just capped, but reduced.

Senator WARNER. So, we'll have some, although, unfortunately, not as large, an increase as the year before, but, at some point we have to see a reversal and a beginning of a decrease.

Now, can you add anything, Secretary Shinn? Because it is your Department that's taken the casualties.

Dr. SHINN. It is, and I don't have very optimistic things to say about this.

Senator WARNER. What can Congress do? What can anybody do? We can't just throw up our hands.

Dr. SHINN. This is a tough one. Part of it is just the basic math. The Afghan central government budget is about $600 to $700 million a year from their domestic revenue, most of it from customs. The street value of 1 year's production of opium is between $3 and $3.5 billion a year. So, the out-of-scale between the amount of money that can flow in to corruption and undermine the public institutions in Afghanistan is so big, compared to the fragile base of the government itself, that we are really walking up a steep hill.

Senator WARNER. We may be walking up a steep hill, but when General Sattler puts into effect the orders for these 3,000 marines, it's incumbent upon the Congress of the United States to assure their families and the marines that we're doing everything we can to limit the risk that they're going to face over there. Among those risks are weapons that are being purchased by this drug money. So, I'm going to unrelentlessly continue to press on this issue, because I feel a strong obligation to those marines.

General SATTLER. Sir, I absolutely agree with you on that. I do think this is an issue that deserves unrelenting pressure. We know what works in Afghanistan. We've seen provinces go poppy-free, we've seen provinces with significant reductions, including places like Nangahar, which was way up, came down, went back, and has now gone down again. It's a combination of military force, police, good governance, and economic opportunity, in addition to the counterdrug programs. The most important thing is that we pursue the overall stability in provinces, we get better government down there, and we pursue these narcotics programs with unrelenting vigor.

Senator WARNER. Thank you, gentlemen.

I thank the Chair. It's been a very good hearing.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Warner.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

I was thinking that before I ask a few questions, I just want to say a word about the American forces over there and say what I heard from the Afghanis when I was there a month ago. It's quite remarkable. They have the greatest appreciation and admiration for the American troops that are there—their courage, what they bring to the fight, and their involvement in the fight. But, beyond that, it's encapsulated in this sentence that one of the Afghanis said, "We appreciate all soldiers and troops from outside Afghanistan that are here. The American soldiers are the only ones that share their canteens with us." Now, that is a simple statement that says a lot, which is that, "The American soldiers treat us like equals, they treat us, in fact, like fellow soldiers, they treat us like brothers in this conflict." I was so moved by that, that I wanted to put it on the record here, because these troops of ours are the best. They're the best of America. What that said to me is that they are bringing American values to this battlefield, which is far from the United States, but has so much to do with our own future security. That pride, of course, doesn't mean that we don't need, as my colleagues have said, to get more NATO forces in there. They, frankly, have to be more involved, as our troops have been.

I want to come to the other part of what I think we need, militarily, which is, just as in Iraq, we need to train more of the Afghans to be an effective ANA.

I want to ask two questions about that. Among the most perplexing things that I heard was that, when I was there, General Cone is actually about 3,000 people short of what he needs to carry out the mission we've given—that is, American short or coalition forces short—to train the Afghan army. Did I get that right? If so, General or Secretary, what are we going to do to—that's the long-term hope here: they get skilled enough, trained enough, to protect themselves from the Taliban.

General, do you want to start that?

General SATTLER. Yes, Senator Lieberman. You are correct, sir. General Cone has, through Admiral Fallon, put a request in for approximately 3,400 additional U.S. men and women to go and assist in the train-and-equip mission for the Afghan National Security Forces, both the army and the police. We have not been able to resource that requirement, sir—what General Cone has been able to do is to stretch the forces he has; and, through some very creative management of the assets he had, he's been able to cover the gap, up to approximately this point. But, we are at a point now—which is why the Secretary is sending 1,000 marines in—to go work for, eventually, General Cone in the train-and-equip mission. So, that time on the ground, they will be able to fill his shortfall. But, as has already been clearly stated, that is for a finite period of time.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General SATTLER. That is for 7 months. We will then need to find the resources to come in behind, to continue that coaching and mentoring and providing security for Afghan National Security Forces. So, you're correct, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate the answer, and I hope we, in Congress, can help, in any way we can, to provide those additional personnel, because that seems to be fundamental to the success of our mission.

Second point is, I was also struck by the fact that we are training the ANA up to a number that is remarkably below what we're training the Iraqi Army up to, notwithstanding the fact—and this would probably surprise most Americans, based on our focus—that Afghanistan is larger, both in terms of land area and population, than Iraq is. So, I wonder whether there's any thinking, within the Pentagon and within NATO, that we ought to increase the goal for training the ANA.

General SATTLER. Sir, I'll go and take that first, Senator. As the base forces, what we describe the end state, this is the objective force that the Afghan Government has described what they need for military. It was originally 70,000, sir. They have just come in with a proposition to take that up to 80,000——

Senator LIEBERMAN. 80,000, right?

General SATTLER.—80,000—from 70,000 to 80,000.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Compare it to Iraq, just for a moment, in terms of the army, as opposed to the local security forces in Iraq. Aren't we going for over 300,000 there?

General SATTLER. I don't think it's quite 300,000, Senator. The overall force in Iraq—police, border guards, and the army—will be somewhere close to about 600,000, total.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes.

General SATTLER. In this particular case, the objective force for the police is 80,000. So, even if they went to 80,000 for the army, they'd have approximately 160,000. So, it is a much smaller force. But, once again, we are in conversation with the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Defense to go ahead and come up with what they feel, based on the enemy threat, their objective force should be, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate that.

Secretary Boucher, did you want to add something?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Yes, if I can just say one thing. That new target, of 82,000—or 80,000 for the army—was approved, about a week ago in Tokyo by the international community doing the coordination monitoring.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Good.

Ambassador BOUCHER. There is serious look now at what's the overall force total that they need? We came through last year with $8 billion to step up the training, both in the pace, the quantity, the quality. As we look, now, to being able to achieve those initial targets, we have to look where the ultimate end goal is, and that's a serious study that's going on right now.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks.

My time is up. I just want to put a thought on the table, Mr. Chairman, and that is, one of the things that the future of Afghanistan depends on is an understanding that we are committed to a long-term relationship with them. I'm not talking about permanent bases or any of that, and I just hope that as we announce that we're going to begin to negotiate some kind of bilateral agreement, strategic partnership with the Government of Iraq, that we ought to be thinking about doing the same, for some period of time, with the government in Afghanistan, because I think that that will give them the confidence, including in the army, the Afghan army, to go forward. So I hope that we're thinking about that.

General SATTLER. Senator Lieberman, I know you're out of time, sir, so I——

Senator LIEBERMAN. But, you're not out of time, so you can talk as long as you want. [Laughter.]

General SATTLER. Mr. Chairman, thank you, sir.

If I could just baseline how we've gone from when we started—you mentioned you've been involved in this all the way along, as everyone in this room has, sir. But if you went back to 2003, when then-Lieutenant General McNeil—three-star General McNeil commanded the forces in Afghanistan, at that point in time, sir, he had about 10,000 U.S. warriors under his command and about 2,000 coalition warriors.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General SATTLER. We had one prototype PRT we were just experimenting with. The Afghan National Security Forces, based on the brutality of the Taliban rule, did not exist. There were no Afghan units that—there were warriors, they had the warrior culture, but no units, sir. So that's 2003.

If you move forward to today now, where General McNeil commands all ISAF, now what he has under his command, sir—he has approximately 27,000 U.S. forces on the ground in Afghanistan, he has 31,000 coalition and NATO forces on the ground. The PRTs now have grown to 25 PRTs, of which 12 are U.S. and 13 are international PRTs. The Afghan National Security Forces, which are growing in capacity and capability, today there's approximately 75,000 police at some stage of training and effectiveness and efficiency, sir, and 49,000 ANA, for a total of approximately 124–125,000.

So, I know we use terms, and I read them in the paper, "the forgotten war," sir, "the unresourced war," and as someone who's been involved with it, myself, for the past 7 years—I apologize if I'm a little emotional on it, but I just wanted to make sure that we did show that there has been tremendous growth in capacity and capability, and the hold piece, as Secretary Shinn alluded to, we need to get that Afghan National Security Force to have the ability to fill in and do that hold, where they're respected and they're appreciated by the Afghan national people, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate your emotion and the truth of what you've said, which is that we've come a long way. Of course, I think we all agree, we have a ways to go yet until we get to where we want to be.

General SATTLER. I certainly agree with "we have a ways to go," sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman, for your courtesy.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman. It's Senator Akaka's turn, but just on this particular subject, if Senator Akaka would not mind just for a moment.

Your figures were 49,000, currently, ANA, and 74,000 ANP personnel. That's the figures we have. But we have something added to that, which is, there's a training completion date, for those two groups, of March 2011. Is that right? Are my notes right on that?

General SATTLER. Senator, I'll have to check, sir.

[The information referred to follows:]

Information regarding the current status of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), compiled monthly by the Joint Staff, includes a "completion date" on one slide. This date depicts a month/year in which a specific category in the ANSF is projected to reach Capability Milestone 1 (CM1) for manning, training, and equipment.

In its broadest sense, CM1 is attained when a unit, agency, staff function, or installation is capable of conducting its primary operational mission (or missions) and has reached full operational capability (FOC). In terms of manning and equipment, CM1 is attained when at least 85 percent of its authorized strength is fielded. In terms of training, basic military training for soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and officers is provided at the military training centers. Manned and equipped units are then fielded with embedded trainers and mentors that assist, mentor, and assess the unit in training and combat operations as it progresses toward FOC.

General SATTLER. There's 8,000 army in training right now, and we're at approximately 49,000. So when they graduate, you're looking to actually hit the goal of the current objective force of 70,000. Sir, I wouldn't want to take a guess at that, Senator, I'll——

Chairman LEVIN. How long does it take to train an Afghan police unit, approximately? Do you know offhand?

General SATTLER. Sir——

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. It's all right.

General SATTLER.—I'll get back to you, rather than guess, Senator, about——

Chairman LEVIN. The same with the——

Ambassador BOUCHER. Senator, the——

Chairman LEVIN.—how long it takes to train the army unit. I don't quite understand that figure, in my own notes. We'd appreciate for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

Basic training for Afghan National Police (ANP) is approximately 8 weeks; advanced training for specialty police such as border or counternarcotics averages 2 to 3 weeks more. For the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), training consists of a 16-week program followed by a dedicated mentoring program.

Our primary program for development of the ANP is the Focused District Development (FDD) plan. Targeted for district uniform police, and eventually incorporating the border police, this program includes the wholesale removal of police units (temporarily backfilled by ANCOP) and provides an intensive 8-week training period at regional training centers that include instruction on individual and unit-level requirements. After this training period, units are then redeployed to their home districts where they undergo a focused mentoring and validation period followed by period of oversight and sustainment. Depending on the size, location, and ability of the FDD-trained units, the post-training mentoring and oversight periods are projected to last approximately 5 to 7 months.

The basic building block of the Afghan National Army (ANA) is the infantry battalion or kandak. The standard training model for developing a kandak with a fully manned training and mentoring team is approximately 15 months. This model includes a series of condition-based phases that covers unit progression from initial formation to full operational capability or CM1. The validation period from fielding to CM1 can vary depending on the availability of mentoring teams and the unit's participation and performance in combat operations. Other noncombat units in the ANA, such as combat support, medical, and intelligence, will have different training and validation timelines associated with the specific skill sets required to reach CM1.

Ambassador BOUCHER. Sir, the Focused District Development Plan that pulls the police out, puts in temporary police, and then moves them back, it's an 8-week training program that they go out on, and then they go back. But, they go back with mentors, and the mentoring is actually probably the key part to how they operate when they get back here.

Chairman LEVIN. We'll get into the mentoring later.

Senator Akaka.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me add my welcome to Secretary Shinn and Secretary Boucher and General Sattler for being here and to continue to inform us about what's happening there.

Six and a half years ago, our country went to war in Afghanistan to drive out al Qaeda and Taliban. Now, because we did not finish the job as we should have, we are still fighting the Taliban. Recent developments in neighboring Pakistan have also added to the concern that we must increase our efforts to ensure stability in this region of the world. So I'd look forward to hearing your responses on the recommendations of the Afghanistan Study Group and Atlantic Council and how we can best proceed on this important mission.

Secretary Boucher, it has been reported by the Afghanistan Study Group that the United States and its allies lack a strategy to—and I'm quoting—"fill the power vacuum outside Kabul and to counter the combined challenges of reconstituted Taliban and al Qaeda forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a runaway opium econ-

omy, and the poverty faced by most Afghans." In your opinion, Secretary, is there a clear political end state for Afghanistan that is agreed upon by both the NATO alliance and within U.S. Government agencies?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Sir, I think there is. If you listen to what military colleagues, Defense Department colleagues, other colleagues in the government, and even other governments, talk about, you'll find that we're all focused on the same issues: beating the Taliban on the battlefield, providing the safety and security that Afghan people need, and providing them with economic opportunity and good governance throughout the country. The goals are there, the strategy to do that in a comprehensive approach is there. Frankly, we need to make sure that the execution matches the strategy, and that's where a lot of the focus is to improve the concentration and the coordination of all those elements. What you might call the "campaign plan" for any given period is where we're very much focused right now.

Senator AKAKA. Do you think that there needs to be a change in our strategy in order to achieve that end state?

Ambassador BOUCHER. We are, indeed, looking at the overall strategy, preparing, with our NATO allies, strategy documents for the Bucharest summit in April, for example, as well as more detailed discussions of the countries of the south, on how we actually implement that strategy in the south this year.

Senator AKAKA. Secretary Shinn, some of the lessons learned in Iraq include the importance of using existing social and political structures within the country in order to more effectively establish a government perceived as legitimate by the people. The extent of de-Ba'athification that was imposed after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime increased many problems in that country that we are still trying to overcome. Given the tribal and decentralized nature of Afghanistan, what do you believe are the best steps forward to establish a more centralized government, particularly given the country's long history of tribal-centric leadership and politics?

Dr. SHINN. That's a good and important question, Senator Akaka. I think, probably the most important two areas that we can work with the Afghan Government to strengthen the hand of the central authorities are, first of all, the general capacity-building of their ministries or their institutions, things that Secretary Boucher referred to, some, earlier in this meeting—in particular, building national institutions, like the ANA, which is distributed in four corps around the country, but is essentially managed by the Ministry of Defense out of Kabul.

The other piece of this puzzle to which there's not a clear answer is what advice we would provide to the authorities in Kabul, and particularly to President Karzai, who is attempting to simultaneously manage the tribal network out in the provinces and out on the ground, some of which are in areas that are actually contested by the Taliban, at the same time as he tries to grow these national institutions out of Kabul. That second question is a much more difficult row to hoe. We are being very cautious about the degree to which lessons from Iraq—for example, the concerned citizens organizations that have worked in Anbar—whether or not they are applicable to Afghanistan.

Senator AKAKA. Secretary Shinn, in a recent combined ABC/BBC poll, 67 percent of Afghanis said they supported the NATO presence, while 13 percent support the Taliban. To what extent do you believe that this poll represents an accurate portrayal of NATO's effectiveness in winning the popular support of the Afghani people?

Dr. SHINN. I might defer that to Secretary Boucher, who knows more about some of the polling data in Afghanistan than I do, while I try to think it through.

Senator AKAKA. Secretary Boucher?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I don't like it when people say "That's a tough one, let him answer it." Let me give a try at it. [Laughter]

Chairman LEVIN. Unless you do that, right, Secretary?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I'm allowed to do that occasionally, sir, I think.

Chairman LEVIN. Yes, right. We all do that, at times.

Ambassador BOUCHER. If anything, it might reflect even a lower level of support for the NATO forces than actually exists. We find story after story, place after place, the strong support for the United States forces, in particular, but NATO forces, in general. They have, unfortunately, experienced the Taliban. They don't want to be whipped in the marketplace, they want their girls to go to school, they don't really want to grow opium poppy, even if they still do, for economic or other reasons. So I think there's a very open attitude towards accepting NATO, U.S., Afghan Government security, Afghan Government structures, if those structures perform, if they deliver what people want, which is safety, justice, economic opportunity, and governance. That's where the concentration is: making a government strong enough to deliver those things throughout the country.

One of our former commanders used to say, "It's not that the Taliban is strong, it's that the government is weak." Strengthening government remains, I think, the strongest effort, because that's what people want. They have expectations that need to be met.

Senator AKAKA. I'm just interested in this. Do you believe that this informational success is an aspect of the war that NATO is winning and that it is mainly lack of force coverage and presence of insurgent sanctuaries that has enabled and encouraged the recent increase in Taliban activity?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I think it's not so much the sanctuaries, because we've managed to take away, at least in Afghanistan, much of the strongholds, and we've been able to interdict or otherwise decrease the level of cross-border activity in many places. I think it's the fact that they're adjusting their tactics, they're picking up new tactics, they're picking up on bombs and kidnaping and things like that. We have to adjust, as well.

General SATTLER. Senator, if I might just add to that, I believe that some may perceive that they are in these safe havens, but, due to, now, getting out and about more, better intelligence collection, sharing information with the population, and all the things that are critical in a counterinsurgency operation, that, as Secretary Boucher just indicated, we are able to precisionally take away those safe havens. But, "Are we getting them all?" is the question that we were asked earlier, and at that point, we answered that we don't believe we're getting them all, sir, but, when

we do find them, we do have the resources and capacity to take those out.

Senator AKAKA. My final question, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Shinn, it has recently been advocated by both General Petraeus and Secretary Gates that further troop withdrawals from Iraq this summer should be put on hold for an indeterminate period for a security evaluation at the reduced levels. Admiral Mullen has also recently testified as to the development strain facing U.S. forces that must be alleviated sooner rather than later. Given the findings of the Afghanistan Study Group that indicate too few troops have been used to fight the war in that country, what do you make of the ability of the U.S. forces to endure what essentially will amount to a shift from Iraq to Afghanistan rather than a reduction that will ease the operations tempo?

Dr. SHINN. It strikes me that one of the most important responses to that question is an observation, made a little bit earlier here by General Sattler, which is, for the forces that we have in Afghanistan, under no circumstances have they engaged in missions for which they were under-resourced—is the first point. The second point is the broader one, which is, on the military clear side of the strategy in Afghanistan, we believe that we're winning—slowly, surely, but winning.

So, the sourcing level is not, to me, the principal concern about Afghanistan. It has to do more with the execution on the hold and the build side of the strategy.

I'd defer to General Sattler to comment on the Iraq side of that.

General SATTLER. I would just say that the Secretary of Defense has that tough call. We talked earlier, Mr. Chairman, about resources and where the resources go. He has the challenges of Iraq, he has to balance against Afghanistan, against, as you just articulated, the health of the force, the opportunity to be home and reset and retrain the force, and then the global challenges of the long war. As you mentioned, we will come down by the end of July. We'll have reduced approximately five brigades of combat power out of Iraq. Then, the Secretary has clearly stated that he wants to take a pause at that point, in conjunction with Admiral Fallon and General Petraeus and Admiral Mullen, and take a look at what that has done. Then, the Secretary, when the time is correct, based on input from his commanders and advice from the Chairman, sir, I believe he will make a decision, at that point, what the next move is.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much for your responses.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Akaka.

You've talked a little bit about the use of the military, in terms of drug interdiction. I may have missed this testimony, in which case I am apologetic for that, but when, I think, you were asked, I believe, Secretary Shinn, but I'm not sure, it may have been Secretary Boucher, about the use of the military, in terms of eradication, were you also saying that we should not be using the military, in terms of interdiction? Who addressed that issue?

Dr. SHINN. Actually, it was him, but I could answer for him.

Chairman LEVIN. Either one. Point the finger at yourself on this. Go on, Secretary Shinn.

Dr. SHINN. Yes, I think the response was that our military is not directly involved in either eradication or interdiction, that we believe it should have an Afghan face to it, but we do provide indirect support, in terms of training and equipping, for some parts of the counternarcotics strategy, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Right, why can't we join with the Afghan forces in the interdiction side, and leave the farmers alone, don't get involved in the eradication, but, when it comes to dealing with heroin laboratories and smuggling convoys and going after the precursor chemicals, why not use our military jointly with the Afghans—not on the fields, not on the eradication, but on the big guys?

Dr. SHINN. Sometimes, we do, actually. There is some crossover between the Taliban and nacrotraffickers.

Chairman LEVIN. Even when there's not a crossover——

Dr. SHINN. When that occurs, we go after them.

Chairman LEVIN.—even when there's not a crossover, why not go after the big guys militarily?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Part of it's theology, but, I think, it's more effectiveness.

Chairman LEVIN. Part of it's what?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Theology. Sort of the—these things get discussed in the NATO mandate——

Chairman LEVIN. I think there's enough theology, as it is, in Afghanistan. Could you use a different word, perhaps?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Part of it's a theoretical decision that was made by NATO on how the NATO forces should be used. Part of it's the practical aspect of—you want to take down drug lords in a way that can be done through law enforcement means, so that they can be prosecuted and punished. Therefore, if it's going to be done in the Afghan justice system, it's better for the Afghans to do it. We have extensive Drug Enforcement Administration presence that we're in the process of beefing up to work with the Afghans, but they need to be able to do these operations, by and large, in a manner that allows them to continue, not just to take down the guy, but to go into prosecution and law enforcement.

That said, NATO is quite aware, because of the nexus, that there are drug lords aligned with the Taliban. I think, both in counterinsurgency terms and counternarcotics terms, they're prepared to go after some of these guys.

Chairman LEVIN. Is the Afghan police and Afghan army effective against the drug lords and the heroin labs?

Ambassador BOUCHER. The Afghan police and army tend to provide the—as I had said, the overall security of the perimeter for the Afghan eradication force, but the——

Chairman LEVIN. No, not eradication. I'm talking about the——

Ambassador BOUCHER. The Afghan drug police and the Afghan eradication force——

Chairman LEVIN. Yes.

Ambassador BOUCHER.—who are more directly charged with that mission.

Chairman LEVIN. Are they effective in interdicting heroin in the poppy?

Ambassador BOUCHER. They've had some success with small and medium traffickers, but not a lot of success at the bigger levels.

Chairman LEVIN. Do they want to succeed at the higher level?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I think they do. The people that we've worked with and——

Chairman LEVIN. No, I'm talking about the police, themselves, or is it just so much corruption in the police or the army that you can't rely on them to go after the big guys?

Ambassador BOUCHER. The counterdrug police seem to have the determination to do so. We're trying to build up their capability.

Chairman LEVIN. You mentioned a shortfall in the number of trainers, I guess a significant shortfall. General, you've talked about commanders being about 2,500 trainers short—900 short in the army, and about 1,500 short in the police. I think those were your numbers. A thousand of the marines that are going to be deployed to Afghanistan in the next few months are going to support that training mission, but we're way, way short. Our allies have not carried through on the commitments that they've made for training teams. I guess the operation is called Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs); shorthand being "omelets," I gather. What's the resistance in our NATO allies to doing that? It's not a direct combat role, it's a training mission. Why have they fallen short on the training mission?

General SATTLER. Mr. Chairman, it really becomes a combat mission. When you become an OMLT, you're paired with an Afghani battalion or brigade. When you go to that brigade, as do our embedded trainers, you eat with, sleep with, you mentor by your mere presence, and you teach and train as you move along.

Chairman LEVIN. These are embeds.

General SATTLER. These are embeds, and OMLTs do the same, sir. When the OMLTs go with that unit, when that unit—if that unit moves into combat, or when that unit moves into combat, the OMLT goes with. The OMLT provides—they call for fire, they provide medevac, they control artillery, so they become a critical enabler to that unit.

Right now, sir, there's 34 international OMLTs that are in the field inside Afghanistan. Of that 34, 24 have been certified. There is a certification process, because of the responsibility that the OMLT, with the enablers, that they bring to the fight, sir—so, obviously, they're certified by ISAF in conjunction with General Cone and Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan. There's six more OMLTs that are in the pipeline that should be fielded later this year. So that'll be approximately a total of 40 international OMLTs on the ground.

Chairman LEVIN. Of the 72 that are needed? Is that——

General SATTLER. Sir, I'll have to get the exact end—the objective number.

[The information referred to follows:]

As of 5 March (latest information available to the Joint Staff), 34 Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) are fielded in Afghanistan, 31 have been certified as operational. The current requirement for OMLTs, as outlined in the NATO Combined Joint Statement of Requirements is 81. This requirement grows to 103 by January 2009.

General SATTLER. But, they are substantially short of the ultimate goal. Correct, sir

Chairman LEVIN. Which gets back to the question of our NATO allies not being willing—too many of them—because a number of them are, and I don't think we ought to generalize about NATO allies——

General SATTLER. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN.—because we have NATO allies that have had, I think, greater proportion of losses, even, than we've had in Afghanistan, including the Canadians. So, we shouldn't be generalizing about this. But, too many of our NATO allies have not come through. One of the reasons, apparently, is because of the public opposition in their countries to the Afghanistan mission. Is one of the reasons for that, Secretary Boucher, that, in the minds of many Europeans, the Iraq mission and the Afghan mission are linked? We have a report, the Afghanistan Study Group recommended that there be decoupling of the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq as a way of improving our overall approach to the war on terrorism, that if we delink them, it may be helpful, in terms of attracting greater support for the one, and that wouldn't be colored or diminished by opposition to the other. Is there some truth to that?

Ambassador BOUCHER. I guess there's some truth to that. I don't find it, extensively. As I've gone to Europe and I've talked to parliamentarians and party leaders and people like that about the Afghan mission, Iraq is not usually thrown up at us.

Chairman LEVIN. How about their publics?

Ambassador BOUCHER. To some extent, you see it in the public commentary. But, a lot of the restrictions on forces are either parliamentary restrictions or promises that they've made to parliament that, "We're going in for peacekeeping and stabilization, and, therefore, we will do these things and not those things." That's where a lot of the caveats come from. It, basically, I think, has to do with the image that they have of their forces, the kinds of things they think they should be doing, and they're there to be nice to people and give them a happier life. When it comes to fighting, not everybody else is as committed as we are, but many are, as you mentioned—the Canadians and the Brits and the Dutch and some of the others that are with us in the south. So, I think part of it's lack of understanding of the full breadth of the mission that you have to do. In order to give people a hospital, you have to be able to give them police, and you have to be able to give them a secure environment, as well. Our forces, and several others, are fully committed to the whole breadth of that; whereas, others have gone under the assumption that they would only be doing part of that.

Chairman LEVIN. To the extent that the public linkage in some of the countries that have put restrictions on their troops is a cause for those parliamentary restrictions or government restrictions, to that extent, would it be useful to decouple these two missions?

Ambassador BOUCHER. Sir, we've been looking at that recommendation. I guess the answer is yes, in general, but what it means in practical terms is not quite clear to me, frankly.

Chairman LEVIN. Let me give you an example. The Afghan mission could be put in our regular budget, keeping the Iraqi mission in a supplemental budget.

Ambassador BOUCHER. The only place that these two seem to go together is in the supplemental budgets. A lot of our funding goes into the regular budget, but there are supplemental needs, and the vehicle for getting that is a combined supplemental. But, at least when we talk about it, when we go out and lobby for it, we're talking about the situation in Afghanistan and what we all need to do to accomplish our goals there.

Chairman LEVIN. Yes, but I think those two missions are linked both in the rhetoric in Washington and in the budgets. It's the global war, and we talk about Iraq and Afghanistan. I think you ought to give a lot more thought to this question. To the extent that the European publics, in those countries that have not come through with what they've committed, link these two efforts, it seems to me that is a diminution of the support that you're likely to get from their representatives in their parliaments. Here, many of us have delinked them. Many of us who have opposed the effort in Iraq, including me—been a critic of it and opposed going in—nonetheless, very much supported going into Afghanistan, which, by the way, I think was a unanimous vote in the Senate, to go into Afghanistan, go after the folks who attacked us, and who are still there, at least on the border, and Taliban, who supported those folks. So I think many of us have delinked it, and I guess you, in your positions, have delinked them.

But, I'm just urging that if there is truth to the perception and to the point that, in those countries, there's been a linkage in the public minds, and if that is one of the reasons why there's been a shortfall on the part of many NATO countries in stepping up to what's needed in Afghanistan, it may be wiser that the administration, in its rhetoric, talk—and in its budget request—separate these two missions. They can argue they're both valid, and you can talk about where there ought to be more troops than the other. You have to do that, obviously. But, in the rhetoric and in the budget, I think it would be useful. It would reflect the public mood here, where the public, I think, sees very differently the challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan—and has, consistently—and it may be true in the NATO—some of the NATO countries, as well.

Thank you, gentlemen, and your staffs, for rearranging your schedules today to accommodate ours.

We will stand adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION SUPPORT FOR AFGHANISTAN MISSION

1. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Shinn and Secretary Boucher, in early February Secretary Gates told the committee that he is worried that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is evolving into a "two-tiered alliance" composed of "some allies willing to fight and die to protect people's security, and others who are not." Secretary Gates has also said that some European publics are confused over the difference between the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and this has resulted in a loss of support for the Afghanistan mission, according to news reports. The Afghanistan Study Group (ASG) recommended that the administration decouple the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq as a way of improving the overall U.S. approach to the global war on terrorism. Do you agree with Secretary Gates that NATO is at risk of becoming a "two-tiered alliance" with some willing to fight and die and others not?

Dr. SHINN. I share Secretary Gates' concern about NATO becoming a two-tiered alliance. A number of allies, particularly those engaging in combat operations in the volatile south and east, shoulder the majority of the burden of kinetic military action against the insurgency. Others, especially those deployed in the more permissive north and west, focus more on reconstruction and humanitarian efforts. While the latter are crucial to Afghanistan's long-term development, all allies must be willing to contribute to all lines of operation, both kinetic and nonkinetic. Simultaneously, however, we must remain mindful of the political realities many of our allies face—in some instances they are severely constrained by prevailing public opinion and the structure of their governments. Recognizing this reality, Secretary Gates has worked closely with his ministerial counterparts to develop a strategic vision for the NATO mission in Afghanistan, which explains what the alliance has achieved, what remains to done, and how we intend to get there.

Ambassador BOUCHER. NATO is united in a common commitment to support the Government of Afghanistan in the establishment of a safe and secure environment in order to extend reconstruction and good governance. All 26 allies—and 13 non-NATO partners—have forces in Afghanistan. Their deployments all fulfill NATO requirements established by the NATO Supreme Allied Commander and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Commander.

We realize, however, that there is a concern about NATO becoming a two-tiered alliance. Allies in the south and east feel that they are shouldering a disproportionate share of the combat burden, while others in the west and north are mostly engaged in reconstruction and humanitarian assistance efforts. Nonetheless, all of these efforts are critical to the overall mission, and allies recognize that we are fighting the same fight. We will continue to engage allies to emphasize the need to meet force requirements, share the burden more equitably, and provide commanders in the field with the flexibility to succeed in their mission. We will also continue to help allies explain the nature and importance of the entire NATO mission in Afghanistan to their publics. To that end, allies and partners are endorsing an ISAF Strategic Vision statement for the NATO Summit in Bucharest.

2. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Shinn and Secretary Boucher, do you agree with the ASG's recommendation that the administration and Congress decouple Iraq and Afghanistan?

Dr. SHINN. In the late 2007/early 2008 reorganization of the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy, Afghanistan and Iraq were decoupled—both portfolios had previously rested under the management of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. A key component of the policy reorganization shifted responsibility for the Afghanistan regional portfolio to a new Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs. Thus, from a management perspective, the two countries have been largely decoupled within the Department.

I do not believe that Afghanistan would stand to gain by decoupling it from Iraq in the defense budget process. Requirements for funding Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan are developed and approved independent of those funding requirements for Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the Department has consistently received the levels of funding it has requested for the mission in Afghanistan.

In so far as decoupling Afghanistan and Iraq in the interest of public opinion, I believe that the Vision Statement, currently being drafted by NATO in preparation for the April 2008 Bucharest Summit, will play a key role in reminding publics about the importance of the Afghanistan mission. The goal of this document is to articulate what we have achieved in Afghanistan, what remains to be done, and how we intend to get there.

Ambassador BOUCHER. The Study Group's second overarching recommendation is to decouple Iraq and Afghanistan. We would note that with the exception of our supplemental funding requests, the two conflicts have been effectively decoupled all along, with U.S. strategy in each country moving on markedly different paths that reflect differing local realities. We are not confident that decoupling supplemental funding requests would in fact result in increased resources for Afghanistan. The Afghanistan funding record before and after the start of the Iraq war suggests otherwise.

NATIONAL SOLIDARITY PROGRAM

3. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Shinn and Secretary Boucher, the Atlantic Council report states that "the future of Afghanistan will be determined by progress or failure in the civil sector." The report also finds that less than 10 cents of every dollar of aid for Afghanistan goes directly to the Afghan people. One program that appears

to be succeeding in directing funds to the local level is the National Solidarity Program (NSP). According to the Afghanistan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, which established the NSP, the NSP has worked with over 19,000 Community Development Councils to finance more than 32,000 subprojects for development and reconstruction. What is being done to eliminate the inefficiencies and waste in the delivery of reconstruction assistance for the Afghan people?

Dr. SHINN. The State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are best suited to respond to questions related to the financing of development and reconstruction projects. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 requires the administration to identify a Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), "to provide for the independent and objective conduct and supervision of audits and investigations relating to the programs and operations funded with amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the reconstruction of Afghanistan." I believe that, once in place, the SIGAR will play a crucial role in ensuring that U.S. resources are not misused.

Ambassador BOUCHER. Through our capacity building programs with Afghan ministries and provincial governments, the United States is working to eliminate inefficiencies and corruption in the delivery of assistance to the Afghan people. U.S. foreign assistance programs work with ministries—focusing on the most important service providers, like the ministries of health, education, finance, and agriculture—to put more responsibility for service delivery at the local levels. We do this to ensure funds reach the provinces. This will also allow ministry representatives working at the provincial levels to do planning, decisionmaking, delivery, and monitoring activities, ensuring assistance reaches the Afghan people. Advisors will mentor and support capacity building for Afghan Government employees in areas such as financial management, budgeting, procurement, human resources management, strategic planning, project planning, project implementation, and information and communications systems.

In addition, the U.S. Government has made a great deal of progress over the past 7 years streamlining our disbursement of funds to program implementers. The U.S. Government has disbursed 69 percent of the $26.3 billion in U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan from fiscal year 2001 to fiscal year 2008 (this is not including the fiscal year 2008 supplemental), which is higher than the Ministry of Finance's reported international average of 62 percent, and almost 20 percent higher than where the U.S. Government was 2 years ago. Our efforts to put more control of funding decisions in the hands of Provincial Reconstruction Teams has improved our ability to quickly follow security gains with development efforts that address locally-identified priorities.

As U.S. Agency for International Development Acting Deputy Administrator Jim Kunder noted in his testimony on oversight on January 24, the Office of the Inspector General in Afghanistan has spent $2.7 million on oversight. As of December 2007, they had completed 18 performance and 23 financial audits. Not a single one of these audits revealed significant findings of waste, fraud, and abuse.

4. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Shinn and Secretary Boucher, do you support the NSP as a way of promoting development and reconstruction at the local level, reducing corruption and waste, and promoting support for the Afghan Government?

Dr. SHINN. I believe the NSP is a positive example of how the Afghan Government, with the assistance of international and nongovernmental organizations, can work to deliver development resources to Afghan communities. The NSP was created by the Afghan Government to develop the ability of Afghan communities to identify, plan, manage, and monitor their own development projects. NSP builds the capacity of local communities to manage projects, develop and execute budgets, and perform program oversight. I would defer to the State Department and USAID to the address details related to this program.

Ambassador BOUCHER. The NSP is one of the most effective programs in Afghanistan in that it empowers the Afghan Government to fulfill basic needs identified by Afghan communities. It is also a tool by which we can make progress on all three elements of our counter insurgency strategy. By empowering communities through their participation in Community Development Councils, it builds ties between the people and the government and reduces the influence of insurgents, warlords, and drug barons. The NSP also transforms the environment by providing block grants for infrastructure projects chosen by the communities themselves. The program has funded over 20,000 projects for water, sanitation, roads and bridges, irrigation, power, and education. The projects also have been proven to be at far less risk of being attacked or destroyed than non-NSP projects. Putting the recipients in the driver seat with a role in identifying and planning the project also helps reduce corruption. With the World Bank working directly with the Ministry of Rural Rehabili-

tation and development to manage the funds, there is clear oversight of the program's funds. The United States has funded the NSP generously and we have urged other donors to do the same.

5. Senator LEVIN. Secretary Shinn and Secretary Boucher, would you support an expansion of and increased funding for the NSP in Afghanistan?

Dr. SHINN. The NSP is a positive example of how the Afghan Government and international and nongovernmental organizations can work together to deliver development resources to Afghan communities. I defer to the State Department and USAID to address issues related to expansion of the program's size and funding.

Ambassador BOUCHER. Yes, the NSP is one of the most effective programs in Afghanistan, as well as one of the most popular among Afghans. The United States has provided $50 million of the $349 million that the international community has contributed to the NSP through fiscal year 2007. The U.S. Agency for International Development plans to allocate $10 million to the NSP from the fiscal year 2008 base, and we are asking for another $40 million in the fiscal year 2008 supplemental to fund the program. This would be our largest contribution in a single fiscal year to the NSP. The requested funds will support the crucial third phase of the program, which provides $300 million in follow-on grants to solidify the impressive accomplishments NSP has made over the past few years in empowering communities.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE IN AFGHANISTAN

6. Senator BYRD. Secretary Shinn, I am disappointed to learn that Secretary Gates is only now working on an ISAF in Afghanistan "vision statement" to lay out with our coalition partners what we want to achieve collectively in Afghanistan and how we intend to get there. We have been in Afghanistan since 2001. Would you not agree that 6 years is too long to wait before attempting to come up with a plan for what we want to achieve there?

Dr. SHINN. The "vision statement" is not a plan. It is a document that articulates what the alliance has achieved, what more remains to be done, and how we intend to get there. It was written in terms that are easily understood by allied publics. The situation in Afghanistan has changed markedly since 2001. While the international community and the Afghan Government have made notable strides in the past 6 years, we continue to face a number of challenges: a resilient insurgency, corruption, weak governance, and narcotics. At the same time, many of our allies are undergoing intensive debates about the future of their contribution to the mission. It is highly appropriate, therefore, that allies agree on a "vision statement" now, so that this document can inform the public, and bolster more widespread support for a sustained commitment to the alliance's undertaking in Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN POLICE FORCE

7. Senator BYRD. Secretary Shinn, your testimony notes that we have invested $5 billion in developing the Afghan police force, but it remains ineffective and its history of corruption undermines its credibility. Although you point out additional steps being taken to provide more training and more pay, on what timeline do you anticipate the police force to be able to operate effectively and independently?

Dr. SHINN. As I noted in my written statement, the Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan has begun implementing, in close coordination with the Afghan Government, a Focused District Development Plan (FDD). The goal of FDD is to concentrate training, equipment, mentoring, and Afghan leadership in priority districts in an effort to rapidly improve the Afghan National Police (ANP). FDD is divided into four phases, which include assessing the status of the police, withdrawing all the police from specific districts for training and equipping, replacing incompetent and corrupt leaders, and then returning the police to the district with intense monitoring and mentoring. As we assess the effectiveness of FDD, we will be able to better estimate when the ANP will be able to achieve higher degrees of effectiveness and independence.

[Whereupon, at 1:45 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

CONTINUATION OF THE STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN AND RECENT REPORTS BY THE AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP AND THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2008

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:36 p.m. in room SD–106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Kennedy, Reed, Bill Nelson, Pryor, McCaskill, Warner, Inhofe, Sessions, Dole, and Thune.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Evelyn N. Farkas, professional staff member; and William G.P. Monahan, counsel.

Minority staff members present: Michael V. Kostiw, Republican staff director; William M. Caniano, professional staff member; and Lynn F. Rusten, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Kevin A. Cronin, Ali Z. Pasha, and Benjamin L. Rubin.

Committee members' assistants present: Bethany Bassett and Sharon L. Waxman, assistants to Senator Kennedy; Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed; Christopher Caple, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; M. Bradford Foley, assistant to Senator Pryor; Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Stephen C. Hedger and Jason D. Rauch, assistants to Senator McCaskill; Anthony J. Lazarski, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Lenwood Landrum, assistant to Senator Sessions; Lindsey Neas, assistant to Senator Dole; Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune; Brian W. Walsh, assistant to Senator Martinez; and Erskine W. Wells III, assistant to Senator Wicker.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good afternoon, everybody. This afternoon's session is the second panel of the committee's hearing on the strategy in Afghanistan and on the independent reports of the Afghanistan Study Group (ASG) and The Atlantic Council of the United States.

This morning, we heard from administration witnesses from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and the Department of State. This afternoon, we will hear from two experts who participated in the preparation of the independent reports: Retired General Jim Jones, chairman of the board of directors of The Atlantic Council, and Ambassador Rick Inderfurth, professor of the practice of international affairs at George Washington University.

Both General Jones and Ambassador Inderfurth were principal members of the ASG, and that group was established under the auspices of the Center for the Study of the Presidency.

We greatly appreciate the work of your groups that you are representing. It is a subject which is of extraordinary importance to the future of this planet and this country's well-being, and we heard a lot this morning which—I don't know if you were present or whether you had any representatives present, but, in any event, we expect, this afternoon, we'll get, at least from the reports that we've read, something of a different slant than we got this morning, because the independent reports provide a very sobering assessment of the situation on the ground in Afghanistan. I quoted from your reports this morning, at least some of the outstanding comments that stick out, including, according to the ASG report, efforts to stabilize Afghanistan are "faltering," and that report finds that, since 2002, that violence and insecurity have risen dramatically as Afghan confidence in their government and its international partners falls. The Atlantic Council report that I quoted this morning said that, "Make no mistake, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is not winning in Afghanistan." There's a "strategic stalemate" in the security situation. There's no ability to eliminate the insurgency, so long as Taliban enjoys safe haven across the border with Pakistan.

A comment that I quoted this morning, the antigovernment insurgency threatening Afghanistan "has grown considerably in the last 2 years." The Study Group also finds that "the Taliban has been able to infiltrate many areas throughout the country," which gives them the power to intimidate and coerce the local Afghan people.

The reports find that more U.S. and international forces are needed for Afghanistan. At the same time, the ASG points out that more NATO countries need to share the burden and remove national caveats that limit the ability of their troops to participate in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operations. There was a great deal of agreement on that point this morning.

The Atlantic Council report concludes that, "despite efforts of the Afghan Government and the international community, Afghanistan remains a failing state" and "could become a failed state."

As The Atlantic Council report says, we cannot afford for Afghanistan to continue to be "the neglected war."

As the ASG says, "Afghanistan stands today at a crossroads." The United States and the international community must ensure that efforts to move Afghanistan towards a stable, secure, and progressive state succeed. That's everybody's goal here.

We made a number of points this morning about the difference, in terms of attention being paid to the situation in Afghanistan,

compared to the situation in Iraq, and a number of other points, which I'm sure will come out this afternoon.

Before I turn this over to Senator Warner, let me again thank you, our witnesses, and your groups and the efforts of your groups, the studies that you've produced. You have volunteered, and, as volunteers, you have contributed to some very, very important reports, and we all look forward to your testimony.

[The prepared statement of Senator Levin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Welcome.

This afternoon's session is the second panel of the committee's hearing on the strategy in Afghanistan and the independent reports of the Afghanistan Study Group and the Atlantic Council of the United States. This morning we heard from administration witnesses from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and the Department of State. We will now hear from two experts who participated in the preparation of the independent reports: retired General Jim Jones, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Atlantic Council; and Ambassador Rick Inderfurth, Professor of the Practice of International Affairs, at the George Washington University. Both General Jones and Ambassador Inderfurth were principal members in the Afghanistan Study Group. The Afghanistan Study Group was established under the auspices of the Center for the Study of the Presidency.

The independent reports provide a sobering assessment of the situation on the ground in Afghanistan:

- Efforts to stabilize Afghanistan are "faltering," according to the Afghanistan Study Group report. That report finds that since 2002 "violence, insecurity, and opium production have risen dramatically as Afghan confidence in their government and its international partners falls."
- The Atlantic Council report states, "Make no mistake, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is not winning in Afghanistan." Instead, the security situation is "a strategic stalemate," with NATO and Afghan forces able to win any head-to-head confrontation with the Taliban, but not being able to eliminate the insurgency so long as the Taliban enjoys safe haven across the border with Pakistan.
- The anti-government insurgency threatening Afghanistan "has grown considerably over the last 2 years," according to the Afghanistan Study Group. The Afghanistan Study Group report also finds that "the Taliban have been able to infiltrate many areas throughout the country," intimidating and coercing the local Afghan people.
- The reports find that more U.S. and international forces are needed for Afghanistan. At the same time, the Afghanistan Study Group points out that more NATO countries need to share the burden, and remove national caveats that limit the ability of their troops to participate in International Security Assistance Force operations.
- The Atlantic Council report concludes, "In summary, despite efforts of the Afghan Government and the international community, Afghanistan remains a failing state. It could become a failed state."

We cannot afford for Afghanistan to continue to be "the Neglected War" as the Atlantic Council report calls it. As the Afghanistan Study Group says "Afghanistan stands today at a crossroads." The United States and the international community need to ensure that their efforts move Afghanistan toward being a stable, secure, and progressive state.

I want to thank our witnesses for volunteering to contribute to these important reports, and look forward to their testimony.

Senator Warner.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER

Senator WARNER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I'll just put a brief opening statement into the record and commend each of these witnesses.

I was so interested in these reports that I actually attended the unveiling of the reports in the spaces occupied by the Foreign Rela-

tions Committee, and it was a very well-attended session. I look forward to hearing it again.

I want to thank you again, General Jones, for all the various activities that you're undertaking. They're quasi, or not totally, pro bono publico. You certainly deserve to take on the career you wish, but you certainly evaded a lot of invitations to take on this type of responsibility, and you bring to it a remarkable background of experience and knowledge.

To you, Mr. Inderfurth, I remember you well when you were with ABC. We're glad to have you back in a very friendly spirit before the committee.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Warner.

[The prepared statement of Senator Warner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR JOHN WARNER

Mr Chairman, thank you.

I join you in welcoming our witnesses here today and I thank you for scheduling the two panels for this very important hearing.

I would like to begin by commending our Secretary of Defense, Robert M. Gates, for his efforts over the last few weeks to impress upon our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies the importance of the NATO mission in Afghanistan. He also emphasized that militant extremists, either in Afghanistan or elsewhere, still pose a significant threat and that the threat posed by these extremists may be greater in Europe than some in Europe may believe.

The debate on the importance of the mission in Afghanistan may be among the most complicated that the NATO allies have faced since the alliance was formed to counter the Soviet threat.

Mr. Chairman, I request unanimous consent to place the entirety of Secretary Gates' February 10 address to the Munich Conference on Security Policy into the record (see Annex A).

In addition to expressing my strong support for Secretary Gate's remarks, I would like to highlight a few matters concerning Afghanistan.

First, I concur with those who assert that the credibility of NATO—the most successful political organization and military alliance in recent history—is at stake in Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan today, there has no doubt been progress since 2001: but the Taliban's recent resurgence in Afghanistan; the escalating opium economy; and the presence of cross-border sanctuaries in Pakistan threaten to challenge positive momentum and potentially lead Afghanistan to slip back to its pre-September 11 role as a safe haven for terrorists.

General Jim Jones, the former NATO Supreme Allied Commander, and co-chair—with Ambassador Thomas Pickering—of the Afghanistan Study Group Report which was sponsored by the Center for the Study of the Presidency, has said: "Make no mistake; NATO is not winning in Afghanistan."

In his recent remarks in Munich, Secretary Gates reiterated a warning he made last Wednesday in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee. In that testimony, Secretary Gates expressed concern about "the alliance evolving into a two-tiered alliance, in which some are willing to fight and die to protect people's security, and some are not."

Over the past 6 years, NATO forces have grown from 16,000 to 43,000. The ground commander is now calling for another 7,500 troops. This is a troop requirement NATO should work vigorously to meet.

All of the nations of NATO should reexamine their contributions to military operations in southern Afghanistan and lift the incapacitating restrictions, known as national caveats, on where, when, and how their forces can fight.

Second, we should never forget that failure in Afghanistan would be a significant boost to militant extremists.

Secretary Gates said that the Islamic extremist movement so far was "built on the illusion of success" and that all the extremists have accomplished recently is "the death of thousands of innocent Muslims." Secretary Gates went on to say: "Many Europeans question the relevance of our actions and doubt whether the mission is worth the lives of their sons and daughters."

The bombings in Madrid and London and the disruption of cells and plots throughout Europe should remind all of us that the threat posed by global extre-

mism in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Europe, and globally remains, as Secretary Gates said: "a steep challenge."

In his Munich speech, Secretary Gates said extremist success in Afghanistan would "beget success on many other fronts as the cancer metastasized further and more rapidly than it already has." I fully agree with this assessment by Secretary Gates.

Third, and concomitantly, we should not forget that Afghanistan and Iraq are very distinct missions. Failure in either would be disastrous for the other, the region as a whole, the United States, and Europe. However, the more we tie the two fronts together we may unintentionally be creating false and misleading impressions.

In very frank comments on Saturday, Secretary Gates said, and I believe correctly, that many Europeans "have a problem with our involvement in Iraq and project that to Afghanistan, and do not understand the very different kind of threat."

Afghanistan has its own strategic importance which should not be confused with Iraq's strategic importance. It is therefore important that we find ways to decouple our strategies, policies, and funding for Afghanistan from those for Iraq.

Next, we must wholly engage Afghanistan's neighbors and fully enjoin them in the plans for the future security and stability of Afghanistan. This specifically includes the development of an effective strategy to dislodge al Qaeda and Taliban sanctuaries in Pakistan's tribal areas along the Afghanistan border.

Finally, there is little doubt about the strong link between instability in Afghanistan, poppy cultivation, and drug trafficking. I do not believe there can be lasting stability in Afghanistan until these links are disrupted.

Afghanistan supplies about 93 percent of the world's opium supply. While poppy cultivation has decreased in north-central Afghanistan, it has dramatically increased in the southwest. In 2006, the drug trade was estimated to total more than $3 billion—money that continues to fund Taliban and al Qaeda insurgents.

Breaking the nexus between the insurgency and opium production requires a coordinated counternarcotics strategy that must be integrated with our counterinsurgency strategy and linked to the economic revitalization of Afghanistan's rural economy that includes alternative livelihood programs.

In closing, the United States, our NATO allies, Afghanistan's neighbors, and international organizations all have roles to play. Each, and all, should recommit to the development of a comprehensive, urgent, and long-term strategy for Afghanistan. This long-term strategy should be one that integrates political and developmental features that complement the military counterinsurgency strategy.

This recommitment should, as I have already discussed, include increasing NATO forces in southern Afghanistan and suspending national caveats. We should also expand the training and equipping of the Afghan National Army and the police through a long-term partnership with NATO to make it professional and multi-ethnic, and deploying significantly more foreign trainers.

This recommitment must also address deficiencies in judicial reform, reconstruction, governance, and anticorruption efforts, and here the other elements of so-called 'soft power' should be marshaled effectively. The international assistance effort should be reenergized and managed efficiently. The efforts to appoint a United Nations High Commissioner should be revived immediately.

After 6 years of international involvement, Afghanistan may be nearing a defining moment. Regretfully, I add, so too may NATO.

Secretary Gates' comments this weekend brought these issues to the fore. I vigorously laud his efforts to speak openly to our allies and to make an effort to ensure that the troop burden in Afghanistan does not divide the NATO allies.

The witnesses on this first panel should be prepared to discuss, among other issues: the current situation in Afghanistan; our current strategies and policies there; the contributions of our partners and allies; the role played by Afghanistan's neighbors to foster stability and security in Afghanistan; and how the drug trade has undermined the Government of Afghanistan's drive to build political stability, economic growth, and rule of law.

This panel of witnesses should also be prepared to respond to questions about three reports released last month. These reports conclude that a new effort is required to succeed in Afghanistan. The reports were the Afghanistan Study Group report sponsored by the Center for the Study of the Presidency (see Annex B); the Atlantic Council report on Afghanistan (see Annex C); and a paper by Dr. Harlan Ullman and others titled, "Winning the Invisible War: An Agricultural Pilot Plan for Afghanistan" (see Annex D).

I request unanimous consent that each of these reports be entered into the record. Mr. Chairman, thank you, and I look forward to the testimony from our witnesses today.

Chairman LEVIN. General Jones?

STATEMENT OF GEN. JAMES L. JONES, USMC (RET.), PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE INSTITUTE FOR 21ST CENTURY ENERGY, UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES

General JONES. Mr. Chairman, Senator Warner, distinguished members of the committee, it is, as always, a very special honor to be able to appear before you on any matter, but particularly on the matter at hand which relates to Afghanistan.

Just by way of summary, my experience in Afghanistan stems from my assignment as Supreme Allied Commander of Operational Forces of NATO. My initial attention to Afghanistan was drawn by ambassadors of the alliance in 2003, when they asked the military component of NATO to start developing plans that would eventually result in NATO going to Afghanistan. We did that, and, as you recall, those plans were approved in February 2004, and we began a rather slow, but methodical, foray into Afghanistan, starting with Kabul itself, then to the north, then to the west, to the south, and finally, in 2006, we assimilated the entire responsibility for security and stability under Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), the U.S.-led coalition, and ISAF, which is the NATO equivalent.

I think we can be very proud of the difference that NATO has made, despite the fact that there is consistent stories about national caveats and inadequate resourcing of the combined joint statement of requirements, which commanders have repeatedly and without any change, have always been up front, I think, in asking for what they felt they needed.

I spent a portion of every month for about 3½ years in Afghanistan, and I watched the evolution, not only of the military buildup, but also the international network that grew up alongside it, and it's quite impressive.

Afghanistan has all of the international legitimacy that one could want, beginning with United Nations Security Council resolutions. It has, on the ground, not only the U.N. as the overarching agency that's responsible for coordination of the international effort, it has NATO, the European Union, the G8, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), all operating within the countryside of Afghanistan.

The contributions that allies have made have, in many cases, made a difference in many parts of that country. I will call your attention to Operation Medusa, in the late summer 2006, when between 8,000 and 9,000 NATO troops accepted the responsibility of taking over the southern region in Afghanistan. This was a region that had never had many troops permanently present. Half a dozen countries or more accepted the responsibility of that region, went into that region, and very quickly got into almost conventional warfighting, and together with our forces and OEF, dealt a very severe military blow to the Taliban as a result of about a month and a half of very intense fighting, the result of which was a crippling blow, at least to the military capability of the Taliban, so much so that the spring offensive of 2007, that was always heralded after the winter, was really a whimper compared to other years.

So, I mention this story because I want to state, up front, that the NATO nations have provided serious combat capabilities, in some respects, and many, many humanitarian reconstruction missions, the administrations of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). So I think we should start on a positive note in saying that where we were in 2003, and where we are now, there certainly have been some positive things on the ground. NATO should be evaluated in terms of its own mandate. It is not responsible for the entire trend of things in Afghanistan, either favorable or unfavorable, because there are just too many other organizations that are participating in various efforts.

At the end of my watch, in December 2006, I left there with certain conclusions, and I will summarize them very briefly. I think they're, unfortunately, still valid. My findings and my opinions are reflected in both studies, and I'll just summarize them very briefly.

What I fear is going on in Afghanistan could be best characterized as a loss of momentum, primarily by the inability of the international communities to come together and to tackle the top four or five things that absolutely have to be done, in my opinion, if Afghanistan is going to continue on the path of progress.

A couple of years ago, you didn't hear the word al Qaeda in Afghanistan. It was almost a footnote. The Taliban was considered to be pretty much on the ropes. We didn't have car bombs and suicide bombers in the capital. The border was worrisome, but certainly was not headed, at least in those days, to where it is today. But, what was consistent in all of my visits to Afghanistan was the fact that the narcotics problem was getting worse and worse each year. Narcotics are responsible for 50 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Afghanistan today. I guess at 50 percent you can say it is a narco-economy. But, when 50 percent of a country's GDP is tied up in narcotics, you have a problem.

Second, it corrupts the entire society. It's corrupting the next generation of young Afghans. It is an irresistible source of income. The income that is derived from the sales of those drugs, 90 percent of which are sold in the capitals in Europe, is funding the insurgency, and therefore, the renewed capacity of the opposition.

I think this must be addressed comprehensively. One hears about single solutions—eradication, buy the crop, do certain other things. The truth is, it has to be a holistic, comprehensive campaign plan that's agreed to by the international community. As a matter of fact, some years ago the G8 did assign the responsibility for the strategic lead in the war on drugs to the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, the rest of the international community left the United Kingdom to try to sort that out by itself, and it's beyond the capacity of any one country to do that.

Similarly, the second thing that I think absolutely has to be resolved is judicial reform in the country. If you can't have a judicial system that is working, you cannot win the war on drugs. If a drug conviction is obtained in a court, and 6 months later, that same person is back out in the field, again involved in the drug business, that's not a system that is going to inspire confidence. Corruption is one of the big problems in Afghanistan, and it's one of the things that the man on the street consistently talks about in any part of

the country that one visits. So, reform of the judicial system is absolutely essential if you're going to fight narcotics.

Even more basic is the absence of adequately trained, adequately equipped, and adequately educated police force. Much of the countryside is left to decide whether they're going to side with the government by day and with the Taliban by night, because the security structure is simply not adequate.

Again, under the G8 agreements, Italy accepted the strategic lead for judicial reform, and Germany accepted the strategic lead for police reform. Neither of those three pillars—the narcotics, judicial, or police reform—has met the standard of making the impact that needs to be made in order to turn the country into a better direction.

Fourth, I think that what's clear on the border between Pakistan—is that now Afghanistan has become a regional problem that is inseparable from discussing Pakistan. Regional problems require regional solutions, and perhaps it's time to engage more countries in the region to have serious dialogue about mutual concerns with regard to the very worrisome trends in Pakistan, in Afghanistan, and along the seam where the tribes don't recognize borders, but where the ideology of taking over or replacing the systems of government that are veering towards democracy, and having them try to challenge that successfully.

Lastly, I was very disappointed—and I'll just speak for myself—that a true international servant, Lord Paddy Ashdown, in the midst of a recognized need for an international coordinator to begin to channel the resources of the international community toward a cohesive and organized end state was turned down by the Government of Afghanistan. I think that the requirement is obviously critical, that Lord Ashdown be replaced with somebody close to his capacities. There was an article, written by him in the Financial Times, which appeared yesterday, in which he gave his solution set of what he would do, had he been approved for that job. If you read that, you will find that the similarity between the three reports that we rolled out and his short thesis in the Financial Times are virtually a mirror image of one another.

So, there is great consensus, I think, about what needs to be done. The question is, how do you do it? From my standpoint, it's a failure of the international community, under the current organizational structures, to bring focus to the four or five things that absolutely have to be done. I think that the Government of Afghanistan, under President Karzai, should be held to some stronger metrics than previously have been asked of them. I see no reason whatsoever that about 4 or 5 years later the government can't make any significant headroads in combating corruption, for example, or failing to reform the judicial system. The help is there, the international community is there in abundance, and I think that the future progress of Afghanistan hinges on a better cohesion of that international effort.

Afghanistan is not a military problem. I think the commanders should be supported. I believe the troop strengths that they're asking for is modest by comparison to the capabilities existing within the 40-some nations that are on the ground there. But, if we don't improve the coordination of the international effort, then I'm afraid

that we could backslide into a situation where the military will become more and more important. Then that will really signal a return to the "bad old days," which all of us want to avoid.

I'll close simply by saying that I'm optimistic, because of the capacity that is there. I would be thrilled if that capacity was more focused and better coordinated and better led in the international-community level. I'm very disappointed that Lord Ashdown was not the man that is going to do this very, very difficult job, because, at the final analysis, I think it must be done.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for these opening remarks.

Chairman LEVIN. General, thank you so much.

Ambassador Inderfurth?

STATEMENT OF HON. KARL F. INDERFURTH, JOHN O. RANKIN PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Warner, members of the committee. It's an honor to be here today. It's an honor to be here with General Jones. I feel great comfort that he is going to be a part of this panel, given his vast experience dealing with Afghanistan.

My experience dealing with that country was largely when I was Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, from 1997 through 2001. I had many dealings with the then-Taliban that was in control—met with them on many occasions, met with others, including Hamid Karzai, who was then an expatriate. He would come to Washington, and we would talk about life after the Taliban; I also got involved with the U.N. "Six Plus Two" process. So, I had a great deal of experience during those 4 years dealing with this country.

But, I do want to relate—Senator Warner mentioned our previous occasions of being together when I was an ABC news correspondent—I want to mention one Afghan-related experience, because it's highly relevant for this discussion.

In 1989, I was a Moscow correspondent for ABC News, and they sent me to the border with Afghanistan in February 1989, when the Soviet troop withdrawal took place, the final military withdrawal across the Amu Darya River and across the Friendship Bridge. The international press corps was on the Uzbek side, and coming across the bridge was the final Soviet military contingent, led by General Gromov. The armored personnel carriers came across. That marked the end of a 10-year war of occupation, a savage war that took place in that country. I remember reporting on that great moment of hope for Afghanistan, because this was the end of all of that bloodshed and destruction.

It wasn't, because, soon after that, the United States and the international community departed Afghanistan, decided that we had done our job, done it well. If you see "Charlie Wilson's War," you'll see that story—it tells that story at the end. But then, attention turned away. A lot of other things were taking place in the world at that time, but attention turned away, and that left Afghanistan to pick up the pieces—and the seven mujaheddin factions that were then involved in the civil war went at each other—also, by the way, it also left Pakistan to pick up the pieces. You

cannot think about a solution for Afghanistan today without also thinking about a solution for Pakistan. These two are joined at the hip.

So we left, and you can do a connecting of the dots between our departure and what took place on September 11. It is not hard to figure out that leaving that country to fend for itself, leaving that country to fall into the chaos that it did, gave rise to the Taliban, which imposed draconian law and order, gave rise to the return of Osama bin Laden in 1996, gave rise to the creation of terrorist networks in that country, and eventually led, after the assassination of Commander Ahmad Shah Massoud, who I also met in Tashkent at one point, that gave rise to September 11.

So, we have a second chance to get Afghanistan right. A second chance. You don't get many second chances in life. We have one with Afghanistan.

This discussion now about the direction that Afghanistan is going today, which we're all concerned about—and these reports all have a common theme: the situation is getting worse, it is dire, but still doable, in Afghanistan. So, I just implore the committee to give Afghanistan its full attention. Those of us outside of government will make whatever contribution we can in that direction.

Let me say a few words, if I can, about the report, which I was asked to present briefly.

Many of you know Ambassador David Abshire, NATO ambassador under President Reagan, founder of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. He was involved with the Iraq Study Group. His new organization, the Center for the Study of the Presidency, was involved in that. So he was involved in the Iraq Study Group in 2006. During that time of listening to the witnesses and the participants, that group became concerned about Afghanistan becoming "the forgotten war." There was great concern that the war in Iraq had drained away military resources, intelligence resources, time and attention of senior officials, economic assistance, and that that had diverted attention away from Afghanistan.

So, Ambassador Abshire decided last year to establish a small-scale version, if you will, of the Iraq Study Group: the ASG. We have General Jones and somebody else that you're well familiar with—Ambassador Tom Pickering, with the co-chairs, and a number of us that have either served in government or have expertise in Afghanistan joined that study group.

So, the product that you have before you today—and I've put excerpts in my written testimony, which I have submitted, and we have the full report for you—is a reflection of the work of all of us in looking at where Afghanistan is today and what can be done about it, the challenge it's facing.

Let me just give you the briefest of summaries of what our evaluation of Afghanistan is today. The country is standing at a crossroads. The progress achieved after 6 years of international engagement is under serious threat from resurgent violence, some of which has migrated from Iraq, weakening international resolve, which is shown, by the way, in polls that show only two countries in the world today favor keeping military forces in Afghanistan—the U.S. and the U.K. This was a Pew poll during the summer. Two countries. The others, the majority, say, "Bring them out now."

Mounting regional challenges—Pakistan and Iran are two cases in point. A growing lack of confidence on the part of the Afghan people about the future direction of their country; they were euphoric at the beginning of this process. They are more concerned today that things are heading in the right direction. They are, by the way, still with us. They do not want us to be the next foreign occupier, like the British or the Soviets. They still want us there, but they are concerned. Things like civilian casualties are undermining that support.

The United States and the international community have tried to win the struggle in Afghanistan with too few military forces, and insufficient economic aid, and without a clear and consistent, comprehensive strategy to fill the power vacuum outside Kabul, and to counter the combined challenges of a reconstituted Taliban. You all know the reconstitution of the al Qaeda and Taliban that was mentioned in the July National Intelligence Estimate, which said that the al Qaeda has reconstituted its attack capability against the homeland—and to counter the combined challenges that were presented by a runaway opium economy, which General Jones has referred to, and the stark poverty faced by Afghanistan. It is the second poorest country in the world. It is in desperate need.

Success in Afghanistan remains a critical national security imperative for the U.S. and the international community. Achieving that success will require a sustained multiyear commitment from the United States and the willingness to make the war in Afghanistan and the rebuilding of that country a higher U.S. foreign policy priority.

Allowing the Taliban to reestablish its influence in Afghanistan, as well as failure to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a failed state, would not only undermine the development of the country, it would constitute a major victory—a major victory—for al Qaeda in its global efforts to spread violence and extremism.

Many of us feel that Afghanistan and Pakistan are truly the central front in the war on terrorism and there is no doubt in my mind that Osama bin Laden, who sees this as one great achievement, the defeat of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, which we were working toward that end, as well, but he wants to see the defeat of the United States, the other great superpower, and he wants to see it done in Afghanistan. So, I think that this is high on our national security priority list.

We conclude by saying, the light footprint of the United States and its allies in Afghanistan needs to be replaced with the right footprint, and that it obviously leads into our recommendations.

We have 34 recommendations. I will not go through all of them with you right now. But, we do talk about establishing an eminent persons group that would develop a long-term coherent international strategy for Afghanistan and a strategic communications plan to garner strong public support. Right now, we're losing the public relations battle there. The European countries, their citizens are saying, "Bring out the troops." Something's not working, in terms of convincing them of the need for them to be directly involved and that they have stakes here. So, an eminent persons group be established.

We also believe that Iraq and Afghanistan should be decoupled. We have joined the two in our funding requests. We've joined the two in making the case for the war on terrorism. The fact that the two are coupled together in the minds of Europeans, an unpopular war in Iraq is dragging down what may be support for Afghanistan. So, we think that these ought to be decoupled. Both dealt with on their own merits—we did not make any recommendations about Iraq in this report, but start dealing with both on their own merits.

We also believe that the U.S. Government needs to have a special envoy for Afghanistan, and have a higher level of authority. General Douglas E. Lute was appointed to work at the National Security Council (NSC) on Iraq and Afghanistan. I think that was a major task that probably was impossible to achieve without more authority and more visibility. So, we believe a special envoy is needed, including on the reconstruction and assistance side.

So, those were the three overarching recommendations. We then had various recommendations, including an international coordinator. I, too, am very disappointed that Lord Paddy Ashdown did not take that. We have to get our act together in Afghanistan on the civilian side. We have over 40 countries, major organizations, U.N., European Union, NATO, scores of NGOs, all doing good work, but nobody coordinating anything. We owe it to President Karzai to get our act together to work with him to achieve these things.

We also talk about security—we'll go into that, I'm sure—including on the Afghan Security Forces. Governance and the rule of law. Corruption—Transparency International just issued their latest report. Afghanistan has gone down on their list. It is now one of the eighth most corrupt countries in the world. That's worse than it was last year.

General Karl Eikenberry, who I'm sure you have heard from with this committee, said that the greatest long-term threat to success in Afghanistan is not the resurgence of the Taliban, but the irretrievable loss of legitimacy of the Government of Afghanistan, and he cited corruption, justice, and law enforcement.

Counternarcotics. General Jones has already discussed that.

Economic development and reconstruction. So much more is needed to be done there, including on infrastructure, roads, electricity, power, water systems. There ought to be a construction surge in Afghanistan, and a surge that would provide jobs, because over a third of the Afghans are out of work. If we don't address that, the Karzai government will fall further, in terms of public support.

Let me just finish on Afghanistan and its neighbors.

Pakistan. As I said, these two countries are joined at the hip. There will be no successful outcome for Afghanistan if Pakistan is not part of the solution. The future stability of both countries depends on the development of an effective strategy to counter and uproot the Taliban and al Qaeda sanctuary in Pakistan's tribal border areas. Easier said than done. These areas have never been under the control of any government, including of Pakistan. It certainly is not going to be done by sending U.S. military forces, en masse, into those tribal areas. That would be a disaster for Paki-

stan, it would be a sinkhole for us. But, there are ways that we can work with the Pakistani government, there are ways and channels through which that can be done.

We do see successes at times, including recently a missile strike that took out an al Qaeda leader, al-Libi. We can work with the Pakistani government on that. Admiral Mullen was recently meeting with the Pakistani chief of staff, General Kayani. There are channels to do this thing. But, it is not a military solution, by itself. Those areas need to be brought into the political mainstream in Pakistan.

As the Pakistani Ambassador, Mahmud Durrani, said recently, what is needed in the tribal areas is a multipronged strategy that is military force, development, and empowerment. Using force alone, he said, is not the answer. I agree with that.

So, Pakistan is key, and also is Iran. Now, I know the committee has heard testimony about covert interference by Iran in Afghanistan. That may well be taking place. But, I will tell you that my experience working in the so-called "Six Plus Two" process was that Iran was a helpful partner in that "Six Plus Two"—six neighbors and the United States and Russia, that's the "Six Plus Two," led by Ambassador Brahimi. We were on the same page with them about our opposition to the Taliban, and strongly on the same page on narcotics and what that was doing. The Iranians were fighting the drug traders coming across their border.

During the Bonn process, Ambassador Jim Dobbins has reported that they were very helpful in bringing about the removal of the Taliban and the installation of a new transition government under President Karzai. The Bonn process ended, and, a few weeks later, President Bush called it part of the "Axis of Evil." They couldn't understand why they didn't get at least a pat on the back for being cooperative with us to stabilize Afghanistan. I think that that opportunity still exists. It's gotten more difficult. But, I think that, and the report calls for, us to develop a strategy to engage Iran. Right now, we're not talking to them in Afghanistan. I think that is not only losing an opportunity, but probably making things more difficult for us in achieving our goals in that country.

So, I actually have in my written statement a few upbeat final notes, but I think I'll just wait to throw those in at the appropriate time, because, as I said, I do see the situation in Afghanistan as dire, but it is still doable, if we can get, as I said, our act together. We need to do it sooner rather than later.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Inderfurth follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR KARL F. INDERFURTH

Chairman Levin, Ranking Member McCain, and members of the committee: Thank you very much for your invitation to discuss the security, political and economic challenges facing Afghanistan today and the recommendations contained in the recently released report of the Afghanistan Study Group (ASG) addressing those challenges.

AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP

First, by way of introduction, a word about the ASG.

The Center for the Study of the Presidency, led by former U.S. Ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) David Abshire, was closely engaged in the work of the 2006 Iraq Study Group. During the deliberations of that group,

it became more and more evident that Afghanistan was at great risk of becoming "the forgotten war." It was also evident that one of the principal reasons for this was the war in Iraq. According to the study group (in its final report): "The huge focus of U.S. political, military and economic support on Iraq has necessarily diverted attention from Afghanistan."

I should add that Afghanistan is still being overshadowed by the Iraq war. As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, told the House Armed Services Committee in December: "It is simply a matter of resources, of capacity. In Afghanistan, we do what we can. In Iraq, we do what we must."

Participants and witnesses before the Iraq Study Group also pointed to the danger of losing the war in Afghanistan unless a reassessment took place of the effort being undertaken by the United States, NATO, and the international community. In its final report, the study group reached this conclusion: "It is critical for the United States to provide additional political, economic, and military support for Afghanistan, including resources that might become available as combat forces are moved from Iraq."

In the spring of 2007, concerned about the deepening crisis in Afghanistan, Ambassador Abshire decided to establish a smaller scale study group. Co-chaired by Ambassador Thomas Pickering and General James Jones (ret.), it included 19 former government officials and experts on Afghanistan and the region, including former Senator Charles Robb, Ambassador James Dobbins, and Dr. Barnett Rubin among others, including myself. The goal of the ASG was to provide policymakers with key recommendations that will contribute to revitalizing our efforts and rethinking our strategies for a successful long-term outcome in Afghanistan.

OVERALL EVALUATION

Before highlighting the recommendations contained in the study group's report, let me share with you this overall evaluation of the situation in Afghanistan, as provided by our co-chairs:

> Afghanistan stands today at a crossroads. The progress achieved after 6 years of international engagement is under serious threat from resurgent violence, weakening international resolve, mounting regional challenges and a growing lack of confidence on the part of the Afghan people about the future direction of their country. The United States and the international community have tried to win the struggle in Afghanistan with too few military forces and insufficient economic aid, and without a clear and consistent comprehensive strategy to fill the power vacuum outside Kabul and to counter the combined challenges of reconstituted Taliban and al Qaeda forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a runaway opium economy, and the stark poverty faced by most Afghans.
>
> Success in Afghanistan remains a critical national security imperative for the United States and the international community. Achieving that success will require a sustained, multi-year commitment from the U.S. and a willingness to make the war in Afghanistan—and the rebuilding of that country—a higher U.S. foreign policy priority. Although the obstacles there remain substantial, the strategic consequences of failure in Afghanistan would be severe for long-term U.S. interests in the region and for security at home. Allowing the Taliban to re-establish its influence in Afghanistan, as well as failure to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a failed state, would not only undermine the development of the country, it would constitute a major victory for al Qaeda and its global efforts to spread violence and extremism.
>
> The 'light footprint' of the U.S. and its allies in Afghanistan needs to be replaced with the 'right footprint.' It is time to re-double our efforts toward stabilizing Afghanistan and re-think our economic and military strategies to ensure that the level of our commitment is commensurate with the threat posed by possible failure in Afghanistan.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Attached to this written statement is a summary of the 34 recommendations contained in the report of the ASG (see Annex F). For more focused work, the group decided to center its analysis on several issues that its members identified as both urgent and crucial for future success, beginning with three overarching recommendations.

First, the study group proposes to establish an Eminent Persons Group to develop a long-term, coherent international strategy for Afghanistan and a strategic communications plan to garner strong public support for that strategy.

Second, the study group calls for decoupling Iraq and Afghanistan, including in the funding and budget process. Doing so would enable more coherence and focus on the increasingly important Afghanistan (and I would add Pakistan) issues, both for Congress and the executive branch as well as in dealing with other governments and international organizations.

Third, the study group recommends that a Special Envoy for Afghanistan position be established within the U.S. Government, charged with coordinating and orchestrating all aspects of U.S. policies towards Afghanistan, including the direction of U.S assistance programs and relations with European and Asian counterparts and Afghan Government officials.

The remainder of the study group's recommendations fell into the following six specific subject areas:

On International Coordination:

appoint a high-level coordinator with a U.N.-mandate to advise all parties to the mission in Afghanistan (over 40 countries, 3 major international organizations, and scores of other agencies and nongovernmental organizations) on needed changes to their policies, funding, and actions and also to ensure that all international assistance programs (now fragmented among 62 donors) have a coordinated strategy that aims to bolster the central government's authority throughout the country and is closely coordinated with the Afghan Government. As Secretary Rice has noted: "There are alot of cooks in the kitchen. We owe it to President Karzai to have an effective international coordinator." In short, the international community must get its act together in Afghanistan.

General Jones will address the need for greater international coordination on the military side.

On Security:

increase the number of NATO troops and military equipment in Afghanistan to the levels requested by the commanders and ensure that the increase in quantity of forces is matched with the quality of the forces that are needed for the mission they are sent to perform. Also, the study group welcomes the significant increases in congressional funding for the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police as well as Defense Secretary Gates' recent announcement that the U.S. will support the expansion of the army to 80,000, beyond its current goal of 70,000 by next year. A further expansion may be required, but any such consideration must take into account affordability, sustainability and the proper balance between police and military forces.

On Governance and the Rule of Law:

a coherent and resourced strategy to increase the reach, capacity, and the legitimacy of the Afghan Government must be a top priority. Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry, the former U.S. military commander in Afghanistan, has said the greatest long-term threat to success in Afghanistan is not the resurgence of the Taliban, but "the irretrievable loss of legitimacy of the Government of Afghanistan," citing specifically corruption, justice, and law enforcement. Afghanistan has slipped sharply in Transparency International's annual corruption index and now ranks among the worst eight countries in the world.

On Counternarcotics:

the study group cautions that proposals to increase eradication immediately—especially the use of herbicides whether sprayed from the air or the ground—could prove extremely dangerous for Afghanistan, further undermining support for the government of President Karzai and providing new recruits for the Taliban. Instead, the study group proposes much larger alternative livelihood programs and greater interdiction efforts, including the use of international military forces to assist the Afghan police to destroy heroin labs and the removal of high officials benefiting from the drug trade.

On Economic Development and Reconstruction:

rebuilding and development assistance must flow into a region immediately after it is cleared of Taliban presence. Infrastructure development—especially outlays on roads, power and water systems—should be accelerated. These efforts should utilize the Afghan labor force and contractors as much as possible. In short, a construction "surge" is needed in Afghanistan,

as are jobs. Very high unemployment in Afghanistan is a major factor in undermining the legitimacy of the Karzai government and adding to instability.

On Afghanistan and its Neighbors:

the study group makes several recommendations, especially about Pakistan.

Afghanistan and Pakistan are inextricably linked. It is clear there can be no successful outcome for Afghanistan if Pakistan is not a part of the solution. The future stability of both depends on the development of an effective strategy to counter and uproot the Taliban/al Qaeda sanctuary in Pakistan's tribal border areas. Indeed Director of National Intelligence Mike McConnell told the Senate Intelligence Committee last week that radical elements in these areas are now a threat to the survival of the Pakistan state.

The study group recommends that the U.S. and its allies develop a regional plan to effectively target the risks coming out of the border region area with Pakistan, involving the governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other regional powers and including better combined intelligence, operations and non-military efforts.

Countering cross border infiltration is critical. The Trilateral Afghanistan-Pakistan-NATO Military Commission is an important mechanism in this regard. So is the strengthening of the U.S. military presence along the Afghan side of the border, which the latest U.S. marine contingent arriving in April will assist. Washington also needs to work more closely with Pakistan in joint counterterrorism operations that can bring U.S. resources (including intelligence) and military assets to bear in the borders areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan. That possibility exists, if pursued in appropriate channels. JSC Chairman Mullen's recent visit to Islamabad to meet with his counterpart, Army chief Gen. Ashfaq Kayani, was the right step in this regard. The January 31 missile strike in North Waziristan that killed senior al Qaeda operative Abu Laith al-Libi is an example of the right kind of counterterrorism operation.

But the study group cautions that a large-scale U.S. military intervention in Pakistan's tribal areas would be disastrous for the Pakistani state and for U.S. interests and would not provide a lasting solution to the problem. Rather than trying to insert U.S. influence directly into the region, Washington should strongly encourage systemic political and economic effort that incorporates the Federally-Administered Tribal Areas into the administrative, legal and political systems of Pakistan. This involves improving overall governance and law and order in the region as well as facilitating economic development. As Pakistan's Ambassador, Mahmud Duranni, says, what is needed in the tribal areas is a "multi pronged strategy. That is, military force, development and empowerment of the people. Using force alone is not the answer."

In addition to pursuing these steps with Pakistan, the study group recommends that the U.S. develop a strategy toward Iran—Afghanistan's other key neighbor—that includes the possibility of resuming discussions with Iran to engender greater cooperation to help stabilize Afghanistan, beginning with the issue of counter-narcotics where common ground already exists.

The present U.S stance of not speaking with Teheran about Afghanistan risks increasing the likelihood that Iran will step up its covert interference as a way of undermining U.S. interests and the international effort in Afghanistan.

CLOSING REMARKS

In closing, let me end on a more upbeat note. As I mentioned at the beginning of my testimony, the genesis for the ASG was the growing concern that Afghanistan was becoming "the forgotten war" and that it had been pushed to the side by the requirements of the war in Iraq. In recent months, however, there are some encouraging signs that the U.S. and its international partners in Afghanistan have recognized the hard truth that defeat in Afghanistan is a possibility—and are beginning to rethink and adjust strategy and resources accordingly.

Several world leaders have recently traveled to Kabul to meet with President Karzai and their national contingents in the country, including British Prime Minister Gordon Brown (who said U.K. troops will have to remain in Afghanistan for more than a decade), French President Nicolas Sarkozy (the first French head of state to travel to Afghanistan), newly elected Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (who announced his country will stay for the "long haul"), and Italy's Prime Minister Romano Prodi (his first visit to Afghanistan). There was also a high level international donors conference on Afghan reconstruction in Tokyo.

Just last week Secretary Rice and British Foreign Secretary Miliband traveled to Kandahar. Secretary Gates was in Vilnius to meet with his NATO counterparts and gave a major address on Afghanistan in Munich. All of these visits and meetings are pointing toward the critical NATO summit that will be held in early April in Bucharest, where the alliance will have the opportunity to demonstrate the strength of its resolve and its long-term commitment to a stable and secure Afghanistan. Hopefully the reports you have before you today by the ASG ("Revitalizing Our Efforts—Rethinking Our Strategies") and the Atlantic Council ("Saving Afghanistan: An Appeal and Plan for Urgent Action") will contribute to U.S. and NATO deliberations.

So, working closely with the Afghan Government and its people, I am optimistic we can succeed in Afghanistan. In many respects the situation there is dire, but still doable, and terribly important. As the U.S. Ambassador to NATO, Victoria Nuland, correctly points out: "If we can get it right in the Hindu Kush, we will also be stronger the next time we are called to defend our security and values so far from home."

Chairman LEVIN. Ambassador, thank you.

Here's the situation now. We have about 5 minutes left, I believe, plus the extra 5 in the first vote, then there's apparently a second vote immediately thereafter. I think everybody—hopefully we can continue this without interruption, but I'm not sure we can. It's going to depend on everybody's speed and how quickly people can move and their own schedules and everything else.

Let's start with a 5-minute round. I'll go 5 minutes, and then, if anyone's here, I will turn it over immediately to them.

Let me start with a question to both of you. Your reports are pretty sobering. The Study Group says that the efforts to stabilize Afghanistan were faltering. Atlantic Council says NATO is not winning. The ASG says that the antigovernment insurgency has grown considerably over the last 2 years. Is it safe to say that neither one of you believes that the Taliban and al Qaeda and their allies are on the run in Afghanistan? Is that fair? Ambassador, do you believe that the Taliban, al Qaeda, and their allies are on the run in Afghanistan?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Today, no, they're not on the run. They were on the run. There was a moment, soon after the U.S. military action after September 11, and into the Tora Bora area. But, around 2003, you can start to see a shift, in terms of reconstituting the Taliban, including in these tribal areas of Pakistan. They basically dispersed. They were not going to take on the U.S. military. They dispersed, and they basically said—their leaders said, "We'll be in touch. Stay around. We'll be in touch." They went to various places, some in Afghanistan, some in Pakistan—and they have reconstituted. They have reconstituted, in part, because they have seen the difficulties of the Karzai government; in part, because they have gotten foreign assistance, and there has been a migration of things from Iraq into Afghanistan that we never saw before. Even during the Soviet times, you didn't see improvised explosive devices, you didn't see assassinations, you didn't see suicide bombers. All this is new to Afghanistan, as it is becoming new to Pakistan.

So, I do not believe they are on the run.

Chairman LEVIN. General?

General JONES. Sir, I would agree with that. I think there are some contributing factors. One is that there are safe havens that they can withdraw to. Two is, as I mentioned, the economic viability of the narcotics trade, I think, fuels at least part of the insur-

gency. So, they're well paid. I think they have the ability to pay their forces, perhaps, competitive wages with the government's wages. Three is the fact that the Government of Afghanistan has not been able to materially increase its span of control over what it was a couple of years ago. So, it's possible to win every single skirmish, as we have been doing, and still lose the war, as we've learned in the past.

Chairman LEVIN. I thought the President's statement the other day, that the Taliban, al Qaeda, and their allies are on the run in Afghanistan, was just rose-colored glasses to an extreme.

Let me ask you a question about the need to do a lot of the work in the villages. There's a national solidarity program in Afghanistan, and one of the efforts there was their provision of $400 million in payments that were disbursed to 16,000 community development councils in Afghanistan. These payments, these funds, have financed over 30,000 community development subprojects, which have improved access to markets and infrastructure and services. The program has drawn resources from the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, which is administered by the World Bank. By distributing funds directly to districts at the lowest level, by bypassing, in other words, the central and provincial governments, the solidarity program has, according to the information we have, significantly reduced corruption and misappropriation, and it avoids that layering of bureaucracies, as well.

This morning, we asked about this. This morning, it was, I believe, Secretary Boucher who gave a very strong statement of support for that program. Are either of you familiar with that program, and can you comment on it?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. I'm not familiar, directly, with that program. I've read testimony, which that has been called attention to. I have no doubt at all we have some programs that are working in Afghanistan.

Chairman LEVIN. You're not familiar, though, with that specifically?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. No, I'm not familiar with that, and it could be taking place in these areas. The south is where the security problems are.

Chairman LEVIN. All right.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. That's where it's difficult to do programs. But, we're doing a lot of useful programs in other parts of the country.

Chairman LEVIN. General?

General JONES. I'm not familiar with the specifics of that program, but I do believe that there is something that I observed, in the few years that I was there, that, where you have a governor of a province that is not corrupt, where you have a police chief who is not corrupt, and you have the presence of the Afghan army and PRTs, and you have direct flow of assistance funds, things turn around very quickly. I agree with the Ambassador, that the overwhelming mentality of the people is to want to live in a democracy and live in freedom.

Chairman LEVIN. The ability of 16,000 local community development councils in Afghanistan to directly fund these small projects, it seems to me—and, more importantly, the people who know, in-

cluding Secretary Boucher this morning—it really gives us an opportunity to cut through layers of bureaucracy, as well as corruption. By the way, according to Secretary Boucher this morning, the request of the administration in the supplemental is for $50 million instead of the $10 million last year. Those are numbers—if my memory is correct—which means there would be a significant increase in that. What I'm going to do for both of you, just to get your reactions, even though I know your reports are filed, I'd like to send you the information on that program to get your reaction to it.

Now we're going to have to recess, or I'm going to miss a vote, and there's no one else here to pick up the gavel. So, hopefully within 10 minutes, we will resume.

Thank you for your patience. [Recess.]

Our apologies, everybody. Both of you have been around the Hill long enough to know that these things happen too regularly, but—this afternoon was one of them.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

General Jones and Ambassador Inderfurth, thank you, not only for your very cogent and, I think, accurate testimony, but for your devotion and service to the country. So, thanks very much.

One issue I'd like to raise. I was here this morning, but I had to leave before I asked questions, and I kept hearing all the witnesses refer to, as sort of a metric or a benchmark for success, the fact that that we are prevailing in all of our tactical engagements.

General Jones, I just wonder, your comments about whether, frankly, that's encouraging, but I don't think that tells us much about the ultimate struggle, since it's more political than tactical. Your comments on that?

General JONES. I think that we should be careful to celebrate tactics over strategy. In the Financial Times yesterday, Lord Ashdown has an article about what he would have done, and he starts out with a fairly well-known quote by Sun Tzu, who said that, "Strategy without tactics is the slow road to defeat, but tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat." Certainly in one of my lessons from Vietnam was the fact that you could win all of your tactical engagements and still not prevail. So I'd be very careful about signing up to that ideology as a benchmark for success.

Senator REED. Mr. Ambassador, further comments or do you concur?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. I totally concur. Coincidentally, 2 weeks ago I was in Hanoi, my first trip to Vietnam, and it was on the 40th anniversary of the Tet Offensive. There were a few articles there. Of course, the Vietnamese have turned the page, they want Americans back there to do business. They like us. But, it did raise the question of a military defeat, but a propaganda victory.

So, the Taliban—they can suffer losses, they can't have a set battle with the forces there, but they can create a climate of insecurity and fear in the country that will stop reconstruction in the south. Recently, there was the bombing of the Serena Hotel in Kabul. This was an oasis of western secure life. Everybody went to the Serena, and suicide bombers got in there.

So, the psychological dimension of this is important to deal with and to counter.

Senator REED. Thank you.

General Jones and Mr. Ambassador, your report talks about integrating counternarcotics and counterinsurgency operations using international military forces to assist Afghan National Police (ANP) in the interdiction, including supporting the ANP in its effort to destroy heroin labs. We're told that there's a reluctance by Central Command to have an explicit counterdrug mission, which would seem to undercut this explicit recognition that these two missions are both necessary and should be explicitly embraced. Again, can you comment on that, sir?

General JONES. Sir, it's not just the Central Command. There is a reluctance, in most militaries, to take on drug operations, preferring to leave it up to equivalents of drug enforcement administrations and officials and capabilities that are specifically suited for that challenge.

In Afghanistan, the challenge is clearly there. The good news about Afghanistan is, you can see the size of the problem every year. All you have to do is go up in a helicopter at the right time, and you can see it. There's no jungle. Everybody knows where it is, and you can really measure it with great accuracy.

I think that whatever the solution is, it has to have an Afghan face to it. I think the international community has to figure out ways to support it. NATO does not have that mandate. I was on the receiving end of what NATO would and would not do. We were able to have a passive role—that is to say, we could provide security for forces that were going in to do a counterdrug operation—but we would not actively send NATO troops to participate in it.

So, it's fairly consistent among the militaries that that is not part of the mission. Somebody's going to have to do it.

Senator REED. It would seem to me, following up, that these laboratories are owned and operated by the traffickers, the real bad guys, and there would seem to be less political objection to knocking those out than trying to eradicate the poppy fields, et cetera. So, it might be—they'll quickly compensate for that, but that might be the most logical target, if you wanted to ramp up the pressure. Is that sensible, in your regard?

General JONES. I think that's certainly part of it. I'd like to underscore a point made by the Ambassador, that this is a regional problem, and, with regard to narcotics, every country that touches Afghanistan is concerned about the trafficking. It would seem to me that, at least on that score, we can come to some agreements with the neighbors in the region, that we should do more, comprehensively, to halt the flow of drugs across the borders. There are only so many crossings. More specifically, since 90 percent of the crop is destined for Europe, and we know the routes through the Black Sea and how it gets there, it seems to me a more coordinated international outcry in response would be warranted, as well.

Senator REED. Let me shift to the regional aspects of, specifically, Pakistan, and ask you a question, General Jones, but feel free to elaborate on just your impressions about Pakistan, and then, Mr. Ambassador, your comments, too. We are effectively denied a physical presence in these tribal areas, American military

personnel. Mr. Ambassador, you made the point very strongly that that might even be counterproductive. But, with technology, particularly UAVs, Predators, platforms that can pick up signals and that are a least not-so-overt presence, would seem to be the way to go, but there's a real concern, I think, given the demands in Iraq for force protection. Are there sufficient platforms available in the region—Pakistan, Afghanistan? Or, another way to say it is, if we surge there, with the ISR, UAVs, et cetera, could that give us an advantage now that we don't have?

General JONES. Senator, I'd have to defer to Admiral Fallon at CENTCOM for that. I don't think NATO has the kind of capacity there to go beyond or, use that kind of technology to go beyond what it's capable of doing today, though. It has mostly been focused on Afghanistan, itself.

Senator REED. Mr. Ambassador, that question, and also any other elaboration about Pakistan that you'd like to make.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Senator, I think that the question of any U.S. presence in those tribal areas—right now, the—I hate to keep talking about polls, but it does give you something to get your head around—the latest poll of favorable/unfavorable views of the United States in Pakistan is 16 percent favorable; 69 percent—call it 70 percent—unfavorable. I guarantee you, if those polls were taken in the tribal areas, it wouldn't even go to 16 percent.

So, if we have a military presence there, any type of U.S. presence there, I'd suggest that they would quickly grow a beard and dress in the native garb, and do their work quietly, because they will only generate a reaction of these tribes that have resisted any kind of authority, including from Islamabad, as well. But, that doesn't mean that there aren't opportunities to have some discreet forces involved there. Obviously, I'm not privy to any kind of classified information, so I can't say what we're doing there and what we're not, but I do know that there have been missile strikes there, so we're doing something, and I think that we need to go in that direction.

But, there are other mechanisms to deal with this. There is a Trilateral Commission—Afghanistan, Pakistan, and NATO—that has been meeting to try to get these two countries to work with NATO in a cooperative way to try to deal with the cross-border interdiction. They are getting better at this. Some of our military commanders have been commending this.

It's also intelligence-sharing. Intelligence-sharing is very important, not only on this question of the interdiction across border, but also on the narcotics side. Even if our forces do not want to become actively engaged in counternarcotics operations, we can sure be sharing intelligence to let the ANP know what we have found on a timely basis.

So, I think that there is a lot that can be done there, but, again, if we have a heavy hand there, I think we're only going to make our goals, objectives that much more distant to achieve.

Senator REED. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator Warner.

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Forgive us, gentlemen, for departing for the vote, but that's a necessary part of life.

I must just ask a question and go upstairs; I'm on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, right above here. We have the Director of National Intelligence.

But, I want to return to this subject that I delved into deeply this morning with our first panel, and that is to follow-on what Senator Reed was talking about—the drug problem. What haunts me is that we had Secretary Gates before us here a few days ago, I asked him directly—with two marine battalions going on, that's a consequence of the inability of NATO to meet its requirements—and his answer was very cryptic and to the point, "Yes, they're going, because the other countries won't step up to their prior commitments or the need for additional forces." What do we tell the wives and the families of these marines as they go over there, that this drug money is buying the arms that'll be used against them?

As much as you've both expressed here the reluctance of the military to take on the narcotics, it's almost in the realm of force protection to take it on, to help dry up this source of income, which is going to the Taliban and being recycled into weaponry and brought to bear against these young men and women going over in these two battalions, and the ones that are there now.

I just find it difficult how we're doing our responsibility here in Congress by sending these battalions over, at the same time we're not doing something—and I don't know what it is that we could do—we do not wish to appear foolish or rash; the executive branch has really got the responsibility, not the legislative branch—but to be doing everything we possibly can to begin to energize some activity against this drug trade.

This morning it was explained to us, it was a 30-some-percent increase last year; this year, the projection is considerably less, but, nevertheless, a measure of increase in the drug trade. So, I just say we have to do something. I've gone through your reports. This is my second time to have the privilege to be with you on these reports. You do address the various point plans and so forth. But, is there a sledgehammer out here that somebody could use? I'd be willing to take the responsibility for it in this institution.

General JONES. Sir, I've said all along that I think it's a question of a comprehensive strategy that nations can agree on, but that absolutely has to have an Afghan face to it. I believe it would be a sign of leadership on the part of President Karzai if he launched a national campaign that would be buttressed by judicial reform and the establishment of a police force that can do its job, supported by the international community. I think it is so critical to his own success as a leader, that even if he has to use his own fledgling army to take this on to make sure that it works, that he should do that. But, it has to be competitive. I don't think there's one solution to this.

The international community can help by taking measures, such as providing alternate means of livelihood, encouraging farmers not to grow the crop, providing economic support, where necessary. But, the harder part of the fight, I think, in order to avoid chaos, has to be done by the Afghans themselves, and it's going to have to be done over time. It was a ramp-up that took several years, and

it's going to be several years to come down. You have to be careful that you don't tilt it too much in, because you could create conditions of a civil war, when food stocks dry up and the little economy that they have just disappears.

But, I think it's doable. It takes that strong international leader to be able to convene the international community, the drug enforcement agencies from many nations, the Afghan statement of purpose that this is definitely with the highest national priority, and the repair work that has to be done and the supporting infrastructure that are essential, the judicial system and the police. I think President Karzai would do himself a lot of good if he did that internally in his country and stayed on it.

Senator WARNER. Ambassador Inderfurth, do you care to comment?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. I would, Senator Warner.

I think that the drug problem may be more susceptible to a agricultural solution than a military solution. There is not a sledgehammer. I wish there were.

We've been talking about our two reports from The Atlantic Council and the ASG. There was a third report that was released at the same time by the National Defense University.

Senator WARNER. Yes. Mr. Ullman?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Exactly.

Senator WARNER. Yes.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Harlan Ullman—which is titled "Winning the Invisible War: An Agricultural Pilot Plan for Afghanistan." I'd like to read you the one paragraph that they say, about the issue of eradication and what to do. They say, "The stark alternative of elimination and eradication of poppy growth will backfire. Destruction of poppies throughout the country, even if sustainable, would create massive economic disruption and hardship and, no doubt, recruit many more volunteers for the insurgency," meaning the Taliban. Then they say, "As we suggest, a pilot program for licit—licit—legal sales of poppies, or, indeed, temporary and massive increases in payments to farmers for cultivating nonnarcotics crops, in addition to other counternarcotic measures, may be the only way to prevent expanding opium production." We may have to buy them out. That's not something that we like the idea of doing.

Senator WARNER. I think it would be relatively inexpensive to pay the farmer.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. It would be relatively inexpensive.

Senator WARNER. He gets a very small amount of this.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. The farmers don't get anything. It's the drug dealers that get the money.

Senator WARNER. Sure. That's where the money is.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. So, it may be that we have to think out of the box. I know that there's been a lot of studies about licit sales and, is that going to encourage others to go into poppy production? But, right now the current strategy is not working, and using the sledgehammer of aerial spraying with herbicides, every independent report I've seen says it will backfire.

Senator WARNER. Chaos. That would bring me to my last observation point. I remember Charlie Wilson very well. I was on the Intelligence Committee at that time, and somewhat involved in the

stinger decisions that we made here. Matter of fact, I was deeply involved in. Charlie Wilson urged me to go several times. I'm not going to put it in the record why, but I was a relatively young Senator, and I wasn't going to risk my career on some of his operations, which were unrelated to the main mission. So much for my good friend Charlie, and I really like him.

But, in the context of doing that work way back then, I undertook my own study of the history of Afghanistan, and one of the most remarkable chapters is in the late 1800s, when the British army were there for, I think, a period of about 15 years, and they suffered enormous losses.

I say to myself, they failed in the 1800s to bring about stability in Afghanistan. The Soviet Union poured enormous sums of money in, and they failed. What is it that we have as an opportunity to fail, in the wake of those two historical chapters of absolute failure?

General JONES. Senator, for my money, it's the ability that we bring—not just the United States, but the international community—potentially, if done correctly, to make people's lives better in the villages and to offer them an alternative to a return to the draconian days of the Taliban.

This isn't a scientific observation, but, in my 40 years in uniform, I've been to Vietnam, I've worked in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I've worked in northern Iraq, and I've been to Afghanistan, and I'm always amazed at—when I go into these missions, and I see the horrific violence that's going on, the ethnic cleansing of the Bosnias, the horror of the brutality of Saddam Hussein against the Kurds, and so on and so forth. But, even in Bosnia, where I thought, in 1993–1994 when I was there, regularly and deeply involved in what was going on, I thought to myself, there is no way that these people are ever going to live side by side again, given all that's going on. Yet, they do. They do.

My lesson here is that, when you go through these periods—we'll call them civil wars, if you want, or insurgencies. Eventually, people tire themselves out. They just go through a certain phase, and they get to the end of it, and they're exhausted. They need some outside help to say, "Okay, here's a better way."

My sense of the Afghan people, in my 3½ years of going all over the country, is that they are tired of the long history of fighting, and they want an alternative. That was clearly demonstrated in the elections. The national elections and the parliamentary elections—hundreds of thousands of voters turned out, and some great stories about incredible treks across the mountains to get to a polling station. Things that would warm the heart of anybody who loves democracy and freedom. They voted with the expectation that their lives are going to be changed for the better.

For a brief while, there was that moment in time when the momentum seemed to be rapidly going that way, and then, because of the failure to sustain the momentum, and, I think, the failure of the international community to find the leadership that could harmonize and make more cohesive the effort to be felt in the four or five main areas, including governmental reform and the assistance that's required to help that government succeed, and the metrics that that government should be meeting, have just simply

not been met in the critical areas. So as a result, the momentum has stalled, and we could be in the danger of backsliding. I think that's what the Ambassador and I are concerned about.

The fact that these three studies really do say the same thing, but in different ways, and most people that you talk to behind the scenes, even at NATO, they generally agree with that, but nobody has figured out what to do with it. That's why I'm so concerned that the turndown of Paddy Ashdown——

Senator WARNER. He's going to take on the drug portfolio.

General JONES. He would have been the senior coordinator of the international effort—economic, judicial, social, all the nonmilitary missions, which I would think would have included the narcotics business.

Senator WARNER. That's maybe one of the reasons they turned him down, then.

General JONES. Whatever the reason, I think it was a big mistake, and I hope we can find somebody of that stature to take his place. This time I hope that the international community will be more insistent, to make sure that the government doesn't turn him down.

Senator WARNER. Yes.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. I think that he was turned down, in part, because of that British Colonial history that you referred to.

Senator WARNER. Yes.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. They still have recollections of that. It just appeared for Karzai's own domestic reasons. To have a British proconsul come in, as they were describing, probably was more than he could do. I think it was a mistake that he turned it down.

Can I just mention, in terms of your discussion——

Chairman LEVIN. We'll have to make it short, if you would, because we're running way over on time.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Very quickly. The history of Afghanistan has to be understood—the British and then the Soviets. But, we are not the successors to those two. The successor to the British and the Soviets is al Qaeda and Taliban. They hijacked the country. We are seen as going in to assist the Afghan people so that they won't return to those days. So, that's the progression.

General JONES. That's a good point.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Therefore, we are still wanted there. We're not seen as occupiers. But, we have to be very careful that we do things with them, so that we don't become—I mentioned civilian casualties—that, over time, we don't lose their support, because if we do, then that is time to leave.

Senator WARNER. Thank you, gentlemen.

Thank you. I have to go upstairs.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Warner.

Senator Kennedy.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much. Enormously valuable and helpful hearing.

Just to relate some of the issues that we heard earlier today to some of the things that you've said. One, Secretary Shinn told the committee that our policy is sound and that implementation is the question. In terms of our ability to clear areas of insurgents, he said we're winning, but it's happening slowly and painfully. This is

at odds, obviously, with—the Afghan Study Group and The Atlantic Council suggest otherwise. What is your opinion? Is there convincing evidence, as the Secretary suggests, that we're winning, even if slowly and painfully?

General JONES. I think it depends on how you categorize the term "winning." If clearing an area of the Taliban, which I'm sure we can do, doesn't result in some stability and some security and some reconstruction that accompanies that clearing in a way that either Afghan forces or Afghan officials or international forces can hold the area, then it's—we're just going to keep on going around in that circumstance.

I don't think that the military alone is going to win this, if it's not accompanied by reconstruction and a change in the security that most Afghan families experience in the countryside.

Senator KENNEDY. On this, Secretary Boucher said that to stabilize Afghanistan we need to provide the security, justice, economic opportunity, good governance. He said we are doing what works, and getting the job done. So, it appears that his reference are to those other items: economic opportunity, governance, and the security. The Atlantic Council points out that the civil sector reform is in serious trouble. I'm just trying to figure out where you all——

General JONES. I think there are a lot of individual things that are going on well. One of the things that characterizes the international effort—and this, Senator, is not necessarily a U.S. problem, this is a—kind of—how the whole thing is set up—most countries, when they arrive in Afghanistan, arrive with a fixed contribution that they're going to make, and they decide that, largely, on a national basis, "We're going to"—a country is going to do a PRT or they're going to a certain project. I think that's all very helpful. In the aggregate, does it make change, does it move things generally in the direction? Yes. But, on the big issues of tackling what is fundamentally keeping the country from moving in the right direction—narcotics, judicial reform, adequate police and security, and more focus in the international effort—I don't see that happening.

So, I would agree with what the witnesses talked about, in terms of the words they used, but I don't think they can make the case—I don't think the case can be made that, on the four or five big things that have to be done, that the international community is doing enough.

Senator KENNEDY. Ambassador?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Senator, Richard Boucher has the job I once had. I know, coming up on the Hill, that you want to present your best case. I think that a great deal of what's being said—as I mentioned, there are other parts of Afghanistan where there are some important things taking place, but, because this is not a coherent strategy, because we do not have a Paddy Ashdown, someone to pull this together, a lot of these efforts are not going well. They need greater coordination, they need more attention.

If you take, for instance, the Afghan National Army, there's no question that this is a bright spot on the security front for Afghanistan. They're working up towards a 70,000-person limit. Secretary Rumsfeld, when he was in office, wanted to go down from that tar-

get to 50,000. Fortunately, that got turned around. Now, Secretary Gates has said up to 80,000. That's a good step in the right direction. But the Afghan Defense Minister says they may need 150,000. If they need more, who's going to pay for them? The Afghan Government cannot pay their Afghan army personnel, so sustainability, affordability is going to have to be taken into account.

So, yes, we can paint a good picture of increases in the Afghan National Army capacity, numbers, training, putting more of an Afghan face on operations, but then you ask, "But how far is that going to go, and who's going to pay for it, and are we going to have the resources to do it?" So, you have to take it to the next step.

Senator KENNEDY. Let me just finally ask you about the contributions of these other countries, the other NATO countries. We went through the polls, the Pew Foundation polls of European countries, and—how are we going to—and, Secretary Gates talked about how these countries are getting confused, or at least he expressed some opinion that there may be some confusion. Part of the reason may be because some of these countries are confused between Iraq and Afghanistan. I mentioned it's the issue of casualties, as well. But, what's your own assessment about—one, how do you reverse that? How do you change that? What's your sense as a former NATO commander, about what the trend line is going to be? What are we facing down there, and how can it be altered and shifted and changed? What recommendations do you have to do it?

General JONES. Sir, Secretary Gates, at the Munich Security Conference last weekend, gave really, I think, a very sobering and accurate speech, where he basically characterized the fact that in the United States an attack on the World Trade Center was a defining moment akin to Pearl Harbor; in Europe, when you have a similar event—for instance, the attack in Madrid on the train system—Europeans react with saying, "I sure hope the Spanish can solve that problem." It's not seen as an attack against all. Therefore, the degree of importance that we've put to this battle against ideologies and—sponsored by terrorism—assumes a different metric.

In 2002, the alliance at the Prague summit decided that they were going to expand the alliance by seven nations, going from 19 to 26, that gentleman's agreement was that 2 percent of the GDP would be a floor for national investment for all nations in security. In 2008, we now have 26 members, the average investment in national security in the alliance is about 1.7 percent. So, we've actually lost ground.

I think the alliance is going to have to decide whether it's going to continue to expand and add new members and celebrate the expansion of the alliance, and the tremendous potential the alliance has, measured against an equally offsetting will to resource the missions that they take on.

This is a fundamental moment in time for the alliance to develop a new strategic vision for the 21st century that takes into account the asymmetric nature of the world, and we understand that the conventional threats of the 20th century have faded into the rearview mirror of history, only to be replaced by these asymmetric threats that we're fighting.

So, I don't know how we turn that corner. I know that's a corner that has to be turned, and I hope that the summit in Bucharest that's coming up in April will address some of that. I think Afghanistan will clearly be on the table. But, we definitely have a lot of work to do—the family of nations—to convince our publics, mostly European, that this struggle is really very important, and it's important to them. So far, I don't think we've made the case in an effective way.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. More has to be done to make that case, and I think that you're seeing some of the leaders of Europe beginning to recognize that they have to do that. Gordon Brown, the Prime Minister, has traveled to Kabul. President Sarkozy has traveled there, the first time a French president has been there—this is in December; the new Prime Minister of Australia, and the Italian Prime Minister Prodi, their first visits. There is more attention. Right now, it's fair to say that Afghanistan is not the forgotten war. People are talking about it, it is front and center—hearings such as these, reports being written.

But, there's no question that something has to be done to deal with the millstone that Iraq is on Afghanistan, in terms of public perceptions, in terms of funding, in terms of dealing with Afghanistan on its own merits. That's why the ASG calls for a delinking of Iraq and Afghanistan, and a recommitment to the importance of this for the alliance.

There was a great quote that I used in my testimony from Victoria Nuland, our very capable ambassador to Brussels, to NATO. She said that, "If we can get it right in the Hindu Kush, we will also be stronger the next time we are called to defend our security and values so far away from home." Well, we are going to be called far away from home again, so we'd best get this one right so that we can demonstrate that we are competent and able to defend our values in this fashion. If we can't do it with a country that wants us and the international community is with us and NATO is beside us, where can we do it?

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Kennedy.

Senator Dole.

Senator DOLE. Yes. General Jones, I think the most compelling way to convey the gravity of the situation in Afghanistan is to speak, not only in terms of what must be done, but what are the implications if we fail to commit sufficient personnel or resources in a unified manner to Afghanistan. I believe, while I was over voting, this did come up. But, let me ask you to be explicit and to spell out, if you would, what are the implications of failure, for the United States, for the region, and for our European allies? If we could spell that out and be specific.

General JONES. Senator, thank you. On page 5 of our report, there is a paragraph called "The Consequences of Failure," but I'll just sum it up very briefly.

I think that, given the enormous investment of the global international community in the institutions that are represented on the ground—the United Nations, NATO, European Union, the G8, the banking institutions—everything that we need to succeed in Af-

ghanistan is represented in Kabul. If, in fact, we are not successful, then I think that will be a signal victory for the ideology that we're fighting—the radical fundamentalism—and it will only mean that we will have to redouble our efforts in other areas, because this will be a signal victory, and I don't think there's—that we can—that the international community can stand and let that happen—aside from the regional impacts of, perhaps, even a spread beyond Afghanistan and Pakistan. So, I think the consequences are fairly serious. I think they're serious for the United States, as the most powerful nation on Earth. To absorb even a perceived failure would have longstanding consequences, whether it's here or in Iraq.

Senator DOLE. Mr. Ambassador, anything you'd want to add to that?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Senator, I cannot improve on that statement. I think those are exactly the right stakes that are involved.

Senator DOLE. General Jones, let me ask you about this. We understand that there are over 40 countries and over 300 NGOs working in Afghanistan, as we've heard today, without any means of effectively coordinating among their actions. This is the most compelling argument that I've heard for structural and institutional change within our own government in the area of interagency reform. In your professional opinion, I'd like to hear from both of you what you feel are the greatest obstacles, within our own departments and agencies, to bringing about needed reforms.

General JONES. I think the very concept of what constitutes national security in the 21st century is undergoing dramatic change. In the 20 century, it was fairly clear. National security threats were handled by the Department of Defense (DOD), NSC, and part of the State Department. In the 21st century, I think all elements of the interagency have to be brought together in a much more cohesive way to make the changes required. There is in Afghanistan, for example, a strong element that argues for judicial reform, that argues for more policemen, that argues for a successful war on drugs. These are not traditional military tasks.

Now, if it's the national will, we can restructure our militaries to do whatever the country wants, but this is not the way things are supposed to play out.

So, I think, within the interagency, we need to have much more agility, we need to be able to take on more issues, more rapidly, as they develop around the world, because the world in the 21st century is cycling around at a much faster pace as a result of globalization. We have to worry about energy security, the security of our critical infrastructures, the weapons proliferation. God forbid that a weapon of mass destruction falls into the Taliban's hands or al Qaeda's hands. These are asymmetric threats. I think even international narcotics, which clearly is supporting insurgencies and bad things that are happening around the world, have to be dealt with, and the only way to do that, I think, is to get more agility and more empowerment out to the people in the field who are actually doing the job. Speaking as a former unified commander, I had all the responsibility in the world that I could have wanted, but I had very, very little authority to do anything without always coming back and asking for permission through the interagency. As

a result—the world goes around faster, and we're still not reacting in real time to the circumstances that evade us. I don't want to get into a 30-minute answer to your question, but there is lots more to be said about things that we can do to be more efficient, competitively, in this new world of the 21st century.

Senator DOLE. Right. Yes, there is.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. I would only add that Secretary Robert Gates gave a excellent speech recently in Kansas, the Alf Landon speech.

Senator DOLE. Kansas. Yes.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. The disparities between our resourcing and funding for our military side versus our civilian side. I urge you all to read that and to think through what this means, in terms of our ability to engage abroad. Clearly, we can do it with our military. We can take Baghdad. But then what happens the day after? The ability for us to do effective work for post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction, we're not very good at it. USAID is not working. The components of that need more attention.

So, this is a big problem, and I was very glad that my former colleague on the NSC, Bob Gates—when we were both much younger—I'm glad he's addressing that issue now, because it's fairly rare for a Defense Secretary to speak in favor of greater funding for State. There ought to be more of that. If you look at the budgets now, half a trillion dollars for the military and, what, smaller number—I don't have the exact number in front of me—for State and foreign operations. Somehow, we have to get this in better alignment. The disparities are making it impossible for us to address "the day after" in these countries.

Senator DOLE. Yes. I agree with you about that speech. In fact, when we were talking with Secretary Gates last week, I utilized that speech to get him to elaborate further. It's a very important subject.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Dole.

Senator McCaskill.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, let me say hello, General. It's my understanding you were born in Kansas City, MO. Is that true?

General JONES. That's correct.

Senator MCCASKILL. Well, hello from the friendliest big city in America. Thank you both for your service.

I have a bad habit of focusing on one area. I'm very focused on accountability of the money that we've spent. I noticed, in The Atlantic Council report, General, that even though we have spent $21 billion on reconstruction and security institutions in Afghanistan, that less that 10 percent of that has directly gone to the Afghans. Where's the other 90 percent gone?

General JONES. I think that's a good question. I think that part of it has been consumed by—corruption is a big problem, so I think it's been, possibly, diverted. I think that we have not always put in the right control mechanisms to make sure that the international money that's provided is, in fact, spent in the ways that we would like to see happen. But, also, internationally, we need to tighten up our auditing mechanisms to make sure that the Govern-

ment of Afghanistan spends the money in the ways intended. Because this is not clearly evident, there are efforts to set up alternate mechanisms by which a more direct infusion of money, that's better controlled, directly to the people is going on by major organizations now, absent the reforms that are necessary within the government itself.

Senator MCCASKILL. The PRTs that are working now in Afghanistan, obviously those represent people from various countries and under various authorities with various accountability, or lack thereof. It doesn't appear to me that the DOD has any kind of metric whatsoever for measuring the effectiveness of these PRTs. Are you aware of any kind of performance metric that's in place that we can even judge how these various PRTs are accomplishing any of the goals that we're giving them this money to accomplish?

General JONES. Senator, I think the PRTs that are under U.S. auspices and control are probably very well monitored. I visited them, and their leaders are very responsible. The international PRTs that are under the auspices of sovereign nations, it's hard to say, there, because that's sovereign-nation business. But, what is true, even though to me, the PRTs are very important, and, unfortunately, they remain very important today, because the government has not moved out to replace the PRTs. The idea was to establish a PRT so that it would give people hope that, soon, help would be coming, more massive help, and the PRTs would then be replaced. Unfortunately, the PRTs are still very, very important. But, I think our national PRTs are probably well-funded, and I think the auditing is probably quite good.

Where I think we have a problem is, when we go into the general fund for international contributions and, at that point, when you factor in the salaries, you factor in construction costs and contracts and things of that nature, and I think that's where, probably, the abuses are found.

Senator MCCASKILL. As you both are probably aware, we included a new Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) in the Defense Reauthorization last year. I would like, briefly, both of you to comment on advice you would give—succinctly, if you would—the new SIGAR as to where they would get the most bang for our buck, in terms of spending time in the initial phases of their work, in terms of looking at how the money is being spend and how we are utilizing American dollars in Afghanistan.

General JONES. Within the G8 Accords, the primary responsibility of the United States is to train the Afghan army. I consider—and I think that of the five pillars that the G8 agreed to, that's probably the pillar that is—has been the best administered. I don't know whether it'll be a national decision that the United States is going to take over some other international responsibilities to, for example, dramatically increase the training for the police or take on more focus on the drug battle or champion judicial reform. I do know that we can't do it all; and I don't think, with the number of wealthy nations that we have there, that we should have to do it all.

But, I'll let Ambassador Inderfurth give his viewpoint.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Annually, we have been spending about $1.5 billion on economic reconstruction and development programs. I would suggest that that funding stream be looked at very closely by the new SIGAR. I testified recently, on the House side, before the House Armed Services Committee, endorsed that idea. I'm very pleased that it's going to be a part of the Senate's endorsement, because, as we saw with Afghanistan, having somebody that is dedicated to that subject can tell us, are we getting our money's worth? I think that that has been a valuable addition to looking at the contributions being made on reconstruction in Iraq. Unfortunately, a lot of that money is not going to the intended purposes. I don't know the programs well enough to say which ones, specifically, but, again, the reconstruction money, I think, needs to be looked at carefully.

There is a Catch-22 here, as well. A lot of the money bypasses the Government of Afghanistan because of corruption, but, by bypassing the central government, the Karzai Government does not get credit for the decisions made about where that money will be spent. So, the undermining of the central government support is partly a product of the fact that so much money is coming in the country, and they have no clue where it's going, and have no say about where it's going. So, there is a Catch-22 here. That also has to be worked out.

Again, we don't want to make the Super Envoy into Superman here, but that person needs to look at the kind of funding that goes through the government and around the government, to try to give the central authority more credit for the work being done in the country, because, as General Eikenberry says, "The loss of legitimacy by the Karzai government is the gravest threat to Afghanistan."

Senator MCCASKILL. So, we can't trust them with the money, but we have to give them the credit.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. We have to find mechanisms to be able to trust them better with the money, and then give them credit

General JONES. I might just piggyback on that one, because I think this is central to the point of what's going on, largely, in the government.

I think it's incumbent upon the international community to embed people of competence to help these struggling young ministries understand how things work in a democracy. So, I think it's not enough to simply say, "You've had your election, you've formed your government, you're on your own, you're a sovereign nation," without, at the same time, providing the expertise and the wherewithal of helping them write an economic recovery plan, better administer the Justice Department, and so on and so forth. But, it seems to me that if we did have a super—or a senior coordinator, that he or she would want to make sure that the international community is represented, as much as possible, to help the new Government of Afghanistan function effectively. That takes mentoring and teaching, and it's not going to be done over the years.

But, the worst thing you can do, in my view, is just to treat them as though they intuitively know what to do, now that they've had an election, when the case is clear that there isn't that depth at the ministerial levels. There are some very good people at the sen-

ior levels in the Afghan Government, people of high education, high quality; but, unfortunately, the numbers are not there.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCaskill.

Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, Ambassador, welcome, and thank you for being here today.

I want to pick up on this issue of the PRTs and their effect on that process. The Atlantic Council report noted that the PRTs, "come from the various nations and report back to the nations' capitals; hence, most are not under central command and coordination, and integration of planning has been modest, at best." I can understand why the capitals would want to hear what they are doing, and why they would still want command, but it seems to me at least that they're very difficult to accomplish what we're trying to accomplish there if they can't be centrally coordinated to avoid some of the duplication of effort. So, I guess I would be interested in your thought on that and what, perhaps, a better solution would be.

General JONES. Senator, when I was in NATO, we relied heavily on the missions of the PRTs, and we worked with the various nations to try to, to a certain point, standardize what the Afghans could expect to find in a PRT. There is wide discrepancy between what one PRT of one nation does versus another.

While I was there, there was also a security aspect that was worrisome. I was very concerned that a PRT could have been overrun with many captives and public executions, and so on and so forth, so we spent a lot of time assuring the security of the PRTs.

But, my overall conclusion was that, where you had a governor who was not corrupt and was working in the right direction, where you had a police chief that could aid in reforming the structure of the police department, and where you had a good PRT that was supported with the resources necessary, the people in that province turned, almost immediately, in a positive direction—building roads, opening schools, bringing water, bringing electricity where there was none. It's very easy to make a huge difference in people's lives in some of the areas of that country.

So, I think, unfortunately, as I mentioned earlier, that the PRTs still remain an important tool, because we haven't had the sustained momentum of the government being able to gain more and more control over their countryside. Until those governmental reforms kick in, and until the metrics on that government are demanded by the international community, I'm afraid that the PRTs are still going to play a very important role for the foreseeable future.

Senator THUNE. But just the notion that there are all these independent operating parts or pieces out there, and oftentimes, probably, duplicating the activities of others, that there—as was noted by the report—couldn't be some sort of central command or coordination that makes sense, that the countries, the nations that are involved with that, could subscribe to?

General JONES. I think it would be very good if we could achieve that. We have not been able to achieve the international accords

that are necessary, with the exception of the security concept of how we protect the PRTs and how you rapidly reinforce them or how you evacuate them in a moment of stress, because nations will need help there. But, nations guard, fairly jealously, the investment that they're making. It's definitely focused from the capital direct to their national effort. It's important, I think, that we work towards greater harmonization and coordination. But, so far, nations have been reluctant to pool their resources and to add or subtract based on the need.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Could I just add——

Senator THUNE. Yes.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. I just want to give one additional point about the PRTs. The expression "hearts and minds" are at play here. It's hard to win hearts and minds in counterterrorist operations, counterinsurgency operations, air power being used. PRTs are one way to extend the reach, not only of the central government, but also the international community throughout the country. Focusing on reconstruction, governance issues, security, they are a way to help with the hearts-and-minds part of this. Only 5 percent of the U.S. funds go into PRTs. It's not a big amount of money. It needs better coordination, all of those things, but the idea of PRTs is a helpful way. It's kind of Peace Corps on steroids. Get them out there, let them see that we do things to help people. So therefore, it's a viable and, I think, legitimate concept. But, it needs, as we have pointed out with so many other programs, more attention and coordination.

Senator THUNE. According to the report, there are only 25 such teams. Are more needed? Is that sufficient?

General JONES. I think the answer to that is probably yes. If the government is not going to be able to expand its reach, unfortunately, it becomes more important. The whole concept was that the government would, in fact, move and be able to assert more control over the provinces, but, since that hasn't happened, the PRTs continue to be very important, and I don't want to speak for the commanders or the alliance, but I would imagine that people would say yes, probably more PRTs would be beneficial.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. But they cannot expand until certain parts of the country, the south and eastern part, are better secured, so there is a wall that they're running up against, in terms of expansion.

Senator THUNE. You talked about the amount of money that our government is putting into the PRT effort. Of the other nations, the international community, that are involved, what kind of investment are they making relative to what the United States is putting into that? Is it like the military component, where we underwrite the biggest share, proportionally?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. I don't have PRT figures.

Senator THUNE. Okay, that's fine. I wouldn't expect you to have those at your fingertips.

Just one last question, General Jones. This comes back, maybe just drawn on your past experience—but, there have been concerns about the military command-and-control structure in Afghanistan, and I'm wondering what your thoughts are about how that might be better organized to ensure that there is unity of command.

General JONES. This is always an interesting discussion, because the metric should not be to try to compare a 26-nation alliance with the unified command structure of a single country; and yet, that seems to what, sometimes, we try to do.

I was one of the ones responsible, along with General Abizaid, for creating the command structure that exists. It was designed and proposed to 26 sovereign nations, and 26 sovereign nations and all chiefs of defense of those nations voted to adopt that command structure. It has a lot of challenges. It has the challenges of merging the more kinetic operations of OEF with the less kinetic operations of ISAF, the NATO operation. At every level, there are instruments in the chain of command that deconflict those two missions, that provide for command-and-control mechanisms to ramp up operations in certain parts of the country, as need be; that allows for special forces to operate in certain protected zones, or earmark zones, if need be; it provides for allies to come to the aid of one another. It is, on paper, relatively easy to diagram and to explain.

In actuality, what it takes is the goodwill and the cooperation of all commanders. The more senior you get, the more cooperation there is to make sure that this works.

The proof of the pudding, in my book, that it's a viable structure happened in August 2006, during Operation Medusa, when we had near conventional combat operations in the southern part of Afghanistan shortly after the arrival of almost 9,000 NATO soldiers. The Taliban evidently had been reading European newspapers and decided that this force wasn't going to fight, and they made the mistake of engaging us very symmetrically. OEF had to come in to reinforce. The Afghan Army was involved in it—the Canadians, the Dutch, the U.K., and a number of other countries—and really achieved a rather stunning victory. If that command-and-control structure was not going to work, the warts of that command-and-control structure would have been revealed.

So, I think it's a question of not setting the expectation too high, recognizing that 26 nations agreeing on how to command and control the troops is a very, very delicate issue. Trying to apply the principles that one would find in a national command structure to an alliance is very hard to do.

I think it's workable. I think it was agreed to. Can you make improvements on it? Sure, and do things change, and should you change the command structure to go along with that change? Absolutely. But, I don't think there's too much—I think the evidence is that the command structure works, let's put it that way, and that it takes the goodwill of people who are within it to make it work.

Senator THUNE. General, Mr. Ambassador, thank you for your service.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Thune.

A second vote is on. I want to take just a couple of minutes, though, to ask a few additional questions.

At least one of the reports suggest that there be an increase in the size of the Afghan National Army. The question is, where would the cost come from on that? I figured out here what the cost would be. My math, if we double the size of it from 80,000 to

160,000, it would be something like $400 million a year. I think my math is correct. That's assuming, by the way, that the soldier be paid $5,000 a year, which I assume is way more than a soldier would be paid in the Afghan National Army, is that true? Do you have any idea what a soldier is paid? It wouldn't be $5,000 a year, would it?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. No. No.

Chairman LEVIN. It might be a couple of thousand a year.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. I understand the point. As our report points out, if you're going to expand it, who's going to pay for it?

Chairman LEVIN. Yes, but that's a pretty small amount of money, compared to——

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Small amount, and you know what I would suggest? For our NATO allies who have decided that, for their own political reasons, they can't go south to fight? Send the Afghan army.

Train them, supply them, fund——

Chairman LEVIN. Pay for them.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Pay for them.

Chairman LEVIN. Yes. That's where I was going with this.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. That seems to be a nice offset to provide security for Afghanistan.

Chairman LEVIN. Yes, that's where I was going. That may be a very conservative amount—so, if they're $2,500 a year as an average pay—I'm just taking a number, here—it would be about $200 million a year, which is pretty tiny percentage of what we pay in Afghanistan, but, more importantly, if our NATO allies are not going to do what they should do, relative to putting their own troops in harm's way, that kind of funding to train the Afghan army surely could be expected from them.

Now, General, you had to deal with our NATO allies for many years. What would be the likely response? We apparently have failed to get Germany, for instance, to agree to put their troops in combat. Would they, you think, be open to an idea that, for a couple of hundred million dollars a year, if my math is right, that they could double the size by at least the pay of 79,000 or 80,000 additional Afghan army members?

General JONES. I wouldn't want to speak for any particular country. The logic appears sound. But, if you look at what hasn't been done already—for example, take the case of Germany, which has the responsibility of training the police force, yet we still lack size, capacity, resources, and everything else.

So, I think the financial condition of many of our allies in Europe has gotten much better over the years; their GDP has grown, and everything else. But there is great reluctance to not only provide manpower, but also to provide the resources. So, all we can do is continue to try. I have no idea whether they would agree to do that. I would hope they would.

Chairman LEVIN. The Study Group has recommended that the administration decouple the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq as a way of improving the overall U.S. approach to the global war on terrorism. I think you mentioned that the way to do this is both in terms of our budgeting; put the Afghanistan war in our regular budget, keep the Iraq war in a supplemental budget, for instance.

The rhetoric, surely we ought to separate them. I think it was your suggestion that the European populations might be more willing to support Afghanistan if they didn't link, in their minds, the two efforts together. Is that a fair comment?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Secretary Gates said that, just the other day.

Chairman LEVIN. He did. Is that a fair statement about your report?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. It is a fair statement and it's supported by the administration's Defense Secretary.

Chairman LEVIN. We'll press him on that one when he gets up here on that. We had this morning General Sattler; we asked him about the reference that Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Mullen, made about troops in Iraq versus troops in Afghanistan, and he said, "It's simply a matter of resources, of capacity. In Afghanistan, we do what we can; in Iraq, we do what we must." In other words, Iraq is our first priority, and that means Afghanistan is a lesser priority. Would it be helpful in that analysis if we continue to reduce our presence in Iraq, in your judgment, so that those forces at least would be available to go to Afghanistan? Whether they would go there or not would be a different decision, but at least would that be helpful? Are they related, in that sense?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. The Iraq Study Group made that recommendation, as combat forces are withdrawn from Iraq, that some be sent to Afghanistan. The ASG endorsed that recommendation. So, I think that that's the answer to that question.

Chairman LEVIN. They are linked, in that sense, aren't they?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. They are linked. There's only finite resources, and the Army and our military is stretched thin. So, you can't make up out of whole cloth. But, the statement that Admiral Mullen made, "do what we must, do what we can," I think my major point this afternoon is that we have to put Afghanistan into the "do what we must" category. It should be there, too. It's not just a "can," "want to do," "like to do," it's a "must."

Chairman LEVIN. On that note—I think, General, you probably would agree with that, but I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I have to run and catch a vote.

General JONES. No, I do agree with that.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you both. I'm just going to run. I won't even have a chance to come personally to thank you. It's been very, very helpful. This was actually a significant turnout of Senators under a very difficult afternoon. That's how much interest there is in Afghanistan.

Thank you. The committee stands adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT BYRD

AL QAEDA SAFE HAVEN

1. Senator BYRD. Ambassador Inderfurth, both reports (the Afghanistan Study Group and the Atlantic Council of the United States) suggest that if immediate action is not taken by as early as this spring to turn around world attention and involvement in the rebuilding of Afghanistan, it stands in danger of becoming a failed state—a safe haven for al Qaeda, run by the Taliban, with an economy based primarily on the cultivation of the opium poppy. This, you argue, would be catastrophic for regional stability and U.S. and western security. Without suggesting that this

would be an acceptable outcome, how would a failed Afghanistan differ from the Afghanistan of 2000, except that we are now aware of and prepared to take preemptive action against a resurgent al Qaeda?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. The Afghanistan Study Group estimated that the prospect of again losing significant parts of Afghanistan to the forces of Islamist extremists has become possible, and that an effort has to be in place to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a failed state. In addition to the consequences in Afghanistan itself, including the implications on poppy trafficking, al Qaeda activity, et cetera, the regional and international implications should also be taken into account. Failure in Afghanistan will also enhance instability and insecurity in the neighboring Pakistan, where local Taliban and other extremist groups would be inspired to step up their effort to stabilize the regime, and would be able to use Afghanistan as their base for doing so. Also, were Afghanistan to slip into a "failed state" status despite the resources and commitment by the international community, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) specifically, it would severely discredit the ability of the United States and its allies on the international level.

RESOURCES AND FUNDING

2. Senator BYRD. General Jones, the ambitious agenda laid out in these two reports will require concerted international effort and coordination, as well as substantial resources. Please describe in more detail the military and economic resources that you believe would be required to achieve your prescribed outcome, both from the international community as a whole and from the United States. From where would you reallocate these resources?

General JONES.

Military Resources

It is my understanding that NATO military commanders have asked allies, including the United States, for several additional maneuver battalions, as well as heavy and medium lift helicopters and airborne intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance. The alliance has those resources in its inventory. It is a lack of political will, whether due to force overstretch, financial costs to deploy, or domestic politics, that keeps these gaps from being filled. Given the large numbers of U.S. forces already deployed to Afghanistan, these resources should come from our allies.

Economic Resources

Success in Afghanistan will not come without a revamped civilian effort to convert tactical military success into large scale strategic gains. This means that the international community must provide more aid to help build a functioning and competent civilian government in Afghanistan. For instance, the European Union (EU) could provide more police trainers in Afghanistan to help create a society based on the rule of law. Those allies who cannot provide forces to International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) can provide civil reconstruction assistance, whether in terms of money or people. For example, those allies could stand up another Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). Ideally new U.N. envoy Kai Eide will be able to marshal these resources into a more efficient and focused effort to affect real change in the country. Increased activity and coordination of PRTs will be necessary to achieve lasting success in Afghanistan as well.

Specifically, more development resources should be directed to infrastructure development, especially outlays on roads, power, and water systems. These will be crucial in the overall improvement in security, governance, and economic growth in Afghanistan. Afghan workers and resources should be used whenever possible to create job growth.

3. Senator BYRD. General Jones, your report describes corruption in Afghanistan that has reached a level where only $1 in aid out of every $10 goes directly to Afghans, compounding already difficult reform and reconstruction problems. Until this situation is corrected, how can you expect the American public to support further expenditure of already scarce tax dollars toward Afghan reconstruction?

General JONES. The estimate that only $1 of every $10 distributed in aid goes to the Afghan people is an indication of how inefficient (and costly) the distribution of assistance is in Afghanistan. The long-term hopes of Afghanistan lie in enhanced and better coordinated civilian aid to the Afghan people. Numerous allied and international officials have commented on the lack of human capital in Afghanistan in the public and private sectors. The good news is that the mandate of Kai Eide as U.N. High Representative is to ensure that international assistance (including U.S. assistance) goes towards meeting a common strategic vision and goal.

Still, despite the fact that poverty remains one of the major problems in Afghanistan, there are a number of economic indicators that should reassure the American taxpayer that progress is being made with their aid dollars. Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, economic growth has averaged 8.7 percent annually, resulting in a doubling of per capita gross domestic product since 2002. Inflation remains low, the Afghan national currency is stable, and currency reserves are stable and sit at $5 billion. Agricultural output continues to rise and the country is presently experiencing a construction boom thanks to foreign aid, refugee return, and a growth in trade.

4. Senator BYRD. General Jones, is it reasonable to expect that Afghan security forces and judicial systems can be established and be effective quickly enough to make a difference?

General JONES. Generally, success in Afghanistan will not come quickly, particularly in the civil reconstruction side.

Afghan Security Forces

In terms of the Afghan National Army (ANA), they are beginning to make a difference and are growing in numbers. There are nearly 57,000 personnel in the ANA today, and we are seeing signs that the Afghan security forces are able to lead operations with just NATO advisors and support. They are close to being able to take responsibility for security in certain sectors, such as in Kabul.

The Focused District Development plan has been put in place now to reduce corruption and improve competence in the police force. Specifically, officers are taken out of the force, rescreened, and then given remedial training before being put back into the force. This plan is starting to take hold and officers are already graduating and being put back into the police force.

Judicial System (including the Afghan National Police (ANP))

The Afghan judicial system has much work to do to become a credible, respected institution with reach throughout Afghanistan. Especially needing improvement is the ANP, but a renewed effort there to retrain forces and improve corruption indices is making progress.

Fortunately, the Europeans offered in 2007 to provide $777 million over the next 4 years to improve governance, with over 40 percent of that money dedicated to judicial system reform. In particular, the system has faced a problem with poorly trained and corrupt officials.

In 2006, President Karzai appointed a fresh team of judges and made a series of reforms that will hopefully begin to bear fruit in the future. As part of Karzai's reforms, the new Supreme Court justices are given the responsibility to monitor judicial activity in the district to which they are assigned. To prevent nepotism and corruption in the process of selecting justices, committees were created to screen and select potential judges based on applicants' education and background, and each committee must include a member of the Supreme Court.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. AKAKA

AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

5. Senator AKAKA. General Jones, looking ahead, it seems that one of the most critical challenges to long-lasting stability in Afghanistan is a shortfall in the number of trainers capable of mentoring the ANA so that it is eventually capable of defending its own borders from Taliban and al Qaeda sanctuaries in neighboring Pakistan. Without NATO assistance with providing language-skilled trainers, is the United States capable of fulfilling this shortfall in developing effective Afghani forces?

General JONES. Training and mentoring of Afghan national forces is one of the most important tasks facing the alliance and its partners today in Afghanistan. While I must defer to the U.S. Government on whether the United States is capable of fulfilling this mission without NATO assistance, it is important to point out that NATO and the international community is assisting in the training of Afghan forces and is increasing their effort. We have seen a number of our allies increase their training contributions—including the French—following the NATO Defense ministers meeting in the Netherlands.

In addition, for nations that cannot provide combat forces to Afghanistan, providing trainers, especially police trainers, will go far in assisting the Afghan Government to build a nation. Providing personnel for an Operational Mentor and Liaison

Team is an excellent way to play a major role in the training and mentoring of the Afghan army.

Frankly speaking, the ANA is one of the real successes of a post-Taliban Afghanistan. There was no ANA just several years ago, and already the force is at 57,000 with the goal of reaching 70,000 by March 2008.

Finally, as mentioned before, problems in Afghanistan are part of a larger regional problem that will require creative thinking for the U.S. Government, NATO, and the international community. Pakistan itself seems unwilling or unable to secure the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and eliminate radicalism in its frontier provinces. It is time for the United States and NATO to develop a regional strategy for the problems in Afghanistan, and that would include a reassessment of the aid and assistance programs in place for Pakistani security forces as well. After all, controlling the Pakistani-Afghan border will be most effective if both countries are actively participating in the effort.

LONG-TERM AFGHANISTAN STRATEGY

6. Senator AKAKA. Ambassador Inderfurth, one of your overarching recommendations was to propose an Eminent Persons Group to "develop a long-term, coherent international strategy for Afghanistan". I am very concerned that in 6½ years of combat operations and international aid efforts, we are still hearing calls for the big-picture strategy. What has been the major problem with developing this coherent strategy for achieving long-term success in Afghanistan up to this point, and how can it be overcome?

Ambassador INDERFURTH. Many factors have contributed to the inability to create a coherent strategy for achieving long-term success in Afghanistan up to this point. In the United States, there has been a lack of coherence driven by both the focus on Iraq (which at least partly came on the expense of strategic resources being devoted to Afghanistan), coupled by the more systemic difficulty to coordinate policy effectively within the executive branch. This is why the Afghanistan Study Group has also recommended to decouple Iraq and Afghanistan and appoint a special envoy to Afghanistan within the executive branch. On the international level, the United States has been successful in rallying allies to the mission in Afghanistan, after initially turning down NATO's offer of assistance in the aftermath of September 11. However, this also presents a challenge when there is a need to coordinate on a strategic level. The problem is compounded by the multitude of private contractors and NGOs that work in Afghanistan. The issue of international coordination has been identified as one of the key issues that require urgent attention.

More than 6 years after the beginning of the international intervention in Afghanistan, we believe that now is a critical moment to rethink our strategies, and that is why we suggested a concrete effort to develop a new strategy on an international level through an eminent persons group.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARK PRYOR

TRAINING

7. Senator PRYOR. General Jones, one of your overarching recommendations is to decouple Afghanistan in the legislative process and in the management of these conflicts in the executive branch. In your report you state that tying together Afghanistan and Iraq also creates the false impression that they consist of the same mission. Yet, you identify issues such as a coherent and resourced strategy to increase the reach, capacity, and the legitimacy of the Afghan Government, fighting terrorism from al Qaeda insurgents, a reconstruction effort aimed at infrastructure, roads, power, and water systems, the resurrection of an integrated and effective justice system, and a focused effort and resources on training and standing up the ANA and recruiting, training, and providing adequate pay and equipment to the ANP to maintain security in an area once coalition forces depart. Besides enhances in poppy crop eradication and interdiction initiatives of a counternarcotics policy, can you explain what you found to be the differences in philosophy and strategic vision between the two conflicts that warrant such a "decoupling" of the budget process for authorizations, appropriations, and supplemental requests?

General JONES. I would argue that although these two conflicts face a number of commonalities, the differences between them are greater than you implied. One of the problems that we face is that lumping the two together sometime result in creating a false image of similarity between the conflicts.

First, the Afghan war is one in which we are engaged with all of our 26 NATO allies and coalition partners under the alliance umbrella. The war in Iraq has enjoyed a not insignificant level of coalition support, but it has never been fought under the NATO umbrella with such sustained international engagement. This implies that in dealing with the challenges in Afghanistan the United States faces different opportunities, but also challenges, with regard to joint efforts with our allies.

Second, Afghanistan is a tribal country where the divisions between groups are not based on religious affiliations. While one of the major challenges in Iraq is to create a shared power between different religious groups, in Afghanistan the challenges are different and are less based on the issue of power sharing among different ethnic or religious groups.

Third, the poppy problem is more significant than you imply. The poppy issue affects governance, security, economic, and societal issues in Afghanistan. It is intimately linked with the resurgence of the insurgency in Afghanistan and is a major factor in the corruption and poor governance in the country. The United States will be hard pressed to succeed in achieving its political goals in Afghanistan without creating a non-drug-based economy.

Fourth, the Afghan war is intimately linked to the political and security struggles of Pakistan. The Iraq conflict is tied into regional dynamics as well, with the questionable intent of neighboring countries such as Syria and Iran affecting coalition efforts in a negative fashion. The ability, or lack thereof, of Pakistan to secure the border with Afghanistan is a crucial factor in the ability of the alliance to win the battle against the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan. It is for this region that NATO needs to approach the Afghan mission in a regional context to achieve success. If the border remains porous and Afghanistan cannot prevent the militants from gaining sanctuary, the alliance will not defeat the Afghan insurgency.

Lastly, perhaps the most substantial difference is the opportunity to create different coalitions for these two conflicts. Decoupling can help both domestically and internationally in that regard. Also, delinking the funding processes for these two conflicts can assist in more balanced approach to funding priorities in each conflict on the basis of its own merits.

As stated in the Afghanistan Study Group Report, decoupling the two conflicts within the executive and legislative branch would "enable more coherence and focus and on the increasingly important Afghanistan (and related Pakistan) issues [and] will likely improve the overall U.S. approach to fighting global terrorism."

8. Senator PRYOR. General Jones, what is your recommended policy roadmap as to how to organize, implement, and administer this recommendation?

General JONES. I would argue that unfortunately, our allies already see the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq as inextricably linked because the U.S. Government has been rhetorically linking the conflicts for the last 5 years. Despite that, the United States should immediately cease referring to the war in Iraq and Afghanistan together as 'the war on terror.' Yes, the United States is fighting terrorists in Iraq, as in Afghanistan. However, this rhetoric is fundamentally unhelpful in dealing with our allies and building support for enhanced engagement in Afghanistan. In fact, according to experts in the region, it is even undermining public support for NATO amongst countries seeking to join the alliance in the Balkans, as they believe that by joining NATO they will be obligated to send forces to Iraq. I would argue as well that NATO needs a regional strategy and approach to the Afghan conflict. The United States and a few of its allies are aware that the Afghan conflict cannot be decoupled from what is happening in Pakistan. The United States needs to work to create a framework or mechanism in which NATO itself can be engaged with Pakistan to better address the border issues that are hampering efforts to secure Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan Study Group called for the decoupling to take place in both the executive branch and the legislative branch. On the legislative side, appropriations, especially defense appropriation, need to be delinked. On the executive side, the ASG called for the appointment of a Special Envoy to Afghanistan that would be charged with coordinating and orchestrating all aspects of U.S. policies towards Afghanistan, to ensure a more comprehensive, strategic approach to managing that conflict in the interagency level. The challenge of coordinating the missions in Afghanistan is compounded by the need to coordinate with NATO as well as multiple different agencies and NGOs on the ground. Without a designated official it is hard to envision a necessarily effective strategic approach to Afghanistan that is not overinfluenced by day-to-day events in Iraq. As the ASG report stated, "while potentially challenging and possible contentious within the U.S. bureaucracy, higher level of coordination in Washington is necessary to increase our chances of success in Afghanistan."

NATO COOPERATION

9. Senator PRYOR. General Jones, your report indicates that NATO faces a lack of a common strategic vision and has struggled to increase the number of combat troops and military equipment in Afghanistan, particularly in Kandahar Province. While Canada is the third largest contributor to the military effort in Afghanistan next to the United States and United Kingdom and has been engaged in the region since early 2002, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper has warned that Canada may withdraw its troops from the ISAF if NATO fails to station additional coalition troops in the southern part of Afghanistan. What have you concluded about the cooperative fashion among those entities representing NATO, the U.N., and the EU?

General JONES. While all three organizations are cooperating to some degree in Afghanistan, there is clearly not the close, daily coordination between these three major international actors. In part, institutional blockages limit cooperation on these matters. Namely, the Turkey-Cyprus diplomatic conflict limits the development of formal dialogue and consultations between top NATO and EU leadership. Furthermore, the EU defense ministers rarely—if ever—discuss the issue of Afghanistan when they meet as a group.

Achieving long-term systemic EU–NATO cooperation in theory is a major diplomatic task that will require sustained effort and cooperation. However, improved practical cooperation is possible, particularly if new U.N. High Representative Kai Eide receives the mandate and authority needed to improve coordination in Afghanistan among the major international actors. The U.N., NATO, and the EU need to work with the Karzai Government to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that they all can implement to provide assistance efficiently.

10. Senator PRYOR. General Jones, how can we bring about a more unified strategy for operations?

General JONES. There are a number of ways we can bring about a more unified strategy for operations.

First, the alliance is presently working to create a common strategic vision and 5 year plan for Afghanistan to be released at the NATO Summit in Bucharest. This document will articulate to NATO member publics the rationale for being in Afghanistan and the need to achieve the goals outlined in this strategic vision. It will call on NATO allies to pledge to share the burden together and to commit to achieving long-term alliance goals.

Unfortunately, a document won't fix the problems of coordination in Afghanistan. A more sustained diplomatic effort is required. One major issue facing the allied effort is a lack of PRT coordination among the nations involved. Until now, national PRTs have coordinated with their country capitals rather than working with other PRTs in the region to target their efforts for maximal effect. Unfortunately NATO–EU cooperation is lacking, and not just in Afghanistan. The Atlantic Council, of which I am Chairman, is working to propose ideas on how to improve the NATO–EU relationship, but unfortunately, bureaucratic blockages and diplomatic differences make improved coordination between these two organizations exceedingly difficult. Ultimately, improving NATO–EU cooperation will require a more sustained and long-term diplomatic effort among the United States and its allies than a simple NATO summit meeting.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROGER WICKER

AFGHAN POLICE FORCE

11. Senator WICKER. General Jones and Ambassador Inderfurth, in your testimony you discuss the problems surrounding the Afghan police force. Specifically, you detail reports of corruption throughout. As we assist in the development of a reliable and effective Afghan police force, what steps are being taken to weed out vulnerable police recruits during the training process?

General JONES. The ANP force is a weak link in the effort to provide security in Afghanistan and corruption is a particular problem in the police. Therefore, NATO has undertaken a review of the current police force to attempt to weed out corrupt officers, ensure that they have proper training, and better determine where they come from. This process is called Focused District Development, an initiative developed by the Afghan Ministry of Interior. ISAF works with the Afghans to identify regions particularly affected by corruption and then takes the officers in that district offline for 8 weeks to provide them with remedial training, make sure that they are the right people for the job, and ensure that they are capable of providing the level of service the job requires. It is our hope and intent that this type of training

will help instill a culture of service necessary to create a more effective Afghan police force. The first class graduated in late February 2008.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. I concur with General Jones' response.

12. Senator WICKER. General Jones and Ambassador Inderfurth, are police candidates screened prior to training?

General JONES. Police candidates are screened prior to training, and over the last year and a half, efforts have been made to improve screening of police recruits to ensure that they do not have ties to extremism or criminal backgrounds.

However, it should be remembered that good recruits with clean backgrounds can be pushed into corruption by circumstances. It is for this reason that proper training, improved morale, and timely pay of decent wages be seen as a priority for reducing corruption among the Afghan police forces.

Ambassador INDERFURTH. I concur with General Jones' response.

[Annexes A through G follow:]

ANNEX A

U.S. Department of Defense
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)
Speech

On the Web:
http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1214
Media contact: +1 (703) 697-5131/697-5132

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Munich Conference on Security Policy
As Delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Munich, Germany, Sunday, February 10, 2008

Thank you, Horst. I would also like to thank the people of Munich for once again allowing us to gather in this beautiful city.

I am glad to see many of my colleagues here, as well as many of the delegations that were with us in Vilnius for the NATO ministerial. As I said in Vilnius – three weeks ago I accomplished a key goal I have been pursuing for the past year: through the good offices of the *Los Angeles Times*, I finally brought unity to NATO – though not as I wished.

It is an honor to be invited to speak here for a second, and last, year as U.S. Secretary of Defense.

Vilnius was my fourth NATO ministerial since taking this post, but my first in a nation that had been part of the former Soviet Union. Lithuania was one of the first nations to be swallowed by the Soviets, and the first republic to declare its independence as Baltic push came to Soviet shove. It is now a proud member of NATO, and the leader of a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan.

For the transatlantic alliance, the period in which Lithuania and other captive nations gained their independence was a time of reflection. Not only were we pondering enlargement to secure the wave of democracy sweeping across Eastern Europe, but NATO was also pondering the very concept of collective self-defense in a post- Cold War world.

We saw this in 1991, when NATO issued its first Strategic Concept. This document recognized that a "single massive and global threat ha[d] given way to diverse and multi-directional risks" – challenges such as weapons proliferation; disruption of the flow of vital resources; ethnic conflict; and terrorism. Overcoming these threats, the document stated, would require a "broad approach to security," with political, economic, and social elements.

From the perspective of one who played a role in that effort to redirect NATO 17 years ago, today I would like to discuss a subject that embodies the security challenges that have emerged since that time, and correspondingly, the capabilities we need, in this new era.

That subject is, not surprisingly, Afghanistan. After six years of war, at a time when many sense frustration, impatience, or even exhaustion with this mission, I believe it is valuable to step back and take stock of Afghanistan:

- First, within the context of the long-standing purpose of the Alliance, and how it relates to the threats of a post Cold War world;
- Second, with regard to NATO's vision of becoming a transformed, multifaceted, expeditionary force – and how we have evolved in accordance with that vision; and
- Finally, to recapitulate to the people of Europe the importance of the Afghanistan mission and its relationship to the wider terrorist threat.

There is little doubt that the mission in Afghanistan is unprecedented. It is, in fact, NATO's first ground war and it is dramatically different than anything NATO has done before. However, on a conceptual level, I believe it falls squarely within the traditional bounds of the Alliance's core purpose: to defend the security interests and values of the transatlantic community.

During the 1990s, even as we tried to predict what form the threats of the 21st century would take, Afghanistan was, in reality becoming exactly what we were discussing in theory. Subsequent events during the ensuing years have shown that:

- Instability and conflict abroad have the potential to spread and strike directly at the hearts of our nations;
- New technology and communications connect criminal and terrorist networks far and wide, and allow local problems to become regional and even global;
- Economic, social, and humanitarian problems caused by massive immigration flows radiate outward with little regard for national borders;

- A nexus between narcotics and terrorists increases the resources available to extremists in the region, while increasing the drug flow to European streets; and
- The presence of safe havens, combined with a lack of development and governance, allow Islamic extremists to turn a poisonous ideology into a global movement.

More than five years ago in Prague, in the wake of the September 11th attacks, our nations set out to transform NATO into an expeditionary force capable of dealing with threats of this type – capable of helping other nations help themselves to avoid Afghanistan's fate. At the time, I imagine many were unsure of what, exactly, this would look like – what new structures, training, funding, mindsets, and manpower would be needed. Since then, however, we have applied our vision on the ground in Afghanistan.

Today:

- Nearly 50,000 troops from some 40 allies and partner nations serve under NATO command, thousands of miles from the Alliance's traditional borders;
- Growing numbers of reconstruction and security training teams are making a real difference in the lives of the Afghan people; and
- NATO's offensive and counterinsurgency operations in the South have dislodged the Taliban from their strongholds and reduced their ability to launch large scale or coordinated attacks.

Due to NATO's efforts, as Minister Jung pointed out yesterday, Afghanistan has made substantial progress in health care, education, and the economy – bettering the lives of millions of its citizens.

Through the Afghan mission, we have developed a much more sophisticated understanding of what capabilities we need as an Alliance and what shortcomings must be addressed.

Since the Riga summit, there has been much focus on whether all allies are meeting their commitments and carrying their share of the burden. I have had a few things to say about that myself. In truth, virtually all allies are fulfilling the individual commitments they have made. The problem is that the Alliance as a whole has not fulfilled its broader commitment from Riga to meet the force requirements of the commander in the field.

As we think about how to satisfy those requirements, we should look more creatively at other ways to ensure that all allies can contribute more to this mission – and share this burden. But we must not – we cannot – become a two-tiered Alliance of those who are willing to fight and those who are not. Such a development, with all its implications for collective security, would effectively destroy the Alliance.

As many of you know, a Strategic Vision document is being drafted that will assess NATO's and our partners' achievements in Afghanistan, and will produce a set of realistic goals and a roadmap to meet them over the next three to five years. We continue urgently to need a senior civilian – a European in my view – to coordinate all non-military international assistance to the Afghan government and people. The lack of such coordination is seriously hampering our efforts to help the Afghans build a free and secure country.

The really hard question the Alliance faces is whether the whole of our effort is adding up to less than the sum of its parts, and, if that is the case, what we should do to reverse that equation.

As an Alliance, we must be willing to discard some of the bureaucratic hurdles that have accumulated over the years and hinder our progress in Afghanistan. This means more willingness to think and act differently – and quickly. To pass initiatives such as the NATO Commander's Emergency Response Fund. This tool has proven itself elsewhere, but will, for NATO, require a more flexible approach to budgeting and funding.

Additionally, it is clear that we need a common set of training standards for every one going to Afghanistan – whether they are combat troops conducting counterinsurgency operations; civilians working in Provincial Reconstruction Teams; or members of operational mentoring and liaison training teams. Unless we are all on the same page – unless our efforts are tied together and unified by similar tactics, training, and goals – then the whole of our efforts will indeed be less than the sum of the parts.

I also worry that there is a developing theology about a clear-cut division of labor between civilian and military matters – one that sometimes plays out in debates over the respective roles of the European Union and NATO, and even among the NATO allies. In many respects, this conversation echoes one that has taken place – and still is – in the United States within the civilian and military agencies of the U.S. government as a result of the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns.

For the United States, the lessons we have learned these past six years – and in many cases re-learned – have not been easy ones. We have stumbled along the way, and we are still learning. Now, in Iraq, we are applying a comprehensive strategy that emphasizes the security of the local population – those who will ultimately take control of their own security – and brings to bear in the same place and very often at the same time civilian resources for economic and political development.

We have learned that war in the 21st century does not have stark divisions between civilian and military components. It is a continuous scale that slides from combat operations to economic development, governance and reconstruction – frequently all at the same time.

The Alliance must put aside any theology that attempts clearly to divide civilian and military

operations. It is unrealistic. We must live in the real world. As we noted as far back as 1991, in the real world, security has economic, political, and social dimensions. And vice versa. The E.U. and NATO need to find ways to work together better, to share certain roles – neither excluding NATO from civilian operations nor barring the E.U. from military missions. In short, I agree entirely with Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer and Minister Morin's comments yesterday that there must be a "complimentarity" between the E.U. and NATO.

At the same time, in NATO, some allies ought not to have the luxury of opting only for stability and civilian operations, thus forcing other Allies to bear a disproportionate share of the fighting and the dying.

Overall, the last few years have seen a dramatic evolution in NATO's thinking and in its posture. With all the new capabilities we have forged in the heat of battle – and with new attitudes – we are seeing what it means to be expeditionary. What is required to spread stability beyond our borders. We must now commit ourselves to institutionalize what we have learned and to complete our transformation.

Just as we must be realistic about the nature and complexity of the struggle in Afghanistan, so too must we be realistic about politics in our various countries. NATO, after all, is an alliance whose constituent governments all answer to their citizens.

My colleagues in Vilnius and those in this room certainly understand the serious threat we face in Afghanistan. But I am concerned that many people on this continent may not comprehend the magnitude of the direct threat to European security. For the United States, September 11th was a galvanizing event – one that opened the American public's eyes to dangers from distant lands. It was especially poignant since our government had been heavily involved in Afghanistan in the 1980s, only to make the grievous error – of which I was at least partly responsible – of abandoning a destitute and war-torn nation after the last Soviet soldier crossed the Termez bridge.

While nearly all the Alliance governments appreciate the importance of the Afghanistan mission, European public support for it is weak. Many Europeans question the relevance of our actions and doubt whether the mission is worth the lives of their sons and daughters. As a result, many want to remove their troops. The reality of fragile coalition governments makes it difficult to take risks. And communicating the seriousness of the threat posed by Islamic extremism in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Europe, and globally remains a steep challenge.

As opinion leaders and government officials, we are the ones who must make the case publicly and persistently.

So now I would like to add my voice to those of many allied leaders on the continent and speak directly to the people of Europe: The threat posed by violent Islamic extremism is real – and it is not going away. You know all too well about the attacks in Madrid and London. But there have also been multiple smaller attacks in Istanbul, Amsterdam, Paris, and Glasgow, among others. Numerous cells and plots have been disrupted in recent years as well – many of them seeking large-scale death and destruction, such as:

- A complex plot to down multiple airliners over the Atlantic that could have killed hundreds or thousands;
- A plot to use ricin and release cyanide in the London Underground;
- A separate plan for a chemical attack in the Paris metro;
- Plots in Belgium, England, and Germany involving car bombs that could have killed hundreds;
- Homemade bombs targeting commuter and high-speed trains in Spain and Germany;
- Individuals arrested in Bosnia with explosives, a suicide belt, and an instructional propaganda video;
- Two plots in Denmark involving explosives, fertilizer, and a bomb-making video; and
- Just in the last few weeks, Spanish authorities arrested 14 Islamic extremists in Barcelona suspected of planning suicide attacks against public transport systems in Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, and Britain.

Imagine, for a moment, if some or all of these attacks had come to pass. Imagine if Islamic terrorists had managed to strike your capitals on the same scale as they struck in New York. Imagine if they had laid their hands on weapons and materials with even greater destructive capability – weapons of the sort all too easily accessible in the world today. We forget at our peril that the ambition of Islamic extremists is limited only by opportunity.

We should also remember that terrorist cells in Europe are not purely homegrown or unconnected to events far away – or simply a matter of domestic law and order. Some are funded from abroad. Some hate all western democracies, not just the United States. Many who have been arrested have had direct connections to Al Qaeda. Some have met with top leaders or attended training camps abroad. Some are connected to Al Qaeda in Iraq. In the most recent case, the Barcelona cell appears to have ties to a terrorist training network run by Baitullah Mehsud, a Pakistan-based extremist commander affiliated with the Taliban and Al Qaeda – who we believe was responsible for the assassination of Benazir Bhutto.

What unites them is that they are all followers of the same movement – a movement that is no longer tethered to any strict hierarchy but one that has become an independent force of its own. Capable of animating a corps of devoted followers without direct contact. And capable of inspiring violence without direct orders.

It is an ideological movement that has, over the years, been methodically built on the illusion of success. After all, about the only thing they have accomplished recently is the death of thousands of innocent Muslims while trying to create discord across the Middle East. So far they have failed. But they have twisted this reality into an aura of success in many parts of the world. It raises the question: What would happen if the false success they proclaim became real success? If they triumphed in Iraq or Afghanistan, or managed to topple the government of Pakistan? Or a major Middle Eastern government?

Aside from the chaos that would instantly be sown in the region, success there would beget success on many other fronts as the cancer metastasized further and more rapidly than it already has. Many more followers could join their ranks, both in the region and in susceptible populations across the globe. With safe havens in the Middle East, and new tactics honed on the battlefield and transmitted via the Internet, violence and terrorism worldwide could surge.

I am not indulging in scare tactics. Nor am I exaggerating either the threat or inflating the consequences of a victory for the extremists. Nor am I saying that the extremists are ten feet tall. The task before us is to fracture and destroy this movement in its infancy – to permanently reduce its ability to strike globally and catastrophically, while deflating its ideology. Our best opportunity as an alliance to do this is in Afghanistan. Just as the hollowness of Communism was laid bare with the collapse of the Soviet Union, so too would success in Afghanistan, as well as in Iraq, strike a decisive blow against what some commentators have called Al Qaeda-ism.

This is a steep challenge. But the events of the last year have proven one thing above all else: If we are willing to stand together, we can prevail. It will not be quick, and it will not be easy – but it can be done.

In the years ahead, the credibility of NATO, and indeed the viability of the Euro-Atlantic security project itself, will depend on how we perform now. Other actors in the global arena – Hezbollah, Iran and others – are watching what we say and what we do, and making choices about their future course.

Everyone knows that in 2009 the United States will have a new administration. And this time, next year, you will be hearing from a new Secretary of Defense.

But regardless of which party is in power, regardless who stands at this podium, the threats we face now and in the future are real. They will not go away. Overcoming them will require unity between opposition parties and across various governments, and uncommon purpose within the Alliance and with other friends and partners.

began my remarks with a bit of history about NATO in the 1990s. I would like to close with a few words about the dawn of the transatlantic Alliance.

From our present-day vantage point, victory in the Cold War now seems almost preordained. But as we prepare to celebrate NATO's 60th anniversary next year, it is useful to recall that 60 years ago this year, in 1948, the year of the Berlin airlift, few people would have been all that optimistic about the future of Europe, or the prospect of a Western alliance. The Continent was devastated, its economy in shambles. The United States was debating the European recovery program – known as the Marshall Plan – and faced a resurgent isolationism. Europe was under siege – with pressure from communism being felt in Germany, France, Finland, Norway, Italy, Czechoslovakia, and Greece.

In January of that year, Ernest Bevin, the British foreign secretary, went before parliament to discuss the Soviet Union and other threats to the United Kingdom. Between all the "kindred souls of the West," he said, "there should be an effective understanding bound together by common ideals for which the Western Powers have twice in one generation shed their blood."

Less than two months later, President Harry Truman stood in the United States Congress and echoed that sentiment. He said: "The time has come when the free men and women of the world must face the threat to their liberty squarely and courageously . . . Unity of purpose, unity of effort, and unity of spirit are essential to accomplish the task before us."

That unity held for decades through ups and downs. It held despite divisions and discord, stresses and strains, and through several crises where another war in Europe loomed. Alexis de Tocqueville once warned that democracies, when it comes to foreign affairs, were ill-suited to pursue a "great undertaking" and "follow it [through] with determination." But the democracies of the West did just that – for more than 40 years. And they can do so once more today.

We must find the resolve to confront together a new set of challenges. So that, many years from now, our children and their children will look back on this period as a time when we recommitted ourselves to the common ideals that bind us together. A time when we again faced a threat to peace and to our liberty squarely and courageously. A time when we again shed blood and helped war devastated people nourish the seeds of freedom and create peaceful, productive societies. That mission drew us together in 1948 and keeps us together today.

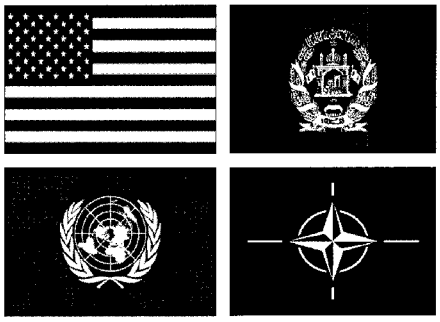
Many years from now, perhaps future generations will look back on this period and say, "victory seemed almost preordained."

Thank you.

ANNEX B

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE PRESIDENCY

AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP REPORT



REVITALIZING OUR EFFORTS RETHINKING OUR STRATEGIES

Co-Chairs:
General James L. Jones, USMC (Ret.)
Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering

Release Date: January 30, 2008
Second Edition

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About the Center for the Study of the Presidency

The Center for the Study of the Presidency, founded in 1965, is a non-profit, non-partisan 501(c)(3) organization. The Center's mission is to promote leadership in the Presidency and the Congress to generate innovative solutions to current national challenges; preserve the historic memory of the Presidency by identifying lessons from the successes and failures of such leadership; draw on a wide range of talent to offer ways to better organize an increasingly compartmentalized Federal Government; and educate and inspire the next generation of America's leaders to incorporate civility, inclusiveness, and character into their public and private lives and discourse.

Other CSP publications include:

A Call to Greatness: Challenging Our Next President (Rowman and Littlefield, 2008).

Presidential Studies Quarterly (ISSN 0360-4918).

Papers of the 2005-2006 Center Fellows (Washington, D.C., 2006).

Facing the Character Crisis in America (Washington, D.C., 2006).

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* The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the institutional affiliations of any or all of the members of the Study Group. Participants endorsed the general policy thrust and judgments in the report, though not necessarily every finding.

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LETTER FROM CO-CHAIRS

Afghanistan stands today at a crossroads. The progress achieved after six years of international engagement is under serious threat from resurgent violence, weakening international resolve, mounting regional challenges and a growing lack of confidence on the part of the Afghan people about the future direction of their country. The United States and the international community have tried to win the struggle in Afghanistan with too few military forces and insufficient economic aid, and without a clear and consistent comprehensive strategy to fill the power vacuum outside Kabul and to counter the combined challenges of reconstituted Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a runaway opium economy, and the stark poverty faced by most Afghans.

We believe that success in Afghanistan remains a critical national security imperative for the United States and the international community. Achieving that success will require a sustained, multi-year commitment from the U.S. and a willingness to make the war in Afghanistan – and the rebuilding of that country – a higher U.S. foreign policy priority. Although the obstacles there remain substantial, the strategic consequences of failure in Afghanistan would be severe for long-term U.S. interests in the region and for security at home. Allowing the Taliban to re-establish its influence in Afghanistan, as well as failure to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a failed state, would not only undermine the development of the country, it would constitute a major victory for al-Qaeda and its global efforts to spread violence and extremism.

The "light footprint" in Afghanistan needs to be replaced with the "right footprint" by the U.S. and its allies. It is time to re-vitalize and re-double our efforts toward stabilizing Afghanistan and re-think our economic and military strategies to ensure that the level of our commitment is commensurate with the threat posed by possible failure in Afghanistan. Without the right level of commitment on the part of the U.S., its allies, and Afghanistan's neighbors, the principles agreed upon by both the Afghan government and the international community at the 2006 London Conference and the goals stated in the Afghanistan Compact will not be achievable. Additionally, recent events in Pakistan further emphasize that there can be no successful outcome for Afghanistan if its neighbors, especially Pakistan, are not part of the solution.

The efforts of the Afghanistan Study Group to help re-think U.S. strategy comes at a time when polls indicate a weakening of resolve in the international community to see the effort in Afghanistan through to a successful conclusion. The Pew Global Attitudes Survey of June 2007 reported that the publics of NATO countries with significant numbers of troops in Afghanistan are divided over whether U.S. and NATO forces should be brought home immediately, or should remain until the country is stabilized. In all but two countries, the U.S. and the United Kingdom, majorities said troops should be withdrawn as soon as possible.

Moreover, recent polls in Afghanistan reflect a downward turn in attitudes toward the ability of the Afghan government and the international community to improve those conditions the Afghan people identify as the most critical problems facing the country: insecurity, weak governance, widespread corruption, a poor economy and unemployment.

What should the United States and the international community do to address the many obstacles to success in Afghanistan? Many efforts to assess what needs to be done at this point have included an analysis of the mistakes that have been made – and the opportunities lost – since the Taliban were removed from power in late 2001. While we acknowledge that mistakes have been made, the Study

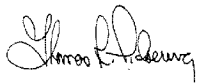
Group focuses its attention on the future – analyzing the current situation with a view to what is needed to match our strategies with our goals and the required resources.

After offering its assessment of the current situation in Afghanistan, the Study Group addresses six critical issues to revitalize the U.S. and international effort in Afghanistan – international coordination, security, governance and the rule of law, counter-narcotics, economic development and reconstruction, and Afghanistan and its neighbors. Policy recommendations of the Study Group on each of these issues are found in italics.

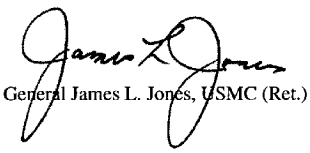
In addition to the recommendations on these six issues, the Study Group offers three overarching recommendations to bring sharper focus and attention to Afghanistan – within the U.S. government and within the broader international community. The first is a proposal for the Administration and the Congress to decouple Iraq and Afghanistan in the legislative process and in the management of these conflicts in the Executive branch. The second is to establish a Special Envoy for Afghanistan position within the U.S. government, charged with coordinating all aspects of U.S. policies towards Afghanistan. The third is to propose an international mandate to formulate a new unified strategy to stabilize Afghanistan over the next five years and to build international support for it.

At the most recent NATO Defense Ministerials, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said: "We need to lift our sights and see what is required for long-term success." In this regard we strongly commend the efforts now underway within the U.S. government and other national governments; NATO, the EU and the UN; non-governmental organizations; and, most importantly, Afghanistan itself to address the many shortcomings in current strategies and policies.

It is in this spirit – and with the hope of elevating the dialogue of the critical importance of succeeding in Afghanistan – that the Afghanistan Study Group offers this report and its recommendations.



Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering



General James L. Jones, USMC (Ret.)

BACKGROUND

"It is critical for the United States to provide additional political, economic and military support for Afghanistan, including resources that might become available as combat forces are moved from Iraq."
- Iraq Study Group Report, Recommendation 18

The Center for the Study of the Presidency (CSP) was closely engaged in the work of the Iraq Study Group. During the discussions of that group it became more and more evident that Afghanistan was at great risk of becoming "the forgotten war." Participants and witnesses pointed to the danger of losing the war in Afghanistan unless a reassessment took place of the effort being undertaken in that country by the United States, NATO and the international community.

In the spring of 2007, recognizing the importance of making policy makers in Washington aware of the deepening crisis in Afghanistan, Center President Ambassador David M. Abshire decided to establish a smaller-scale study group. The Afghanistan Study Group's work has been conducted on a voluntary pro-bono basis under the auspices of the Center for the Study of the Presidency. With the Iraq Study Group experience in mind, this group attempted to work on a flexible and agile basis to ensure that its work bears results as soon as possible. For more focused work, the group also decided to center its analysis on several key issues that its members identified as both urgent and crucial for future success.

The group, co-chaired by Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering and General James L. Jones, included prominent experts on the region and on foreign policy (a list is available in the front of this report). In addition to its working sessions, the group held consultative sessions with: Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns and Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Richard Boucher; former United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General to Afghanistan, Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi; Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, Mahmud Durrani; Ambassador of Afghanistan to the United States, Said Tayeb Jawad; and United States Ambassador to NATO Victoria Nuland (via video-teleconference).[†]

The goal of the Afghanistan Study Group is to provide policy makers with key recommendations that will lead to a re-vitalization and re-doubling of the United States and international community's commitment and effort in Afghanistan. The study group's findings and proposals will be shared with U.S. government officials, Members of Congress, key officials in NATO and at the United Nations, and representatives of the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as other interested governments and parties. We hope that, taken together, the work and commitment of all these parties in the months ahead will ensure that the current war in Afghanistan is not forgotten, but won for the safety and well-being of the people of Afghanistan, the region and the world community.

[†] The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of any or all of these individuals.

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OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

While most of our analysis and recommendations fall into specific subject areas – including security, governance, counter-narcotics, development, and regional considerations – some of the challenges and solutions facing our effort in Afghanistan cut across those issues. This section deals with crosscutting recommendations.

It is clear that one of the key challenges that the mission in Afghanistan now faces is the lack of a common strategic vision that will reinvigorate our efforts under unified attainable goals. This process has to be done comprehensively – involving both military and civilian aspects of the mission as equals – and in a cooperative fashion among the U.S., NATO, the UN, the EU, and the Afghan government. The Afghanistan Compact should be the basis for any common strategic vision, and discussion should focus on developing strategies to achieve that vision.

For that purpose, *the Study Group proposes to establish an Eminent Persons Group to develop a long-term, coherent international strategy for Afghanistan and a strategic communications plan to garner strong public support for that strategy.* The Eminent Persons Group would aim to have its report and recommendations available for the April 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest, Romania, and the opening of the UN General Assembly the following September. If an International Coordinator position were created under a UN mandate* (as is strongly recommended), this group should be established to serve as an advisory body to that individual. However, *if the efforts to appoint an individual to that position continue to lag, we recommend that NATO establish the Eminent Persons Group under its auspices*, while including representatives from other partnering organizations (such as the UN, World Bank and EU) and appropriate countries. A principal objective of the group should be to rally support for continued and enhanced efforts by NATO countries and other regional players in Afghanistan – in all spheres, military and civilian. The Eminent Persons Group would also aim to increase public awareness in partnering countries, especially in Europe, of the relevance of this conflict to their own security. To maximize this effort, the U.S. should support a European or other highly qualified international leader to chair this group, while remaining fully engaged as a key participant in the process.

Within the U.S., *the Study Group calls for decoupling Iraq and Afghanistan.* Since 2003, U.S. funding of military and other mission operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have been linked together in the Congressional and Executive branch budget processes for authorizations, appropriations and supplemental requests. The rationale for this was that it would provide a more unified focus on overall "Global War on Terrorism" efforts by the Congress, the Administration and the military.

In July 2007, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) issued a report on the costs of Iraq, Afghanistan, and other war on terror operations since 9/11. The report emphasized the issue of transparency in war and related costs, noting the Iraq Study Group's observation that the funding/budget requests from the Executive branch are presented in a confusing manner, making it difficult for both the general public and members of Congress to understand the request or to differentiate it from counter-terrorism operations around the world or operations in Afghanistan.

* The ASG regrets the news that the lead candidate for this position, Lord Paddy Ashdown, has withdrawn his candidacy due to opposition from the Afghan government and hopes that the international community and the Afghan government will be able to achieve agreement on this issue in a timely manner.

While arguments have been made that in effect the two missions are practically decoupled, we believe this to be insufficient.

There is, accordingly, an emerging view that Afghanistan and its long-term problems would be better addressed by decoupling funding and related programs from those for Iraq. Doing so would enable more coherence and focus on the increasingly important Afghanistan (and related Pakistan) issues, both for the Congress and the Executive branch as well as in dealing with other governments and international organizations to achieve needed improvement in coordination, collaboration, and efficacy of efforts in the interrelated military, economic and reconstruction spheres.

Decoupling these two conflicts likely will improve the overall U.S. approach to fighting global terrorism. While the fates of these two countries are connected – and a failure in Iraq would influence Afghanistan and vice versa – tying together Afghanistan and Iraq also creates the false impression that they consist of the same mission, while in reality the challenges in these countries differ significantly from one another. It is not the intention of this recommendation to speak to the comparative funding levels for the two conflicts – only that the Afghanistan Study Group believes it would be best to consider each on their own merits.

Finally, a more unified management structure within the U.S. government would create a more unified approach toward the international community and Afghanistan. Therefore, in addition to decoupling the funding mechanisms, *we recommend that a Special Envoy to Afghanistan position be established within the U.S. government, charged with coordinating and orchestrating all aspects of U.S. policies towards Afghanistan.* This should include (but not be limited to) the strategic guidance of military operations, all civilian operations, and links to the UN, NATO and Europe. This official should have overall responsibility for the direction of U.S. assistance programs to Afghanistan and coordinating these programs and policies with European and Asian counterparts and Afghan government officials. While potentially challenging and possibly contentious within the U.S. bureaucracy, higher level of coordination in Washington is necessary to increase our chances of success in Afghanistan.

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUE RECOMMENDATIONS

International Coordination

- While the current command structure may be very difficult to change in light of existing differences among the Allies on mission participation in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) missions, it is essential that NATO authorities regularly review the command and control arrangement with the aim to simplify and streamline it at the earliest moment.
- While it is not advisable to immediately attempt an overhaul of the command structure, NATO and the U.S. should strive to achieve greater unity of command whenever possible. As a first step toward this objective, the U.S.-led training mission for the Afghan National Army (ANA), which occupies the bulk of American forces in Afghanistan still under national command, could be shifted to NATO once sufficient NATO resources have been committed for this purpose. G8 considerations would have to be addressed should this be deemed as worthwhile mission realignment.
- Appoint a high-level international coordinator under a UN mandate to: advise all parties to the mission in Afghanistan on needed changes to their policies, funding and actions; ensure that all international assistance programs have a coordinated strategy that aims to bolster the central government's authority throughout the country and is closely coordinated with the Afghan government; advise on the implications to and needs for security coordination; and conduct dialogue with Afghanistan's neighbors. Assign to this individual a joint professional staff representing a wide range of partnering countries and organizations in Afghanistan.
- Develop, with all countries involved, an agreed concept of operations, goals and objectives, organizational structure and set of metrics to evaluate Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). Ideally, the international coordinator, when appointed, should be tasked with overseeing this process.

Security

- Work to increase the number of NATO troops and military equipment in Afghanistan to the levels requested by the commanders. Ensure that the increase in quantity of forces is matched with the quality of the forces that is needed for the mission they need to perform. We endorse the recommendation of the Iraq Study Group that "It is critical for the United States to provide additional...military support for Afghanistan, including resources that might become available as combat forces are moved from Iraq."
- Focus more efforts and resources on training and standing up the ANA and recruiting, training, and providing adequate pay and equipment to the Afghan National Police (ANP) to maintain security in an area once coalition forces depart. The U.S. and its NATO partners should reconsider, together with the Afghan government, benchmarks for force levels of both the ANA and ANP that are realistic, attainable, and maintainable.
- The U.S. needs to play a greater role in building and expanding the ANP, while continuing to engage other international allies in this mission. This would also require a G8 mission realignment as this task is presently under Germany's leadership. Assistance needs to go beyond equipping and training, and should be directed towards embedding foreign police officers into Afghan units – possibly by creating a mechanism similar to the NATO-led Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT) mechanism for the ANA. The international community

also needs to focus on holding Afghan police officers and their superiors accountable for their performance.

- While "zero civilian casualties" may not be an attainable goal given the nature of the enemy and the battlefield, the U.S. and NATO should, as a matter of policy, continue to publicly reinforce their goal of minimizing civilian casualties, as well as being judicious in the frequent use of air power, erring on the side of caution when civilian casualties are probable.
- Better involve Afghan forces in U.S. and NATO military planning and operations. Enhance coordination with the Afghan Ministry of Defense and the Afghan National Army.
- Set up a special NATO compensation fund for civilian deaths, injuries or property damage resulting from its military operations in Afghanistan, to which all NATO member states should contribute.
- Develop, with the international community, a coordinated strategy in support of President Karzai's national political reconciliation efforts. Consider providing incentives to Taliban that do not subscribe to extremist ideologies and agree to put down their weapons and join the political process. The international coalition partners need to adhere to the same standards as the Afghan government when negotiating with insurgents.
- Develop a regional plan to effectively target the risks coming out of the border region area with Pakistan – this plan should involve the governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan and other regional powers and include better combined intelligence, operations and non-military efforts. Specifically, with regard to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), rather than trying to insert U.S. influence directly into the region, Washington should encourage systemic political and economic reform that incorporates the FATA into the administrative, legal and political systems of Pakistan.

Governance and Rule of Law

- A coherent and resourced strategy to increase the reach, capacity, and legitimacy of the Afghan government must be a top priority.
- The Afghan government and the international community must refocus their efforts to resurrect an integrated and effective justice system for Afghanistan, through increased and sustained funding to the sector and through working towards an Afghan-led prioritization process that will set a realistic agenda for progress in the justice sector.
- Work to establish "pockets of competence" throughout the country by focusing on development of human resources in the sector and institutional development of the Supreme Court, the Office of the Attorney General, the Ministry of Justice, and the Afghan National Police (currently within the Ministry of Interior) at the national and provincial levels.
- Provide resources and political support to the newly created Advisory Panel on Presidential Appointments.

Counter-Narcotics

- Sequence the core tools of counter-narcotics policy – crop eradication, interdiction (including arresting and prosecuting traffickers, destruction of labs, etc.), and development (alternative livelihoods).
- Increase investment in development – especially infrastructure and industry development – in all provinces, but ensure that these programs go first of all to provinces that are not planting poppy or that are reducing production.

- Enhance interdiction efforts. Ensure the removal of high officials benefiting from the drug trade from the government but also from contracts operating on behalf of the coalition.
- Integrate counter-narcotics and counter-insurgency by using international military forces to assist the ANP in interdiction, including supporting the ANP in its efforts to destroy heroin labs.
- How best to pursue poppy eradication and the relation of eradication to counter-insurgency presents the greatest challenge – and controversy – for the U.S., the international community, and the Afghan government. Proposals to enhance eradication immediately (including the use of herbicides whether sprayed from the air or the ground), especially in Helmand province, could prove extremely dangerous for Afghanistan, further undermining support for the government of President Hamid Karzai, alienating thousands of Afghan farmers and providing new recruits for the Taliban.
- In lieu of massive eradication, adopt an "Afghan-centric" approach that will include: public information campaign stating that the purpose of counter-narcotics is not to destroy but to enhance the livelihoods of the people of Afghanistan; a request for voluntary restraint in planting while actually delivering (not just announcing or funding or launching) much larger alternative livelihood programs; the provision of all the services currently provided to farmers by drug traffickers: futures contracts, guaranteed marketing, financing, and technical assistance (extension services); and increased availability of micro-finance.

Economic Development and Reconstruction

- The donor community should focus on giving the Afghan government credit for projects and programs. To do so, donors need to focus on improving Afghan government accounting and enhance anti-corruption reforms.
- Encourage the Afghan government to appoint an Afghan development "czar", drawing authority from President Karzai and able to coordinate the various government ministries, to work with the international community to ensure concerted development efforts.
- Spread development assistance more evenly around the country. The donor community should ensure that relatively peaceful areas benefit from assistance.
- Reconstruction aid and development assistance must flow into a region immediately after it is cleared of Taliban presence by the coalition. Representatives of the local governments must be directly involved in administering the aid to build support and trust between the Afghan people and the local authorities.
- Enhance and accelerate infrastructure development – especially outlays on roads, power and water systems – that are necessary to improve security, governance and the Afghan economy. These efforts should utilize the Afghan labor force, as well as Afghan contractors, as much as possible.

Afghanistan and its Neighbors

- Embark on a sustained, long-term diplomatic effort to reduce antagonisms between Pakistan and Afghanistan. As part of that, the international community should: encourage Kabul to accept the Durand Line as the international border; work with Pakistan to make every effort to root out Taliban ideology from its own society and close down the extremist madrassahs (religious schools) and training camps that perpetuate the Taliban insurgency and cross-border activities; and encourage Pakistan to remove burdensome restrictions that inhibit the transportation of goods through Pakistan to and from Afghanistan, including from India.

- Pakistan has to develop fully effective means for asserting its authority and physical control over the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), including reforming archaic administrative arrangements and fully integrating these areas politically and economically within Pakistan.
- Develop a strategy towards Iran that includes the possibility to resume discussions with Iran to coax greater cooperation from Tehran in helping to stabilize Afghanistan. Establish, with U.S. allies, a cooperative net assessment of what Iran is doing in Afghanistan to map out a sound strategy that seeks to convince Tehran to develop a more constructive role there and includes the possibility to reestablish direct talks on Afghanistan.
- Initiate a regional process to engage Afghanistan's neighbors and potential regional partners in future sustainable development of Afghanistan. This process can begin with relatively minor confidence building measures and the establishment of a regional forum for discussion of common challenges. Over the longer term, as Afghanistan makes progress towards standing on its own feet, these can serve as a basis for a multilateral regional accord that would: recognize Afghanistan as a permanently neutral state; provide international recognition for Afghanistan's borders; pledge non-interference in internal Afghan affairs; ban the clandestine supply of arms to nongovernmental actors; and establish a comprehensive regime to promote the flow of trade through Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP (ASG) – ASSESSMENT

The mission to stabilize Afghanistan is faltering. Following the rapid successes in toppling the Taliban government, passing a new constitution, and electing a president and parliament, the long road to reconstruction, reconciliation, and institutional development has grown hazardous. Despite a significant increase in the number of foreign troops and the amount of aid to Afghanistan since 2002, violence, insecurity, and opium production have risen dramatically as Afghan confidence in their government and its international partners falls. The year 2007 has been the deadliest for American and international troops in Afghanistan since U.S.-led coalition forces invaded Afghanistan in 2001. As we struggle to build an Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police, suicide attacks against Afghan security forces have also surged.

The most immediate threat to Afghanistan comes from an anti-government insurgency that has grown considerably over the past two years. It has become apparent that the Taliban cannot fight the U.S. and coalition forces head-to-head, and coalition forces have had success in targeting Taliban leadership over the last year, capturing or killing several senior commanders. Therefore, the Taliban rely on terrorism and ambushes, launching over 140 suicide bombings in 2007, with numerous attacks in the heart of the capital, Kabul. Over 80 Afghan civilians reportedly lost their lives in suicide attacks in September 2007 alone. The Taliban have been able to infiltrate many areas throughout the country, especially the south and the southeast where the government is weakest, intimidating and coercing the local populations and occasionally holding territory. As a result, the prospect of again losing significant parts of Afghanistan to the forces of Islamic extremists has moved from the improbable to the possible.

Although international support for the mission in Afghanistan remains broad, some nations believe the mission is failing. Several NATO countries are wavering in their troop commitments. Britain, Denmark, and Poland have dispatched greater numbers of troops this year, and Canada, Australia and the Netherlands continue to participate in the heaviest fighting in the south. At the same time, strong public opposition to the Afghan war has grown in Canada, the Netherlands, and Germany, among others, threatening to fray the coalition in the next two years. Burden-sharing among NATO allies is critical to the mission in terms of both available resources and public perceptions – an increasingly unilateral mission will be politically vulnerable in Afghanistan, the U.S., and NATO. A failure of the NATO mission in Afghanistan would also damage the future prospects of the organization itself.

A concerted effort to regain strategic focus and momentum in Afghanistan is needed to reverse the backsliding of the last two years and to secure our considerable investment thus far. Right now many Afghans are uncertain about the direction of their country and are losing confidence in the ability of their army and NATO forces to protect them from the Taliban. They are also increasingly frustrated with the failure of President Karzai's government to extend its authority and services throughout the country and by the lack of improvement in their daily lives six years after the international reconstruction process was launched. The Taliban have been able to exploit the Karzai government's shortcomings to their advantage.

Failure to defeat the Taliban's force and ideology in Afghanistan would also signal a strategic defeat against global extremism and contribute to the strengthening of international terrorist movements throughout the region and globally. Not only would failure to stabilize Afghanistan pave the way for a new al-Qaeda safe haven in that country, it would also increase instability in Pakistan, where local Taliban and other extremist groups have stepped up their own efforts to challenge the authority of the

Pakistani regime. As noted in the National Intelligence Estimate released in July 2007 entitled "The Terrorist Threat to the U.S. Homeland," the Taliban and al-Qaeda have established safe havens within Pakistan from which they plan, organize and train for attacks in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and globally.

Realizing the vision of a new Afghanistan that is stable, secure and free of influence from radical Islamic leaders is a core objective of the U.S. fight against Islamic extremism and militancy. The Taliban's links with al-Qaeda remain close: one of al-Qaeda's top priorities is helping the Taliban fight against coalition forces in Afghanistan. Taliban support for al-Qaeda is critical to its survival – and almost certainly that of its leaders Osama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahiri – in the tribal areas of Pakistan along the Afghanistan border.

The U.S. and international coalition forces are at a critical moment. Afghanistan strategy and policy are currently under review in several national capitals and at NATO headquarters. The Study Group believes two possible courses of action would have dire consequences – either withdrawing forces from Afghanistan or adopting a minimal approach.

If international forces are pulled from Afghanistan, the fragile Afghan government would likely fall apart, again becoming a failed state while the Taliban and other warlords would gain control of various areas and eventually fight each other. Development efforts and accomplishments heretofore would be rolled back as they cannot be maintained in insecure areas. Not only would failure to stabilize Afghanistan pave the way for a revival of an al-Qaeda safe haven in that country, it would also likely have a blowback effect in Pakistan, where local Taliban and other extremist groups would be inspired to step up their own efforts to destabilize the Pakistani regime, with the hope of one day installing fundamentalist, theocratic rule.

A minimum approach also risks squandering recent advances. Although the Taliban would not return to power, the Afghan government would be focused on that conflict at the expense of improving security elsewhere in the country, building its institutional capacity or providing public services. Economic growth would likely slow. Afghanistan would remain dependent on international assistance. The country would be unlikely to develop competent government institutions, tackle the expanding drug trade, or create a sustainable democracy. In addition, limiting the purpose of the mission may accelerate trends in many NATO countries to further decrease their level of commitment. In short, minimal efforts mean minimal progress and long-term slow deterioration of the Afghan mission.

The ASG therefore believes the only reasonable strategy at this point is to reinvigorate and redouble the international community's effort and return to the Afghanistan Compact vision. U.S. and other key countries must concentrate and coordinate their efforts to beat back the insurgency, propel economic development, and build a competent and capable Afghan government. Such moves would go a long way to reassure the Afghan people of the international community's long-term commitment to the stabilization and rebuilding of their country.

KEY ISSUE: INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION

There is an acute need for greater international coordination on both the military and civil sides of Afghanistan's stabilization and reconstruction efforts, with the latter including over 40 contributing nations, the UN, the World Bank, the European Union, and a multitude of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The momentum that many would have hoped to see in the wake of the February 2006 London Conference on Afghanistan, attended by over 50 nations, has not materialized. The lack of strong leadership over the international reconstruction effort has led to fragmentation and lack of coherence in the implementation of various aid programs.

Much has been said concerning the existing military chain of command. Integrating the missions of NATO and the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) was a difficult and long process. At the end of the effort in 2006, 26 nations agreed to the U.S.-NATO military proposals through NATO's Military Committee and the North Atlantic Council. The new command and control system was almost immediately put to the test as NATO expanded its operations to the south and east of Afghanistan in late summer of 2006. Operation Medusa, in the south, was a near-conventional military operation initiated by Taliban insurgents who, quite mistakenly, believed that the newly-arrived NATO forces would not fight. They were wrong, and they suffered a major tactical defeat, the effects of which significantly restricted their capabilities to mount a Spring Offensive in 2007. Had there been major flaws in the integrated command and control system, they would have been clearly manifest during that lengthy period of fierce fighting.

This is not to say that the current command and control system cannot be adjusted or improved. By definition, international military operations are complex, beset by national caveats and other restrictions, and do not compare with the efficiencies resident in a national chain of command. To be successful, senior commanders must be patient, tolerant, and understanding of the complexities (both military and political) that bring about success in international operations.

Essentially, there are two strategic commands operating in Afghanistan. Both are commanded by Americans. One (SHAPE) is in Mons, Belgium, and the other is on MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. Both commands are comprised of multinational forces, and both must work in harmony in order to succeed in Afghanistan. American commanders and key staff officers are interspersed at virtually all critical positions of the NATO command structure in order to de-conflict operations. In fact, for the past year, the U.S. has also commanded the tactical headquarters of NATO's force in Afghanistan (ISAF) with a third four-star general.

The range of military missions in Afghanistan encompasses everything from humanitarian to highly kinetic conventional and special operations. It is a fact that some nations have strong national restrictions with regard to the type of operations their forces are authorized to undertake, but this has been true since 2004. As long as nations refuse to modify their positions with regard to caveats and restrictions, the command structure will be, by necessity, complex. It would be ideal if nations could agree, as they did in Kosovo in 2004, to remove virtually all caveats and restrictions. This far, in Afghanistan, they have not done so.

NATO and OEF forces have some degree of overlapping missions. NATO's ISAF's key military tasks include assisting the Afghan government in extending its authority across the country, conducting stability and security operations in co-ordination with the Afghan national security forces; mentoring and supporting the Afghan National Army (ANA); and supporting Afghan government programs to disarm illegally armed groups. The OEF mission in Afghanistan is to

conduct counter-insurgency (COIN) operations against the Taliban and other insurgents, and to stop the infiltration of Taliban forces from Pakistan into Afghanistan.

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The existing command structure is the result of some Allies not wanting their forces to participate in OEF's COIN missions, which are politically sensitive on their home public opinion fronts. Such an "imperfect and complicated" command structure requires ISAF and OEF commanders and their subordinates and staffs to coordinate and ensure transparency in their operational plans.

While the current command structure may be very difficult to change in light of current prohibitions by some allies on participation in OEF missions, *it is important that NATO military authorities regularly review command and control arrangements with the aim to simplify and streamline existing command structures wherever and whenever possible.* Changing political conditions, in the U.S. or in NATO, or the evolution of mission objectives on the ground in Afghanistan, are two examples of opportunities where one might obtain consensus for changes in command and control.

NATO and the U.S. should aim to consolidate missions whenever possible. *As a first step toward this objective, the U.S.-led training mission for the ANA, which occupies the bulk of American forces in Afghanistan still under national command, could become a NATO mission once enough NATO resources have been committed for this purpose.*

Structures for coordination of effort on the civil side are even less coherent. Neither the U.S., the United Nations nor NATO is responsible for setting, articulating or representing donor nation policies. The lead nation approach adopted in early 2002 (focused on security sector reform, not the aid effort as a whole) reflected a disinclination on the part of the American, UN and G8 leadership to step into this breach. This approach has consistently failed to yield either adequate resources or effective multinational collaboration. For several years no lead nation devoted enough attention or money to the sector under its purview with exception of Japan, for its Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) mission, and the U.S., for its training mission of the ANA. Police training has been inadequate, as have counter-narcotics, judicial and penal reforms. Further, no "lead nation" has assumed responsibility for economic development. Nominally, it was intended that the Afghan government set overall priorities. Had it been capable of effectively coordinating donor reconstruction assistance the international effort would have been in a much better position than it is today.

The recent expansion in the number of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) has exacerbated coordination problems among and within donor governments. These civil/military hybrid organizations vary greatly in structure, function and effectiveness. To the extent that they respond to military direction, NATO commanders may be able to effect some coordination, but there is no one providing such direction regarding their civil functions. [See further comments on PRT coordination below.]

There are several possibilities for enhancing international coordination among the civil components of Afghan reconstruction. One possibility, and the one that is being considered by the U.S. and its international partners, is to expand the United Nations responsibilities, and ask the UN Secretary General to appoint a high level representative for this purpose. *This individual would have to have the stature and authority necessary to command the respect of donor governments, including the U.S.* In addition to coordinating and working with the Afghan government, *he would also need to be in a position to deal with neighboring governments*, whose cooperation or lack thereof will make or break any international effort to stabilize Afghanistan.

An international coordinator *will have to be tasked with the responsibility to advise all parties to the mission in Afghanistan on needed changes to their policies, funding and actions, as well as to ensure that all international assistance programs have a coordinated strategy* that aims to bolster the central government's authority throughout the country and is coordinated with the Afghan government. He or she *will need to be able to coordinate the economic and development efforts effectively, and advise on the implications to and needs for security coordination.* While it cannot be expected that countries will completely give up control on how their resources are spent, there needs to be a mechanism that provides some power to the coordinator or he will not be able to adequately perform the task at hand. *We also recommend that the international coordinator be assigned a joint professional staff representing a wide range of the major partnering countries and organizations in Afghanistan.* This will allow the coordinator to be in sync with efforts conducted by the members and will enhance his ability to create harmonized efforts across regular channels of operation.

In addition to better coordination of military operations and civil efforts at reconstruction, there needs to be more concerted attention to relations with neighboring states, in particular Pakistan and Iran. For different reasons, the U.S. is talking to Islamabad but not Teheran. The Afghan government is talking to both. However, there appears to be no coordinated strategy, either in NATO or the UN, on how to handle these relationships that are so vital to Afghanistan's stability and its future. *One important role for the high level civilian coordinator mentioned above should be to conduct a dialogue with the governments of regional actors, especially Pakistan and Iran, focused on Afghanistan issues, on behalf of the international coalition aiding Afghanistan. There could also be ongoing efforts at NATO to encourage neighboring countries to cooperate in halting aid to the insurgency, especially in denying the use of their territory for the passage of narcotics and other illegal trafficking.*

The Study Group welcomes moves currently underway to strengthen the international coordination mechanism in Afghanistan, to achieve a more comprehensive approach that should help to ensure the international military and civil efforts reinforce one another and that the donors speak with one voice to Kabul. Success in the international community's overall counterterrorism and development goals in Afghanistan cannot be achieved unless the international and regional partners work together, through well-coordinated strategies and policies, to strengthen the authority and ability of the Afghanistan central government to provide security and needed social services to its people.

A specific challenge of international coordination that merits special attention is the mechanism of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs):

PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS

Provincial Reconstruction Teams are small, civilian-military units that assist provincial and local governments to govern more effectively and deliver essential services. The U.S. established the first PRTs in Afghanistan in 2002. There are now 25 PRTs in Afghanistan operating under the NATO-led

International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). PRTs are led by the U.S. and 12 other NATO and Coalition partners; another dozen countries contribute personnel, financial and material support.

There is no overarching concept of operations or organizational structure for PRTs in Afghanistan. In the relatively peaceful north and west, PRTs are operated by European countries and engage in peacekeeping. The German PRT in Kunduz has over 300 personnel and a large economic assistance unit located separately from a military force that operates under caveats that severely circumscribe its operations. In the conflicted south and east, U.S., British, Canadian and Dutch PRTs provide the civilian side of COIN operations. Typically, U.S. PRTs have 80 personnel: military leadership, two Army civil affairs teams, a platoon-size force protection unit and representatives from the Departments of State and Agriculture as well as USAID. While we recognize the benefit in carefully tailoring the PRTs to the specific regional and local needs, a degree of strategic coordination is needed.

In addition, within PRTs there is no unified chain of command. Civilian agency representatives report to their superiors in embassies or capitals. Personalities, local environment, domestic politics, capacity and funding of the lead nation all determine PRT priorities and programs. Moreover, there is no rationale for distributing resources among provinces on the basis of the size of the economy of the PRT lead nation. There is no coordination mechanism for aid going through PRTs. Finally, since there are no agreed goals and objectives for the PRT program, it is impossible to evaluate fairly its performance on the local level and on the programmatic level.

The purpose of PRTs in Afghanistan is to extend the authority of the central government into the provinces. PRTs concentrate in three areas: governance, reconstruction and security. Approaches vary widely. To improve governance, PRTs work with appointed provincial governors, police chiefs and elected provincial councils to increase capacity and improve the provision of services. In reconstruction, PRTs initially engage in quick impact, village improvement projects to "win hearts and minds." Once established, PRTs work with Provincial Development Councils to develop projects and obtain funding. PRTs depend on a vast array of civilian and military funding programs and sources. Less than five percent of the U.S. assistance budget is channeled through U.S. PRTs. Beyond providing a security presence, PRTs do not conduct combat operations, protect civilians, or provide public order or law enforcement. PRTs do not engaged in counter narcotics operations.

PRTs should reflect the strategic overview of U.S. and NATO efforts in Afghanistan and play an assigned role, tailored to the local circumstances. *PRTs need an agreed concept of operations and basic common organizational structure as well as goals and objectives so they provide a standard range of services.* They also need to coordinate among themselves on a regular basis (and not settle for quarterly conferences) to exchange ideas on "best practices." *There is need for a common source of quick disbursing funds for PRTs, so they can support short and long-term development projects. PRTs need to provide information about their accomplishments to Afghans and the international community. There is also need for a set of metrics to evaluate PRT operations.*

Ideally, the international coordinator, when appointed, should be tasked with overseeing the process of assessing, optimizing and synergizing the PRT mechanism. Alternatively, NATO should aim to create this process under its auspices.

KEY ISSUE: SECURITY

U.S. and NATO forces have had several battlefield successes in Afghanistan over the last year. The anticipated spring offensive by the Taliban never materialized. Coalition forces have also captured or killed several senior Taliban commanders and demonstrated that the Taliban is incapable of going head-to-head with coalition forces. Although the Taliban suffered heavy losses this past year, the U.S. military also lost more than 100 soldiers in 2007, the highest number of deaths in one year since the war began in 2001. Casualties among foreign troops climbed to more than 240 soldiers killed, their highest level since 2001. And Afghan civilian deaths reached an all-time high at about 1,000.

The battlefield strength of the coalition forces has forced the Taliban to rely increasingly on small-scale attacks by bands of insurgents and suicide bombings of soft targets that instill a sense of insecurity in the population. The Taliban is waging a traditional insurgency campaign. The Taliban's guerilla tactics have slowed work on reconstruction and humanitarian projects. The coalition has proved it can clear areas held by the Taliban, but often sees these areas fall back to Taliban influence as soon as the coalition forces depart. A November 25, 2007 *Washington Post* article about contrasting views within the U.S. government over progress in Afghanistan described the mixed security picture this way: "While the [U.S.] military finds success in a virtually unbroken line of tactical achievements, [U.S.] intelligence officials worry about a looming strategic failure."

There is a need for more U.S. and international troops in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is larger in size and population than Iraq but has far fewer national and foreign troops. NATO's ISAF currently has about 41,000 troops from 37 NATO (including the U.S.) and non-NATO countries. The U.S. has approximately 10,000 additional troops deployed under its own command. *The ASG endorses the recommendation of the Iraq Study Group that "It is critical for the United States to provide additional...military support for Afghanistan, including resources that might become available as combat forces are moved from Iraq."* We welcome recent indications that the U.S. intends on transferring some forces that are being freed in Iraq to Afghanistan in the spring. *NATO countries need to share this burden,* removing national caveats that hinder joint operations against insurgents and threaten the long-term success of the NATO mission in Afghanistan. Additionally, it should be made clear that *when evaluating an increase in the quantity of forces in Afghanistan, all participating countries should match the quality of the forces with the mission they need to perform.*

The U.S. and its NATO partners also need to focus more efforts and resources on training and standing up the Afghan National Army (ANA) and recruiting, training, and providing adequate pay and equipment to the Afghan National Police (ANP) so they can maintain security in an area once coalition forces depart. The U.S. and its NATO partners should reconsider, together with the Afghan government, benchmarks for force levels of both the ANA and ANP that will be realistic to attain and maintain. These benchmarks should focus on quality as well as quantity.

The Study Group welcomes the recent announcement by Defense Secretary Robert Gates that the U.S. government will support (with funding, training and equipment) the expansion of the ANA to 80,000, beyond its current goal of 70,000 by next year. A further expansion of that number may be required – Afghan Defense Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak has called for expanding the ANA to 150,000 – but *any such consideration must take into account affordability, sustainability and the proper balance between police forces and military forces.* In addition, former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Ronald Neumann recently suggested establishing a national conscription service in Afghanistan – an idea that could be examined by the Afghan government and the international community.

The ANP are severely under funded, poorly trained and poorly equipped. Many go months without pay because of corruption and problems with the payroll system. In parts of the country the police are seen as a greater cause of insecurity than the Taliban, undermining the authority and legitimacy of the central government. *The United States needs to play a greater role in building and expanding the ANP* – this would require a G8 mission realignment as this task is presently under Germany's leadership. The Study Group therefore welcomes U.S. pledges to spend over $8 billion in 2007–2008 on equipping and training Afghan security forces, the ANA and ANP, as well as increased U.S. involvement in police reform efforts beginning in 2005, which has led to some progress. However, *U.S. assistance needs to go beyond equipping and training, and be directed towards embedding foreign police officers into Afghan units,* possibly by creating a mechanism similar to the NATO-led Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT) mechanism for the ANA.

The international community also needs to focus on holding Afghan police officers and their superiors accountable for their performance, not just providing more training, pay and new uniforms. *Other international partners – the UN, NATO, and the European Union (EU) – must also commit additional funding and resources to this effort.* Specifically, the EU should be encouraged to enlarge the size and capabilities of its modest Police Mission (EUPOL) in Afghanistan, which the EU launched in June 2007 with the stated aim of monitoring, mentoring, advising and training at the Afghan Ministry of Interior, regional, and provincial levels. This increased effort should be taken in close cooperation with NATO to improve the effectiveness of the comprehensive approach and provide security for the EU personnel.

The international coalition forces need to expand their strategy beyond purely military objectives and focus attention on efforts to engage with the local population and provide security in a way that facilitates economic and development programs and minimizes civilian suffering and casualties. Coalition troops need to develop a better understanding of the culture, politics, and local customs of the areas in which they operate. An increase in Afghan civilian casualties from coalition military operations is angering Afghans. Friction between coalition forces and the civilians they are trying to protect is rising. As the Taliban refine their insurgency techniques and psychological operations aimed at turning the local populace against the coalition forces, U.S. and NATO troops will have to counter the Taliban tactics through increased engagement with the local population.

Several actions are needed to address this problem of current security challenges, which are *critical to the issue of winning, or losing, Afghan "hearts and minds"*:

- First, while "zero civilian casualties" may not be an attainable goal given the nature of the enemy and the battlefield, the U.S. and NATO should, as a matter of policy, continue to publicly reinforce their goal of minimizing civilian casualties, as well as being judicious in the frequent use of air power, erring on the side of caution when civilian casualties are probable.

- Second, *more must be done to involve Afghan forces in U.S. and NATO military planning and operations.* This means closer coordination with the Afghan Ministry of Defense and the ANA. Afghan soldiers should also be included in U.S. and NATO military actions. Surveys show that nearly 90 percent of the Afghan people trust their national army.

- Third, *NATO should set up a special compensation fund for civilian deaths, injuries or property damage resulting from its military operations in Afghanistan, to which all NATO member states should contribute.* This entails a significant opportunity to mitigate the negative effects of what is sometimes unavoidable and unintended damage.

The international community also needs to develop a coordinated strategy in support of President Karzai's national political reconciliation efforts. There is broad agreement that Afghanistan's security problems cannot be addressed by military means alone. *Providing incentives to Taliban that do not subscribe to extremist ideologies and agree to put down their guns and join the political process should be considered. The international coalition partners need to adhere to the same standards when negotiating with insurgents*, conveying a consistent message that former insurgents will not be allowed to impose an extremist agenda on the Afghan people and will instead participate in the building of a tolerant, pluralistic and representative society.

Finally, the future stability of both Afghanistan and Pakistan depends on the development of an effective strategy to counter and uproot the Taliban/al-Qaeda sanctuary in Pakistan's tribal border areas, particularly in the North and South Waziristan agencies. The Taliban and associated militants operating in Afghanistan conduct most of their recruiting and training on Pakistan's side of the border. These extremists have begun to make inroads into the settled areas of the Northwest Frontier Province in Pakistan, and are increasingly threatening local authority in these regions and spreading an extremist form of Islam through violence and intimidation. *The U.S. and its allies need to develop a regional plan to effectively target the risks coming out of the border region area with Pakistan – this plan should involve the governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan and other regional powers and include better combined intelligence, operations and non-military efforts.*

Any strategy aimed at uprooting the Taliban/al-Qaeda sanctuary must take into account that the local populations in these areas are fiercely independent, adhere to conservative Muslim and entrenched tribal traditions, and hold deep ethnic loyalties and extended family connections. U.S. officials should not over-estimate their ability to influence the local tribes in this region and consider carefully the potential for blowback of providing resources to a group that one day might side with the terrorists. *Rather than trying to insert U.S. influence directly into the region, Washington should strongly encourage systemic political and economic reform that incorporates the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) into the administrative, legal and political systems of Pakistan.* This involves improving overall governance and law and order in the region as well as facilitating economic development. The U.S. is already moving in this direction with a pledge of $750 million over five years to develop the tribal areas, but difficulties are still underway and it is clear that unless some changes in the Pakistani approach are made, this assistance will not bear fruit.

The recent National Intelligence Estimate entitled "The Terrorist Threat to the U.S. Homeland" (July 2007) concluded that al-Qaeda has regenerated its capability to attack, including a safe haven in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Countering cross border infiltration activity is critical, but it will require closer coordination and cooperation than we have seen to date. The Trilateral Afghanistan-Pakistan-NATO Military Commission is an important mechanism in this regard. So is the strengthening of the U.S. military presence along the Afghan side of the border.

Washington also needs to convince Islamabad to work more closely in joint operations that can bring U.S. resources (including intelligence) and military assets to bear in the border areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan. A large-scale U.S. troop invasion of Pakistan's tribal areas would be disastrous for the Pakistani state and for U.S. interests and would not provide a lasting solution to the problem. *A more effective strategy involves working cooperatively with Pakistan to integrate these areas into the Pakistani political system and, once they are secure, provide substantial assistance to build up the economy and social infrastructure.*

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KEY ISSUE: GOVERNANCE AND RULE OF LAW

Six years after the fall of the Taliban, Afghanistan is still facing a fundamental crisis of governance. Creating a capable and legitimate Afghan government is the sine qua non of the intervention in Afghanistan – without it there is no sustainable security; no sustainable development; without which there is no political legitimacy. Yet the state-building mission in Afghanistan has always taken a back seat in U.S. policy to the counter-terrorism mission in terms of funding, manpower, and political attention. As a result, the fundamental objective of building a competent government that can provide security and justice and gain the trust of the Afghan people has lagged.

A central part of the problem, going back to the initial intervention, is the stunning dearth of human capital in a country ravaged by over 20 years of civil war. The pool of educated Afghan professionals available for staffing its civil administrations remains very small in relation to need. On top of that, many senior political figures – provincial governors, members of the cabinet, and parliamentarians – are considered serial human rights abusers by large segments of the population. This sense of impunity shakes popular confidence in the concepts of democracy and rule of law and makes people question the legitimacy of the government. The out-of-control opium economy has also impacted rule of law and governance in significant ways. Underpaid civil servants are expected to engage in dangerous policing and eradication programs in environments awash in cash for bribes. Senior government officials and militia commanders control trade routes yielding millions of dollars in illicit taxes or funds from engaging directly in the trade. Meanwhile, poppy-eradication programs directed at farmers are deeply unpopular and unevenly enforced, leading to increased resentment against the government in already unstable areas.

This litany of problems in governance and rule of law has made room for challenges to the government's legitimacy and primacy by Taliban and other anti-government, anti-coalition forces. More than building houses, roads, and schools, Afghans fundamentally look to the government to provide security and justice. At present, it is evident that the Afghan government is incapable of doing this, and so Afghans are beginning to hedge their bets in terms of open support for the government. This leads neighbors, aid donors, and troop contributors to hedge as well.

Therefore, *a coherent and resourced strategy to increase the reach, capacity, and legitimacy of the Afghan government must be a top priority.* Efforts thus far to build institutions of state and establish rule of law have been ad hoc, poorly coordinated, and under-funded. The Afghan government and international community have focused on high profile events, such as elections and the effort to draft and ratify a new constitution, but the difficult work of creating a strong system of central and provincial governance that enables and empowers accountable local actors has been lacking. Moreover, virtually every aspect of a functioning justice system is absent.

There have been some important advances, however, with the support of the international community. Many governors and police chiefs with questionable credentials or records of past abuse have been removed. A recent presidential appointments panel was created to vet high-level appointments, although it has yet to begin its work. The heads of the major justice sector institutions – the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Justice, and the Office of the Attorney General – have all been replaced with competent, moderate reformers. Significant additional attention and funds are now devoted to the creation of the Afghan National Police (ANP), although this critical effort is still years away from completion. Reform of the police and the troubled Ministry of Interior remains very nascent. The establishment of a new department of sub-national governance outside of the Ministry of Interior and headed by a well-regarded official is another positive step. Also on the international

level, donors have established a Provincial Justice Coordination Mechanism under the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) to de-conflict internationally-funded justice sector development projects.

A former top U.S. military commander in Afghanistan, Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry, has said that the greatest long-term threat to success in Afghanistan is not the resurgence of the Taliban but "the potential irretrievable loss of legitimacy of the government of Afghanistan." In this regard, he specifically cited several critical areas – corruption, justice and law enforcement – and said: "We need more urgency to build Afghan government capacity and help connect it with the Afghan people."

In order to improve governance and the rule of law in Afghanistan, the Study Group makes the following recommendations for the Afghan government and the international community:

- *There is a need to enhance the partnership between the international community and the government of Afghanistan.* Mutual responsibilities and obligations need to be made explicit. More ownership on the part of the government of Afghanistan of the very severe problems of corruption must occur, even while the international community offers more coherent advice and robust programs to help the Karzai Administration build governance capacity.

- *The Afghan government and the international community must refocus their efforts to resurrect an integrated and effective justice system for Afghanistan.* In practical terms, this means that actors should *increase and sustain funding to the sector and work towards an Afghan-led prioritization process that will set a realistic agenda for progress in the justice sector.* This will also mean addressing difficult issues such as the role of Islamic law in the courts and the use of informal justice or dispute settlement institutions.

- *A critical goal of efforts to improve the delivery of justice in Afghanistan is to work holistically to establish "pockets of competence"* – justice institutions in key provincial and district centers that function properly and are resourced with proven staff, buildings and communications resources – *throughout the country.* Once functioning, these pockets would establish their legitimacy and can assist neighboring districts using their experience and practices to reform and improve. In order to do this, *Afghanistan and its partners should*:

    - *Focus on development of human resources in the sector.* This would entail a crash program to create legal professionals and civil servants who can manage the basic infrastructure of a judicial system, as well as a vetting, pay and grade reform processes that will weed out problem employees, promote capable ones, and pay them a living wage.

    - *Focus on institutional development of the Supreme Court, the Office of the Attorney General, the Ministry of Justice, and ANP* (currently within the Ministry of Interior) *at the national and provincial levels.*

- In addition, to enhance public confidence in government, security forces, and judicial institutions, *the newly created Advisory Panel on Presidential Appointments should be fully implemented and provided both the resources and political support for it to undertake its efforts.* Further, anti-corruption units should be created or strengthened to provide much needed investigative capacity to deal with low- to medium-level cases and prosecutorial capacity for higher-level ones, and the

establishment of a special national court to prosecute special high-level corruption charges should be considered.

- Donors and the Afghan government should *consider establishing an education system* (such as a School of Governance) *for government officials, starting with the level of district chiefs.* Such a system would provide a short training program that would vet officials, develop their basic administrative skills, teach ethics, and build their social networking and sense of nationhood.

- Finally, *constant and sustained attention and efforts must be made to ensure effective access to justice and protection of basic rights in accordance with the basic principles of Afghan law.* For that purpose, *the Afghan government should be encouraged to: adopt a policy that would acknowledge the important role played by non-state (traditional) dispute resolution mechanisms in Afghan society; create a positive relationship with these processes, in accordance with the basic principles of Afghan law; and work to prevent abuses within the traditional sphere.*

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KEY ISSUE: COUNTER-NARCOTICS

Last August the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released its 2007 Afghan Opium Survey. The report contained several important findings: the area in Afghanistan under opium cultivation rose to 193,000 hectares from 165,000 in 2006; the amount of Afghan land used for growing opium is now larger than the combined total under coca cultivation in Latin America. In the center and north of Afghanistan, where the government has increased its authority and presence, and where governors were able to exert authority and rally local support, opium cultivation is diminishing; the number of provinces with no reported poppy cultivation more than doubled from six to thirteen. However, the opposite trend was seen in southern Afghanistan. Some 80 percent of opium poppies were grown in a handful of provinces along the border with Pakistan, where instability is greatest. In the volatile province of Helmand, where the Taliban insurgency is concentrated, poppy cultivation rose 48 percent.

The report repeated the misconception contained in the recently released U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan that provinces with little or no poppy cultivation are "opium-free." Elites in "opium-free" provinces continue to profit handsomely from drug trafficking. But the UNODC report is a welcome complement to the U.S. Strategy in that it speaks frankly of the inadequacy of alternative livelihood programs and of development for those who do not grow poppy. The report accurately links poppy cultivation (though not drug trafficking) to insecurity. Like the U.S. Strategy, it calls for the full integration of counter-insurgency and counter-narcotics measures, especially in Helmand province, which has become "the world's biggest source of illicit drugs, surpassing the output of entire countries."

The U.S. Strategy correctly states that the drug problem in Afghanistan is "drug money," which weakens key institutions and significantly strengthens the Taliban. According to UNODC estimates, cultivators receive only about 20 percent of the revenue from narcotics, and the drug money that really harms Afghanistan is the money that passes between trafficker/processors on the one side, and power holders on the other, including Taliban, Afghan government officials, and local/tribal leaders.

The core tools of counter-narcotics policy are crop eradication, interdiction (including arresting and prosecuting traffickers, destruction of labs, etc.), and development (alternative livelihoods). These go side by side with public information and with increased governance and reform of the justice sector. *All are necessary in a coordinated counter-narcotics policy, but they need not be simultaneous. They have to be sequenced to achieve the right outcome.* One example, as limited as its applicability may be, is Thailand, where the government invested in development for ten years before introducing eradication. Since the people had confidence in the alternatives by then, they accepted eradication of what little cultivation was left.

An effective and sustainable counter-narcotics strategy for Afghanistan has to include increasing the access to regional and global markets for products made in Afghanistan. *Within Afghanistan, investment in development – especially infrastructure and industry development – should increase in all provinces as part of the implementation of Afghanistan's provincial development plans. These programs must go first of all to provinces that are not planting poppy or that are reducing production.* Otherwise there will be perverse incentives.

Simultaneously there must be a greatly enhanced interdiction effort, going beyond seizing containers from traffickers. *It must start at the top, with the removal of high officials benefiting from the trade.*

The U.S. and other states and international organizations operating in Afghanistan should also strive to ensure that none of their contractors are involved with or benefit from drug trafficking.

The concept of integrating counter-narcotics and counter-insurgency by using international military forces to assist in interdiction is welcome and overdue. But the international forces must take extreme care during such actions not to cause civilian casualties, which have already become a serious issue in the country. These operations should be conducted in full coordination with the Afghan government, with the international forces providing assistance to the Afghan police and/or army with means and intelligence.

How best to pursue poppy eradication and the relationship of eradication to counter-insurgency presents the greatest challenge – and controversy – for the U.S., the international community, and the Afghan government. Proposals to enhance eradication immediately (including the use of herbicides whether sprayed from the air or the ground), especially in Helmand, could prove extremely dangerous for Afghanistan, further undermining support for the government of President Hamid Karzai, alienating thousands of Afghan farmers and providing new recruits for the Taliban.

As an alternative, a more Afghan-centric counter-narcotics strategy should be pursued that includes:

- *A public information campaign stating that the purpose of counter-narcotics is not to destroy but to enhance the livelihoods of the people of Afghanistan.* Afghans cannot build a stable future on the basis of a criminal enterprise that is against Islam. But they also cannot build a stable future on insecurity and poverty. Therefore, the focus should be to work together with the 98 percent of Afghan poppy cultivators (according to the UNODC report) who say that they are willing to abandon poppy cultivation if they can count on earning at least half as much from legal economic activities (not only crops). Eradication should be pursued against cultivators that given alternative means refuse to do so.

- *Ask for voluntary restraint in planting while actually delivering* (not just announcing or funding or launching) *much larger alternative livelihood programs.* Subsidies, price supports, micro-loans, and other forms of insurance to farmers will be needed as they make the transition to licit economic activities.

- *Alternative livelihood programs must provide all the services currently provided to farmers by drug traffickers: futures contracts, guaranteed marketing, financing, and technical assistance (extension services). Micro-finance must be made easily available so that poor farmers and regions can avail themselves of new opportunities.* Such programs have started being implemented in the last couple of years, but they need to be significantly enhanced in order to yield returns and gain the confidence of the Afghans.

The state in Afghanistan can be built only by using the limited force available in a highly-focused and economical way against hard-core opponents, while greatly expanding the incentives (where international actors should have a decisive advantage) to win people over to the side of the government and its international supporters. Counter-narcotics done properly will remove criminal power holders and bring security and development. Done the wrong way, counter-narcotics could destroy any hope of popular support.

KEY ISSUE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION

Afghanistan remains one of the poorest countries in the world. With a per capita gross domestic product of only 377 USD in 2007, most Afghans live on less than a dollar a day, the World Bank measure of absolute poverty. Afghanistan was ranked the second lowest country in the world on the UNDP 2007-08 human development index, and is in the bottom five countries of the world for life expectancy (42.9 years), under-five infant mortality (257 per 1,000 live births), maternal mortality, and adult literacy (28%). Access to clean water and heath services is extremely limited. In short, most Afghans remain desperately poor.

However, like most societies that have emerged from conflict, Afghanistan has experienced a period of rapid economic growth, averaging 8.7 percent per year since the Taliban was toppled in 2001. Per capita GDP has doubled since 2002. Economic growth has been most rapid in Kabul and other urban centers, although every part of Afghanistan has experienced higher output and incomes, with the exception of some of the most violent regions.

Other economic indicators are also positive. Inflation is in single digits. The national currency, the Afghani, has been stable against the dollar. Reserves at the central bank are now more than $5 billion, enough to cover 5 months of imports. Agricultural output has been rising as refugees have returned, numerous roads have been built or repaired enabling farmers to transport crops, and urban demand for food has risen. Afghanistan has also been enjoying a construction boom triggered by rising trade (including narcotics), massive refugee return, and foreign assistance. Transport, retail and wholesale trade, and modest manufacturing gains are all contributing to growth as Afghanistan integrates into the regional economy.

Although economic performance in some sectors has been positive, there are several negative trends. The government and its partners have failed in many respects to create a positive business and investment climate. The production and trade of opium is equivalent to more than a third of the licit GDP, fueling rampant corruption and diverting labor. Although opium's importance to the economy is likely to decline as other sectors grow more rapidly, opium production reached an all-time high in 2007 and there is evidence that more of the value-adding refinement of opium to heroin is taking place inside Afghanistan.

Security has gotten worse in numerous areas of the country, disrupting trade and construction of transportation, communications, and energy infrastructure. Although the customs service has improved, agencies other than the customs service obstruct cross-border and internal traffic in a quest for bribes, increasing costs for businesses and consumers. Despite its promises, the government has also failed to implement a payroll system that will ensure the timely payment of wages to certified government employees. In addition, core areas of government remain corrupt, and Afghanistan has actually experienced a significant drop in its global transparency ranking since 2005 (ranked 9th most corrupt country in the world on the 2007 Corruption Perceptions Index).

The U.S. and other donors should strongly support the International Monetary Fund's efforts to work with the Afghan government to reduce opportunities for bribery by introducing an efficient payroll system and making contracting procedure more transparent. The donor community should also support the IMF by insisting that loss-making state-owned enterprises be properly restructured and that the Afghan government cease giving preferences to politically-powerful businesses, state-owned or private.

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Amounts of foreign assistance are extremely difficult to tabulate. Donors often provide data in terms of commitments rather than disbursements. Technical assistance payments often go directly to non-government organizations or experts who live outside of Afghanistan. This said, according to the World Bank, Afghanistan now receives about $3 billion annually in foreign assistance, up from $1.3 billion in 2002.

Donors have focused on funding education, primary health care, counter-narcotics, and the reconstruction of Afghanistan's major roads and water systems. Training and equipping the Afghan army has received a substantial amount of attention and funding; the police, less so, and assistance to create a justice system, including setting up courts, prosecutors' offices, and prisons even less attention.

Assistance to Afghanistan has shifted from humanitarian relief to funding for projects to improve the operations of the Afghan government and foster economic development, as the need for relief has fallen. Since the fall of the Taliban, rates of enrollment in primary schools have skyrocketed, especially among girls. Donors have funded a massive expansion in primary health care.

Donors should work with the Afghan government to set and fund pay scales that will attract better qualified Afghans, including expatriates, to government jobs. The capacity of the Afghan government to develop and implement plans has constrained the effectiveness and disbursement of assistance. The Afghan government has been unable to tap well-qualified individuals as effectively as it should because of the low level of government salaries. Ensuring competitive wage scales for all government employees from the most senior to teachers and policemen should make the government more efficient and easier for government leaders to hold government employees accountable through the threat of dismissal. Also, *donors should enhance and accelerate infrastructure development – especially outlays on roads, power and water systems – that are necessary to improve security, governance and the Afghan economy.* These efforts should utilize the Afghan labor force, as well as Afghan contractors, as much as possible. Another area of assistance that needs to be significantly bolstered is agricultural expertise.

Donors should focus on giving the Afghan government credit for projects and programs. To do so, donors need to focus on improving Afghan government accounting. *The donor community should also encourage the Afghan government to appoint an Afghan development "czar", drawing authority from President Karzai and able to coordinate the various government ministries.*

Donors should also spread development assistance more evenly around the country. Most assistance has been funneled into conflict areas, even though it is often much less effective in these areas than others. *The donor community should ensure that relatively peaceful areas benefit from assistance, as well as those with high levels of poppy production or of violence, so that incentives for communities are properly aligned.* If communities received more assistance if they are peaceful, the likelihood that the areas of unrest will spread is likely to fall.

Finally, there is growing concern that uncoordinated military and aid strategies among the various international players in Afghanistan are undermining the overall effort to stabilize Afghanistan. *It is imperative that once coalition forces sweep the Taliban from an area, reconstruction aid and development assistance flow into that region immediately, and proper aid mechanisms should be used for that purpose. Representatives of the local governments must be directly involved in administering the aid to build support and trust between the Afghan people and the local authorities.*

This requires close coordination between international military and civilian operations as well as coordinated strategies that emphasize – not undermine – the authority of the local governments. As mentioned above, one of the highest priorities for the new International Coordinator recommended by the Study Group should be to ensure that all international assistance programs have a coordinated strategy that aims to bolster the central government's authority throughout the country.

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KEY ISSUE: AFGHANISTAN AND ITS NEIGHBORS

To reach the international goal of a stable and peaceful Afghanistan, Kabul needs to have better and more reliable relations with its neighbors and the major states of Asia (Russia, India, and China). Achieving this calls for a much more comprehensive and sustained diplomatic effort to engage all the regional players.

History has shown that landlocked Afghanistan is vulnerable to external pressures and interference, especially from Pakistan. Geography and the presence of large numbers of Pushtuns in both countries give Pakistan great leverage over its weaker neighbor. Interference by other countries, particularly Iran, can pose difficulties but of lesser magnitude than Pakistan.

Reducing antagonisms between Pakistan and Afghanistan must be a top priority for the U.S. and the international community. The task requires a sustained, long-term and coordinated diplomatic effort. *Afghanistan has legitimate concerns and fears, especially about the resurgent Taliban's use of Pakistani territory as a safe haven. Kabul blames Islamabad for this and believes that Pakistan's goal is to regain the influence over Afghanistan that it lost with the defeat of the Taliban in 2001-2002. For its part, Pakistan has legitimate concerns about Afghanistan's unwillingness to accept the Durand Line as the border and related, if latent, Afghan irredentist claims on Pushtun areas of Pakistan. Kabul needs to be encouraged to accept the Durand Line as the international border. Given nationalist sentiments, this will be a hard pill for any Afghan government to swallow. Yet removing uncertainty about the frontier is a prerequisite for smoother relations with Pakistan.*

In addition, Islamabad needs to undertake major steps – *not easy in the present tense situation but essential over the long term:*

- Despite Pakistan's counterinsurgency efforts over the last four years, the Taliban and al-Qaeda have developed a strong-hold in this region that bolsters the Taliban's capabilities against coalition forces in Afghanistan and facilitates al-Qaeda planning and execution of global terrorist plots. *The U.S. and its international partners will need to work with Pakistan to make every effort to root out Taliban ideology from its own society and close down the extremist madrassahs (religious schools) and training camps that perpetuate the Taliban insurgency and cross border activities.* The Trilateral Afghanistan-Pakistan-NATO Military Commission will be an important mechanism in this latter regard.
- Pakistan has to develop fully effective means for asserting its authority and physical control over the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), including reforming archaic administrative arrangements, and fully integrating these areas politically and economically within Pakistan. FATA reform and resolution of the border issue referred to above have to go together. The United States has authorized expenditures on economic development in the tribal areas, but this requires a far more intensive and better-coordinated international and Pakistani effort.
- *Pakistan needs to remove burdensome restrictions that inhibit the transportation of goods through Pakistan to and from Afghanistan, including from India.* With regard to trade, there should be a more concerted and energetic international effort to enable Afghanistan to take fuller advantage of its geographic position as a crossroads between central, southern and western Asia.

The Study Group therefore welcomes the efforts by the U.S. and other European partners to encourage better ties between Kabul and Islamabad, including the recent convening of "peace jirgas" and the development of people-to-people, trade and economic links. Washington and other influential capitals should bolster such efforts as a way to build trust and confidence between the two countries and gradually change each side's security perceptions of the region. The recent political complications in Pakistan and the increased security challenges within the country reinforce the notion that without serious steps to tackle the insurgency and extremists in the tribal areas Pakistan's security may also be at risk.

In addition to promoting and assisting these steps with Pakistan, *the U.S. should develop a strategy toward Iran that includes the possibility to resume discussions with Iran to coax greater cooperation from Tehran in helping to stabilize Afghanistan*, beginning with the issue of counter-narcotics, where common ground already exists between Iran and the international community. There were productive contacts and exchanges between the U.S. and Iran during the Taliban years (in the so-called "6 Plus 2" UN process) and at the Bonn conference after the Taliban were removed from power. In the last year, however, Iran's role in Afghanistan has become increasingly troublesome, apparently including supplying arms (including artillery shells, land mines and rocket-propelled grenade launchers) and other support to the Taliban. Although Iran has a history of ideological hostility toward the Taliban, it is likely resorting to assisting its former enemies as a way to pressure the U.S.

Washington, with its allies, should develop a comprehensive picture of what Iran is doing in Afghanistan and map out a sound strategy that seeks to convince Tehran to develop a more constructive role there, including the possibility to reestablish direct talks on Afghanistan. The present U.S stance of not speaking with Tehran about Afghanistan risks increasing the likelihood that Iran will step up its covert interference as a way of hurting the United States. Even if direct negotiations are judged to be premature, the International Coordinator and NATO should be encouraged to engage all of Afghanistan's neighbors in developing solutions for Afghanistan's challenges.

On a regional level, the Afghan government and the international community should initiate a regional process to engage Afghanistan's neighbors and potential regional partners in future sustainable development of Afghanistan. This process can begin with relatively minor confidence building measures and the establishment of a regional forum for discussion of common challenges. *Over the longer term, as Afghanistan makes progress toward standing on its own feet, a multilateral accord involving Afghanistan, all its neighbors, relevant major powers, and the UN would enhance its stability and bolster its international position. Such an accord would recognize Afghanistan as a permanently neutral state*, provide international recognition for Afghanistan's borders, pledge non-interference in internal Afghan affairs, ban the clandestine supply of arms to nongovernmental actors, and establish a comprehensive regime to promote the flow of trade through Afghanistan.

The model (far fetched as it may seem at first glance) *would be the Congress of Vienna accord that guaranteed the permanent neutrality of Switzerland.* Such an agreement would not stop all interference by neighbors, but would help. It would also provide an international framework for Kabul's acceptance of its frontier with Pakistan and a basis for the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO military forces from Afghanistan. Indeed, once Afghanistan is able to maintain internal security and defend its borders, the continued presence of foreign troops is likely to stir trouble within the country and with the neighbors.

The fact that none of the external powers – in its immediate neighborhood or beyond - stands to gain from an Afghanistan that again reverts to anarchy provides a shared basis for addressing the problems at hand. Although achieving the above will be a difficult and long-term task, an Afghanistan that gets along with neighbors is essential.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
ASG	Afghanistan Study Group
COIN	Counter Insurgency
CRS	Congressional Research Service
CSP	Center for the Study of the Presidency
EU	European Union
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
G8	Group of Eight (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (NATO)
ISG	Iraq Study Group
JSF	Allied Joint Force Command (NATO)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OMLT	Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander, Europe
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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ANNEX C

International Security Program

ISSUE BRIEF

THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES

Saving Afghanistan: An Appeal and Plan for Urgent Action

Make no mistake, the international community is not winning in Afghanistan

Unless this reality is understood and action is taken promptly, the future of Afghanistan is bleak, with regional and global impact. The purpose of this paper is to sound the alarm and to propose specific actions that must be taken now if Afghanistan is to succeed in becoming a secure, safe and functioning state.

On the security side, a stalemate of sorts has taken hold. NATO and Afghan forces cannot be beaten by the insurgency or by the Taliban. Neither can our forces eliminate the Taliban by military means as long as they have sanctuary in Pakistan. Hence, the future of Afghanistan will be determined by progress or failure in the civil sector.

However, civil sector reform is in serious trouble. Little coordination exists among the many disparate international organizations and agencies active in Afghanistan. Legal and judicial reform (including reducing corruption), and control of narcotics are interdependent efforts and must receive the highest priority. To add insult to injury, of every dollar of aid spent on Afghanistan, less than ten percent goes directly to Afghans, further compounding reform

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MISSION

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and reconstruction problems.

Urgent changes are required now to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a failing or failed state. Not just the future of the Afghan people is at stake. If Afghanistan fails, the possible strategic consequences will worsen regional instability, do great harm to the fight against Jihadist and religious extremism, and put in grave jeopardy NATO's future as a credible, cohesive and relevant military alliance.

Building a functioning Afghanistan is inherently fraught with difficulty. Much of the nation's infrastructure was destroyed by the Soviet occupation and the years of Taliban rule. But despite the resources and nearly seven years of effort put into Afghanistan by the Afghan government and the international community, the situation on the civil side is deteriorating. Taliban control of the sparsely populated parts of Afghanistan is increasing. Civil reforms, reconstruction, and development work have not gained traction across the whole country, especially in the South.

Surprisingly, many NATO nations engaged in Afghanistan lack a sense of urgency in comprehending the gravity of the situation and the need for effective action now. Fortunately, NATO and the George W. Bush administration have announced separately that studies are now underway to assess conditions on both the security and civil sectors in Afghanistan as a first step that will result in corrective action. But hope is not a strategy or a plan of action. And unfortunately, recent dissension within NATO over the ability of the different militaries to conduct counter-insurgency operations has not helped.

The dangers and difficulties in Afghanistan have been intensified following the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in December. The turmoil and violence Pakistan faces with Bhutto's death and the February elections could too easily overwhelm any interest Islamabad might have to work with Afghan President Hamid Karzai to secure the Pakistan-Afghan border.

Strategic Recommendations in summary

Swift Completion of the Security and Reconstruction Assessment: Without properly assessing the current situation, it will be impossible to design a coherent way forward for NATO and the international community in Afghanistan.

A Comprehensive Campaign Plan and Strategy: One essential step to achieving success in Afghanistan is to create a comprehensive campaign plan that brings together all of the disparate security, reconstruction and governance efforts and coordinates and integrates their work.

Appointment by the UN of a High Commissioner: He must use his stature, gravitas, and authority to cajole, convince or even coerce better coordination and integration of the international effort with the Karzai government.

Create a Regional Approach and Regional Solutions: Bringing in interested parties and neighbors could be done through a meeting or conference that could include the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (of which Russia and China are key members); India; Iran; and of course Pakistan.

These recommendations are explained in more detail in the next section of this paper

That means a porous border that will continue to provide a safe haven for Taliban and insurgents to stage attacks into Afghanistan.

Conclusions and Prescriptions in Brief

These realities lead to two major prescriptions. First, only a regional solution can bring peace, security and some measure of prosperity to Afghanistan. Second, efforts inside Afghanistan must be coordinated and integrated, in the first instance with a "high commissioner" given the appropriate authority by the UN Security Council to carry out this integration, to develop a regional approach to Afghan problems, and to implement a comprehensive plan of action. To implement these prescriptions, we urge the following steps.

Swift Completion of the Security and Reconstruction Assessment: The Afghan assessment studies announced by the Bush Administration and NATO must be completed soon – preferably before the spring when fighting will begin anew. Without properly assessing the current situation and identifying the problems and obstacles to progress across all sectors, it will be impossible to design a coherent way forward for NATO and the international community in Afghanistan. Through these assessments, Allied publics and politicians must understand the stakes and risks involved if we fail; what the real situation on the ground in Afghanistan is concerning security and civil sector reform; and the urgency needed in taking action. At present that is not the case. Any assessment should define the mission in Afghanistan over a long-term framework that would clearly and unambiguously demonstrate that there are no quick or easy fixes to the country's many challenges. The international community must understand that international efforts in Afghanistan will require a lengthy commitment. From this assessment, a comprehensive campaign plan must be developed and put into action.

A Comprehensive Campaign Plan and Strategy: International efforts engaged in rebuilding and securing Afghanistan include over 40 countries, three major international organizations (the UN, EU and NATO) and scores of other agencies and non-governmental organizations. They are disorganized, uncoordinated and at present insufficient. That must be fixed.

One essential step to achieving this vital goal is to create a comprehensive campaign plan that brings together all of these disparate security, reconstruction and governance efforts and coordinates and integrates their work. This effort to write a plan could be organized under NATO auspices, with the plan submitted to the UN for inclusion in the UN Security Council Resolution which provides the authority for the high representative. Participants in the development of this plan must include not only NATO, which is responsible only for providing a safe and secure environment, but the international organizations and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) representatives who do the bulk of the civil reconstruction work. *The Karzai government must play a key role as well.*

The focus of their efforts should be to develop a plan that improves security and safety; weeds out corruption; establishes a fair and just legal system; puts in place an effective and legitimate police force; Creates jobs and, crucially, reverses the epidemic in opium production through a sound and innovative set of policies that controls the cultivation of poppies by providing incentives to alternative crop cultivation and punishing producers of opium.

Appointment by the UN of a High Commissioner: The Karzai government must understand the need for a High Representative to help coordinate and integrate the international effort in Afghanistan. The failure to appoint a "High Rep" with the experience of Paddy Ashdown is a blow to improving the international effort. The High Representative must use his stature,

gravitas, and authority to cajole, convince or even coerce better coordination and integration of the international effort with the Karzai government. To ensure the international legitimacy of the commissioner and to enhance coordination, his mandate should be approved by the UN Security Council to permit him to oversee and implement the proposed comprehensive campaign plan. Without such an individual with the authority to implement the campaign plan, the civil sector reforms in Afghanistan will continue to be inchoate and far less effective than the situation demands.

The high commissioner should also play a critical role in organizing a regional solution. For instance, the high commissioner and the international organizations and nations (especially the U.S.) could seek to develop a Pakistani-Afghan "Camp David process" of intensive, US-led multilateral diplomacy with the goal of brokering an agreement that addresses boundary problems and other bilateral irritants, and especially deals with Pakistan's tribal regions that provide sanctuary for Taliban and other insurgents. Without such a regional effort, success in Afghanistan will be impossible.

Clearly, any High Commissioner can only be effective once a political arrangement with the Afghan government is agreed enabling him to have authority to coordinate reconstruction and a counter narcotics strategy, while at the same time working in close cooperation with the Afghan government and preserving Afghan national sovereignty.

Create a Regional Approach and Regional Solutions: The call for "paradigm shift" is over -used. However, in this case, one is justified. Unless those parties interested in saving Afghanistan understand that a regional approach is essential, the stalemate will continue. Bringing in interested parties and neighbors could be done through a meeting or conference that could include the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (of which Russia and China are key members); India; Iran; and of course Pakistan. A regional approach will not be fashioned over night. But the international community and the UN High Commissioner must put energy and focus into a regional approach if gains in Afghanistan are to endure.

Consequences of failure

By its interventions in the Balkan crises of the 1990s, NATO demonstrated that even with the end of the Cold War, the alliance was still relevant and needed to help address many of the security threats that will arise in the 21st century. But if the Afghanistan effort fails, NATO's cohesion, effectiveness and credibility will be shaken and the rationale for NATOs expeditionary, out of area, role would be undermined. Member states would become reluctant to embark on other out of area operations, and the United States would be less likely to turn to the Alliance in crisis. This could lead to a moribund Alliance, which could find itself reduced to geopolitical irrelevancy and marginalization, much like the long defunct Cold War pacts of CENTO and SEATO.

Fortunately, both NATO and the Bush administration have finally decided to assess the deteriorating conditions in Afghanistan as a first step in taking action. NATO, the U.S. Central Command and the Washington interagency have announced each is undertaking an assessment. However, much greater urgency is required than is currently evident

In addition to the recommendations covered in the preceding pages, success in Afghanistan will also require the international community to focus on the following recommendations covered in more detail in the section "Plan of Action":

- **A Comprehensive Counternarcotics Effort.** The drug issue must be addressed now in a comprehensive and effective way if Afghanistan is to become a successful state. Bold thinking and a holistic approach combining development and enforcement tools are essential.

- **Improved training of the Afghan national police force.** A competent police force is key to sustained stability in Afghanistan, and this effort needs to be a top priority for the international community.

- **Emphasis on effective governance and creation of a credible Afghan judicial system.** The reach of the Afghan government is limited beyond Kabul, and with new elections in 2009 the legitimacy and effectiveness of the government will be put to the test.

- **Development assistance.** The international community must develop a coherent strategy for development assistance in Afghanistan that will ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

- **Public outreach to the allies, partners, and regional stakeholders.** The UN, NATO, and the EU must develop a public outreach strategy that will powerfully communicate the importance of a stable Afghanistan, and that this will be a long-term effort. Also, Many publics in Europe and elsewhere have mistakenly associated the efforts in Afghanistan with the unpopular war in Iraq. The United States needs to separate these two campaigns in its public diplomacy, in order to bolster support for Afghanistan.

- **A rebalancing of national caveats on force participation in the International Security Assistance Force.** Care needs to be taken when dealing with national caveats. There needs to be an understanding of each nation's ability to contribute forces according to their national directives. Furthermore, nations unable to contribute more forces should instead be encouraged to bolster their civilian aid to Afghanistan.

on both sides of the Atlantic. Study is necessary. Action is vital. The U.S. and NATO need to complete these studies by the spring and begin implementing changes even as they work.

The Neglected War

Afghanistan remains a dangerously neglected conflict in a Washington transfixed by Iraq and by European publics indifferent at best and opposed to engagement at worst (where Afghanistan is blurred in the public mind with Iraq). This despite the fact that casualty reports are front-page news in Canadian, Dutch, and British media. Yet, what is happening in Afghanistan and beyond its borders can have even greater strategic long-term consequences than the struggle in Iraq. Failure would be disastrous for Europe, North America, and the region. Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan are already breeding grounds for insurgency and terrorism, potentially worse than before September 11th. The drug trade presents major national security and domestic criminal dangers to Afghans, and can unleash a fresh wave of cheap narcotics into Europe and North America. And what happens in Iraq, Iran and Pakistan will most likely influence and be influenced by conditions in Afghanistan.

On the ground, the situation has gradually settled into a strategic stalemate. Politically, the Taliban have expanded their control to less populated areas. Neither NATO nor the Afghan security forces have the numbers to prevent this from happening. For the time being, many Afghans are taking a wait and see attitude towards the Karzai government. But Afghans are losing patience after almost seven years sincethe fall of the Taliban, while the international engagement has failed to show significantly improved conditions in the country.

NATO, as its commanders have repeatedly stressed, is short of troops in Afghanistan. Even though the Taliban cannot defeat U.S. or NATO forces, at least four maneuver battalions, additional helicopters and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets are needed to improve the security situation in Afghanistan.

The U.S. decision to deploy an additional 3200 Marines to Afghanistan this spring will help ease these shortfalls. However, this one time deployment to plug a gap in the ISAF force pool is not a long term solution.

The Afghan National Army (ANA) is beginning to make a difference in providing lasting security for the Afghan people. Unfortunately, this is not the case with the Afghan police. Until the police forces can be made effective and self-sustaining, the security situation will remain tenuous. And, as long as the Taliban and insurgents can find sanctuary, recruits and supplies in Pakistani tribal areas, they cannot be defeated. This leaves few good options for NATO and the coalition, especially given the latest political crisis in Pakistan today created by Bhutto's assassination.

President Musharraf clearly understands the extent of the grave risks of Islamic militancy. However, securing the border with Afghanistan and effectively fighting an insurgency in northwest Pakistan is an enormously complex problem. The Pakistani Army has little stomach for killing other Pakistanis especially when ethnic and tribal relationships make it difficult to tell friend from foe and intermarriage in the tribal areas has made many Taliban and other insurgents part of local Pakistani families.

This stalemate poses a great dilemma for NATO: how can the 26 NATO governments convince their publics to support a long-term effort in Afghanistan without clear indications of real progress either in the security or reconstruction sectors? Those allies with substantial forces fighting in Afghanistan are already fatigued by the political battles at

home, as adverse domestic opinion challenges the governments to continue their strong support for Afghanistan. Canada, Germany and the Netherlands are the most immediate cases. While each has renewed their mandates for force deployments, finding replacement forces for them in 2009 and beyond will be difficult. If NATO cannot provide new forces to fight in the south, its credibility will be dealt a powerful blow, throwing into doubt its future cohesion and hence viability.

Key to success in Afghanistan, and ultimate withdrawal of coalition forces, is helping the Karzai government win on the civil front. Currently, the Afghan government is not winning the crucial battle in the civil sector to create the judicial, legal and police reforms essential to governance and is losing the fight in curtailing corruption and drug production and creating job opportunities. NATO and Afghan forces are capable of coping with the immediate military and security threats posed by the Taliban and other insurgents, although there is continued fighting in the south. But unless civil reforms are put in place by the Karzai government with increased assistance from the international community, tactical military success will never bring the political or strategic victory that will allow NATO to go home. It is critical that the government take the lead in improving governance. The international community can provide security and reconstruction assistance, but only the Afghan government can build lasting government structures.

Problems and Dysfunctionalities

A multi-front war is being waged in Afghanistan. On the security side, military forces from some three-dozen states are dealing with the largely Taliban inspired insurgency. The major combatants are NATO, with about 41,000 troops under the command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and coalition forces with approximately 7,000 troops under U.S. command. The definition of Taliban is by no means clear with some full-time, part time and even amateur Afghans participating in the insurgency.

By most press accounts, the insurgency appears to be spreading, warlords seem to be accumulating power and the split between President Karzai and the Afghan legislature over power is growing. However, the insurgency does not threaten the survival of the current government in the short term. Meanwhile, Afghan security forces are still in the process of being recruited, trained and equipped with the police falling far behind the army in that regard. Even with growing Afghan Army strength, NATO still has the primary responsibility for maintaining security and stability.

Reform of the civil sector, particularly counternarcotics and job creation, remains painfully slow. After the Geneva donors' conference in 2002, division of labor was assigned to various states to oversee reforms in Afghanistan. Germany was assigned responsibility for the Afghan national police; Italy for the judicial sector; Japan for demobilization of militias; and the U.S. for building and training the Afghan army. The responsibility for Afghan reconstruction rests with the Afghan government, assisted by the international community most visibly by "Provincial Reconstruction Teams" (PRTs) of which there are now 25. The PRTs come from the various nations and report back to national capitals. Hence, most are not under central command and coordination, and integration of planning has been modest at best.

Regarding the issues of coordinating and integrating the many foreign resources directed to Afghanistan, former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Ronald Neumann points out that the tribal and political nature of Afghanistan means that there would be divided authority and responsibility and that no equivalent of a General MacArthur in the case of Japan or even an L. Paul Bremer in the early days of Iraq could fit the Afghan case. Hence, to a large degree, the failure of reconstruction has been a

failure of having sufficient points of real control. Whether that can be corrected or not is crucial to Afghanistan's future. While the Karzai government has largely failed to make civil reforms or stem the growth of poppy production, Afghanistan has always been a loosely governed state and it would be counterproductive to expect dramatic changes to the political culture of the country. A UN high commissioner with a strong and accepted mandate could address the coordination problem, but for that to happen the Afghan government may have to agree to an outside voice in its chambers.

The most striking sign of the international community's failure is drug production. It has grown to the extent that the World Bank estimates that close to 90 percent of the world's illegal opium originates in Afghanistan. The stark alternatives that could reduce the poppy growth are unacceptable. Elimination through eradication of the poppies would create massive economic hardship and disruption that would turn a substantial portion of the population against the Karzai government and the NATO forces as more insurgents would now be recruited if only to derive income.

The last problem area is job creation. Simply put, despite all the other efforts, job creation is the most essential. Stimulating and growing the economy are key to any form of long-term stability. Yet, as with the PRTs, coordination of reconstruction and job creation has proven elusive.

In summary, despite efforts of the Afghan Government and the international community, Afghanistan remains a failing state. It could become a failed state. Were that to happen, the geostrategic consequences would likely prove profound for the West. NATO would not be able to just go back to business as usual, it would emerge from a failed mission greatly weakened. And a weakened NATO would find itself facing a strengthened Islamic insurgency with an Afghan sanctuary from which to base its expansion and a confidence developed from its ability to grind down both the USSR and NATO in Afghanistan. But attention in Washington and in European capitals on Afghanistan needs to be sharpened especially as the NATO Summit in Bucharest approaches. Islamabad must realize that instability in Afghanistan negatively impacts its goal of building a stable democracy. The first step is to draw attention to this crisis and ensure that policy makers and Alliance publics understand that urgency in taking action is essential.

While an assessment, campaign plan, a UN High Commissioner, and enhanced regional cooperation are the most urgent requirements and necessary pre-conditions for success, there are additional steps that NATO and the international community can take at the same time. These additional steps can be found in the "Plan of Action" section of this paper.

Conclusions

Perhaps the best that can be hoped for *in the short term* is to reduce Taliban control and freedom of action, especially in the south, and to improve stability elsewhere in the country. This will take more NATO forces in the south and stepped up civil efforts everywhere. It may be that the worst that can happen is a protracted insurgency in the south and instability elsewhere. It may be also that an Afghan state cannot be created that is effective and legitimate throughout the country.

The key to success - as in any counter-insurgency - rests on the Afghans. If enabled with effective security forces, the promise of a growing economy and legitimate institutions of government including the legal and judicial system, Afghanistan can become a functioning and secure country. This will take a great deal of time. Hence, NATO and the international community must reaffirm its commitment for the long haul that will be measured in years and perhaps decades, though the form and substance of assistance will change as that nation progresses towards peace, stability and democracy.

But, if NATO and the international community, together with the Karzai government, cannot put forward a coordinated and comprehensive effort that is sustainable and adequately resourced for this long-term, Afghanistan will experience only the worst of possible outcomes, and NATO itself could be on the path towards irrelevancy. This need not be the case and it is still not too late to act decisively as the main foundations for solution are essentially in place. The first step is to understand that the situation in Afghanistan is grave and that immediate action and attention are needed by the United States and the international community in order to prevent a setback to regional and global security. Urgency is the watchword. The international community must act, and it must act now.

Specific recommendations follow in the section "Plan of Action".

Plan of Action

For NATO, the international community and the people of Afghanistan, the challenge is to strengthen and sustain efforts to provide security, and to make progress in building a nation in what will be a long campaign. Steps that can be taken to do this in a long campaign include:

A Comprehensive Counternarcotics Effort. Among the many sub-tasks of a comprehensive campaign plan, counternarcotics must have the first priority. The drug issue must be addressed now in a comprehensive and effective way if Afghanistan is to become a successful state. Bold thinking and a holistic approach combining development and enforcement tools are essential.

Currently, a combination of law enforcement, interdiction, eradication, education and information and alternative job creation form the elements of the counternarcotics program. However, there is little consensus on the balance between and sequencing of these different tools. Some alliance countries emphasize interdiction and eradication, (with the United States pushing for herbicide spraying), while others see more promise in education and alternative crops. The various countries contributing to the counternarcotics campaign in Afghanistan must reach an overarching agreement on the balance and the sequencing between these tools.

Some have suggested ISAF take on an aggressive drug eradication role. This is not a good fit for ISAF; armed forces should not be used as an eradication force, being neither trained, manned nor equipped to do that job. Drug eradication must be an Afghan job, performed by Afghan forces, especially the police, which will require major improvements in the police force's ability and willingness to interdict drug producers and traffickers, as well as protect Afghans that cooperate with government and allied efforts. A carrots and sticks approach could be used where regions are given an opportunity to cooperate with a holistic counter narcotics approach, but their failure to do so would result in Afghan eradication of their poppy crops.

Also, the possibility of limited use of legal opium purchases should be explored by the international community, beginning in Helmand Province, to see if limited purchases can become part of the comprehensive approach to fighting the drug problem.

Another idea to provide incentives for farmers to leave poppy cultivation, suggested by Edmund Phelps and Graciana del Castillo on January 9, 2008, in "The Financial Times", is for the international community to provide farmers loan and price support programs and other incentives like special preferential tariff treatments for light, labor-intensive manufactures (such as textiles) that make it

easier for farmers to transition to non-poppy crops.

Regardless, the Karzai government must be as effective in providing security and social services to alternative crop farmers as the drug traffickers are in protecting poppy farmers if Afghanistan is going to wean the poppy farmers off their dependence on the drug trade. The Ministry of Agriculture can be helpful in providing services (such as an extension service); however, the Ministry is not a priority and needs civil mentoring, which is another area where nations (or the private sector) can assist. Experience from other counternarcotics campaigns suggest that such economic development is far more successful in persuading poor populations to stop producing illicit drugs, rather than harsh measures such as law enforcement raids and eradication.

Improved Training of the Afghan National Police. A competent and effective Afghan police force (including border guards) is critical to the long-term sustainment of Afghan stability and the eventual withdrawal of international forces. In some provinces of Afghanistan, crime is seen as a greater threat to stability and security than the insurgency, but current police forces are too few and too poorly equipped and paid to be effective. Therefore, building competent law enforcement units who have the trust of the local population should be a key priority for the international effort in Afghanistan.

A pay and promotion reform designed to curb corruption by reducing the incentives for bribes is especially needed within the Afghan National Police. NATO led Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams have proven successful in training the Afghan National Army. Similar teams composed of police from the international community should be considered for embedding with the Afghan police units.

The "Focused District Development" concept should be encouraged and spread to other parts of Afghanistan, where certain key districts identified by Afghans take whole police formations off the line for 8 weeks to make sure the force is composed of the right personnel who are then trained until they reach a uniform level. In addition to providing better equipment and training, the Afghan National Police must be taught a culture of service. Nothing will enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of the government more than a police force that has the confidence and trust of the Afghan people.

Governance and Creation of a Credible Afghan Judicial System. While the year 2008 is important, 2009 is decisive. That is the year of new elections in Afghanistan, and governance will be tested not just in the transfer of power, but in how the government will prepare for and conduct those elections.

Governance and rule of law in Afghanistan are clearly underdeveloped. The reach, capacity and legitimacy of the Afghan government are weak and do not extend very far outside Kabul. This is true partly because of the lack of trained officials to implement government decisions and to work with national governments and international organizations. The development and mentoring of professional government staff, from the provincial governors to ministry staff in Kabul, is an important area for donor countries to contribute either advisors or training resources in the donor country.

Perhaps above all elements of governance, a credible and capable Afghan judicial system is most critical. Without an integrated and effective justice system and institutional development of the Supreme Court, Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Justice, a campaign plan to deal with the narcotics problem will fail, as will fail the legitimacy of the Afghan Government. The international community has lost focus and let slip its support in this area. As a top priority, it must re-energize with funding and expertise its assistance to Afghans in building an Afghan

judicial system that is in harmony with Afghan traditions and international legal practice.

One way to bolster the effectiveness of the Afghan judicial system is to continue the construction of the judicial infrastructure with prisons, police stations, and courts. However, continued reforms in this area must also take into account the informal tribal systems of justice that can be found in Afghanistan. Imposing a judicial system without proper attention to these social mechanisms of justice will lead to a lack of legitimacy among the Afghan people.

PRT Coordination. Coordination between the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) is essential. Because most PRTs report directly back to national capitals, coordination among all the PRTs, with NGOs and with the Karzai government is at best ad hoc. In fact, most PRTs are stovepiped back to national capitals and the ISAF commander has no ability to influence or coordinate their work. That must be corrected so that what happens in one province is related to both neighboring provinces as well as the national effort.

In fact, with experience gained in the past few years in running PRTs, the whole concept should be part of the assessment review, with an eye not only on best practices and better coordination, but also on whether some PRTs should be merged.

Additionally, to be effective, PRT personnel should remain in country at least twelve months (not the normal six month rotation in some PRTs) so they can establish relationships with the leadership in the local area. In this way, they can exploit these relationships to make sure local leaders identify not just wants but needs. Additionally, some PRT staffing is too heavily weighted towards military personnel for force protection, when more civilian personnel who are expert in reconstruction tasks are needed to do the nation-building job of the PRT.

Development Assistance. While coordination of development assistance is a primary goal for the campaign plan, there are other ways developmental assistance can be improved. For example, there is no coherent international strategy on how nations should provide funds for reconstruction and development projects in Afghanistan. While some countries have chosen to funnel their development funds through the Karzai government, others use NGOs or private companies for this purpose. On the U.S. part, the civilian economic and developmental assistance funding should be increased from its current level of only $1.5 billion a year. Too much U.S. assistance and funding goes into the military sector at the expense of badly needed civil reconstruction. Better coordination in providing development aid funds could help in the coherence of an Afghan reconstruction and development strategy. An Afghan Development Corps along the lines of a public works program could also help the Afghan government better organize internally its development needs and priorities that can help international donors better shape their assistance.

The international donor base can be deepened, because the entire international community has a stake in Afghanistan. Nations in Asia and the Gulf can do more to provide resources, both human and financial, for Afghan reconstruction. The private sector as well can work with the Afghan government and NGOs, as well as look for opportunities to assist with micro-enterprise assistance of their own.

Public Outreach and de-linking Iraq and Afghanistan. The UN, NATO and the EU must intensify efforts at 'strategic outreach,' especially in Europe, to communicate more powerfully the importance of building a stable Afghanistan. Part of this outreach is to de-link Iraq and Afghanistan. Publics, especially in Europe, regard Afghanistan as part of the highly unpopular war in Iraq. As a result, publics are unsure whether or not to support the ISAF mission. American declarations must cease describing Iraq and Afghanistan as the two main

fronts in the war on terror and instead focus on each as separate, unique actions with different goals and objectives. Political leaders in Europe should also focus on the importance of Afghanistan for European security. Allied publics should know too, that the NATO mission will be a long one and that their patience and sustained contributions by all Allies are vital. The upcoming NATO Summit in Bucharest in April is an appropriate forum for heads of state to make this case for sustained, long-term effort to ensure success in Afghanistan.

Rebalancing the national caveats on force participation and allied support for reconstruction. We should be careful in dealing with the issue of national caveats. While we need our forces to be able to accomplish many diverse missions on the ground in Afghanistan, military capability remains the cornerstone of NATO's raison d'etre. We should respect each nation's ability to contribute directly as they are able and according to their national directives. Rather than forcing nations to undertake operations that will not be approved by domestic legislatures, commitments in kind to civil reform and non-security related actions should be valid substitutes. In lieu of military forces, these members should increase their civil support, both financial and in human resources, for Afghan reconstruction and development. This could include establishing PRTs, or providing experts in governance to those areas of the Afghan government under development, such as police training, judicial reform, agriculture or economic development. That will give individual states the chance to make additional capabilities beyond certain military tasks that have been foreclosed for national reasons. National caveats that restrict the commander's ability to use forces as needed, especially in emergency or in extremis are a cancer that Allies should attempt to remove, much as the Alliance did in Kosovo in 2004.

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ANNEX D

Winning the Invisible War

An Agricultural Pilot Plan for Afghanistan

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The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not reflect the official policy or position of the National Defense University, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government. All information and sources for this paper were drawn from unclassified materials.

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INTRODUCTION

When this paper was undertaken in the summer of 2007, one of its purposes was to sound the alarm over Afghanistan and the critical need for comprehensive action across all sectors of society to prevent that country from becoming a failed state. The second purpose was to lay out the major areas that needed immediate attention, largely within the civil side of reconstruction and development. The third was to propose specific pilot plans for rejuvenating the agricultural sector. These plans were developed by experienced American farmers and other experts with long careers in government, agriculture, and development. The principle participants are co-authors.

Now, six months later, it appears that the Bush administration and NATO are taking that warning seriously. At least three studies are underway: one at Central Command; a second at the State Department; and a third at NATO. Those studies need not take much time to finish. The issues are clear.

At the strategic level, what happens in Afghanistan and beyond its borders can have even greater long-term consequences than how the struggle to bring a measure of stability and order to Iraq turns out. Failure would be disastrous for the United States and the region. Afghanistan could again become a breeding ground for insurgency and terrorism, possibly worse than before the Taliban government was overthrown in 2001. The thriving drug trade also presents major national security and domestic criminal dangers. And what happens in Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan will influence and be influenced by conditions in Afghanistan.

The cohesion and viability of NATO, the most successful military alliance in history, rests on prevailing in Afghanistan. That NATO, an alliance with two million people in uniform, cannot find four additional maneuver battalions and a handful of helicopters for Afghanistan makes this point. If the alliance cannot show that the Afghan government is making substantial reforms on the civil and economic fronts to become a functioning state, NATO members will find ways to lessen support to the point of withdrawal.

Withdrawal that leaves Afghanistan a failed or failing state would weaken the political bonds of the Alliance. NATO would not implode immediately, but, it could become moribund and ineffective because of its demonstrated inability to act decisively and in concert to protect the interests and security of its members. The specter of the League of Nations, which lacked any power to enforce the peace, comes to mind.

The Taliban[1] is gaining strength, and poppy production continues to increase, despite the counter-narcotic campaigns waged by the Afghan government and its foreign allies. The conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq could merge, depending on developments in Pakistan, namely, the consequences of clashes in Pakistan between radical and moderate Islam and between democracy and authoritarianism—intensified by the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto—and, in Iran, namely, political decisions on acquiring nuclear weapons.

It is our assertion that the current Afghan government and its allies, principally NATO and the United States, are not winning the battle in the civil sector to create crucial judicial, legal and police reforms essential to governance and are losing the fight in curtailing corruption and drug production and creating employment opportunities. While NATO and other forces are capable of coping with the current military and security threats posed by the Taliban and other insurgents—although conditions in the south are deteriorating—unless or until civil reforms are put in place, tactical success will not bring political or strategic victory.

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[1] The definition of Taliban is by no means clear, with some full-time, part-time, and even amateur Afghans participating in the insurgency.

THE MAJOR PROBLEMS AND DYSFUNCTIONALITIES

A multi-front war is being waged in Afghanistan. On the security side, military forces from some three-dozen states are dealing with the largely Taliban-inspired insurgency. The major combatants are NATO, with some 42,000 troops under the command of the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF), and U.S. Central and Special Forces commands, with approximately 20,000 troops. Although the insurgency does not threaten the survival of the current government in the short term, the trends are ominous. By most press accounts, the insurgency is spreading, warlords are accumulating power, and the split between President Hamid Karzai and the Afghan legislature is growing. While Afghan security forces are in the process of being recruited, trained and equipped, the burden of maintaining security rests on NATO, the United States, and other outside states.

The reform of the civil sector, including counter-narcotics and job creation, is painfully slow. According to the division of labor established by the 2002 Berlin Conference, NATO members were assigned responsibility for whole governmental sectors. Germany is responsible for the Afghan national police, Italy for the judiciary, Japan for demobilization, and the United States for building and training the Afghan army. Reconstruction was to be the responsibility of the Afghan government and, later, ISAF provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs), which combine reconstruction workers and security forces. Despite nominal subordination of PRTS to ISAF, the national governments that provide the personnel have authority over the PRTs. Although stabilization and reconstruction should be a concerted, nation-wide effort, it is managed piecemeal via coordination and cooperation. No single entity is fully in charge or has the authority and responsibility to cross the many political and geographic boundaries.

Former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Ronald Neumann pointed out that the nature of Afghanistan meant that there would be divided authority and responsibility, and that no equivalent of a General McArthur or L. Paul Bremer could fit the Afghan case. To a large degree, the failure of stabilization and reconstruction is attributable to poor command and control. Correction of that deficiency is crucial to Afghanistan's future.

As stabilization and reconstruction falters, drug production grows. The stark alternative of elimination and eradication of poppy growth will backfire. Destruction of poppies throughout the country—if achievable and sustainable—would create massive economic disruption and hardship, and no doubt recruit many more volunteers for the insurgency. Combining a program for licit sale of poppies, or temporary and massive increases in payments to farmers for cultivating non-narcotic crops, with other counter-narcotic measures may be the only way to constrain opium production.

Job creation is the major focus of this paper. Simply put, economic growth is essential to any form of long-term stability. Unless and until the problem areas and dysfunctionalities impeding economic growth are remedied, the prognosis for Afghanistan is grim. Five pilot programs are offered here as immediate steps toward economic growth and models for an expanded effort.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

First, the various ongoing assessments of Afghanistan must be completed in days or weeks and not months. From these assessments, a comprehensive campaign plan that coordinates all or most activities in the security and civil sectors must be drafted and approved by the administration and other participants, particularly NATO.

Second, there must be an effort to coordinate civil-sector reforms between and among the Afghan government and the outside states responsible for the various efforts. The idea of a high commissioner—an individual with the stature, gravitas, and authority to cajole, convince, or even coerce better coordination and integration—has been proposed before. By whatever title, such a position is essential. Whether the sponsoring group would be the European Union, the United Nations, or some other entity can be debated. However, without such an individual and the authority to act, the civil-sector reforms will continue to be inchoate and far less effective than the situation demands. (As this goes to press, there are reports that President Karzai has rejected the UN nominee for that post, Paddy Ashdown.) Coordination between the PRTs is essential. Because PRTs report directly back to national capitols, coordination is at best ad hoc. That must be corrected so that what happens in one province is related to neighboring provinces and to the national effort.

Along with a high commissioner, a rejuvenated agricultural reform plan is urgently needed. Ours is called "Project Plant-Rite" and is ready for immediate implementation. Project Plant-Rite would consist of five off-the-shelf programs developed by American farmers and agricultural experts. These programs could be started immediately and used as models or prototypes for a larger effort.

We propose that the ongoing assessment effort incorporate the state of agricultural reform and how projects like the ones proposed can make a difference (or where they may be redundant).

Finally, and not included in Project Plant-Rite, is a suggestion for the counter-narcotics effort. Currently, eradication is being stressed among the priorities of education and alternative job creation. We do not believe this will work and, indeed, could fuel the insurgency because of the negative economic impact. We suggest that limited use of licit purchases, along the lines argued by British Conservative MP Tobias Ellwood, be investigated first in Helmand Province. We understand the counter arguments, and this is not the place to review them. However, we believe that, unless an action like this is conducted on a trial basis, the broader counter-narcotics effort of reliance solely or largely on eradication will fail.

These efforts must be integrated under a comprehensive campaign plan that brings together security and reconstruction efforts and the plethora of governmental and nongovernmental organizations working in Afghanistan.

A PLAN FOR AGRICULTURAL REFORM—OPERATION PLANT-RITE

Priority 1: Construction of state-of-the-art processing and warehouse facilities in the Kabul and Kandahar locales

This priority focuses on building the capacity of Afghan farmers to take advantage of potentially lucrative export markets. By financing the rapid construction of a network of state-of-the-art processing, refrigeration, and storage facilities, this component of Plant-Rite stands to bridge the gap between farm and export markets.

The Afghan agriculture export sector flourished in the years before the Soviet invasion in 1979. Afghan farmers dominated the international market in pistachios and supplied significant amounts of other, perennial, horticultural products, especially dried fruit and nuts.[2] The Afghanistan Ministry of Agriculture has identified this large export market as a crucial opportunity for high-profit, agricultural activities.[3] India is often mentioned as the leading market for such products, and its fantastic levels of economic growth in recent years may further increase demand.

The need for a network of processing and storage facilities is urgent. Efforts to date by international donors to build processing/storage facilities have focused on the local level, e.g., sorting, cleaning, and storage facilities funded through smaller, community-driven projects. Such efforts are important but contribute little to the export side. In the absence of a network of facilities that links regions and Kabul and Kandahar, the most that donor efforts are likely to achieve is the creation of more robust local and regional agricultural markets.

The export opportunities are large and have exceptional and unique benefits, such as high profit margins, immediate and high demand, and possibilities for earning foreign exchange. While the international donor community has taken important steps in funding projects to improve finance (micro-credit) and general infrastructure (roads), Plant Rite fills an important need for linking such initiatives to markets in countries around Afghanistan. Unfortunately, given difficulties in the security arena, as well as sluggish progress in some areas of reconstruction, relying on the domestic private sector or foreign direct investment to fill this need is not a feasible solution, especially if a premium is placed on short-term impact. If the maximum value of the current Afghan government and international donor community efforts is to be extracted, a specific and ambitious program to build the foundations of a horticultural export economy is critical.

Off-the-shelf plans for state-of-the-art processing and warehousing facilities have been drafted by a group of California growers, processing equipment manufacturers, controlled-climate storage experts, and agricultural building designers. The plans can be implemented now, and the machinery, refrigeration, and processing facilities will greatly enhance the output and value of Afghanistan's primary food exports of dried fruits, raisins, and almonds. The enhanced product quality and values will, in turn, create more reliable markets and higher purchase prices for the growers' goods. We estimate that 12,000 additional jobs will be created. (Costs and benefits of each proposal are summarized in associated tables.)

Two central processing and refrigeration centers will be constructed in Kabul and Kandahar. Six companion field receiving and pre-processing stations will be developed in strategically

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[2] <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Reports/Afghanistan/Agriculture/Rebuilding_Agriculture_Sector_AFG.pdf>.

[3] Master plan www.agriculture.gov.af/fills/English%20summary%20for%20masteplan.doc.

located, outlying, farming areas to facilitate moving high-value produce to the central processing facilities. Cold-chain product-handling systems using truck-mounted, refrigerated containers will improve the field-to-receiving-station handling of high-value, perishable crops during harvest.

Estimated Costs	
Central Facilities	$ 3.5 million
Improved Processing Machinery	8.5 million
Primary Receiving Stations	4.0 million
Technical Assistance	2.0 million
Total Investment	$18.0 million
Estimated Employment Enhancements	12,000 jobs

Priority 2: Restoration and expansion of vineyards, fruit and nut orchards, and field crops.

This priority focuses on the importance of building long-term, sustainable alternatives to poppy production. In concert with the other recommendations, aggressively funding a coordinated program to restore and expand the use of high-value fruit, nut, and vegetable crops will enable and equip the individual farmer with the knowledge and materials to choose "not poppy" and build a sustainable, long-term livelihood.

The key objective of this recommendation is to connect and enable the individual farmer with the larger, infrastructure-related initiatives of Plant Rite. The priority is to provide information, training, and raw materials to enable farmers to make the transition from cereals and poppy production to high-value, high-profit crops for export. These include specifically grapes, raisins, almonds, walnuts, pistachios, and apricots, and possibly pomegranates, mulberries, oilseed crops, and vegetables for drying (such as peppers and tomatoes).

The terrain, climate, and tradition of gardening in Afghanistan make it an excellent place to grow high-value fruits and nuts. For most Afghanis, agriculture is their source of livelihood. Over 75 percent of Afghanis live in rural areas. Before the expansion of the opium trade, legal agricultural production was half of Afghan GDP. High-value horticulture provided 48 percent of Afghanistan's pre-1979 export revenue and 60 percent of the world's dried fruit.[4]

Since the Soviet invasion, lack of security and destruction of both general and agricultural infrastructure have made earning a living in licit agriculture difficult. International assistance to date has had an unfortunate tendency to focus on short-term measures—distribution of seeds, tools, and fertilizers; funding alternatives to poppy with a seasonal rather than sustainable effect. The logic of the proposed initiative is to provide the key necessary ingredients for a rapid and sustainable move toward high-value crop production. Those ingredients include:

- Instruction for Afghan farmers on all phases of farming these high-value crops, including planting, fertilizing, pruning, irrigation, harvesting, and processing;
- Information and analysis for "best-fit" and expanded production. Technical work will include satellite surveys, soil analyses, and improved irrigation systems to help determine the best fit crops, as well as opportunities for expanding existing vineyards; and,
- New, high-yield plantings of nut- and fruit-tree stock grown in California nurseries via tissue culture will be air freighted to Afghanistan. Through this method, a full year of the tree-into-production growing cycle can be saved.

[4] Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), "Crops and seeds programme," 2004, <http://www.fao.org/world/afghanistan/proj_ag_hort_en.htm>; "The Gardens of Eden," *The Economist*, Sept 19, 2002.

The reality for farmers in Afghanistan is that the choice in favor of producing poppy is made easier because of the informal training in production provided by drug networks and the comparative ease with which opium can be stored and transported. This portion of Project Plant Rite will rectify this imbalance and provide the techniques, information, and stock for farmers to choose to produce high-value crops for export. Other efforts by international donors in the agricultural sector have made some improvements; adopting Project Plant Rite's comprehensive approach with a clear mandate and strong leadership can build on those efforts.

Estimated Costs:	
New Orchard/Vineyard Planting Stock	$2.5 million
Orchard/Vineyards Planning and Soils Development	1.0 million
Cropping Management/Irrigation Training	0.5 million
Total Cost:	4.5 million
Employment/Income Enhancement	6,000 families

Priority 3: Development of groundwater and repair of large-scale water resources facilities

This priority focuses on the importance of large-scale solutions to the key limiting factor in agricultural productivity in Afghanistan—water. By opening up new, large-scale sources of the fresh water so critical to all agriculture, especially high-value vineyards and orchards, this recommendation provides a critical input for long-term, sustainable, agricultural production.

Shortage of water is a critical barrier to fostering new agricultural opportunities in Afghanistan.[5] The ability to grow poppy in arid conditions reinforces this importance, as farmers in regions without a sustainable source of fresh water will find it difficult to earn income without resorting to illegal products. In particular, the southwest region of Helmand is both arid and home to much of Taliban activity. Without a large-scale water solution, areas like Helmand will be difficult to turn to long-term, non-poppy agriculture. This priority approaches the large-scale water supply issue through exploration for new freshwater sources using cutting-edge, megawatershed, geologic techniques.[6]

As is well known, restoration of the Kajaki Dam in Helmand Province is USAID's largest project in Afghanistan. Built in 1953, the dam has the potential to store 1.7 billion cubic feet of water for irrigation and to supply power to several million people. Successfully restoring the Kajaki Dam to full operation would be a critical improvement in infrastructure. The villages and security forces around the dam have been the target of Taliban attacks the last 2 years. The security situation has placed an indefinite hold on the larger components of rehabilitation, including construction of a road to the dam and transmission lines for distributing power. An alternative large-scale water supply is needed.

[5] Ben Berry, "Rebuilding Afghanistan's Agricultural Sector: Common Recommendations across NGOs and Governments," July 2007, http://ats.agr.gc.ca/asia/4349_e.htm

[6] "The Megawatershed Paradigm expands upon existing volumes of presumed accessible, sustainable groundwater resources by a multiple of 10 to 100 globally. Relative to other alternatives (such as dams and desalinization plants), Megawatershed exploration and development is the quickest, most cost-effective and environmentally progressive means of water development." From EarthWater Global at <http://www.earthwaterglobal.com/paradigm.htm>.

We propose the use of advanced geologic exploration techniques developed by American geotechnical specialists to locate and drill into megawatersheds.[7] Recent advances in fractured-bedrock hydrogeology and underground water analyses have opened the door to finding new sources of potable water in many parts of the world where periodic drought conditions exist. Afghanistan, with precipitation in its central, Hindu Kush Mountains, is a region where megawatersheds are likely to exist. Advanced drilling techniques can allow sustained recovery of these underground water resources. Preliminary geologic studies, funded by USAID, will facilitate subsequent exploration, location, and drilling.

Estimated Costs	
Megawatershed exploration and drilling (6–10 high-production wells)	8 million
Estimated numbers affected	500,000 people

Priority 4: Improve export sales linkages for Afghanistan's dried fruits, nuts and other crops

This priority focuses on building the capacity and business skills to link the anticipated larger quantities of high-value, agricultural products to prospective buyers. By providing near-term assistance to facilitate marketing, quality improvement, and business links with interested buyers, this effort will provide the necessary bridge from processing and storage to revenue-generating sales.

The conflict with the Soviet Union and rule of the Taliban precipitated a massive exodus of highly educated business professionals from Afghanistan. While some of these valuable people returned after the removal of the Taliban from power in 2001, there remains a significant shortage of educated professionals with international business experience. Without a program to help build even the basic skills needed for negotiating contracts and export, Afghan agricultural potential will remain unfulfilled.

Project Plant Rite will provide funds for technical assistance in marketing and advertising for export of high-value products. Agriculture groups seeking to export such products will require assistance in identifying potential export markets, ensuring quality in process, and communicating quality to potential buyers, and designing a marketing and branding strategy. The focus of these efforts will initially be South Asia and other regional markets.

As mentioned in Priority 1, the network of processing and storage facilities will include product-display areas that will allow buyers to inspect the methods of production for quality. In addition, the initiative will provide funds to recruit and pay for travel for potential regional and international buyers as a vehicle for building critical, first, business relationships. This approach will be similar to past assistance programs, such as in Iraq, that have sponsored visits of potentially interested business executives. These efforts help mitigate security-related concerns about doing business and build business relationships and market opportunities.

[7] Robert A. Bisson, Charles Sheffield and Sabine Sisk, "Megawatershed Exploration: A State-of-the-Art Technique Integrating Water Resources and Environmental Management Technologies," paper presented to IDA World Congress on Desalination and Water Sciences, 1995, http://www.earthwaterglobal.com/pubs/Megawatershed%20Exploration-%20A%20State-of-the-Art%20Technique%20Integrating%20Water%20Resources.pdf

Estimated Costs	
Marketing Training	$0.8 million
Product Trial Placements	$0.6 million
International / Invitational Travel	$1.1 million
Total Cost	$2.5 million
Employment Enhancement	5,000 jobs

Priority 5: Urban and village infrastructure/sanitation improvements–labor-intensive work activities

This initiative focuses on the importance of funding short-term, labor-intensive upgrades to village infrastructure throughout Afghanistan. By using a cash-for-work approach and focusing on such troubled sectors as water sanitation, the initiative will simultaneously and visibly improve quality of life, as well as provide a critical source of revenue for local residents.

Poor infrastructure in both the Kabul capital area and rural Afghanistan has resulted in persistent health problems, especially among the poor. The Kabul area, with reportedly over three million residents, has no sewer or waste treatment facilities.

Poor infrastructure persists, despite significant efforts by the international donor community, including U.S. agencies. Simultaneously, unemployment and employment growing poppy continue to grow as problems in both urban and rural areas, contributing to dissatisfaction with the Karzai government and international donors and security forces. A re-energized commitment to labor-intensive, employment projects conducted at the local level and using local labor can make a significant improvement in quality of life. Using a cash-for-work approach, we propose a new initiative to improve infrastructure, especially in the area of water sanitation, in both urban and rural contexts. Projects could include improving existing water wells and/or construction of new wells, improved water distribution systems, construction of sanitary drains and sewage systems, and introduction of innovative approaches to sanitation, such as duckweed ponds.[8]

Project Plant Rite would provide funds for construction materials and related supplies, emphasizing the use of local materials, where possible. Project design would emphasize use of appropriate technology and attempt to blend, where feasible, with existing efforts by international donors and the Government of Afghanistan. The target outcome would be activities in 200–300 villages and the short-term employment of 6,000 people.

Estimated Costs	
Labor-Intensive Employment	$6.0 million
Construction Materials / Supplies	1.5 million
Operations Management	0.4 million
Oversight / Reporting/Evaluation	0.1 million
Total Cost	$8.0 million
Employment Enhancement	20,000 jobs

[8] Duckweed ponds have been used in Bangladesh and elsewhere to sanitize water and provide a food source for fish. See "Project Evaluation Summary," UN Capital Development Fund, Integrated aquaculture in Bangladesh, 1995, available at <http://www.uncdf.org/english/evaluations/bgd91co6_midterm.php>.

Priority 6: Enable access to agriculture information and collaboration, coordination, and information sharing among farmers, buyers, distributors, government officials, and others.

This initiative focuses on the importance of information links between the key elements of an export-oriented, high-value, agricultural program. By establishing the infrastructure for communication between farmers, government, and purchasers, the initiative will help improve productivity and maximize business opportunities.

The existing information infrastructure in Afghanistan, especially outside the major urban areas, is underdeveloped. Collection and dissemination of agricultural information is problematic. Farmers lack access to much useful information including technical information, market assessments and opportunities, disease early warning, weather, and other agriculture-related and business management information. In addition, the public and private sectors lack the ability to effectively coordinate activities and collect, develop, produce, distribute, and share information.

This initiative will install a network of upgraded communications and data facilities. By laying the infrastructure, it will enable technology transfers and improve public-private sector collaboration. Moreover, the communications network will include links for the proposed Kabul and Kandahar area processing and storage facilities to enable information sharing/business processing, crop extension services, marketing, pest monitoring and management, and other needs of the local farmers and those in the processing, storage, and export stages.

In addition, this initiative will create local job opportunities by providing additional means for the general public and local businesses to access communications and information technology through the implementation and use of telekiosks, Internet Cafes, and public call offices managed by locals.

Materials and funds for salaries would be provided and, where feasible, blended with existing international donor and Government of Afghanistan activities. The use of appropriate technology, local materials, and replicability of the interventions will be important design/implementation factors. If possible, this network should leverage the planned implementation of the ASAP AgNet. Use of public (the District Communications Network) and private-sector (Cellular, ISPs, and Internet Cafes) telecommunication means should be considered as well, including financing community towers to attract private cellular operators to offer services in rural areas.

Estimated Costs Hardware/Software, Operations, Training and Technical Support	$0.5–1 million
Employment Enhancement	Hundreds of jobs

ANNEX E

ProQuest

Databases selected: ProQuest Newspapers

Gates says NATO force unable to fight guerrillas; The U.S. Defense chief asserts that troops in southern Afghanistan lack proper training.

Peter Spiegel. **Los Angeles Times**. Los Angeles, Calif.: Jan 16, 2008. pg. A.1

Abstract (Summary)

In an unusual public criticism, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said he believes NATO forces currently deployed in southern Afghanistan do not know how to combat a guerrilla insurgency, a deficiency that could be contributing to the rising violence in the fight against the Taliban. The European NATO official, who is directly involved in Afghan planning, angrily denounced the American claims, saying much of the violence is a result of the small number of U.S. troops who had patrolled the region before NATO's takeover in mid-2006, a strategy that allowed the Taliban to reconstitute in the region.

Full Text (1455 words)

In an unusual public criticism, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said he believes NATO forces currently deployed in southern Afghanistan do not know how to combat a guerrilla insurgency, a deficiency that could be contributing to the rising violence in the fight against the Taliban.

"I'm worried we're deploying [military advisors] that are not properly trained and I'm worried we have some military forces that don't know how to do counterinsurgency operations," Gates said in an interview.

Gates' criticism comes as the Bush administration has decided to send 3,200 U.S. Marines to southern Afghanistan on a temporary mission to help quell the rising number of attacks. It also comes amid growing friction among allied commanders over the Afghan security situation.

But coming from an administration castigated for its conduct of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, such U.S. criticism of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is controversial. Many NATO officials blame inadequate U.S. troop numbers earlier in the war in part for a Taliban resurgence.

"It's been very, very difficult to apply the classic counterinsurgency doctrine because you've had to stabilize the situation sufficiently to start even applying it," said one European NATO official, who discussed the issue on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak for the alliance. "Even in the classic counterinsurgency doctrine, you've still got to get the fighting down to a level where you can apply the rest of the doctrine."

Gates' views, however, reflect those expressed recently by senior U.S. military officials with responsibility for Afghanistan. Some have said that an overreliance on heavy weaponry, including airstrikes, by NATO forces in the south may unwittingly be contributing to rising violence there.

"Execution of tasks, in my view, has not been appropriate," said one top U.S. officer directly involved in the Afghan campaign who discussed internal assessments on condition of anonymity. "It's not the way to do business, in my opinion. We've got to wean them of this. If they won't change then we're going to have another solution."

Gates has publicly criticized European allies in the past for failing to send adequate numbers of troops and helicopters to the Afghan mission. But concerns about strategy and tactics are usually contained within military and diplomatic channels.

In the interview, Gates compared the troubled experience of the NATO forces in the south -- primarily troops from the closest U.S. allies, Britain and Canada, as well as the Netherlands -- with progress made by American troops in the eastern part of Afghanistan. He traced the failing in part to a Cold War orientation.

"Most of the European forces, NATO forces, are not trained in counterinsurgency; they were trained for the Fulda Gap," Gates said, referring to the German region where a Soviet invasion of Western Europe was deemed most likely.

Gates said he raised his concerns last month in Scotland at a meeting of NATO countries with troops in southern Afghanistan and suggested additional training.

But he added that his concerns did not appear to be shared by the NATO allies. "No one at the table stood up and said: 'I agree with that.' "

The NATO forces are led by a U.S. commander, Army Gen. Dan McNeill, who has called for greater contributions by NATO countries. Some member nations are reluctant to deepen their involvement.

NATO officials bristled at suggestions that non-U.S. forces have been ineffective in implementing a counterinsurgency campaign. They argued that the south, home to Afghanistan's Pashtun tribal heartland that produced the Taliban movement, has long been the most militarily contested region of the country.

The European NATO official, who is directly involved in Afghan planning, angrily denounced the American claims, saying much of the violence is a result of the small number of U.S. troops who had patrolled the region before NATO's takeover in mid-2006, a strategy that allowed the Taliban to reconstitute in the region.

"The reason there is more fighting now is because we've uncovered a very big rock and lots of things are scurrying out," the NATO official said.

Pentagon concerns have risen as violence in the south has steadily increased, even as other parts of Afghanistan have begun to stabilize.

Last year was the deadliest for both U.S. and allied forces in Afghanistan since the 2001 invasion, according to the website icasualties.org.

But both U.S. and NATO officials have expressed optimism that eastern Afghanistan, which is under the control of U.S. forces led by Army Maj. Gen. David Rodriguez, has substantially improved in recent months.

Rodriguez implemented a campaign that incorporated many of the same tactics being used in Iraq by Army Gen. David H. Petraeus, the U.S. commander in Baghdad who co-wrote the military's new counterinsurgency field manual.

"If you believe all the things you hear about Afghanistan, this ought to be real hot," Navy Adm. William J. Fallon, commander of U.S. troops in the Middle East and Central Asia, said of eastern Afghanistan. "More than half the border is Pakistan, it's a rough area, historically it's been a hotbed of insurgent activity. It's remarkable in its improvement."

At the same time, violence has continued to rise in the south, which is controlled by a 11,700-soldier NATO force largely made up of the British, Canadian and Dutch forces. Britain saw 42 soldiers killed last year, almost all in southern Afghanistan, its highest annual fatality count of the war; Canada lost 31, close to the 36 from that country killed in 2006. American forces lost 117 troops in 2007, up from 98 in 2006, but U.S. forces are spread more widely across Afghanistan.

"Our guys in the east, under Gen. Rodriguez, are doing a terrific job. They've got the [counterinsurgency] thing down pat," Gates said. "But I think our allies over there, this is not something they have any experience with."

Some U.S. counterinsurgency experts have argued that the backsliding is not the fault of NATO forces alone.

Some have argued that an effective counterinsurgency campaign implemented by Army Lt. Gen. David W. Barno and Zalmay Khalilzad, who were the U.S. commander in and ambassador to Afghanistan from 2003 to 2005, was largely abandoned by officials who came later.

Barno retired from the military and heads the Near East South Asia Center at the National Defense University. In an article in the influential Army journal Military Review last fall, he blamed both NATO and U.S. commanders for moving away from the counterinsurgency plan since 2006.

Barno accused NATO and U.S. forces of ignoring the cornerstone of a counterinsurgency campaign -- protecting the local population -- and said they instead focused on killing enemy forces.

"We had a fundamentally well-structured, integrated U.S. Embassy and U.S. military unified counterinsurgency campaign plan which we put in place in late '03 that took us all the way through about the middle of 2005," Barno said in an interview. "And then it was really, in many ways, changed very dramatically."

Currently serving American officers, however, have singled out non-U.S. NATO forces for the bulk of their criticism. Among the concerns is that NATO forces do not actively include Afghan troops in military operations.

As a result, local forces in the south are now less capable than those in the east, which operate very closely with their American counterparts.

"Every time you see our guys in the field, you don't have to look very far and you'll see them," said the senior U.S. officer involved in the Afghan campaign. "Getting the Brits to do this and the others is a little more of a problem."

In addition, U.S. military officials said NATO forces in the south are too quick to rely on high-caliber firepower, such as airstrikes, a practice which alienates the local population.

"The wide view there, which I hear from Americans, is that the NATO military forces are taking on a Soviet mentality," said one senior U.S. military veteran of Afghanistan. "They're staying in their bases in the south, they're doing very little patrolling, they're trying to avoid casualties, and they're using air power as a substitute for ground infantry operations, because they have so little ground infantry."

The European NATO official said, however, that alliance data show that all countries, including the U.S., use air power in similar amounts when their troops come in contact with enemy forces.

"Everyone is grateful for the Americans . . . but this kind of constant denigration of what other people are doing isn't helpful," the official said. "It also makes the situation look worse than it is."

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Credit: Times Staff Writer

[Illustration]
Caption: PHOTO: ON PATROL: A British soldier walks in Musa Qala in Helmand province in southern Afghanistan last month. Most of the NATO troops in the south are British, Canadian and Dutch.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Shah Marai AFP/Getty Images

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ANNEX F

AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP REPORT

REVITALIZING OUR EFFORTS
RETHINKING OUR STRATEGIES

Co-Chairs:

General James L. Jones, USMC (Ret.)

Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering

Released: January 30, 2008

AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP (ASG) – LETTER FROM CO-CHAIRS

Afghanistan stands today at a crossroads. The progress achieved after six years of international engagement is under serious threat from resurgent violence, weakening international resolve, mounting regional challenges and a growing lack of confidence on the part of the Afghan people

about the future direction of their country. The United States and the international community have tried to win the struggle in Afghanistan with too few military forces and insufficient economic aid, and without a clear and consistent comprehensive strategy to fill the power vacuum outside Kabul and to counter the combined challenges of reconstituted Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a runaway opium economy, and the stark poverty faced by most Afghans.

We believe that success in Afghanistan remains a critical national security imperative for the United States and the international community. Achieving that success will require a sustained, multi-year commitment from the U.S. and a willingness to make the war in Afghanistan – and the rebuilding of that country – a higher U.S. foreign policy priority. Although the obstacles there remain substantial, the strategic consequences of failure in Afghanistan would be severe for long-term U.S. interests in the region and for security at home. Allowing the Taliban to re-establish its influence in Afghanistan, as well as failure to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a failed state, would not only undermine the development of the country, it would constitute a major victory for al-Qaeda and its global efforts to spread violence and extremism.

The "light footprint" in Afghanistan needs to be replaced with the "right footprint" by the U.S. and its allies. It is time to re-vitalize and re-double our efforts toward stabilizing Afghanistan and re-think our economic and military strategies to ensure that the level of our commitment is commensurate with the threat posed by possible failure in Afghanistan. Without the right level of commitment on the part of the U.S., its allies, and Afghanistan's neighbors, the principles agreed upon by both the Afghan government and the international community at the 2006 London Conference and the goals stated in the Afghanistan Compact will not be achievable. Additionally, recent events in Pakistan further emphasize that there can be no successful outcome for Afghanistan if its neighbors, especially Pakistan, are not part of the solution.

The efforts of the Afghanistan Study Group to help re-think U.S. strategy comes at a time when polls indicate a weakening of resolve in the international community to see the effort in Afghanistan through to a successful conclusion. The Pew Global Attitudes Survey of June 2007 reported that the publics of NATO countries with significant numbers of troops in Afghanistan are divided over whether U.S. and NATO forces should be brought home immediately, or should remain until the country is stabilized. In all but two countries, the U.S. and the United Kingdom, majorities said troops should be withdrawn as soon as possible.

Moreover, recent polls in Afghanistan reflect a downward turn in attitudes toward the ability of the Afghan government and the international community to improve those conditions the Afghan people identify as the most critical problems facing the country: insecurity, weak governance, widespread corruption, a poor economy and unemployment.

What should the United States and the international community do to address the many obstacles to success in Afghanistan? Many efforts to assess what needs to be done at this point have included an analysis of the mistakes that have been made – and the opportunities lost – since the Taliban were removed from power in late 2001. While we acknowledge that mistakes have been made, the Study Group focuses its attention on the future – analyzing the current situation with a view to what is needed to match our strategies with our goals and the required resources.

After offering its assessment of the current situation in Afghanistan, the Study Group addresses six critical issues to revitalize the U.S. and international effort in Afghanistan – international coordination, security, governance and the rule of law, counter-narcotics, economic development and

reconstruction, and Afghanistan and its neighbors. Policy recommendations of the Study Group on each of these issues are found in italics.

In addition to the recommendations on these six issues, the Study Group offers three overarching recommendations to bring sharper focus and attention to Afghanistan – within the U.S. government and within the broader international community. The first is a proposal for the Administration and the Congress to decouple Iraq and Afghanistan in the legislative process and in the management of these conflicts in the Executive branch. The second is to establish a Special Envoy for Afghanistan position within the U.S. government, charged with coordinating all aspects of U.S. policies towards Afghanistan. The third is to propose an international mandate to formulate a new unified strategy to stabilize Afghanistan over the next five years and to build international support for it.

At the most recent NATO Defense Ministerials, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said: "We need to lift our sights and see what is required for long-term success." In this regard we strongly commend the efforts now underway within the U.S. government and other national governments; NATO, the EU and the UN; non-governmental organizations; and, most importantly, Afghanistan itself to address the many shortcomings in current strategies and policies.

It is in this spirit – and with the hope of elevating the dialogue of the critical importance of succeeding in Afghanistan – that the Afghanistan Study Group offers this report and its recommendations.

Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering

General James L. Jones, USMC (Ret.)

AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP (ASG) - OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

While most of our analysis and recommendations fall into specific subject areas – including security, governance, counter-narcotics, development, and regional considerations – some of the challenges

and solutions facing our effort in Afghanistan cut across those issues. This section deals with crosscutting recommendations.

It is clear that one of the key challenges that the mission in Afghanistan now faces is the lack of a common strategic vision that will reinvigorate our efforts under unified attainable goals. This process has to be done comprehensively – involving both military and civilian aspects of the mission as equals – and in a cooperative fashion among the U.S., NATO, the UN, the EU, and the Afghan government. The Afghanistan Compact should be the basis for any common strategic vision, and discussion should focus on developing strategies to achieve that vision.

For that purpose, *the Study Group proposes to establish an Eminent Persons Group to develop a long-term, coherent international strategy for Afghanistan and a strategic communications plan to garner strong public support for that strategy.* The Eminent Persons Group would aim to have its report and recommendations available for the April 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest, Romania, and the opening of the UN General Assembly the following September. If an International Coordinator position were created under a UN mandate[1] (as is strongly recommended), this group should be established to serve as an advisory body to that individual. However, *if the efforts to appoint an individual to that position continue to lag, we recommend that NATO establish the Eminent Persons Group under its auspices*, while including representatives from other partnering organizations (such as the UN, World Bank and EU) and appropriate countries. A principal objective of the group should be to rally support for continued and enhanced efforts by NATO countries and other regional players in Afghanistan – in all spheres, military and civilian. The Eminent Persons Group would also aim to increase public awareness in partnering countries, especially in Europe, of the relevance of this conflict to their own security. To maximize this effort, the U.S. should support a European or other highly qualified international leader to chair this group, while remaining fully engaged as a key participant in the process.

Within the U.S., *the Study Group calls for decoupling Iraq and Afghanistan.* Since 2003, U.S. funding of military and other mission operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have been linked together in the Congressional and Executive branch budget processes for authorizations, appropriations and supplemental requests. The rationale for this was that it would provide a more unified focus on overall "Global War on Terrorism" efforts by the Congress, the Administration and the military.

In July 2007, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) issued a report on the costs of Iraq, Afghanistan, and other war on terror operations since 9/11. The report emphasized the issue of transparency in war and related costs, noting the Iraq Study Group's observation that the funding/budget requests from the Executive branch are presented in a confusing manner, making it difficult for both the general public and members of Congress to understand the request or to differentiate it from counter-terrorism operations around the world or operations in Afghanistan. While arguments have been made that in effect the two missions are practically decoupled, we believe this to be insufficient.

There is, accordingly, an emerging view that Afghanistan and its long-term problems would be better addressed by decoupling funding and related programs from those for Iraq. Doing so would enable more coherence and focus on the increasingly important Afghanistan (and related Pakistan) issues, both for the Congress and the Executive branch as well as in dealing with other governments and

[1] The ASG regrets the news that the lead candidate for this position, Lord Paddy Ashdown, has withdrawn his candidacy due to opposition from the Afghan government and hopes that the international community and the Afghan government will be able to achieve agreement on this issue in a timely manner.

international organizations to achieve needed improvement in coordination, collaboration, and efficacy of efforts in the interrelated military, economic and reconstruction spheres.

Decoupling these two conflicts likely will improve the overall U.S. approach to fighting global terrorism. While the fates of these two countries are connected – and a failure in Iraq would influence Afghanistan and vice versa – tying together Afghanistan and Iraq also creates the false impression that they consist of the same mission, while in reality the challenges in these countries differ significantly from one another. It is not the intention of this recommendation to speak to the comparative funding levels for the two conflicts – only that the Afghanistan Study Group believes it would be best to consider each on their own merits.

Finally, a more unified management structure within the U.S. government would create a more unified approach toward the international community and Afghanistan. Therefore, in addition to decoupling the funding mechanisms, *we recommend that a Special Envoy to Afghanistan position be established within the U.S. government, charged with coordinating and orchestrating all aspects of U.S. policies towards Afghanistan.* This should include (but not be limited to) the strategic guidance of military operations, all civilian operations, and links to the UN, NATO and Europe. This official should have overall responsibility for the direction of U.S. assistance programs to Afghanistan and coordinating these programs and policies with European and Asian counterparts and Afghan government officials. While potentially challenging and possibly contentious within the U.S. bureaucracy, higher level of coordination in Washington is necessary to increase our chances of success in Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP (ASG) - SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUE RECOMMENDATIONS

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION

- While the current command structure may be very difficult to change in light of existing differences among the Allies on mission participation in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) missions, it is essential that NATO authorities regularly review the command and control arrangement with the aim to simplify and streamline it at the earliest moment.
- While it is not advisable to immediately attempt an overhaul of the command structure, NATO and the U.S. should strive to achieve greater unity of command whenever possible. As a first step toward this objective, the U.S.-led training mission for the Afghan National Army (ANA), which occupies the bulk of American forces in Afghanistan still under national command, could be shifted to NATO once sufficient NATO resources have been committed for this purpose. G8 considerations would have to be addressed should this be deemed as worthwhile mission realignment.
- Appoint a high-level international coordinator under a UN mandate to: advise all parties to the mission in Afghanistan on needed changes to their policies, funding and actions; ensure that all international assistance programs have a coordinated strategy that aims to bolster the central government's authority throughout the country and is closely coordinated with the Afghan government; advise on the implications to and needs for security coordination; and conduct dialogue with Afghanistan's neighbors. Assign to this individual a joint professional staff representing a wide range of partnering countries and organizations in Afghanistan.
- Develop, with all countries involved, an agreed concept of operations, goals and objectives, organizational structure and set of metrics to evaluate Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). Ideally, the international coordinator, when appointed, should be tasked with overseeing this process.

SECURITY

- Work to increase the number of NATO troops and military equipment in Afghanistan to the levels requested by the commanders. Ensure that the increase in quantity of forces is matched with the quality of the forces that is needed for the mission they need to perform. We endorse the recommendation of the Iraq Study Group that "It is critical for the United States to provide additional...military support for Afghanistan, including resources that might become available as combat forces are moved from Iraq."
- Focus more efforts and resources on training and standing up the ANA and recruiting, training, and providing adequate pay and equipment to the Afghan National Police (ANP) to maintain security in an area once coalition forces depart. The U.S. and its NATO partners should reconsider, together with the Afghan government, benchmarks for force levels of both the ANA and ANP that are realistic, attainable, and maintainable.
- The U.S. needs to play a greater role in building and expanding the ANP, while continuing to engage other international allies in this mission. This would also require a G8 mission realignment as this task is presently under Germany's leadership. Assistance needs to go beyond equipping and training, and should be directed towards embedding foreign police officers into Afghan units – possibly by creating a mechanism similar to the NATO-led Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT) mechanism for the

ANA. The international community also needs to focus on holding Afghan police officers and their superiors accountable for their performance.

- While "zero civilian casualties" may not be an attainable goal given the nature of the enemy and the battlefield, the U.S. and NATO should, as a matter of policy, continue to publicly reinforce their goal of minimizing civilian casualties, as well as being judicious in the frequent use of air power, erring on the side of caution when civilian casualties are probable.
- Better involve Afghan forces in U.S. and NATO military planning and operations. Enhance coordination with the Afghan Ministry of Defense and the Afghan National Army.
- Set up a special NATO compensation fund for civilian deaths, injuries or property damage resulting from its military operations in Afghanistan, to which all NATO member states should contribute.
- Develop, with the international community, a coordinated strategy in support of President Karzai's national political reconciliation efforts. Consider providing incentives to Taliban that do not subscribe to extremist ideologies and agree to put down their weapons and join the political process. The international coalition partners need to adhere to the same standards as the Afghan government when negotiating with insurgents.
- Develop a regional plan to effectively target the risks coming out of the border region area with Pakistan – this plan should involve the governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan and other regional powers and include better combined intelligence, operations and non-military efforts. Specifically, with regard to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), rather than trying to insert U.S. influence directly into the region, Washington should encourage systemic political and economic reform that incorporates the FATA into the administrative, legal and political systems of Pakistan.

GOVERNANCE AND RULE OF LAW

- A coherent and resourced strategy to increase the reach, capacity, and legitimacy of the Afghan government must be a top priority.
- The Afghan government and the international community must refocus their efforts to resurrect an integrated and effective justice system for Afghanistan, through increased and sustained funding to the sector and through working towards an Afghan-led prioritization process that will set a realistic agenda for progress in the justice sector.
- Work to establish "pockets of competence" throughout the country by focusing on development of human resources in the sector and institutional development of the Supreme Court, the Office of the Attorney General, the Ministry of Justice, and the Afghan National Police (currently within the Ministry of Interior) at the national and provincial levels.
- Provide resources and political support to the newly created Advisory Panel on Presidential Appointments.

COUNTER-NARCOTICS

- Sequence the core tools of counter-narcotics policy – crop eradication, interdiction (including arresting and prosecuting traffickers, destruction of labs, etc.), and development (alternative livelihoods).

- Increase investment in development – especially infrastructure and industry development – in all provinces, but ensure that these programs go first of all to provinces that are not planting poppy or that are reducing production.
- Enhance interdiction efforts. Ensure the removal of high officials benefiting from the drug trade from the government but also from contracts operating on behalf of the coalition.
- Integrate counter-narcotics and counter-insurgency by using international military forces to assist the ANP in interdiction, including supporting the ANP in its efforts to destroy heroin labs.
- How best to pursue poppy eradication and the relation of eradication to counter-insurgency presents the greatest challenge – and controversy – for the U.S., the international community, and the Afghan government. Proposals to enhance eradication immediately (including the use of herbicides whether sprayed from the air or the ground), especially in Helmand province, could prove extremely dangerous for Afghanistan, further undermining support for the government of President Hamid Karzai, alienating thousands of Afghan farmers and providing new recruits for the Taliban.
- In lieu of massive eradication, adopt an "Afghan-centric" approach that will include: public information campaign stating that the purpose of counter-narcotics is not to destroy but to enhance the livelihoods of the people of Afghanistan; a request for voluntary restraint in planting while actually delivering (not just announcing or funding or launching) much larger alternative livelihood programs; the provision of all the services currently provided to farmers by drug traffickers: futures contracts, guaranteed marketing, financing, and technical assistance (extension services); and increased availability of micro-finance.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION

- The donor community should focus on giving the Afghan government credit for projects and programs. To do so, donors need to focus on improving Afghan government accounting and enhance anti-corruption reforms.
- Encourage the Afghan government to appoint an Afghan development "czar", drawing authority from President Karzai and able to coordinate the various government ministries, to work with the international community to ensure concerted development efforts.
- Spread development assistance more evenly around the country. The donor community should ensure that relatively peaceful areas benefit from assistance.
- Reconstruction aid and development assistance must flow into a region immediately after it is cleared of Taliban presence by the coalition. Representatives of the local governments must be directly involved in administering the aid to build support and trust between the Afghan people and the local authorities.
- Enhance and accelerate infrastructure development – especially outlays on roads, power and water systems – that are necessary to improve security, governance and the Afghan economy. These efforts should utilize the Afghan labor force, as well as Afghan contractors, as much as possible.

AFGHANISTAN AND ITS NEIGHBORS

- Embark on a sustained, long-term diplomatic effort to reduce antagonisms between Pakistan and Afghanistan. As part of that, the international community should: encourage Kabul to accept the Durand Line as the international border; work with Pakistan to make every effort to root out Taliban ideology from its own society and close down the extremist madrassahs (religious schools) and training camps that perpetuate the Taliban insurgency and cross-border activities; and encourage Pakistan to remove burdensome restrictions that inhibit the transportation of goods through Pakistan to and from Afghanistan, including from India.
- Pakistan has to develop fully effective means for asserting its authority and physical control over the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), including reforming archaic administrative arrangements and fully integrating these areas politically and economically within Pakistan.
- Develop a strategy towards Iran that includes the possibility to resume discussions with Iran to coax greater cooperation from Tehran in helping to stabilize Afghanistan. Establish, with U.S. allies, a cooperative net assessment of what Iran is doing in Afghanistan to map out a sound strategy that seeks to convince Tehran to develop a more constructive role there and includes the possibility to reestablish direct talks on Afghanistan.
- Initiate a regional process to engage Afghanistan's neighbors and potential regional partners in future sustainable development of Afghanistan. This process can begin with relatively minor confidence building measures and the establishment of a regional forum for discussion of common challenges. Over the longer term, as Afghanistan makes progress towards standing on its own feet, these can serve as a basis for a multilateral regional accord that would: recognize Afghanistan as a permanently neutral state; provide international recognition for Afghanistan's borders; pledge non-interference in internal Afghan affairs; ban the clandestine supply of arms to nongovernmental actors; and establish a comprehensive regime to promote the flow of trade through Afghanistan.

ANNEX G

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An Afghan police officer stands guard near damaged police vehicles at the site of a deadly suicide bombing in Kandahar last month.
[ASSOCIATED PRESS]

AFGHAN ALARM

Without urgent action by the U.S. and its NATO allies, the war may be lost

BY KARL F. INDERFURTH

"Make no mistake: NATO is not winning in Afghanistan."

So says the Atlantic Council of the United States, the sponsor of one of three recent independent U.S. reports on Afghanistan. The other two — by the Afghanistan Study Group, on which I served, and the National Defense University — arrive at a similar conclusion: Without prompt action by the U.S. and its allies, the mission in Afghanistan may fail, with disastrous results for U.S. strategic interests worldwide, including the war on terrorism and the future of NATO.

NATO leaders preparing for their summit meeting in Bucharest, Romania, next week should take heed. All three reports agree that achieving success in Afghanistan will require two things: a willingness to make the war in Afghanistan and the rebuilding of that country higher priorities, and for the world to recommit to a sustained, long-term effort.

According to the Afghanistan Study Group report, this is a crucial moment. The progress achieved after six years of international engagement is under serious threat from resurgent violence, weakening international resolve, mounting regional challenges and a growing lack of confidence among Afghans about the direction of their country.

What should be done? The independent reports offer recommendations to revitalize the U.S. and international effort in Afghanistan. Among the most important:

■ The international community must get its act together in Afghanistan. More than 40 countries, three major international organizations and scores of other agencies and non-governmental organizations are active in Afghanistan, setting their own priorities and often working at cross purposes with the Hamid Karzai government. The recent appointment of a new high-level U.N. envoy, Kai Eide of Norway, was a long-overdue step in the right direction.

■ The international community's "light" military footprint must be replaced by the "right" footprint. This means increasing the number of NATO troops — currently 43,000 — and military equipment to the levels requested by field commanders (at least two combat brigades, an additional 7,500 troops). France appears the likeliest candidate to step forward. Nations unable to contribute more forces should significantly bolster their civilian assistance for development and governance programs. Greater assistance is also needed for training and equipping Afghanistan's national army and police, the keys to Afghanistan's long-term security and NATO's eventual departure.

■ Creating crucial judicial, legal and police reforms essential to improve governance and the rule of law and curtail corruption must become a higher priority for the Afghan government and its international partners.

■ More creative thinking is needed to prevent Afghanistan's slide into a narco-state (it currently produces 93 percent of the world's opium). The National Defense University report suggests fighting expanded opium production through a pilot program for licit sales of poppies or temporary and massive increases in payments to farmers for cultivating non-narcotic crops.

■ A development and reconstruction "surge" is needed. Infrastructure projects — roads, power and water systems — should be accelerated, using the Afghan labor force and contractors as much as possible to create jobs and alleviate destabilizing unemployment.

Finally, there can be no successful outcome for Afghanistan if neighboring Pakistan is not part of the solution. The future stability of the two countries depends on the development of an effective strategy to counter the Taliban/al-Qaida sanctuary in Pakistan's tribal border areas. The U.S. and NATO need to develop a regional plan to address Afghanistan's security and development needs, including an overture to Iran to help stabilize Afghanistan. The U.S. refusal to talk directly to Tehran about Afghanistan is counterproductive.

In recent months, there have been some signs that the U.S. and its NATO partners have recognized the hard truth that defeat in Afghanistan is a possibility. They are beginning to rethink and adjust strategy and resources accordingly. On his recent trip to Kabul, NATO chief Jaap de Hoop Scheffer told Mr. Karzai that Afghanistan "is not considered by NATO as a mission of choice. It is a mission of necessity."

That's a good message to restate to all 26 members of the NATO alliance at the coming Bucharest meeting, which will also be attended by representatives from the 60 donor nations to Afghanistan and President Karzai. So is this statement from the Atlantic Council report: "Urgency is the watchword. The international community must act, and it must act now."

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[Whereupon, at 4:47 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

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