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Afghanistan: Current Issues and U.S. Policy

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Summary

The United States and its allies are helping Afghanistan emerge from more than 22 years of warfare, although substantial risk to Afghan stability remains. Before the U.S. military campaign against the Taliban movement began on October 7, 2001, Afghanistan had been mired in conflict since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. The Taliban ruled most of Afghanistan from 1996 until its collapse in December 2001 at the hands of the U.S. and Afghan opposition military campaign.

The defeat of the Taliban enabled the United States and its coalition partners to send forces throughout Afghanistan to search for Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters and leaders that remain at large, including Al Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden. Since the fall of the Taliban, Afghan citizens are enjoying new personal freedoms that were forbidden under the Taliban, about 2 million Afghan refugees have returned, and women are returning to schools and their jobs and participating in politics.

As U.S.-led combat against remaining Al Qaeda and Taliban elements winds down, the United States is shifting its military focus toward stabilizing and extending the writ of the central government, including training a new Afghan national army, supporting an international security force (ISAF), and setting up regional enclaves to protect aid and reconstruction workers. To help foster development, the United Nations and the Bush Administration have lifted most sanctions imposed on Afghanistan since the Soviet occupation. The United States gave Afghanistan a total of over $531 million in humanitarian and reconstruction aid during FY2002.

There are some indications that ethnic tensions that have been so closely associated with Afghan politics is fading. Although the minority coalition Northern Alliance emerged from the war as the dominant force in the country, the United States and United Nations mediators persuaded the Alliance to share power with Pashtun representatives in a broad-based interim government. On December 5, 2001, major Afghan factions, meeting under U.N. auspices in Bonn, signed an agreement to form an interim government that ran Afghanistan until a traditional national assembly ("loya jirga") was held June 11-19, 2002. The *loya jirga* delegates selected a new government to run Afghanistan for the next 18 months and approved Hamid Karzai, a Pashtun, to continue as leader for that time, but the assembly adjourned without establishing a new parliament. Karzai is said to be highly popular throughout Afghanistan, including among non-Pashtuns.

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Background to Recent Developments

Afghanistan became unstable in the 1970s as both its Communist Party and its Islamic movement grew in strength and became increasingly bitter opponents of each other.[1] The instability shattered the relative peace and progress that characterized the rule of King Mohammad Zahir Shah, who reigned during 1933 - 1973. Zahir Shah was the last King in Afghanistan's monarchy, which was founded in 1747 by Ahmad Shah Durrani. Prior to the founding of the monarchy, Afghanistan did not exist as a distinct political entity, but was a territory inhabited by tribes and tribal confederations often linked to neighboring nations. Zahir Shah was the only surviving son of King Mohammad Nadir Shah (1929-1933), whose rule followed that of King Amanullah Khan (1919-1929), after a brief rule in 1919 by a Tajik strongman named Bacha-i-Saqqo.

King Amanullah Khan launched attacks on British forces in Afghanistan shortly after taking power and won complete independence from Britain as recognized in the Treaty of Rawalpindi (August 8, 1919). He was considered a secular modernizer and who presided over a government in which all ethnic minorities participated. Zahir Shah promulgated a constitution in 1964 that established a national legislature, and he promoted freedoms for women, including freeing them from the veil. However, possibly believing that doing so would enable him to limit Soviet support for communist factions in Afghanistan, Zahir Shah also entered into a significant political and arms purchase relationship with the Soviet Union.

While undergoing medical treatment in Italy, Zahir Shah was overthrown by his cousin, Mohammad Daoud, a military leader. Daoud established a dictatorship characterized by strong state control over the economy. After taking power in 1978 by overthrowing Daoud, the communists, first under Nur Mohammad Taraki and then under Hafizullah Amin (leader of a rival communist faction who overthrew Taraki in 1979), attempted to impose radical socialist change on a traditional society. The communists tried to redistribute land and bring more women into government positions. These moves spurred recruitment for Islamic parties and their militias opposed to communist ideology. The Soviet Union sent troops into Afghanistan on December 27, 1979 to prevent a seizure of power by the Islamic-oriented militias

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[1] For more information, see CRS Report RL31389, *Afghanistan: Challenges and Options for Reconstructing a Stable and Moderate State*, by Richard Cronin; and RL31355, *Afghanistan's Path to Reconstruction: Obstacles, Challenges, and Issues for Congress*, by Rhoda Margesson.

that later became known as "mujahedin"[2] (Islamic fighters), and thereby keep Afghanistan pro-Soviet. Upon their invasion, the Soviets ousted Hafizullah Amin and installed its local ally, Babrak Karmal, as Afghan president.

After the Soviets occupied Afghanistan, the U.S.-backed mujahedin fought them effectively, and Soviet occupation forces were never able to pacify all areas of the country. The Soviets held major cities, but the outlying mountainous regions remained largely under mujahedin control. The mujahedin benefitted from U.S. weapons and assistance, provided through the Central Intelligence Agency, working closely with Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence directorate (ISI). That weaponry included man-portable shoulder-fired anti-aircraft systems called "Stingers," which proved highly effective against Soviet aircraft. The Islamic guerrillas also hid and stored weaponry in a large network of natural and manmade tunnels and caves throughout Afghanistan. The Soviet Union's losses mounted, and domestic opinion shifted against the war. In 1986, perhaps in an effort to signal some flexibility on a possible political settlement, the Soviets replaced Babrak Karmal with the more pliable former director of Afghan intelligence (Khad), Najibullah Ahmedzai (who went by the name Najibullah or, on some occasions, the abbreviated Najib).

On April 14, 1988, the Soviet Union, led by reformist leader Mikhail Gorbachev, agreed to a U.N.-brokered accord (the Geneva Accords) requiring it to withdraw. The Soviet Union completed the withdrawal on February 15, 1989, leaving in place a weak communist government facing a determined U.S. backed mujahedin. A warming of superpower relations moved the United States and Soviet Union to try for a political settlement to the internal conflict. From late 1989, the United States pressed the Soviet Union to agree to a mutual cutoff of military aid to the combatants. The failed August 1991 coup in the Soviet Union reduced Moscow's capability for and interest in supporting communist regimes in the Third World, leading Moscow to agree with Washington on September 13, 1991, to a joint cutoff of military aid to the Afghan combatants.

The State Department has said that a total of about $3 billion in economic and covert military assistance was provided by the U.S. to the Afghan mujahedin from 1980 until the end of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1989. Press reports and independent experts believe the covert aid program grew from about $20 million per year in FY1980 to about $300 million per year during fiscal years 1986 - 1990. Even before the 1991 U.S.-Soviet agreement on Afghanistan, the Soviet withdrawal had decreased the strategic and political value of Afghanistan and made the Administration and Congress less forthcoming with funding. For FY1991, Congress reportedly cut covert aid appropriations to the mujahedin from $300 million the previous year to $250 million, with half the aid withheld until the second half of the fiscal year. Although the intelligence authorization bill was not signed until late 1991, Congress abided by the aid figures contained in the bill.[3]

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[2] The term refers to an Islamic guerrilla; literally "one who fights in the cause of Islam."

[3] See "Country Fact Sheet: Afghanistan," in *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*. Volume 5, No. 23, June 6, 1994. Page 377.

Population:	25.8 million
Ethnic Groups:	Pashtun 38%; Tajik 25%; Uzbek 6%; Hazara 19%; others 12%
Religions:	Sunni Muslim 84%; Shiite Muslim 15%; other 1%
Per Capita Income:	$280/yr (World Bank figure)
External Debt:	$5.5 billion (1996 est.)
Major Exports:	fruits, nuts, carpets
Major Imports:	food, petroleum

Source: CIA World Factbook, 2000.

With Soviet backing withdrawn, on March 18, 1992, Afghan President Najibullah publicly agreed to step down once an interim government was formed. His announcement set off a wave of regime defections, primarily by Uzbek and Tajik ethnic militias that had previously been allied with the Kabul government, including that of Uzbek militia commander Abdul Rashid Dostam (see below).

Joining with the defectors, prominent mujahedin commander Ahmad Shah Masud (of the Islamic Society, a largely Tajik party headed by Burhannudin Rabbani) sent his fighters into Kabul, paving the way for the installation of a mujahedin regime on April 18, 1992. Masud, nicknamed "Lion of the Panjshir," had earned a reputation as a brilliant strategist by successfully preventing the Soviets from occupying his power base in the Panjshir Valley of northeastern Afghanistan. Two days earlier, as the mujahedin approached Kabul, Najibullah failed in an attempt to flee Afghanistan. He, his brother, and a few aides remained at a U.N. facility in Kabul until the day in September 1996 that the Taliban movement seized control of the city – Taliban fighters entered the U.N. compound, captured Najibullah and his brother, and hanged them.

The fall of Najibullah brought the mujahedin parties to power in Afghanistan but also exposed the serious differences among them. Under an agreement among all the major mujahedin parties, Burhannudin Rabbani became President in June 1992, with the understanding that he would leave office in December 1994. His refusal to step down at the end of that time period–on the grounds that political authority would disintegrate in the absence of a clear successor–led many of the other parties to accuse him of attempting to monopolize power. His government faced daily shelling from another mujahedin commander, Pakistan-backed Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, a radical Islamic fundamentalist who headed a faction of Hizb-e-Islami (Islamic Party) and who was nominally the Prime Minister. (Hikmatyar was later ousted by the Taliban from his powerbase around Jalalabad despite sharing the Taliban's ideology and Pashtun ethnicity, and he fled to Iran before returning to Afghanistan in early 2002.) Four years (1992-1996) of civil war among the mujahedin followed, destroying much of Kabul and creating popular support for the Taliban. In addition, the dominant Pashtun ethnic group accused the Rabbani government of failing to represent all of Afghanistan's ethnic groups, and many Pashtuns allied with the Taliban.

The Rise of The Taliban

The Taliban movement was formed in 1993-1994 by Afghan Islamic clerics and students, many of them former mujahedin who had become disillusioned with continued internal conflict and moved into the western areas of Pakistan to study in Islamic seminaries ("madrassas"). They were mostly ultra-orthodox Sunni Muslims who practice a form of Islam, "Wahhabism," similar to that practiced in Saudi Arabia. The Taliban was composed overwhelmingly of ethnic Pashtuns (Pathans) from rural areas of Afghanistan. Pashtuns constitute a plurality in Afghanistan, accounting for about 38% of Afghanistan's population of about 26 million. Taliban members viewed the Rabbani government as corrupt and responsible for continued civil war in Afghanistan and the deterioration of security in the major cities. With the help of defections by sympathetic mujahedin fighters, the Taliban seized control of the southeastern city of Qandahar in November 1994 and continued to gather strength. The Taliban's early successes encouraged further defections around Afghanistan, and by February 1995 it had reached the gates of Kabul, after which an 18-month stalemate around the capital ensued. In September 1995, the Taliban captured Herat province, on the border with Iran, and expelled the pro-Iranian governor of the province, Ismail Khan. In September 1996, a string of Taliban victories east of Kabul led to the withdrawal of the Rabbani government to the Panjshir Valley north of Kabul, with most of its heavy weapons intact. The Taliban took control of Kabul on September 27, 1996.

The Taliban lost much of its international support as its policies unfolded. It imposed strict adherence to Islamic customs in areas it controls, and used harsh punishments, including executions, on transgressors. The Taliban regime made extensive use of its Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Suppression of Vice, a force of religious police officers that often used violence and physical punishments to enforce Islamic laws, customs, and moral regulations. It banned television, popular music, and dancing, and required male beards. The Taliban prohibited women from attending school or working outside the home, except in health care.

Mullah Muhammad Umar/Taliban Leaders. During the war against the Soviet Union, Taliban founder Mullah Muhammad Umar fought in the Hizb-e-Islam (Islamic Party) mujahedin party led by Yunis Khalis. During Taliban rule, Mullah Umar held the title of Head of State and Commander of the Faithful. He lost an eye during the anti-Soviet war, rarely appeared in public, and did not take an active role in the day-to-day affairs of governing. However, in times of crisis or to discuss pressing issues, he summoned Taliban leaders to meet with him in Qandahar. Considered a hardliner within the Taliban regime, Mullah Umar forged a close personal bond with bin Laden and was adamantly opposed to handing him over to another country to face justice. Born near Qandahar, Umar is about 51 years old. His ten year old son, as well as his stepfather, reportedly died at the hands of U.S. airstrikes in early October 2001. Umar, having reportedly fled Qandahar city when the Taliban surrendered the city on December 9, 2001, is still at large and believed alive, possibly in his native Uruzgan Province.

Coalescence of the Northern Alliance

The rise of the Taliban movement caused other power centers to make common cause with ousted President Rabbani and commander Ahmad Shah Masud. The individual groups allied with them in a "Northern Alliance." The Persian-speaking core of the Northern Alliance was located not only in the Panjshir Valley of the northeast but also in largely Persian-speaking western Afghanistan near the Iranian border. The fighters in the west were generally loyal to the charismatic Ismail Khan, who regained the governorship of his former stronghold in Herat and surrounding provinces after the Taliban collapse of mid-November 2001.

One non-Tajik component of the Northern Alliance was the ethnic Uzbek militia force (the Junbush-Melli, or National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan) of General Abdul Rashid Dostam. Uzbeks constitute about 6% of the population, compared with 25% that are Tajik. Dostam was best known for his break with Najibullah in early 1992, the key defection that paved the way for the overthrow of the Najibullah regime. He subsequently fought against Rabbani during his presidency in an effort to persuade him to yield power, but then allied with Rabbani and the Northern Alliance when the Taliban took power in Kabul. Dostam once commanded about 25,000 troops, significant amounts of armor and combat aircraft, and even some Scud missiles, but infighting within his faction left him unable to hold off Taliban forces. The Taliban captured his power base in August 1998, leaving him in control of only small areas of northern Afghanistan near the border with Uzbekistan. During the U.S.-led war against the Taliban, he, in concert with a Tajik commander Atta Mohammad and a Shiite Hazara commander Mohammad Mohaqqiq, recaptured Mazar-e-Sharif from the Taliban. There have been tensions among the three in governing the city and its environs since, often resulting in minor clashes. Clashes escalated in July 2002 but were calmed after mediation by the U.N. personnel in Afghanistan (UNAMA, U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan).

Shiite Muslim parties, generally less active against the Soviet occupation than were the Sunni parties, constituted another part of the Northern Alliance. The main Shiite Muslim party is Hizb-e-Wahdat (Unity Party, an alliance of eight Hazara tribe Shiite Muslim groups), which was part of Rabbani's government for most of his rule during 1992-1996. Hizb-e-Wahdat has traditionally received some material support from Iran, which practices Shiism and has an affinity for the Hazaras. In September 1998, Taliban forces captured the Hazara stronghold of Bamiyan city, capital of Bamiyan province, raising fears in Iran and elsewhere that Taliban forces would massacre the Hazara civilians. This contributed to the movement of Iran and the Taliban militia to the brink of armed conflict that month. After that time, Hizb-e-Wahdat forces occasionally retook Bamiyan city but were unable to hold it. They recaptured Bamiyan province as the Taliban was collapsing in November 2001.

Another mujahedin party leader, Abd-i-Rab Rasul Sayyaf, heads a Pashtun-dominated faction called the Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan. Sayyaf lived many years in and is politically close to Saudi Arabia, which shares his interpretation of Sunni Islam. This interpretation ("Wahhabism") was also shared by the Taliban, which partly explains why many of Sayyaf's fighters originally defected to the Taliban movement when that movement was taking power. Although he is a Pashtun, Sayyaf was allied with the Northern Alliance and placed his forces at

Alliance disposal. Sayyaf is considered personally close to Rabbani and is reputedly maneuvering in concert with Rabbani for a future leadership role.

Operation Enduring Freedom. The political rivalries among opposition groups long hindered their ability to shake the Taliban's grip on power. In the few years prior to the beginning of the U.S.-led war, the opposition had steadily lost ground, even in areas outside Taliban's Pashtun ethnic base. The losses extended to the point at which the Taliban controlled at least 75% of the country and almost all major provincial capitals. The Northern Alliance suffered a major setback on September 9, 2001, two days before the September 11 attacks that led to the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan, when Ahmad Shah Masud, the undisputed, charismatic military leader of Northern Alliance forces, was assassinated at his headquarters by suicide bombers allegedly linked to Al Qaeda. His successor was his intelligence chief, Muhammad Fahim, who is a veteran commander but lacked the overarching authority or charisma of Masud.

The U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan began on October 7, 2001 (Operation Enduring Freedom). The campaign consisted of U.S. airstrikes on Taliban and Al Qaeda forces, coupled with targeting by U.S. special operations forces working in Afghanistan with the Northern Alliance and other anti-Taliban forces. Taliban control of the north collapsed first, followed by its control of southern Afghanistan, which it progressively lost to pro-U.S. Pashtun forces, such as those of Hamid Karzai, who is now President. Karzai, the 46 year old leader of the powerful Popolzai tribe of Pashtuns, had entered Afghanistan in October 2001 to organize Pashtun resistance to the Taliban, and he was supported in that effort by U.S. special forces. By the time the Taliban had been defeated, Northern Alliance forces controlled about 70% of Afghanistan, including Kabul, which they captured on November 12, 2001. Groups of Pashtun commanders took control of cities and provinces in the east and south. One example is Ghul Agha Shirzai, now the governor of Qandahar province and environs.

Despite the overwhelming defeat of the Taliban, small Taliban and Al Qaeda groups continue to operate throughout Afghanistan. In late September 2002, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan said that as many as 1,000 Al Qaeda might still be active inside Afghanistan, suggesting there is still substantial work left to do to eliminate the Al Qaeda presence. The United States has about 9,000 troops in and around Afghanistan, and coalition forces are contributing another 8,000, including those in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), discussed further below. The whereabouts of Al Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden, identified by the Bush Administration as the main organizer of the September 11 attacks, are still unknown. He reportedly was wounded at or about the time of the U.S.-Afghan offensive against the Al Qaeda stronghold of Tora Bora in eastern Afghanistan (December 2001), but an audiotape of his voice released in November 2002 was judged by U.S. experts to be authentic and served as evidence that he survived the war, overturning the growing U.S. belief that he was killed. The United States and its Afghan allies conducted "Operation Anaconda" in the Shah-i-Kot Valley south of Gardez during March 2 - 19, 2002, to eliminate a pocket of as many as 800 Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters. Several smaller military operations by the United States and its coalition partners have been conducted since, particularly in eastern Afghanistan. The largest such skirmish occurred around the border town of Spin Buldak on January 27-28, 2003

against fighters loyal to Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, the Taliban, and Al Qaeda. (Hikmatyar escaped an early May 2002 U.S. strike by a CIA-controlled Predator-launched missile.) At least 18 enemy fighters were killed. Other pockets are said to straddle the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, and press reports indicate that Pakistan has been allowing the United States to conduct low-level military or military support operations inside Pakistan since April 2002, as well as possibly venture over the border when in hot pursuit of enemy fighters.

U.S. military commanders in and outside Afghanistan have said since August 2002 that the war against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan is winding down, and that the U.S. military is increasingly focusing its operations on ensuring political stability. There is no publicly available timetable for that mission. General Tommy Franks, commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), responsible for prosecuting the war in Afghanistan, said in August 2002 that U.S. forces would likely need to remain in Afghanistan for years ahead to prevent terrorist groups from resettling there. In early December 2002, U.S. forces became involved in clashes between local leaders in the Herat area and called in B-52 airstrikes to quell the fighting. In late October 2002, CENTCOM ended its practice of providing captured weapons to local militias with which it is working, saying that the practice conflicts with the overall U.S. effort to strengthen the central government.

Joint Regional Teams. In mid-December 2002, the Defense Department said it would focus increased attention to creating secure conditions for aid workers. The plan unveiled is to create 8-10 "Joint Regional Teams" (JRTs) composed of U.S. forces, Defense Department civil affairs officers, and representatives of U.S. aid and other agencies. The objective of the JRTs is to provide safe havens for international aid workers to help with reconstruction and to extend the writ of the Kabul government throughout Afghanistan.

The creation of the JRT's appeared intended, in part, to deflect criticism that the United States is paying insufficient attention to reconstruction and as an alternative to expanding ISAF (see below). Fears of terrorism and instability were increased significantly on September 5, 2002. That day, there was a car bombing in a crowded marketplace in Kabul, and an assassination attempt against President Karzai. Karzai was unhurt and the assailant, a member of the security detail, was killed by U.S. special forces who serve as Karzai's protection unit. Afghan officials blamed Taliban/Al Qaeda remnants for both events. Employees of a private U.S. security contractor (Dyncorp) have taken over the Afghan leadership protection effort as of November 2002.

War-Related Casualties. No reliable Afghan casualty figures for the war on the Taliban and Al Qaeda have been announced, but estimates by researchers of Afghan civilian deaths generally cite figures of "several hundred" civilian deaths. On July 1, 2002, a U.S. airstrike on suspected Taliban leaders in Uruzgan Province, the home province of Taliban head Mullah Umar, mistakenly killed about 40 civilians. According to Centcom, as of May 24, 2002, 37 U.S. servicepersons were killed, including from enemy fire, friendly fire, and non-hostile deaths (accidents). Of coalition forces, 4 Canadian and 1 Australian military personnel were killed in hostile circumstances. In addition, according to CENTCOM, there have been ten U.S. deaths in the Philippines theater of Operation Enduring Freedom (operations against

the Al Qaeda-affiliated Abu Sayyaf organization), all of which resulted from a helicopter crash.

Political Settlement Efforts

The war against Al Qaeda and the Taliban paved the way for a longstanding U.N. effort to form a broad-based Afghan government to bear fruit, although substantial instability remains.

Pre-September 11 U.N. Mediation. For the 8 years prior to the war, the United States worked primarily through the United Nations to end the Afghan civil conflict, because the international body was viewed as a credible mediator by all sides. It was the forum used for ending the Soviet occupation. However, some observers criticized U.S. policy as being insufficiently engaged in Afghan mediation to bring about a settlement. After the fall of Najibullah in 1992, a succession of U.N. mediators – former Tunisian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mestiri (March 1994-July 1996); German diplomat Norbert Holl (July 1996-December 1997); and Algeria's former Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi (August 1997-October 1999) – sought to arrange a ceasefire, and ultimately a peaceful transition to a broad-based government. The proposed process for arranging a transition incorporated many ideas advanced by former King Zahir Shah and outside experts, in which a permanent government was to be chosen through a traditional Afghan selection process, the hallmark of which was to be the holding of a *loya jirga*, a grand assembly of notable Afghans. These U.N. efforts, at times, appeared to make significant progress, but ceasefires and other agreements between the warring factions always broke down. Brahimi suspended his activities in frustration in October 1999, and another U.N. mediator, Spanish diplomat Fransesc Vendrell, was appointed.

The "Six Plus Two" and Geneva Contact Groups. In coordination with direct U.N. mediation efforts, the "Six Plus Two" contact group began meeting in early 1997; the group consisted of the United States, Russia, and the six states bordering Afghanistan: Iran, China, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. The group was created following informal meetings of some of the key outside parties, in which the United States and others agreed not to provide weapons to the warring factions. (In June 1996, the Administration formally imposed a ban on U.S. sales of arms to all factions in Afghanistan, a policy already that had been already in place less formally.[4]) In 2000, possibly because of the lack of progress in the Six Plus Two process, another contact group began meeting in Geneva, and with more frequency than the Six Plus Two. The Geneva grouping included Italy, Germany, Iran, and the United States. Another Afghan-related grouping multilateral mediating grouping consisted of some Islamic countries operating under the ad-hoc "Committee on Afghanistan" under the auspices of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). The countries in that ad-hoc committee include Pakistan, Iran, Guinea, and Tunisia.

King Zahir Shah and the *Loya Jirga* Processes. During the period of Taliban rule, the United States also supported initiatives coming from Afghans

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[4] *Federal Register*, Volume 61, No. 125, June 27, 1996. Page 33313.

inside Afghanistan and in exile. During 1997, Afghans not linked to any of the warring factions began a new peace initiative called the Intra Afghan Dialogue. This grouping, consisting of former mujahedin commanders and clan leaders, held meetings during 1997 and 1998 in Bonn, Frankfurt, Istanbul, and Ankara. Another group, based on the participation of former King Zahir Shah, was centered in Rome ("Rome Grouping"), where the former King lived. A third grouping, calling itself the "Cyprus Process," consisted of former Afghan officials and other Afghan exiles generally sympathetic to Iran, including a relative of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar.

Post-September 11 Efforts. The September 11 attacks and the start of U.S. military action against the Taliban injected new urgency into the search for a government that might replace the Taliban. In late September 2001, Brahimi was brought back as the U.N. representative to help arrange an alternative government, an effort that, it was hoped, would encourage defections within Taliban ranks and hasten its demise. On November 14, 2001, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1378, calling for a "central" U.N. role in establishing a transitional administration and inviting member states to send peacekeeping forces to promote stability and secure the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Many of the hopes for a post-Taliban government at first appeared to center on the former King. A 2-day (October 25-26, 2001) meeting of more than 700 Afghan tribal elders in Peshawar, Pakistan ("Peshawar Grouping") issued a concluding statement calling for the return of the former King. However, neither the King's representatives nor those of the Northern Alliance attended the gathering, instead airing suspicions that the meeting was orchestrated by Pakistan for its own ends.

Bonn Conference/Interim Government. As part of the effort to craft a new government, a U.S. envoy to the Northern Alliance, Ambassador James Dobbins, was appointed in early November 2001 and, until April 2002, coordinated U.S. reconstruction assistance efforts. (Later, another envoy was appointed, NSC Senior Director for the Near East Zalmay Khalilzad, see below.) In late November, after Kabul had already fallen (November 12, 2001), delegates of the major Afghan factions – most prominently the Northern Alliance and representatives of the former King – gathered in Bonn, Germany, at the invitation of the United Nations. The Taliban was not invited. On December 5, 2001, the factions signed an agreement to form a 30-member interim administration, to govern until the holding in June 2002 of a *loya jirga*, to be opened by the former King. The *loya jirga* would then choose a new government to run Afghanistan for the next two years until a new constitution is drafted and national elections held. The *loya jirga* also would establish a 111-member parliament. According to the Bonn agreement, the new government was to operate under the constitution of 1964 until a new constitution is adopted. The last *loya jirga* that was widely recognized as legitimate was held in 1964 to ratify a constitution. Communist leader Najibullah convened a *loya jirga* in 1987 largely to approve his policies; that gathering was widely viewed by Afghans as illegitimate.

The Bonn agreement also provided for an international peace keeping force to maintain security, at least in Kabul. Northern Alliance forces were to withdraw from Kabul, according to the Bonn agreement, but forces under the command of Defense Minister Fahim have remain garrisoned there. The Bonn conference's conclusions

were endorsed by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1385 (December 6, 2001), and the international peacekeeping force was authorized by Security Council Resolution 1386, adopted December 20, 2001. (For text of the Bonn agreement, see [http://www.uno.de/frieden/afghanistan/talks/agreement.htm].)

At the Bonn meeting, Hamid Karzai was selected chairman of the interim administration, which governed from December 22, 2001, until the end of the *loya jirga*. H owever, Karzai presided over a cabinet in which a slight majority (17 out of 30) of the positions were held by the Northern Alliance, with this block holding the key posts of Defense (Mohammad Fahim), Foreign Affairs (Dr. Abdullah Abdullah), and Interior (Yunus Qanuni). The three are ethnic Tajiks, with the exception of Dr. Abdullah, who is half Tajik and half Pashtun. This trio, all of whom are in their mid-40s and were close aides to Ahmad Shah Masud, was considered generally well disposed toward the United States, although they also have ties to Iran and Russia, and all three are suspicious of Pakistan.

The Loya Jirga. In late January 2002, the 21 members of the commission, including two women, were chosen to prepare for the *loya jirga*. In preparation for the assembly, the former King returned to Afghanistan on April 18, 2002, and he conducted meetings with Afghan notables and local leaders. By the beginning of June, 381 districts of Afghanistan had chosen the 1,550 delegates to the *loya jirga*. About two hundred of the delegates were women.

On the first day of the *loya jirga* (June 11, 2002), the former King and Burhannudin Rabbani withdrew from leadership consideration and endorsed interim government chairman Hamid Karzai to continue as Afghanistan's leader. Their withdrawals, reportedly urged or supported by the United States, paved the way for Karzai's selection as leader by the *loya jirga* delegates over two other candidates, one of whom was a woman. On June 13, 2002, by an overwhelming margin, the *loya jirga* selected Karzai to lead Afghanistan until the elections by June 2004. On its last day, June 19, 2002, the assembly approved Karzai's new cabinet, which included three vice presidents and several "presidential advisors" in an effort to balance the ethnic and factional composition of the government. However, the *loya jirga* adjourned without establishing the new parliament; a group of experts has remained in Kabul to continue working on the parliament, with no decision to date. The experts reportedly are considering forming a 93-member national assembly, with no party affiliations represented. The assembly will be temporary, and would be replaced by a new body chosen in June 2004 national elections.

In the cabinet endorsed by the *loya jirga*, Karzai moved Yunus Qanooni to head the Ministry of Education and serve as an adviser on security. He was replaced as Interior Minister by Taj Mohammad Wardak, a Pashtun. Abdullah and Fahim retained their positions, with Fahim acquiring the additional title of vice president.

Other notable changes to the government made by the *loya jirga* include the following:

- Ashraf Ghani replaced Hedayat Amin Arsala as Finance Minister (see below). Ghani is a Pashtun with ties to international financial institutions.

- The new Minister of Women's Affairs is Habiba Sorabi, replacing Sima Samar.

- Hajji Abdul Qadir, a Pashtun, who is also governor of Nangahar Province, switched portfolios to head the Ministry of Public Works. He had headed the Ministry of Urban Affairs in the interim goverment. He was also appointed a vice president. However, Abdul Qadir was assassinated by unknown gunmen on July 6. Hedayat Amin Arsala was appointed a Vice President to replace Qadir. Arsala, a former World Bank official, is a supporter of the former King and a relative of Pir Ahmad Gaylani, leader of a pro-King mujahedin faction during the anti-Soviet war.

- The third vice president appointed was Karim Khalili, the leader of a faction of the Hazara Shiite party Hizb-e-Wahdat.

- Herat leader Ismail Khan was given no formal post; he preferred to remain in his locality rather than take a position in the central government in Kabul. His son, Mir Wais Saddiq was retained in the new cabinet, heading the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism. (He headed the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in the interim government.)

- Dostam was given no formal post, although he served as deputy Defense Minister in the interim administration. Dostam said in early August 2002 that he prefers to remain in his northern stronghold rather than accept a post that would bring him to Kabul.

- A national security council was formed as an advisory body to Karzai. The intention in establishing this council is to increase Kabul's decisionmaking power and extend central government influence. The national security adviser is Zalmai Rasool.

Since the *loya jirga*, there have been reports of strain between Karzai and Fahim, who continues to dominate most of the armed force in Afghanistan. U.S. envoy Khalilzad visited Kabul in August 2002 to try to ease these tensions, with some signs of success, at least for the current time. Some of the reports of strains surfaced after Karzai replaced his Afghan bodyguard force with U.S. special forces, shortly after the assassination of Abd al Qadir. The bodyguard switch suggested to some Afghans that Karzai did not trust Fahim's forces to protect him or the interests of Afghanistan as a whole. As noted above, Fahim did not withdraw his forces from Kabul and was said to oppose the formation of a national army, although he now reportedly accepts that army.

International Security Force/Afghan National Army. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) created by the Bonn agreement has reached its agreed strength of over 4,900. It was headed until December 20, 2002 by Turkey, which replaced Britain as the lead force following the *loya jirga*. Since then, Germany and the Netherlands have begun to assume command for the December 20,

2002- December 20, 2003 period. T he force is operating in conjunction with Afghan security forces in Kabul and is coordinating, to an extent, with U.S. military forces in and immediately around Afghanistan.

As of August 2002, ISAF has forces from the following 18 countries: Austria (71 troops), Belgium (19), Bulgaria (32), Czech Republic (132), Denmark (36), Finland (31), France (520), Germany (1121), Greece (163), Ireland (7), Italy (403), the Netherlands (232), New Zealand (8), Norway (17), Romania (155), Spain (349), Sweden (38), Turkey (1322), and the United Kingdom (426). Germany will roughly double its troop commitment now that it has assumed co-command of ISAF.

Because of several threats to Afghanistan's internal security since the interim government was constituted, Afghan officials wanted ISAF to be expanded and deploy to other major cities. The Bush Administration favored its own alternative plan to help build an Afghan national army rather than expand ISAF, but the Administration has recently expressed support for an expansion if enough troops are contributed to it. Training by U.S. special forces has begun, and the first 2,300 have completed training as of late January 2003. In early December 2002, the first recruits began training as a battalion, according to the Defense Department, and deployed to eastern Afghanistan to fight alongside U.S. and coalition forces. They performed well, by all accounts, and were welcomed by the local population as a symbol of a unified future for Afghanistan. Afghan officials say the desired size of the army is 70,000, a level that will likely not be reached for several more years, at the current rate of U.S.-led training, but the Department of Defense envisions training up to 14,400 Afghan troops by the end of 2003 at a cost, including establishing a general staff and a headquarters staff, of about $135 million.[5] The United States plans to provide some additional U.S. arms and/or defense services to the national army, according to statements by U.S. officials. In November 2002, at U.S. urging, Albania sent surplus light weaponry to the fledgling Afghan national army.

There has been some concern that Vice President/Defense Minister General Fahim has weighted the recruitment of the national army to favor his Tajik ethnic base. In the early stages of the training program, many Pashtuns, in reaction, refused recruitment or left the national army program, although U.S. officials say this problem has been alleviated recently with somewhat better pay and more involvement by U.S. special forces.[6]

New Governmental Authority. The Afghan national army is one key component in the attempts by the U.S. government and the Afghan government to expand governmental capabilities, guide reconstruction efforts, and bring security to all parts of Afghanistan. The U.S. is hoping to attract to the national army young fighters who are now part of regional militias not linked to the central government. In August 2002, Karzai threatened to send Afghan central government forces to combat a rebellious local leader in Paktia province, Padsha Khan Zadran, but no

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[5] Briefing Slides Prepared by the National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies, for J-5 of the Department of Defense Joint Staff. June 2002.

[6] Gall, Carlotta. In a Remote Corner, an Afghan Army Evolves From Fantasy to Slightly Ragged Reality. *New York Times*, January 25, 2003.

fighting ensued. In early November 2002, Karzai fired 15 provincial officials, partly in an attempt to establish the primacy of the central government, although many remain at their jobs. That same month, police in Kabul suppressed student riots at Kabul University; they were protesting poor dormitory facilities.

Karzai has sought and received some international funds to pay government workers who had not been paid in many months. At a meeting on October 13, 2002, international donors applauded Afghanistan's budgetary and reconstruction plans. The national airline, Ariana, also has resumed some operations, although its fleet is very small. On March 23, 2002, schools reopened following the Persian/Afghan new year (Nowruz). Girls returned to the schools for the first time since the Taliban came to power, and a total of 3 million children have returned to school since the fall of the Taliban.

Since the establishment of the interim government, several countries have reopened embassies in Kabul, including the United States. In conjunction with the formation of the interim administration, NSC official Zalmay Khalilzad was appointed a special envoy to Afghanistan in December 2001 and has made several extended visits there. In late March 2002, a U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Robert Finn, was sworn in Kabul. The new Afghan government has reopened the Afghan embassy in Washington and a new ambassador, U.S.-educated and U.S.-based energy entrepreneur Ishaq Shahryar, has taken office. He previously was an adviser to former King Zahir Shah.

Regional Context [7]

Even before September 11, several of Afghanistan's neighbors were becoming alarmed about threats to their own security interests emanating from Afghanistan. All of these governments endorsed the Bonn agreement, but some experts believe that the neighboring governments will likely attempt, over the long term, to manipulate Afghanistan's factions and its political structure to their advantage.

Pakistan[8]

Pakistan reversed its position on the Taliban in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. Pakistan initially saw the Taliban movement as an instrument with which to fulfill its goals. Those goals traditionally have been to seek an Afghan central government strong enough to prevent calls for unity between ethnic Pashtuns in Afghanistan and Pakistan, while at the same time sufficiently friendly and pliable to provide Pakistan strategic depth against rival India. In the wake of the Soviet pullout in 1989, Pakistan was troubled by continued political infighting in

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[7] For further information, see CRS Report RS20411, *Afghanistan: Connections to Islamic Movements in Central and South Asia and Southern Russia*. December 7, 1999, by Kenneth Katzman.

[8] For further discussion, see Rashid, Ahmed. "The Taliban: Exporting Extremism." *Foreign Affairs*, November - December 1999.

Afghanistan that was enabling drug trafficking to flourish and to which Afghan refugees did not want to return. Pakistan saw Afghanistan as essential to opening up trade relations and energy routes with the Muslim states of the former Soviet Union.

Pakistan was the most public defender of the Taliban movement and was one of only three countries (Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are the others) to formally recognize it as the legitimate government. Prior to the September 11 attacks, the government of General Pervez Musharraf, who took power in an October 1999 coup, resisted U.S. pressure to forcefully intercede with the Taliban leadership to achieve bin Laden's extradition. Pakistan's links to the Taliban, and the Taliban's hosting of Al Qaeda terrorist leader Osama bin Laden, were a major focus of a visit to Pakistan by Undersecretary of State Thomas Pickering in May 2000, but Pakistan made no commitments to help the United States on that issue. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1333, of December 19, 2000, was partly an effort by the United States and Russia to compel Pakistan to cease military advice and aid to the Taliban. Pakistan did not completely cease military assistance, but it abided by some provisions of the resolution, for example by ordering the Taliban to cut the staff at its embassy in Pakistan.[9] Prior to the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, Pakistan had said it would cooperate with a follow-on U.N. Security Council Resolution (1363 of July 30, 2001) that provided for U.N. border monitors to ensure that no neighboring state was providing military equipment or advice to the Taliban.

Pakistan's modest pre-September 11 steps toward cooperation with the United States reflected increasing wariness that the Taliban movement was radicalizing existing Islamic movements inside Pakistan. Pakistan also feared that its position on the Taliban was propelling the United States into a closer relationship with Pakistan's arch-rival, India. These considerations, coupled with U.S. pressure as well as offers of economic benefit, prompted Pakistan to cooperate with the U.S. response to the September 11 attacks. Pakistan provided the United States with requested access to Pakistani airspace, ports, airfields. Pakistan also arrested hundreds of Al Qaeda fighters fleeing Afghanistan and turned them over to the United States and deployed substantial forces to the Afghan border to capture Al Qaeda fighters attempting to flee into Pakistan. Pakistani authorities helped the United States track and capture top bin Laden aide Abu Zubaydah in early April 2002, and alleged September 11 plotter Ramzi bin Al Shibh (captured September 11, 2002). Pakistani forces reportedly are helping the United States track and fight Al Qaeda forces along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

At the same time, Pakistan has sought to protect its interests by fashioning a strong Pashtun-based component for a post-Taliban government. Pakistan was wary that a post-Taliban government dominated by the Northern Alliance, which is backed by India, and it is. Some Afghan officials are concerned about the implications for the new Afghan government of the election gains of some pro-Taliban parties in Pakistan's October 2002 parliamentary elections; those parties did well in districts that border Afghanistan.

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[9] Constable, Pamela. New Sanctions Strain Taliban-Pakistan Ties. *Washington Post*, January 19, 2001.

As of October 2002, about 1.75 million Afghan refugees have returned from Pakistan since the Taliban fell. About 300,000 Afghan refugees remain in Pakistan.

Iran

Iran's key national interests in Afghanistan are to exert influence over western Afghanistan, which Iran borders and was once part of the Persian empire, and to protect Afghanistan's Shiite minority. Iran strongly supported the Northern Alliance and its Tajik (Persian-speaking) leaders who have traditionally been strong in western Afghanistan as well as northern Afghanistan. Since Taliban forces ousted Ismail Khan from Herat (the western province that borders Iran) in September 1995, Iran has seen the Taliban movement as a threat to its interests in Afghanistan. After that time, Iran provided fuel, funds, and ammunition to the Northern Alliance[10] and hosted fighters loyal to Khan, who was captured by the Taliban in 1998 but escaped and fled to Iran in March 2000. In September 1998, Iranian and Taliban forces nearly came into direct conflict when Iran discovered that nine of its diplomats were killed in the course of Taliban's offensive in northern Afghanistan. Iran massed forces at the border and threatened military action, but the crisis cooled without a major clash, possibly because Iran lacked confidence in its military capabilities.

The United States and Iran have long had common positions on Afghanistan, despite deep U.S.-Iran differences on other issues. U.S. officials have long acknowledged working with Tehran, under the auspices of the Six Plus Two contact group and Geneva group. Iran has confirmed that it offered search and rescue assistance in Afghanistan, and it also allowed U.S. humanitarian aid to the Afghan people to transit Iran. On the other hand, some Iranian leaders were harshly critical of U.S. military action against the Taliban.

Amid reports Iran seeks to exert influence over the new government by arming pro-Iranian Afghan factions, in early January 2002 President Bush warned Iran against meddling in Afghanistan. The President listed Iran as part of an "axis of evil" in his January 29, 2002 State of the Union message, partly because of Iran's actions in Afghanistan. Since then, the Bush Administration has continued to accuse Iran of trying to build influence over the interim government and of failing to attempt to locate or arrest Al Qaeda fighters who have fled to Iran from Afghanistan. Partly in response to the U.S. criticism, in February 2002 Iran reportedly expelled a major critic of the interim administration, Gulbuddin Hikmatyar. For his part, Karzai has said that Iran is an important neighbor of Afghanistan and visited Iran in late February 2002, pledging to build ties with the Islamic republic. Saudi Arabia said in early August 2002 that Iran had turned over to Saudi Arabia several Al Qaeda fighters located and arrested in Iran.

As of October 2002, about 275,000 Afghan refugees have returned from Iran since the Taliban fell. About 1.2 million remain, many of which are integrated into Iranian society.

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[10] Steele, Jonathon, "America Includes Iran In Talks On Ending War In Afghanistan." *Washington Times*, December 15, 1997. A14.

Russia

A number of considerations might explain why Russia supported the U.S. effort against the Taliban and Al Qaeda, including the use of bases in Central Asia to conduct the war. Russia's main objective in Afghanistan has been to prevent the further strengthening of Islamic or nationalist movements in the Central Asian states or Islamic enclaves in Russia itself, including Chechnya. Russia's fear became acute following an August 1999 incursion into Russia's Dagestan region by Islamic guerrillas from neighboring Chechnya. Some reports link at least one faction of the guerrillas to Al Qaeda.[11] This faction was led by a Chechen of Arab origin who is referred to by the name "Hattab" (full name is Ibn al-Khattab), although there are some reports Russia may have killed him in Chechnya in 2002. In January 2000, the Taliban became the only government in the world to recognize Chechnya's independence, and some Chechen fighters integrated into Taliban/Al Qaeda forces were captured or killed during Operation Enduring Freedom.

The U.S. and Russian positions on Afghanistan became coincident well before the September 11 attacks.[12] Even before the U.S.-led war, Russia was supporting the Northern Alliance with some military equipment and technical assistance.[13] U.S.-Russian cooperation led to the passage of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1267 and 1233 (see section on "Harboring of Al Qaeda, below). On the other hand, the United States has not blindly supported Russia's apparent attempts to place a large share of the blame for the rebellion in Chechnya on the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Some outside experts believe that Russia exaggerated the threat emanating from Afghanistan in an effort to persuade the Central Asian states to rebuild closer defense ties to Moscow and to justify its actions in Chechnya.

Central Asian States[14]

During Taliban rule, leaders in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan grew increasingly alarmed that Central Asian radical Islamic movements were receiving safe haven in Afghanistan. In 1996, several of these states banded together with Russia and China into a regional grouping called the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to discuss the threat emanating from Afghanistan's Taliban regime. The organization groups China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Of the Central Asian states that border Afghanistan, two of them – Uzbekistan and Tajikistan – had seen themselves as particularly vulnerable to militants harbored by the Taliban. Uzbekistan saw its ally, Abdul Rashid Dostam, the Uzbek commander in northern Afghanistan, lose most of his influence in 1998.

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[11] Whittell, Giles. "Bin Laden Link To Dagestan Rebel Fightback." *London Times*, September 6, 1999.

[12] Constable, Pamela. "Russia, U.S. Converge on Warnings to Taliban." *Washington Post*, June 4, 2000.

[13] Risen, James. "Russians Are Back in Afghanistan, Aiding Rebels." *New York Times*, July 27, 1998.

[14] For further information, see CRS Report RL30294. *Central Asia's Security: Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests*. December 7, 1999.

Prior to the U.S. war on the Taliban and Al Qaeda, Uzbek officials had said that more active support from Uzbekistan would not necessarily have enabled Dostam to overturn Taliban control of the north.[15]

Uzbekistan has long asserted that the group Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), allegedly responsible for four simultaneous February 1999 bombings in Tashkent that nearly killed President Islam Karimov, is linked to Al Qaeda.[16] One of its leaders, Juma Namangani, reportedly was killed while commanding Taliban/Al Qaeda forces in the battle for Mazar-e-Sharif in November 2001. Uzbekistan was highly supportive of the United States in the wake of the September 11 attacks and placed military facilities at U.S. disposal for use in the combat against the Taliban and Al Qaeda. About 1,000 U.S. troops from the 10th Mountain Division, as well as U.S. aircraft, have been based at the Khanabad/Karsi air base there. Following the fall of the Taliban, in December 2001 Uzbekistan reopened the Soviet-built "Friendship Bridge" over the Amu Darya river in order to facilitate the flow of aid into Uzbekistan. Uzbek officials in Tashkent told CRS in May 2002 that the defeat of the Taliban has made them less anxious about the domestic threat from the IMU, and press reports say the IMU has been severely weakened by its war defeats and Namangani's death.

Tajikistan feared that its buffer with Afghanistan would disappear if the Taliban defeated the Northern Alliance, whose territorial base borders Tajikistan. Some of the IMU members based in Afghanistan, including Namangani, fought alongside the Islamic opposition United Tajik Opposition (UTO) during the 1994-1997 civil war in that country. Tajikistan, heavily influenced by Russia, whose 25,000 troops guards the border with Afghanistan, initially sent mixed signals on the question of whether it would give the United States the use of military facilities in Tajikistan. However, on September 26, 2001, Moscow officially endorsed the use by the United States of three air bases in Tajikistan, paving the way for Tajikistan to open facilities for U.S. use, which it did formally offer in early November 2001.

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan do not directly border Afghanistan. However, IMU guerrillas have transited Kyrgyzstan during past incursions into Uzbekistan.[17] Kazakhstan had begun to diplomatically engage the Taliban over the year prior to the September 11 attacks, but it publicly supported the U.S. war effort against the Taliban. In early December 2001, Kyrgyzstan offered to host U.S. warplanes, and U.S. and French aircraft, including U.S. Marine F-18 strike aircraft, have been using part of the international airport at Manas (Peter J. Ganci base) as a base for combat flights in Afghanistan.[18] Kyrgyzstan said in March 2002 that there is no time limit on the U.S. use of military facilities there; French aircraft withdrew in September 2002 as the war wound down. Kazakhstan signed an agreement with the United

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[15] CRS conversations with Uzbek government officials in Tashkent. April 1999.

[16] The IMU was named a foreign terrorist organization by the State Department in September 2000.

[17] *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1999*, pp. 14, 92.

[18] Some information based on CRS visit to the Manas facility in Kyrgyzstan, May 2002.

States in July 2002 to allow coalition aircraft to use Kazakhstan's airports in case of an emergency or short term need related to the ongoing war in Afghanistan.

Of the Central Asian states that border Afghanistan, only Turkmenistan chose to seek close relations with the Taliban leadership, possibly viewing engagement as a more effective means of preventing spillover of radical Islamic activity from Afghanistan. Turkmenistan's leadership also saw Taliban control as bringing the peace and stability that would permit construction of a natural gas pipeline from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan, which would help Turkmenistan bring its large gas reserves to world markets. However, the September 11 events stoked Turkmenistan's fears of the Taliban and its Al Qaeda guests and the country politically supported the U.S. anti-terrorism effort. There are no indications the United States requested basing rights in Turkmenistan.

China

China has a small border with a sliver of Afghanistan known as the "Wakhan corridor" (see map) and had become increasingly concerned about the potential for Al Qaeda to promote Islamic fundamentalism among Muslims (Uighurs) in northwestern China. A number of Uighurs fought in Taliban and Al Qaeda ranks in the U.S.-led war. China expressed its concern through active membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, as noted above. In December 2000, sensing China's increasing concern about Taliban policies, a Chinese official delegation met with Mullah Umar at the Taliban's invitation.

Although it has long been concerned about the threat from the Taliban and bin Laden, China did not, at first, enthusiastically support U.S. military action against the Taliban. Many experts believe this is because China, as a result of strategic considerations, was wary of a U.S. military buildup on its doorstep. China is an ally with Pakistan, in part to balance out India, which China sees as a rival. Pakistan's cooperation with the United States appears to have allayed China's opposition to U.S. military action, and President Bush has praised China's cooperation with the anti-terrorism effort in his meetings with senior leaders of China.

Saudi Arabia

During the Soviet occupation, Saudi Arabia channeled hundreds of millions of dollars to the Afghan resistance, and particularly to hardline Sunni Muslim fundamentalist resistance leaders. Saudi Arabia, which itself practices the strict Wahhabi brand of Islam practiced by the Taliban, was one of three countries to formally recognize the Taliban government. (The others are Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates.) The Taliban initially served Saudi Arabia as a potential counter to Iran, with which Saudi Arabia has been at odds since Iran's 1979 revolution. However, Iranian-Saudi relations improved dramatically beginning in 1997, and balancing Iranian power ebbed as a factor in Saudi policy toward Afghanistan.

Instead, drawing on its intelligence ties to Afghanistan during the anti-Soviet war, Saudi Arabia worked with Taliban leaders to persuade them to suppress anti-Saudi activities by Al Qaeda. Saudi Arabia apparently believed that Al Qaeda's

presence in Afghanistan drew Saudi Islamic radicals away from Saudi Arabia itself and thereby reduced their opportunity to destabilize the Saudi regime. Some press reports indicate that, in late 1998, Saudi and Taliban leaders discussed, but did not agree on, a plan for a panel of Saudi and Afghan Islamic scholars to decide bin Laden's fate. Other reports, however, say that Saudi Arabia refused an offer from Sudan in 1996 to extradite bin Laden to his homeland on the grounds that he could become a rallying point for opposition to the regime. In March 2000 and again in May 2000, the Saudi-based Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) sponsored indirect peace talks in Saudi Arabia between the warring factions.

According to U.S. officials, Saudi Arabia has generally cooperated with the U.S. war effort. Along with the UAE, Saudi Arabia broke diplomatic relations with the Taliban in late September 2001. It quietly permitted the United States to use a Saudi base for command of U.S. air operations over Afghanistan, but it did not permit U.S. aircraft to launch strikes on Afghanistan from Saudi bases. The Saudi position has generally been to allow the United States the use of its facilities as long as doing so is not publicly requested or highly publicized.

U.S. Policy Issues

U.S. policy objectives in Afghanistan have long been multifaceted, although in the 3 years prior to the September 11 attacks, U.S. goals had largely narrowed to ending the presence of the Al Qaeda leadership and infrastructure there. Since the Soviet withdrawal, returning peace and stability to Afghanistan has also been a U.S. goal, pursued with varying degrees of intensity. Other longstanding U.S. goals have included an end to discrimination against women and girls, the eradication of narcotics production, and alleviating severe humanitarian difficulties.

The Clinton Administration diplomatically engaged the Taliban movement as it was gathering strength, but U.S. relations with the Taliban deteriorated sharply during the 5 years that the Taliban were in power in Kabul, to the point where the United States and the Taliban were largely adversaries well before the September 11 attacks. Despite the deterioration, Clinton Administration officials including Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Karl Inderfurth met periodically with Taliban officials. At the same time, the United States withheld recognition of Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan and formally recognized no faction as the government. Based on the lack of broad international recognition of Taliban, the United Nations seated representatives of the former Rabbani government, not the Taliban. The United States closed its embassy in Kabul in January 1989, just after the Soviet pullout from Afghanistan, and the State Department ordered the Afghan embassy in Washington, D.C. closed in August 1997 because of a power struggle within it between Rabbani and Taliban supporters.

Although press reports in May 2002 said the Bush Administration was considering a plan to give military aid to the Northern Alliance prior to the September 11 attacks, the Bush Administration continued the previous Administration's policy of maintaining a dialogue with the Taliban. In compliance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1333, in February 2001 the State Department

ordered the closing of a Taliban representative office in New York. The Taliban complied with the directive, but its representative, Abdul Hakim Mujahid, continued to operate informally. In March 2001, Bush Administration officials received a Taliban envoy, Rahmatullah Hashemi, to discuss bilateral issues. Three State Department officers visited Afghanistan in April 2001, the first U.S. visit since the August 1998 bombings of the Al Qaeda camps, although the purpose of the visit was described as assessing the humanitarian needs and not furthering U.S.-Taliban relations.

As did the executive branch, Congress became highly critical of the Taliban well before the September 11 attacks. A sense of the Senate resolution (S.Res. 275) that resolving the Afghan civil war should be a top U.S. priority passed that chamber by unanimous consent on September 24, 1996. A similar resolution, H.Con.Res. 218, passed the House on April 28, 1998.

After September 11, legislative proposals became significantly more adversarial toward the Taliban. One bill, H.R. 3088, stated that it should be the policy of the United States to remove the Taliban from power and authorized a drawdown of up to $300 million worth of U.S. military supplies and services for the anti-Taliban opposition. The bill, as well as another bill (H.R. 2998, introduced October 2, 2001), established a "Radio Free Afghanistan" broadcasting service under RFE/RL. On February 12, 2002, the House passed the Senate version of H.R. 2998 providing $17 million funding for the radio broadcasts for FY2002. President Bush signed the bill into law on March 11, 2002 (P.L. 107-148).

The following sections discuss major issues in U.S. relations with Afghanistan.

Taliban Harboring of Al Qaeda

Even before the September 11, 2001 attacks, the Taliban's refusal to yield Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden to the United States (or a U.S. ally) for trial – and its protection of radical Islamic movements more broadly – had become the overriding bilateral agenda item in U.S. policy toward Afghanistan.[19] Particularly after the August 7, 1998 Al Qaeda bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the United States had been placing progressively more pressure on the Taliban to extradite bin Laden, adding sanctions, some military action, reported covert intelligence operations, and the threat of further punishments to ongoing diplomatic efforts.

- During his April 1998 visit, Ambassador Richardson asked the Taliban to hand bin Laden over to U.S. authorities, but he was rebuffed.

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[19] For more information on bin Laden and his Al Qaeda organization, see CRS Report RL31119, *Terrorism: Near Eastern Groups and State Sponsors, 2001, September 10, 2001*. See also CRS Report RS20411, *Afghanistan: Connections to Islamic Movements in Central and South Asia and Southern Russia*.

- On August 20, 1998, the United States fired cruise missiles at alleged bin Laden-controlled terrorist training camps in retaliation for the embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.

- On July 4, 1999, because of the Taliban's hosting of bin Laden, President Clinton issued Executive Order 13129, imposing a ban on U.S. trade with Taliban-controlled portions of Afghanistan and blocking Taliban assets in U.S. financial institutions. The Taliban was not designated as a terrorist group, nor was Afghanistan named a state sponsor of terrorism. On August 10, 1999, the Clinton Administration determined that Ariana Airlines represents Taliban-controlled property, thereby preventing Americans from using the airline and triggering the blocking of about $500,000 in Ariana assets identified in the United States. (President George W. Bush revoked Executive Order 13129 on the grounds that the Taliban government had been dismantled.)

- On October 15, 1999, with Russian support, the United States achieved adoption of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1267, the first U.N. resolution sanctioning the Taliban regime. The resolution banned flights outside Afghanistan by Ariana airlines and directed U.N. member states to freeze Taliban assets. The resolution was in response to the Taliban's refusal to hand bin Laden over to justice, and it threatened further sanctions if it did not do so.

On December 19, 2000, again by combining diplomatic forces with Russia, the United States achieved adoption of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1333, a follow-on to Resolution 1267, imposed even stricter sanctions against the Taliban. The major additional provisions of the Resolution included: (1) a worldwide prohibition against the provision of arms or military advice to the Taliban, and a requirement (directed against Pakistan) that all countries withdraw any military advisers that are helping the Taliban; (2) a call for all countries that recognize the Taliban to reduce the size of Taliban representative missions in their countries, and for all other countries to close completely all Taliban offices and Ariana Afghan airline offices and ban all non-humanitarian assistance flights into or out of Taliban-controlled Afghanistan; (3) a requirement that all countries freeze any bin Laden/Al Qaeda assets that can be identified; (4) a prohibition on any supply to areas under Taliban control of the chemical acetic anhydride, which is used to produce heroin; and (5) a ban on foreign travel by all Taliban officials at or above the rank of Deputy Minister, except for the purposes of participation in peace negotiations, compliance with the resolution or 1267, or humanitarian reasons, including religious obligations. On July 30, 2001, the U.N. Security Council adopted an implementing Resolution 1363. The resolution provided for the stationing of monitors in Pakistan, to ensure that no weapons or military advice was being provided by the Taliban.

In the aftermath of the Taliban's ouster from power, these provisions were narrowed to focus on Al Qaeda, and not the Taliban, by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1390 of January 17, 2002.

Human Rights/Treatment of Women

Virtually all observers agree that Afghans are freer than they were under the Taliban, although the interim administration is relatively young, and many want to evaluate its human rights practices over a longer period of time. The groups that have assumed power from the Taliban are widely considered far less repressive of women than was the Taliban, although some of the factions now part of the ruling coalition, including the Northern Alliance, have been accused of significant human rights abuses in the past. Since the interim administration took office, there have been some reports of reprisals and other abuses based on ethnicity in certain parts of Afghanistan, particularly against Pashtuns living in largely Tajik and Uzbek northern Afghanistan. Some Afghans say that the Taliban brought order and peace to the areas it captured by disarming independent militiamen and that, to some extent, lawlessness has returned in certain parts of Afghanistan. U.S. officials believe that law and order will improve as the central government extends its writ throughout the country and as economic reconstruction expands.

Some observers say that the new government is reimposing some Islamic restrictions that characterized Taliban rule, including the code of criminal punishments stipulated in Islamic law.[20] Some have blamed the increased restrictions on chief justice Fazl Hadi Shinwari, a religious conservative. On January 21, 2003, Shinwari ordered shut down cable television in Kabul on the grounds it was un-Islamic, and called for an end to co-education. The U.S. government has generally refrained from advising the new government on these issues, lest the United States be accused of undue interference in Kabul's affairs.

Under the new government, women in Kabul are said to be reverting to the less restrictive behavior practiced before the Taliban fled. The burqa is no longer obligatory, although many women continue to wear it by tradition or because of fear or uncertainty of the new government's attitudes on the issue. Two women hold positions in the new government, and many women are returning to the jobs they held before the Taliban came to power. As noted above, girls returned to school March 23, 2002, for the first time since the Taliban took over, and many female teachers have resumed their teaching jobs.

Before the war, there was significant U.S. and U.N. pressure on the Taliban regime to moderate its treatment of women. Several U.N. Security Council resolutions, including 1193 (August 28, 1998), and 1214 (December 8, 1998), urged the Taliban to end discrimination against women. During a November 1997 visit to Pakistan, then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright attacked Taliban policies as despicable and intolerable. U.S. women's rights groups like Feminist Majority and the National Organization for Women (NOW) mobilized to stop the Clinton Administration from recognizing the Taliban government unless it altered its treatment of women. On May 5, 1999, the Senate passed S.Res. 68, a resolution calling on the President not to recognize any Afghan government that refuses to end discrimination against women. On November 27, 2001, the House unanimously adopted S. 1573, the Afghan Women and Children Relief Act, which had earlier

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[20] Shea, Nina. Sharia in Kabul? *The National Review*, October 28, 2002.

passed the Senate. The law (signed December 12, 2001) calls for the use of supplemental funding (appropriated by P.L. 107-38) to fund educational and health programs for Afghan women and children. After the new government took office, the United States and the new Afghan government set up a U.S.-Afghan Women's Council to coordinate the allocation of resources so as to improve the future of Afghan women. It is chaired on the U.S. side by Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky, and on the Afghan side by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of Women's Affairs.

Destruction of Buddha Statues/Hindu Badges. The Taliban's critics pointed to its March 2001 destruction of two large Buddha statues, dating to the 7th century, as evidence of the Taliban's excesses. The Taliban claimed it ordered the destruction of the statues, which it considered un-Islamic, after representatives of the United Nations Economic, Social, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) offered to fund preservation of the statues. Others believe the move was a reaction to new U.N. sanctions imposed in December 2000 (see below). The destruction provoked widespread condemnation, even among other Islamic states, including Pakistan. Some international groups are looking at the possibility of rebuilding the statues, although at least one group has said doing so will be extremely difficult technically.

In May 2001, the Taliban said it was considering requiring non-Muslims to wear identity labels on their clothing to distinguish them from Muslims. The Taliban explained the move as an effort to prevent non-Muslims from being harassed by Taliban security forces for not attending Muslim prayer, which is compulsory for Muslims. The announcement received worldwide condemnation and was not implemented before the Taliban was ousted. There are believed to be only two Jews left in Afghanistan, so the move was not viewed as being directed against Jews, even though the policy evoked memories of the treatment of Jews in Nazi Germany.

Counternarcotics

The December 5, 2001 Bonn agreement mentions the need for a post-Taliban Afghanistan government to prevent Afghanistan's re-emergence as a haven for drug cultivation, and the Bush Administration is focusing some U.S. resources on counter-narcotics. The new government has banned poppy cultivation, although it has had difficulty enforcing the ban due to resource limitations and opposition from Afghan farmers who see few alternatives. The U.N. Drug Control Program estimated in August 2002 that 3,000 tons of opium crop would be produced in Afghanistan in 2002, restoring Afghanistan to its previous place as the world's top opium producer.[21] On the other hand, the U.S. military is opposed to its conducting poppy crop eradication in Afghanistan.[22] In mid-October 2002, the Afghan government burned 5,500 pounds of hashish and opium to demonstrate its determination to the counter-narcotics effort.

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[21] Armitage, Tom. U.N. Sees Afghan Opium Cultivation Soaring in 2002. *Reuters*, February 28, 2002.

[22] Gertz, Bill. Military Opposes Spraying Poppies. *Washington Times*, March 25, 2002.

Narcotics trafficking control was perhaps the one issue on which the Taliban apparently satisfied much of the international community. The Taliban, for the most part, enforced its July 2000 ban on poppy cultivation; in February 2001, U.N. International Drug Control Program (UNDCP) officials said that surveys showed a dramatic drop in poppy cultivation in the areas surveyed.[23] The Northern Alliance did not issue a similar ban in areas it controlled. In April 2001, the United States began funding a UNDCP crop substitution program, contributing $1.5 million to that program in FY2001. Despite the Taliban's performance on drug issues, and despite the ascension of a pro-U.S. government, in March 2002, the Bush Administration determined that Afghanistan had "failed demonstrably to make substantial efforts" during the past 12 months to adhere to international counter-narcotics agreements and take certain counter-narcotics measures set forth in U.S. law. (This is equivalent to the listing by the United States, as Afghanistan has been listed every year since 1987, as a state that is uncooperative with U.S. efforts to eliminate drug trafficking or has failed to take sufficient steps on its own to curb trafficking.) Despite that determination, President Bush waived drug-related sanctions on the new government on the grounds that providing assistance is in the vital national interest of the United States (see section on sanctions, below).

Retrieval of U.S. Stingers

Beginning in late 1985 and following an internal debate, the Reagan Administration provided "hundreds" of man-portable "Stinger" anti-aircraft missiles to the mujahedin for use against Soviet combat helicopters and aircraft. Prior to the U.S.-led war against the Taliban and Al Qaeda, common estimates among experts suggested that 200-300 Stingers remained at large in Afghanistan out of about 1,000 provided during the war against the Soviet Union.[24] In the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the United States had tried to retrieve the at-large Stingers.[25] The United States feared that the missiles could fall into the hands of terrorist groups for possible use against civilian airliners. Iran bought 16 of the missiles in 1987 and fired one against U.S. helicopters; some reportedly were transferred to Lebanese Hizballah, according to press reports in January 2002. India claimed that it was a Stinger, supplied to Islamic rebels in Kashmir probably by sympathizers in Afghanistan, that shot down an Indian helicopter over Kashmir in May 1999.[26] It was not the Stinger but Soviet-made SA-7 "Strella" man portable launchers that were fired, allegedly by Al Qaeda, against a U.S. military aircraft in Saudi Arabia in June 2002 and against an Israeli passenger aircraft in Kenya on November 30, 2002. Both firings missed their targets.

The practical difficulties of retrieving the weapons had caused this issue to fade from the U.S. agenda for Afghanistan. In 1992, the United States reportedly spent

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[23] Crossette, Barbara. "Taliban Seem to Be Making Good on Opium Ban, U.N. Says." *New York Times*, February 7, 2001.

[24] Saleem, Farrukh. Where Are the Missing Stinger Missiles? Pakistan, *Friday Times*. August 17-23, 2001.

[25] Gertz, Bill. Stinger Bite Feared in CIA. *Washington Times*, October 9, 2000.

[26] "U.S.-Made Stinger Missiles – Mobile and Lethal." *Reuters*, May 28, 1999.

about $10 million to buy the Stingers back, at a premium, from individual mujahedin commanders. The *New York Times* reported on July 24, 1993, that the buy back effort failed because the United States was competing with other buyers, including Iran and North Korea, and that the CIA would spend about $55 million in FY1994 in a renewed Stinger buy-back effort. On March 7, 1994, the *Washington Post* reported that the CIA had recovered only a fraction of the at-large Stingers. Many observers speculate that the CIA program retrieved perhaps 50 or 100 Stingers. According to Defense Intelligence Agency testimony in 1996,[27] an unspecified number of man-portable surface-to-air missiles (Stingers) remain in Afghanistan.[28]

The Stinger issue resurfaced in conjunction with the U.S. war effort. U.S. pilots reported that the Taliban fired some Stingers at U.S. aircraft during the war, but they recorded no hits. Any Stingers that survived the anti-Taliban war are likely controlled by Afghans now allied to the United States and would presumably pose less of a threat. In early February 2002, the interim government collected and returned to the United States "dozens" of Stingers and said it would continue to try to find and return additional Stingers.[29]

Landmine Eradication

Landmines laid during the Soviet occupation constitute one of the principal dangers to the Afghan people. The United Nations estimates that 5 -7 million mines remain scattered throughout the country, although some estimates by outside organizations are significantly lower. An estimated 400,000 Afghans have been killed or wounded by landmines. U.N. teams have succeeded in destroying one million mines and are now focusing on de-mining priority-use, residential and commercial property, including land surrounding Kabul. As shown in the U.S. aid table for FY1999-FY2002, the United States Humanitarian Demining Program was providing about $3 million per year for Afghanistan demining activities, and the amount escalated to $7 million in the post-Taliban period. Most of the funds go to the HALO Trust, a British organization, and the U.N. Mine Action Program for Afghanistan.

Assistance and Reconstruction

Since the Soviet invasion, Afghanistan has faced major humanitarian difficulties, some of which deteriorated further under Taliban rule. In addition to 3.6 million Afghan refugees at the start of the U.S.-led war,[30] another 500,000 Afghans were displaced internally even before U.S. military action began, according to Secretary General Annan's April 19, 2001 report on Afghanistan. Many of the

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[27] John Moore, before the House International Relations Committee. May 9, 1996.

[28] Common estimates in a variety of press reports suggest that 200-300 Stingers may remain at large in Afghanistan.

[29] Fullerton, John. "Afghan Authorities Hand in Stinger Missiles to U.S." *Reuters*, February 4, 2002.

[30] About 1.5 million Afghan refugees were in Iran; 2 million in Pakistan; 20,000 in Russia; 17,000 in India, and 9,000 in the Central Asian states.

displaced persons had fled the effects of a major drought that affected the 85% of the population that directly depends on agriculture. About 2 million Afghan refugees have returned since January 2002. The conflicts in Afghanistan, including the war against the Soviet Union, have reportedly left about 2 million dead, 700,000 widows and orphans and about one million Afghan children who were born and raised in refugee camps outside Afghanistan.

As part of its military operations, the United States air-dropped food rations to help alleviate suffering. Following the Taliban collapse, aid routes via Uzbekistan and Pakistan reopened, largely eliminating the need for the airdrops. A variety of U.N. agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) serve as the vehicles for international assistance to Afghanistan. The U.N. High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) supervises Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan and Afghan repatriation.

U.S. Assistance Issues. To address humanitarian concerns, the United States had become the largest single provider of assistance to the Afghan people, even before the crisis triggered by the September 11 attacks. In 1985, the United States began a cross-border aid program for Afghanistan, through which aid was distributed in Afghanistan, via U.S. aid workers in Pakistan. However, citing budgetary constraints and the difficulty of administering a cross-border program, there was no USAID mission for Afghanistan after the end of FY1994, and U.S. aid has been provided through various channels, mostly U.N. agencies and NGO's.

Primarily because of a drought and the widely publicized suffering of the Afghan people, U.S. aid to the Afghan people in FY2001 greatly exceeded that provided in FY2000 or FY1999, but no U.S. assistance went directly to the Taliban government. **Table 2** breaks down FY1999-FY2002 aid by program. For a history of U.S. aid to Afghanistan (FY1978-FY1998), see **Table 4**.

Post Taliban. On October 4, 2001, in an effort to demonstrate that the United States has an interest in the welfare of the Afghan people and not just the defeat of the Taliban, President Bush announced that humanitarian aid to the Afghan people would total about $320 million for FY2002. After the fall of the Taliban, at a donors' conference in Tokyo during January 20-21, 2002, the United States pledged $296 million in reconstruction aid for Afghanistan for FY2002. The amounts provided for FY2002 are listed in the table; the figures include both humanitarian and reconstruction aid, totaling over $530 million for FY2002.

The conference report on the FY2002 foreign aid appropriation (H.Rept. 107-354, P.L. 107-115) contained a sense of Congress provision that the United States should contribute substantial humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, although no dollar figures were mentioned. The conference report on a FY2002 supplemental appropriation (H.R. 4775, P.L. 107-480) recommends $134 million in additional aid to Afghanistan. (For more information, including on aid to help Afghan civilian victims of U.S. airstrikes, see CRS Report RL31406, *Supplemental Appropriation for FY2002: Combatting Terrorism and Other Issues*, by Amy Belasco and Larry Nowels.)

U.S. reconstruction funds have been used primarily for various "quick impact" programs. These programs include $6.5 million for 9.7 million school textbooks; $7

million for agricultural rehabilitation, programs for women (about $15 million in FY2002), and support to the interim administration; $5 million for health services infrastructure; $1 million for the rehabilitation of landmine victims and other disabled persons (Leahy War Victims Fund); and funding to rebuild the Ministry of Women's Affairs building ($64,000) and to distribute radios to localities to disseminate information on humanitarian aid. The United States is forwarding donations from American citizens for the rebuilding of Kabul University.

FY2003 Plans. The Administration says it plans to spend about $300 million for Afghan programs in FY2003, which the Administration says is a sufficient contribution to help accomplish international objectives. Larger amounts than this, according to the Administration, cannot be easily absorbed by existing infrastructure and could lead to waste or abuse. As part of the FY2003 plan, on September 12, 2002, the Administration pledged Afghanistan $80 million for road reconstruction, as part of an international pledge of $180 million. Table 3 covers FY2003 aid.

An authorization bill, H.R. 3994, which was passed by the House on May 21, 2002, authorizes $1.05 billion in U.S. reconstruction assistance during FY2002-FY2005 ($200 million in FY2002; $300 million in each of FY2003 and FY2004, and $250 million in FY2005). The bill also authorizes $15 million per year for FY2002-2005 for counternarcotics, and $10 million per year for FY2002-FY2005 for the *loya jirga* and local political development. A similar bill in the Senate would authorize $2.5 billion in reconstruction aid during FY2002-FY2005, of which $500 million would be for an enterprise fund, plus an additional $1 billion to expand ISAF if such an expansion takes place. Both bills authorize $300 million in defense, crime control, and counter-narcotics articles and services. S. 2712 was passed by the Senate on November 14 and by the House on November 15, and signed on December 4, 2002 (P.L. 107-327). No FY2003 foreign aid appropriations was completed before the 107th Congress adjourned.

In addition, the U.S. Treasury Department (Office of Foreign Assets Control, OFAC) has unblocked over $145 million in assets of Afghan government owned banking entities that were frozen under U.S. sanctions imposed on the Taliban in 1999 (see below). These funds are being used by the new government for currency stabilization, not for recurring costs of the interim government. Most of the funds consist of gold that will be held in Afghanistan's name in the United States to back up Afghanistan's currency. Together with its allies, over $350 million in frozen funds have been released to the new government. In January 2002, the United States agreed to provide $50 million in credit for U.S. investment in Afghanistan, provided by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). The United States also has successfully pressed the International Air Transport Association to pay Afghanistan $20 million in overflight fees that were withheld because of U.N. sanctions on the Taliban. In April 2002, OFAC unblocked $17 million in privately-owned Afghan assets. In May 2002, the World Bank reopened its office in Afghanistan after twenty years.

International Reconstruction Pledges. Common estimates of reconstruction needs run up to about $10 billion. At the Tokyo donors' conference, mentioned above, the following international reconstruction pledges were announced:

European Union - $495 million in 2002; Japan - $500 million over the next 30 months; Germany - $362 million over the next 4 years; Saudi Arabia - $220 million over the next 3 years; Iran - $560 million over the next 5 years; Pakistan - $100 million over the next 5 years; India - a $100 million line of credit; South Korea - $45 million over 30 months; and United Kingdom - $86 million in 2002. Total pledges in Tokyo for reconstruction amounted to $2 billion to be spent in 2002 and $4.5 billion over the next 5 years. Of the amounts pledged for 2002, about $1.9 billion has been spent, received, or about to be received, as of January 2003.

Promoting Long-Term Economic Development

In an effort to find a long-term solution to Afghanistan's acute humanitarian problems, the United States has, when feasible, tried to promote major development projects as a means of improving Afghan living standards and political stability over the long term. During 1996-98, the Administration supported proposed natural gas and oil pipelines through western Afghanistan as an incentive for the warring factions to cooperate. One proposal by a consortium led by Los Angeles-based Unocal Corporation[31] was for a Central Asia Oil Pipeline (CAOP) that would originate at the Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan border and extend through the western region of Afghanistan to Pakistan. A $2.5 billion Central Asia Gas Pipeline (CentGas) would originate in southern Turkmenistan and pass through Afghanistan to Pakistan, with possible extensions into India.

The deterioration in U.S.-Taliban relations after 1998 largely ended hopes for the pipeline projects while the Taliban was in power. Immediately after the August 20,1998 U.S. strikes on bin Laden's bases in Afghanistan, Unocal suspended all its Afghan pipeline-related activities, including a U.S.-based training program for Afghans who were expected to work on the project. With few prospects of improved U.S. relations with Taliban, Unocal withdrew from its consortium in December 1998. Saudi Delta Oil was made interim project leader, although Delta lacked the financing and technology to make the consortium viable. The rival consortium led by Bridas of Argentina reportedly continued to try to win approval for its proposal to undertake the project.

Prospects for the project have improved in the post-Taliban period. In a summit meeting in late May 2002 between the leaders of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, the three countries agreed to revive the gas pipeline project. Sponsors of the project held an inaugural meeting on July 9, 2002 in Turkmenistan, signing a series of preliminary agreements. However, financing for the project is unclear.

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[31] Other participants in the Unocal consortium include Delta of Saudi Arabia, Hyundai of South Korea, Crescent Steel of Pakistan, Itochu Corporation and INPEX of Japan, and the government of Turkmenistan. Some accounts say Russia's Gazprom would probably receive a stake in the project. Moscow Nezavisimaya Gazeta, October 30, 1997. Page 3.

Table 1. Major Factions in Afghanistan

Party/Commander	Leader	Ideology/ Ethnicity	Areas of Control
Taliban	Mullah (Islamic cleric) Muhammad Umar	ultra-orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Small groups hiding throughout Afghanistan. No presence in government.
Northern Alliance/Islamic Society (dominant party in the Northern Alliance)	Burhannudin Rabbani (political leader), Muhammad Fahim (military leader)	conservative Islamic, mostly Tajik	Most of northern and western Afghanistan, including Kabul. Fahim is Vice President and Defense Minister. Dr. Abdullah is Foreign Minister. Rabbani holds no official position.
Forces of Ismail Khan (part of Northern Alliance)	Ismail Khan	Tajik	Herat Province and environs; Khan's son in cabinet.
Eastern Shura (loosely allied with Northern Alliance)	No clear leader, following death of Abdul Qadir; Qadir's son appointed Jalalabad governor after Qadir's death	moderate Islamic, Pashtun	Jalalabad and environs; Qadir was vice president.
National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan (part of Northern Alliance)	Abdul Rashid Dostam	secular, Uzbek	Mazar Sharif and environs; Dostam was deputy defense minister in interim government.
Hizb-e-Wahdat (part of Northern Alliance)	Karim Khalili	Shiite, Hazara tribes	Bamiyan province. Khalili is a vice president.
Pashtun Commanders	Ghul Agha Shirzai, and other tribal leaders	mostly orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Southern Afghanistan, including Qandahar.

Table 2. U.S. Aid to Afghanistan in FY1999-FY2003

($ in millions)

	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001	FY2002 (final)
U.S. Department of Agriculture (DOA) and USAID Food For Peace (FFP), via World Food Program(WFP)	$42.0 worth of wheat (100,000 metric tons under "416(b)" program.	$68.875 for 165,000 metric tons. (60,000 tons for May 2000 drought relief.)	$131.0 (300,000 metric tons under P.L.480, Title II, and 416(b)	$198.12 for food commodities
State/Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via UNHCR and ICRC	$16.95 for Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, and to assist their repatriation	$14.03 for the same purposes	$22.03 for similar purposes	$136.54 to U.N. agencies
State Department/ Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)	$7.0 to various NGO's to aid Afghans inside Afghanistan	$6.68 for drought relief and health, water, and sanitation programs	$18.934 for similar programs	$113.36 to various U.N. agencies and NGO's
State Department/HDP (Humanitarian Demining Program)	$2.615	$3.0	$2.8	$7.0 to Halo Trust/other demining
Aid to Afghan Refugees in Pakistan (through various NGO's)	$5.44 (2.789 for health, training - Afghan females in Pakistan	$6.169, of which $3.82 went to similar purposes	$5.31 for similar purposes	
U.N. Drug Control Program			$1.50	
USAID/ Office of Transition Initiatives			$0.45 (Afghan women in Pakistan)	$24.35 for broadcasting/ media
Dept. of Defense				$50.9 (2.4 million rations)
Totals	**$76.6**	**$113.2**	**$182.6**	**$530.28**

Table 3. U.S. Aid to Afghanistan, FY2003

($ in millions, same acronyms as above table)
(figures as of December 18, 2002)

USAID/OFDA	4.97, mostly for urban shelter
USAID/FFP	13.7, for wheat
Total	18.7

Table 4. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan FY1978-1998

($ in millions)

Fiscal Year	Devel. Assist.	Econ. Supp. (ESF)	P.L. 480 (Title I and II)	Military	Other (Incl. regional refugee aid)	Total
1978	4.989	–	5.742	0.269	0.789	11.789
1979	3.074	–	7.195	–	0.347	10.616
1980	–	(Soviet invasion - December 1979)			–	–
1981	–	–	–	–	–	–
1982	–	–	–	–	–	–
1983	–	–	–	–	–	–
1984	–	–	–	–	–	–
1985	3.369	–	–	–	–	3.369
1986	–	–	8.9	–	–	8.9
1987	17.8	12.1	2.6	–	–	32.5
1988	22.5	22.5	29.9	–	–	74.9
1989	22.5	22.5	32.6	–	–	77.6
1990	35.0	35.0	18.1	–	–	88.1
1991	30.0	30.0	20.1	–	–	80.1
1992	25.0	25.0	31.4	–	–	81.4
1993	10.0	10.0	18.0	–	30.2	68.2
1994	3.4	2.0	9.0	–	27.9	42.3
1995	1.8	–	12.4	–	31.6	45.8
1996	–	–	16.1	–	26.4	42.5
1997	–	–	18.0	–	31.9*	49.9
1998	–	–	3.6	–	49.14**	52.74

Source: U.S. Department of State.

* Includes $3 million for demining and $1.2 million for counternarcotics.

** Includes $3.3 million in projects targeted for Afghan women and girls, $7 million in earthquake relief aid, 100,000 tons of 416B wheat worth about $15 million, $2 million for demining, and $1.54 for counternarcotics.

U.S. and International Sanctions

Shoring up a post-Taliban government of Afghanistan with financial and other assistance has required waivers of restrictions or the permanent modification of U.S. and U.N. sanctions previously imposed on Afghanistan. Most of the sanctions discussed below have now been lifted.

- On May 2, 1980, Afghanistan was deleted from the list of designated beneficiary countries under the U.S. GSP, denying Afghanistan's exports duty free treatment, by Executive Order 12204 (45 F.R. 20740). This was done under the authority of Section 504 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended [P.L. 93-618; 19 U.S.C. 2464]. *On January 10, 2003, the President signed a proclamation making Afghanistan a beneficiary of GSP, eliminating U.S. tariffs on 5,700 Afghan products.*

- On June 3, 1980, as part of the sanctions against the Soviet Union for the invasion of Afghanistan, the United States imposed controls on exports to Afghanistan of agricultural products, oil and gas exploration and production equipment, and phosphates. This was implemented at 15 CFR Part 373 et seq (45 F.R. 37415) under the authority of Sections 5 and 6 of the Export Administration Act of 1979 [P.L. 96-72; 50 U.S.C. app. 2404, app. 2405]. On April 24, 1981, these sanctions were modified to terminate controls on U.S. exports to Afghanistan of agricultural products and phosphates.

- In mid-1992, the George H.W. Bush Administration determined that Afghanistan no longer had a "Soviet-controlled government." This opened Afghanistan to the use of U.S. funds made available for the U.S. share of U.N. organizations that provide assistance to Afghanistan.

- On October 7, 1992, President George H.W. Bush issued Presidential Determination 93-3 that Afghanistan is no longer a Marxist-Leninist country. The designation as such a country had prohibited Afghanistan from receiving Export-Import Bank guarantees, insurance, or credits for purchases under Sec. 8 of the 1986 Export-Import Bank Act, which amended Section 2(b)(2) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (P.L. 79-173, 12 U.S.C. 635). However, President George H.W. Bush's determination was not implemented before he left office.

- President George H.W. Bush's October 7, 1992 determination (93-3) also found that assistance to Afghanistan under Section 620D of the Foreign Assistance Act is in the national interest of the United States because of the change of regime in Afghanistan. The presidential determination, had it been implemented in regulations, would have waived restrictions on assistance to Afghanistan provided for in the Act, as amended [P.L. 87-195; 22 U.S.C. 2374]; as added by Section 505 of the International Development

Cooperation Act of 1979 [P.L. 96-53]. These provisions prohibit foreign assistance to Afghanistan until it apologizes for the death of U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Adolph Dubs, who was kidnapped in Kabul in 1979 and killed when Afghan police stormed the hideout where he was held, unless the President determines that such assistance is in the national interest because of changed circumstances in Afghanistan. *The restrictions on U.S. aid to the government of Afghanistan have been lifted in light of the change of government there.*

- Section 552 of the Foreign Assistance Appropriations for FY1986 [P.L. 99-190] authorized the President to deny any U.S. credits or most-favored-nation (MFN) tariff status for Afghanistan. Under that law, on February 18, 1986, the height of the Soviet occupation, President Reagan had issued Presidential Proclamation 5437, suspending (MFN) tariff status for Afghanistan (51 F.R. 4287). *On May 3, 2002, President Bush restored normal trade treatment to the products of Afghanistan.*

- On March 31, 1993, President Clinton, on national interest grounds, waived restrictions provided for in Section 481 (h) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended [P.L. 87-195]; as amended and restated by Section 2005(a) of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 [P.L. 99-570]. The waiver was renewed in 1994. Mandatory sanctions include bilateral aid cuts and suspensions, including denial of Ex-Im Bank credits; the casting of negative U.S. votes for multilateral development bank loans; and a non-allocation of a U.S. sugar quota. Discretionary sanctions included denial of Generalized System of Preferences (GSP); additional duties on country exports to the United States; and curtailment of air transportation with the United States. *On February 25, 2002, President Bush waived restrictions on FY2002 aid to Afghanistan under this Act.*

- On June 14, 1996, Afghanistan was formally added to the list of countries prohibited from receiving exports or licenses for exports of U.S. defense articles and services. This amended the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (22 CFR Part 121 et seq.) under the authority of Section 38 of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended (P.L. 90-629; 22 U.S.C. 2778) by adding Afghanistan at Section 126.1 of 22 CFR Part 126. *On July 2, 2002, the State Department amended U.S. regulations (22 CFR Part 126) to allow arms sales to the new Afghan government.*

- In a ruling largely redundant with the one above, on May 15, 1997, the State Department designated Afghanistan under the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-132), as a state that is not cooperating with U.S. anti-terrorism efforts. The designation, made primarily because of Taliban's harboring of bin Laden, makes Afghanistan ineligible to receive U.S. exports of items on the U.S. Munitions List. The designation was

repeated every year since 1997. *Afghanistan was deleted from the list of non-cooperative states when the list was reissued on May 15, 2002, thereby eliminating this sanction on Afghanistan.*

- On July 4, 1999, the President declared a national emergency with respect to Taliban because of its hosting of bin Laden, and issued Executive order 13129 that imposed sanctions. The sanctions include the blocking of Taliban assets and property in the United States, and a ban on U.S. trade with Taliban-controlled areas of Afghanistan. On August 10, 1999, the Administration determined that Ariana Afghan Airlines was a Taliban entity. That determination triggered a blocking of Ariana assets (about $500,000) in the United States and a ban on U.S. citizens' flying on the airline. *On January 29, 2002, the State Department issued a determination that the Taliban controls no territory within Afghanistan, thus essentially ending this trade ban. On July 2, 2002, President Bush formally revoked this Executive order.*

- On October 15, 1999, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1267; on December 19, 2000, it adopted U.N. Security Council Resolution 1333, imposed a number of new sanctions against the Taliban. For the provisions of these sanctions, see the section on the harboring of bin Laden. *As noted, these sanctions were narrowed to penalize only Al Qaeda by virtue of the adoption of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1390 of January 17, 2002.*

Map of Afghanistan

Map adapted by CRS from Magellan Geographix.