Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy

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Summary

Following two high-level policy reviews on Afghanistan in 2009, the Obama Administration asserts that it is pursuing a fully resourced and integrated military-civilian strategy intended to pave the way for a gradual transition to Afghan security leadership beginning in July 2011. The pace of that transition is to be determined by conditions on the ground. The policy is predicated on the view that stabilizing Afghanistan will ensure that it cannot again become a base for terrorist attacks against the United States. In order to reverse a deterioration of security in large parts of Afghanistan since 2006, each of the two reviews resulted in a decision to add combat troops, with the intent of creating the conditions to expand Afghan governance and economic development. A total of 51,000 additional U.S. forces were authorized by the two reviews, which has brought U.S. troop levels to about 104,000 as of September 4, 2010, with partner forces holding at about 40,000. At the same time, the Administration is attempting to counter the perception in the region, particularly among Pakistan, India, the Afghan insurgency, and within the Afghan political establishment that U.S. involvement will be sharply reduced after July 2011. That perception may, among other consequences, be inflaming the traditional rivalry between Pakistan and India, in this case to deny each other influence in Afghanistan.

As the effort approaches a formal DOD-led review of the Afghanistan situation in December 2010, there is not a consensus that U.S. strategy has shown clear success, to date. The top U.S./NATO commander in Afghanistan, Gen. David Petraeus, said in September 2010 that the U.S. "surge" has produced an expansion of security in areas that have been the focus of U.S.-led operations in 2010. Still, some experts remain pessimistic, asserting that there has been failure to fully stabilize Marjah; that Afghans have been reluctant to allow combat to better secure Qandahar Province; that President Hamid Karzai's refusal to forcefully confront governmental corruption has caused a loss of Afghan support for his government, and that several partner countries insist, in advance of a November 2010 NATO meeting in Lisbon, that the "transition" to Afghan responsibility be accelerated.

In order to try to achieve progress more rapidly, Gen. Petraeus is expressing support for accelerating local security solutions and experiments similar to those he pursued earlier in Iraq, and for efforts to induce low level insurgents to reintegrate into society. Karzai received backing for the reintegration initiative at an international conference in London on January 28, 2010, during his May 2010 meetings in Washington, DC, at "consultative peace *jirga*" in Kabul during June 2-4, 2010, and at a July 20, 2010, international meeting in Kabul. He has named a high council to implement the policy. However, there are major concerns among Afghanistan's minorities and among its women that reintegration—and more controversially Karzai's willingness to reconcile with senior insurgent leaders—could lead to compromises that erode the freedoms Afghans have enjoyed since 2001. Gen. Petraeus, taking account of criticisms of the Afghan government in Congress, also is reportedly reinforcing the U.S. insistence that Karzai move more decisively against governmental corruption. In September 2010, he issued new contracting guidance intended to try to reduce corrupt uses of DoD funds spent in Afghanistan.

Through the end of FY2009, the United States has provided over $40 billion in assistance to Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban, of which about $21 billion has been to equip and train Afghan forces. (See CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.)

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Background

Afghanistan has a history of a high degree of decentralization, and resistance to foreign invasion and occupation. Some have termed it the "graveyard of empires."

From Early History to the 19th Century

Alexander the Great conquered what is now Afghanistan in three years (330 B.C.E. to 327 B.C.E), although at significant cost and with significant difficulty, and requiring marriage to a resident of the conquered territory. From the third to the eighth century, A.D., Buddhism was the dominant religion in Afghanistan. At the end of the seventh century, Islam spread in Afghanistan when Arab invaders from the Umayyad Dynasty defeated the Persian empire of the Sassanians. In the 10th century, Muslim rulers called Samanids, from Bukhara (in what is now Uzbekistan), extended their influence into Afghanistan, and the complete conversion of Afghanistan to Islam occurred during the rule of the Gaznavids in the 11th century. They ruled over the first vast Islamic empire based in what is now Ghazni province of Afghanistan.

In 1504, Babur, a descendent of the conquerors Tamarlane and Genghis Khan, took control of Kabul and then moved onto India, establishing the Mughal Empire. (Babur is buried in the Babur Gardens complex in Kabul, which has been refurbished with the help of the Agha Khan Foundation.) Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, Afghanistan was fought over by the Mughal Empire and the Safavid Dynasty of Persia (now Iran), with the Safavids mostly controlling Herat and western Afghanistan, and the Mughals controlling Kabul and the east. A monarchy ruled by ethnic Pashtuns was founded in 1747 by Ahmad Shah Durrani, who was a senior officer in the army of Nadir Shah, ruler of Persia, when Nadir Shah was assassinated and Persian control over Afghanistan weakened.

A strong ruler, Dost Muhammad Khan, emerged in Kabul in 1826 and created concerns among Britain that the Afghans were threatening Britain's control of India; that fear led to a British decision in 1838 to intervene in Afghanistan, setting off the first Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1842). Nearly all of the 4,500-person British force was killed in that war, which ended with a final British stand at Gandamack. The second Anglo-Afghan War took place during 1878-1880.

Early 20th Century and Cold War Era

King Amanullah Khan (1919-1929) launched attacks on British forces in Afghanistan (Third Anglo-Afghan War) 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 presiding over a government in which all ethnic minorities participated. He was succeeded by King Mohammad Nadir Shah (1929-1933), and then by King Mohammad Zahir Shah. Zahir Shah's reign (1933-1973) is remembered fondly by many older Afghans for promulgating a constitution in 1964 that established a national legislature and promoting freedoms for women, including dropping a requirement that they cover their face and hair. However, possibly believing that he could limit Soviet support for Communist factions in Afghanistan, Zahir Shah also entered into a significant political and arms purchase relationship with the Soviet Union. The Soviets began to build large infrastructure projects in Afghanistan during Zahir Shah's time, such as the north-south Salang Pass/Tunnel and Bagram airfield. He

also accepted agricultural and other development aid from the United States. In part, the countryside was secured during the King's time by local tribal militias called *arbokai*.

Afghanistan's slide into instability began in the 1970s when the diametrically opposed Communist Party and Islamic movements grew in strength. While receiving medical treatment in Italy, Zahir Shah was overthrown by his cousin, Mohammad Daoud, a military leader who established a dictatorship with strong state involvement in the economy. Daoud was overthrown and killed[1] in April 1978 by People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA, Communist party) military officers under the direction of two PDPA (Khalq faction) leaders, Hafizullah Amin and Nur Mohammad Taraki, in what is called the *Saur* (April) Revolution. Taraki became president, but he was displaced in September 1979 by Amin. Both leaders drew their strength from rural ethnic Pashtuns and tried to impose radical socialist change on a traditional society, in part by redistributing land and bringing more women into government. The attempt at rapid modernization sparked rebellion by Islamic parties opposed to such moves. The Soviet Union sent troops into Afghanistan on December 27, 1979, to prevent a seizure of power by the Islamic militias, known as the *mujahedin* (Islamic fighters). Upon their invasion, the Soviets replaced Amin with another PDPA leader perceived as pliable, Babrak Karmal (Parcham faction of the PDPA), who was part of the 1978 PDPA takeover but was exiled by Taraki and Amin.

Soviet occupation forces, which numbered about 120,000, were never able to pacify the outlying areas of the country. The *mujahedin* benefited from U.S. weapons and assistance, provided through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in cooperation with Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence directorate (ISI). The mujahedin were also relatively well organized and coordinated by seven major parties that in early 1989 formed a Peshawar-based "Afghan Interim Government" (AIG). The seven party leaders were Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi; Sibghatullah Mojaddedi; Gulbuddin Hikmatyar; Burhanuddin Rabbani; Yunus Khalis; Abd-i-Rab Rasul Sayyaf; and Pir Gaylani. Mohammadi and Khalis have died in recent years of natural causes, but the others are still active. Most of those *mujahedin* leaders still active are part of the current government; others, such as Hikmatyar, fight it.

The *mujahedin* weaponry included U.S.-supplied portable shoulder-fired anti-aircraft systems called "Stingers," which proved highly effective against Soviet aircraft. The United States decided in 1985 to provide these weapons to the mujahedin after substantial debate within the Reagan Administration and some in Congress over whether they could be used effectively and whether doing so would harm broader U.S.-Soviet relations. The *mujahedin* also hid and stored weaponry in a large network of natural and manmade tunnels and caves throughout Afghanistan. Partly because of the effectiveness of the Stinger in shooting down Soviet helicopters and fixed wing aircraft, the Soviet Union's losses mounted—about 13,400 Soviet soldiers were killed in the war, according to Soviet figures—turning Soviet domestic opinion against the war. In 1986, after the reformist Mikhail Gorbachev became leader, the Soviets replaced Karmal with the director of Afghan intelligence, Najibullah Ahmedzai (known by his first name). Najibullah was a Ghilzai Pashtun, and was from the Parcham faction of the PDPA. Some Afghans say that some aspects of his governing style were admirable, particularly his appointment of a prime minister (Sultan Ali Keshtmand and others) to handle administrative duties and distribute power.

[1] Daoud's grave was discovered outside Kabul in early 2008. He was reburied in an official ceremony in Kabul in March 2009.

Geneva Accords (1988) and Soviet Withdrawal

On April 14, 1988, Gorbachev agreed to a U.N.-brokered accord (the Geneva Accords) requiring it to withdraw. The withdrawal was completed by February 15, 1989, leaving in place the weak Najibullah government. A warming of relations moved the United States and Soviet Union to try for a political settlement to the Afghan conflict, a trend accelerated by the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, which reduced Moscow's capacity for supporting communist regimes in the Third World. On September 13, 1991, Moscow and Washington agreed 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 in 1989. Press reports say the covert aid program grew from about $20 million per year in FY1980 to about $300 million per year during FY1986-FY1990.[2] The Soviet pullout decreased the perceived strategic value of Afghanistan, causing a reduction in subsequent covert funding. As indicated below in **Table 10**, U.S. assistance to Afghanistan remained at relatively low levels from the time of the Soviet withdrawal, validating the views of many that the United States largely considered its role in Afghanistan "completed" when Soviets troops left, and there was little support for a major U.S. effort to rebuild the country. The United States closed its embassy in Kabul in January 1989, as the Soviet Union was completing its pullout, and it remained so until the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

With Soviet backing withdrawn, Najibullah rallied the PDPA Army and the party-dominated paramilitary organization called the *Sarandoy*, and successfully beat back the post-Soviet withdrawal *mujahedin* offensives. Although Najibullah defied expectations that his government would immediately collapse after a Soviet withdrawal, military defections continued and his position weakened in subsequent years. On March 18, 1992, Najibullah publicly agreed to step down once an interim government was formed. That announcement set off a wave of rebellions primarily by Uzbek and Tajik militia commanders in northern Afghanistan—particularly Abdul Rashid Dostam, who joined prominent *mujahedin* commander Ahmad Shah Masud of the Islamic Society, a largely Tajik party headed by Burhannudin Rabbani. Masud had earned a reputation as a brilliant strategist by preventing the Soviets from occupying his power base in the Panjshir Valley of northeastern Afghanistan. Najibullah fell, and the *mujahedin* regime began April 18, 1992.[3] Each year, a public parade is held to mark that day. (Some major *mujahedin* figures did not attend the 2010 celebration because of a perception that they are under Afghan public and international criticism of their immunity from alleged human rights abuses during the anti-Soviet war.)

[2] 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. See "Country Fact Sheet: Afghanistan," in *U.S. Department of State Dispatch,* vol. 5, no. 23 (June 6, 1994), p. 377.

[3] After failing to flee, Najibullah, his brother, and aides remained at a U.N. facility in Kabul until the Taliban movement seized control in 1996 and hanged them.

Table 1. Afghanistan Social and Economic Statistics

Population	28 million +. Kabul population is 3 million, up from 500,000 in Taliban era.
Ethnicities/Religions	Pashtun 42%; Tajik 27%; Uzbek 9%; Hazara 9%; Aimak 4%; Turkmen 3%; Baluch 2%.
Size of Religious Minorities	Religions: Sunni (Hanafi school) 80%; Shiite (Hazaras, Qizilbash, and Isma'ilis) 19%; other 1%Christians-estimated 500-8,000 persons; Sikh and Hindu-3,000 persons; Bahai's-400 (declared blasphemous in May 2007); Jews-1 person; Buddhist- small numbers, mostly foreigners. No Christian or Jewish schools. One church.
Literacy Rate	28% of population over 15 years of age. 43% of males; 12.6% of females.
Total and Per Capita GDP/Growth Rates	$23.3 billion purchasing power parity. 114th in the world. Per capita: $800 purchasing power parity. 219th in the world. Growth: 3.5%, down from 12% in 2007.
Unemployment Rate	40%
Children in School/Schools Built	5.7 million, of which 35% are girls. Up from 900,000 in school during Taliban era. 8,000 schools built; 140,000 teachers hired since Taliban era. 17 universities, up from 2 in 2002. 75,000 Afghans in universities in Afghanistan; 5,000 when Taliban was in power. 35% of university students in Afghanistan are female.
Afghans With Access to Health Coverage	65% with basic health services access-compared to 8% during Taliban era. Infant mortality down 18% since Taliban to 135 per 1,000 live births. 680 clinics built .
Roads Built	About 2,500 miles paved post-Taliban, including repaving of "Ring Road" (78% complete) that circles the country. Kabul-Qandahar drive reduced to 6 hours.
Judges/Courts	900 sitting judges trained since fall of Taliban; some removed for corruption
Banks Operating	17, including branches in some rural areas, but still about 90% of the population use hawalas, or informal money transfer services. Zero banks existed during Taliban era. Some limited credit card use. Some Afghan police now paid by cell phone (E-Paisa).
Access to Electricity	15%-20% of the population.
Revenues	Expected to be about $1.4 billion in 2010; nearly double the $720 million 2007
Financial Reserves	About $4.4 billion, up from $180 million in 2002.
Expenditures	About $3 billion in 2009; $2.7 billion in 2008; $1.2 billion in 2007; 900 million in 2006. Budget supported by international donors, including through World Bank-run Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund.
External Debt	$8 billion bilateral, plus $500 million multilateral. U.S. forgave $108 million in debt in 2004, and $1.6 billion forgiven by other creditors in March 2010.
Foreign/Private Investment	About $500 million to $1 billion per year. Four Afghan airlines: Ariana (national) plus three privately owned: Safi, Kam, and Pamir.
Agriculture/Major Legal Exports	80% of the population is involved in agriculture. Self-sufficiency in wheat production as of May 2009 (first time in 30 years). Products for export include fruits, raisins, melons, pomegranate juice (Anar), nuts, carpets, lapis lazuli gems, marble tile, timber products (Kunar, Nuristan provinces). In 2009, large exports of pomegranates and apples to India and Dubai began. July 2010 Afghanistan-Pakistan trade agreement may increase these exports. Vast untapped minerals affirmed by U.S. experts (June 2010).
Oil Proven Reserves	3.6 billion barrels of oil, 36.5 trillion cubic feet of gas. Current oil production negligible. USAID funding project to revive oil and gas facilities in the north.
Import Partners/Imports	Pakistan 38.6%; U.S. 9.5%; Germany 5.5%; India 5.2%.. Main imports are food, petroleum, capital goods, textiles, autos
Cellphones/Tourism	About 12 million cellphones, up from several hundred used by Taliban government officials. Tourism: National park opened June 2009. Increasing tourist visits.

Sources: CIA, *The World Factbook*; various press and U.S. government official testimony.

The *Mujahedin* Government and Rise of the Taliban

The fall of Najibullah exposed the differences among the *mujahedin* parties. The leader of one of the smaller parties (Afghan National Liberation Front), Islamic scholar Sibghatullah Mojadeddi, was president during April-May 1992. Under an agreement among the major parties, Rabbani became President in June 1992 with agreement that he would serve until December 1994. He refused to step down at that time, saying that political authority would disintegrate without a clear successor. Kabul was subsequently shelled by other *mujahedin* factions, particularly that of nominal "Prime Minister" Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, a Pashtun, who accused Rabbani of monopolizing power. Hikmatyar, who never formally assumed a working prime ministerial role in Kabul because of suspicions of Rabbani, was purportedly backed by Pakistan. Hikmatyar's radical faction of the Islamist Hizb-e-Islami (Islamic Party) had received a large proportion of the U.S. aid during the anti-Soviet war. (Yunus Khalis led a more moderate faction of Hizb-e-Islami during that war.)

In 1993-1994, Afghan Islamic clerics and students, mostly of rural, Pashtun origin, formed the Taliban movement. Many were former *mujahedin* who had become disillusioned with conflict among *mujahedin* parties and had moved into Pakistan to study in Islamic seminaries ("madrassas") mainly of the "Deobandi" school of Islam.[4] Some say this Islam is similar to the "Wahhabism" that is practiced in Saudi Arabia. Taliban practices were also consonant with conservative Pashtun tribal traditions.

The Taliban viewed the Rabbani government as corrupt and anti-Pashtun, and the four years of civil war (1992-1996) created popular support for the Taliban as able to deliver stability. With the help of defections, the Taliban peacefully took control of the southern city of Qandahar in November 1994. By February 1995, it was approaching Kabul, after which an 18-month stalemate ensued. In September 1995, the Taliban captured Herat province, bordering Iran, and imprisoned its governor, Ismail Khan, ally of Rabbani and Masud, who later escaped and took refuge in Iran. In September 1996, new Taliban victories near Kabul led to the withdrawal of Rabbani and Masud to the Panjshir Valley north of Kabul with most of their heavy weapons; the Taliban took control of Kabul on September 27, 1996. Taliban gunmen subsequently entered a U.N. facility in Kabul to seize Najibullah, his brother, and aides, and then hanged them.

Taliban Rule (September 1996-November 2001)

The Taliban regime was led by Mullah Muhammad Umar, who lost an eye in the anti-Soviet war while fighting as part of the Hizb-e-Islami *mujahedin* party of Yunis Khalis. Umar held the title of Head of State and "Commander of the Faithful," remaining in the Taliban power base in Qandahar and almost never appearing in public, although he did occasionally receive high-level foreign officials. Umar forged a political and personal bond with bin Laden and refused U.S. demands to extradite him. Like Umar, most of the senior figures in the Taliban regime were Ghilzai Pashtuns, which predominate in eastern Afghanistan. They are rivals of the Durrani Pashtuns, who are predominant in the south.

[4] The Deobandi school began in 1867 in a seminary in Uttar Pradesh, in British-controlled India, that was set up to train Islamic clerics and to counter the British educational model.

The Taliban progressively lost international and domestic support as it imposed strict adherence to Islamic customs in areas it controlled and employed harsh punishments, including executions. The Taliban authorized its "Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Suppression of Vice" to use physical punishments to enforce strict Islamic practices, including bans on television, Western music, and dancing. It prohibited women from attending school or working outside the home, except in health care, and it publicly executed some women for adultery. In what many consider its most extreme action, and which some say was urged by bin Laden, in March 2001 the Taliban blew up two large Buddha statues carved into hills above Bamiyan city, considering them idols.

The Clinton Administration held talks with the Taliban before and after it took power, but was unable to moderate its policies. The United States withheld recognition of Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, formally recognizing no faction as the government. The United Nations continued to seat representatives of the Rabbani government, not the Taliban. The State Department ordered the Afghan embassy in Washington, DC, closed in August 1997. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1193 (August 28, 1998) and 1214 (December 8, 1998) urged the Taliban to end discrimination against women. Women's rights groups urged the Clinton Administration not to recognize the Taliban government. In May 1999, the Senate-passed S.Res. 68 called on the President not to recognize an Afghan government that oppresses women.

The Taliban's hosting of Al Qaeda's leadership gradually became the Clinton Administration's overriding agenda item with Afghanistan. In April 1998, then U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson (along with Assistant Secretary of State Karl Indurfurth and NSC senior official Bruce Riedel) visited Afghanistan, but the Taliban refused to hand over bin Laden. They did not meet Mullah Umar. After the August 7, 1998, Al Qaeda bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the Clinton Administration progressively pressured the Taliban, imposing U.S. sanctions and achieving adoption of some U.N. sanctions as well. On August 20, 1998, the United States fired cruise missiles at alleged Al Qaeda training camps in eastern Afghanistan, but bin Laden was not hit.[5] Some observers assert that the Administration missed several clearer opportunities to strike him, including a purported sighting of him by an unarmed Predator drone at the Tarnak Farm camp in Afghanistan in the fall of 2000.[6] Clinton Administration officials say they did not try to oust the Taliban militarily because domestic and international support for doing so was lacking.

The "Northern Alliance" Congeals

The Taliban's policies caused different Afghan factions to ally with the ousted President Rabbani and Masud and their ally in the Herat area, Ismail Khan—the Tajik core of the anti-Taliban opposition—into a broader "Northern Alliance." In the Alliance were Uzbek, Hazara Shiite, and even some Pashtun Islamist factions discussed in **Table 4**. Virtually all the figures mentioned remain key players in politics in Afghanistan, sometimes allied with and at other times feuding with President Hamid Karzai:

- **Uzbeks/General Dostam**. One major faction was the Uzbek militia (the Junbush-Melli, or National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan) of General Abdul Rashid Dostam. Frequently referred to by some Afghans as one of the "warlords"

[5] A pharmaceutical plant in Sudan (Al Shifa) believe to be producing chemical weapons for Al Qaeda also was struck that day, although U.S. reviews later corroborated Sudan's assertions that the plant was strictly civilian in nature.

[6] http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/4540958.

who gained power during the anti-Soviet war, Dostam first joined those seeking to oust Rabbani during his 1992-1996 presidency, but later joined Rabbani's Northern Alliance against the Taliban. (For more information on Dostam, see CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.)

- **Hazara Shiites**. Members of Hazara tribes, mostly Shiite Muslims, are prominent in Bamiyan, Dai Kundi, and Ghazni provinces (central Afghanistan) and are always wary of repression by Pashtuns and other larger ethnic factions. The Hazaras have tended to serve in working class and domestic household jobs, although more recently they have been prominent in technology jobs in Kabul, raising their economic status. During the various Afghan wars, the main Hazara Shiite militia was Hizb-e-Wahdat (Unity Party, composed of eight different groups). Hizb-e-Wahdat suffered a major setback in 1995 when the Taliban captured and killed its leader Abdul Ali Mazari. One of Karzai's vice president's Karim Khalili, is a Hazara. Another prominent Hazara faction leader is Mohammad Mohaqeq.
- **Pashtun Islamists/Sayyaf**. Abd-I-Rab Rasul Sayyaf, later a post-Taliban parliamentary committee chairman, headed a Pashtun-dominated hardline Islamist *mujahedin* faction called the Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan during the anti-Soviet war. Even though he is an Islamic conservative, Sayyaf viewed the Taliban as selling out Afghanistan to Al Qaeda and he joined the Northern Alliance to try to oust the Taliban.

Policy Pre-September 11, 2001

Throughout 2001, but prior to the September 11 attacks, Bush Administration policy differed little from Clinton Administration policy—applying economic and political pressure while retaining dialogue with the Taliban, and refraining from militarily assisting the Northern Alliance. The September 11 Commission report said that, in the months prior to the September 11 attacks, Administration officials leaned toward such a step and that some officials also wanted to assist ethnic Pashtuns who were opposed to the Taliban. Other covert options were reportedly under consideration as well.[7] In a departure from Clinton Administration policy, the Bush Administration stepped up engagement with Pakistan to try to reduce its support for the Taliban. At that time, there were allegations that Pakistani advisers were helping the Taliban in their fight against the Northern Alliance. In accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1333, in February 2001 the State Department ordered the Taliban representative office in New York closed, although Taliban representative Abdul Hakim Mujahid continued to operate informally. In March 2001, Administration officials received a Taliban envoy to discuss bilateral issues.

Even though the Northern Alliance was supplied with Iranian, Russian, and Indian financial and military support—all of whom had different motives for that support—the Northern Alliance nonetheless continued to lose ground to the Taliban after it lost Kabul in 1996. By the time of the September 11 attacks, the Taliban controlled at least 75% of the country, including almost all provincial capitals. The Alliance suffered a major setback on September 9, 2001, two days before the September 11 attacks, when Ahmad Shah Masud was assassinated by Arab journalists who

[7] Drogin, Bob. "U.S. Had Plan for Covert Afghan Options Before 9/11." *Los Angeles Times*, May 18, 2002.

allegedly were Al Qaeda operatives. He was succeeded by his intelligence chief, Muhammad Fahim,[8] a veteran figure but one who lacked Masud's undisputed authority.

September 11 Attacks and Operation Enduring Freedom

After the September 11 attacks, the Bush Administration decided to militarily overthrow the Taliban when it refused to extradite bin Laden, judging that a friendly regime in Kabul was needed to enable U.S forces to search for Al Qaeda activists there. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1368 of September 12, 2001, said that the Security Council

> expresses its readiness to take all necessary steps to respond (implying force) to the September 11 attacks.

This is widely interpreted as a U.N. authorization for military action in response to the attacks, but it did not explicitly authorize Operation Enduring Freedom to oust the Taliban. Nor did the Resolution specifically reference Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, which allows for responses to threats to international peace and security.

In Congress, S.J.Res. 23 (passed 98-0 in the Senate and with no objections in the House, P.L. 107-40), was somewhat more explicit than the U.N. Resolution, authorizing[9]

> all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001 *or harbored such organizations or persons*.

Major combat in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom, OEF) began on October 7, 2001. It consisted primarily of U.S. air-strikes on Taliban and Al Qaeda forces, facilitated by the cooperation between small numbers (about 1,000) of U.S. special operations forces and CIA operatives. The purpose of these operations was to help the Northern Alliance and Pashtun anti-Taliban forces by providing information to direct U.S. air strikes against Taliban positions. In part, the U.S. forces and operatives worked with such Northern Alliance contacts as Fahim and Amrollah Saleh, who during November 2001–June 2010 served as Afghanistan's intelligence director, to weaken Taliban defenses on the Shomali plain north of Kabul (and just south of Bagram Airfield, which marked the forward position of the Northern Alliance during Taliban rule). Some U.S. combat units (about 1,300 Marines) moved into Afghanistan to pressure the Taliban around Qandahar at the height of the fighting (October-December 2001), but there were few pitched battles between U.S. and Taliban soldiers. Some critics believe that U.S. dependence on local Afghan militia forces in the war subsequently set back post-war democracy building.

The Taliban regime unraveled rapidly after it lost Mazar-e-Sharif on November 9, 2001, to forces led by Dostam.[10] Other, mainly Tajik, Northern Alliance forces—the commanders of which had initially promised U.S. officials they would not enter Kabul—entered the capital on November 12, 2001, to popular jubilation. The Taliban subsequently lost the south and east to U.S.-

[8] Some Afghan sources refer to him by the name "Fahim Khan," or "Marshal Fahim."

[9] Another law (P.L. 107-148) established a "Radio Free Afghanistan" under RFE/RL, providing $17 million in funding for it for FY2002.

[10] In the process, Dostam captured Taliban fighters and imprisoned them in freight containers, causing many to suffocate. They were buried in a mass grave at *Dasht-e-Laili.* This issue is covered in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

supported Pashtun leaders, including Hamid Karzai. The end of the Taliban regime is generally dated as December 9, 2001, when the Taliban surrendered Qandahar and Mullah Umar fled the city, leaving it under tribal law administered by Pashtun leaders such as the Noorzai clan.

Subsequently, U.S. and Afghan forces conducted "Operation Anaconda" in the Shah-i-Kot Valley south of Gardez (Paktia Province) during March 2-19, 2002, against 800 Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters. In March 2003, about 1,000 U.S. troops raided suspected Taliban or Al Qaeda fighters in villages around Qandahar (Operation Valiant Strike). On May 1, 2003, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld announced an end to "major combat."

Post-Taliban Nation-Building Efforts[11]

With Afghanistan devastated after more than 20 years of warfare, the 2001 fall of the Taliban regime raised questions about the extent of a U.S. and international commitment to Afghanistan. Taking the view that leaving the Afghanistan-Pakistan theater after the 1989 Soviet pullout had led Afghanistan degenerate into chaos, the decision was made by the Bush Administration to try to rebuild try to build a relatively strong central government and to assist Afghanistan's economy, in order to prevent a return of the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and other militants to Afghanistan.

The effort, which many outside experts described as "nation-building,"was supported by major international institutions and U.S. partners in several post-Taliban international meetings. The task has proved more difficult than anticipated. In part this is because of the devastation that years of war wrought on Afghan tribal structures and related local governing institutions, on the education system, and on the already limited infrastructure. Some observers believe the international community had unrealistic expectations of what could be achieved in a relatively short time frame—particularly in establishing competent, non-corrupt governance and a vibrant democracy.

The Obama Administration's two "Afghanistan strategy reviews," the results of which were announced on March 27, 2009, and on December 1, 2009, narrowed official U.S. goals to preventing terrorism safe haven in Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, the elements of Obama Administration strategy in many ways enhance the nation-building strategy put in place by the Bush Administration. Reforming Afghan governance was emphasized both at the international January 28, 2010, "London Conference" and the July 20, 2010, "Kabul Conference."[12] The issue of governance is, according to U.S. officials, inseparable from that of securing Afghanistan, but the sections below present both Afghan-generated and international community-led efforts to build Afghanistan's governing capacity. Governance is discussed in greater detail in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

[11] See also CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

[12] A draft of the final communiqué of the Kabul Conference is at http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100720.ap_on_re_as/as_afghanistan/print.

Post-Taliban Political Transition

The 2001 ouster of the Taliban government paved the way for the success of a long-stalled U.N. effort to form a broad-based Afghan government and for the international community to help Afghanistan build legitimate governing institutions. In the formation of the first post-Taliban transition government, the United Nations was viewed as a credible mediator by all sides largely because of its role in ending the Soviet occupation. During the 1990s, a succession of U.N. mediators adopted many of former King Zahir Shah's proposals for a government to be selected by a traditional assembly, or *loya jirga*. However, U.N.-mediated cease-fires between warring factions did not hold. Non-U.N. initiatives made little progress, particularly the "Six Plus Two" multilateral contact group, which began meeting in 1997 (the United States, Russia, and the six states bordering Afghanistan: Iran, China, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan). Other failed efforts included a "Geneva group" (Italy, Germany, Iran, and the United States) formed in 2000; an Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) contact group; and prominent Afghan exile efforts, including discussion groups launched by Hamid Karzai and his clan, former *mujahedin* commander Abd al-Haq, and Zahir Shah ("Rome process").

Bonn Agreement

Immediately after the September 11 attacks, former U.N. mediator Lakhdar Brahimi was brought back (he had resigned in frustration in October 1999). U.N. Security Council Resolution 1378 (November 14, 2001) called for a "central" role for the United Nations in establishing a transitional administration and inviting member states to send peacekeeping forces to promote stability and aid delivery. After the fall of Kabul in November 2001, the United Nations invited major Afghan factions, most prominently the Northern Alliance and that of the former King—but not the Taliban—to an international conference in Bonn, Germany.

On December 5, 2001, the factions signed the "Bonn Agreement."[13] It was endorsed by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1385 (December 6, 2001). The agreement was reportedly forged with substantial Iranian diplomatic help because Iran had supported the military efforts of the Northern Alliance faction and had leverage to persuade temporary caretaker Rabbani and the Northern Alliance to cede the top leadership to Hamid Karzai as leader of an interim administration. Other provisions of the agreement:

- authorized an international peace keeping force to maintain security in Kabul, and Northern Alliance forces were directed to withdraw from the capital. Security Council Resolution 1386 (December 20, 2001) gave formal Security Council authorization for the international peacekeeping force (International Security Assistance Force, ISAF);
- referred to the need to cooperate with the international community on counter narcotics, crime, and terrorism; and
- applied the constitution of 1964 until a permanent constitution could be drafted.[14]

[13] Text of Bonn agreement at http://www.ag-afghanistan.de/files/petersberg.htm.

[14] The last pre-Karzai *loya jirga* that was widely recognized as legitimate was held in 1964 to ratify a constitution. Najibullah convened a *loya jirga* in 1987 to approve pro-Moscow policies, but that gathering was widely viewed by Afghans as illegitimate.

Permanent Constitution

A June 2002 "emergency" *loya jirga* put a representative imprimatur on the transition; it was attended by 1,550 delegates (including about 200 women) from Afghanistan's 364 districts. Subsequently, a 35-member constitutional commission drafted the permanent constitution, and unveiled in November 2003. It was debated by 502 delegates, selected in U.N-run caucuses, at a "*constitutional loya jirga* (CLJ)" during December 13, 2003–January 4, 2004.

The CLJ, chaired by Sibghatullah Mojadeddi (mentioned above, now chairman of the upper house of the National Assembly), ended with approval of the constitution with only minor changes. It set up a presidential system, with an elected president and a separately elected National Assembly (parliament). The Northern Alliance failed in its effort to set up a prime ministership (in which the elected parliament would select a prime minister and a cabinet) , but the faction did achieve a limitation on presidential powers by assigning major authorities to the parliament, such as the power to veto senior official nominees and to impeach a president. The constitution made former King Zahir Shah honorary "Father of the Nation," a title that is not heritable. Zahir Shah died on July 23, 2007.[15] The constitution also set out timetables for presidential, provincial, and district elections (by June 2004) and stipulated that, if possible, they should be held simultaneously.

[15] Text of constitution: http://arabic.cnn.com/afghanistan/ConstitutionAfghanistan.pdf.

Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Hamid Karzai, born December 24, 1957, was selected to lead Afghanistan at the Bonn Conference because he was a prominent Pashtun leader who had been involved in Taliban-era political talks among exiled Afghans and was viewed as a compromiser rather than a "strongman." However, some observers consider his compromises as Afghanistan's leader a sign of weakness, and criticize him for indulging members of his clan and other allies with appointments and contracts. Others view him as overly suspicious of the intentions of the United States and other outside powers, believing they are intent on replacing him or favoring certain groups of Afghans over others. These concerns, coupled with U.S. press and official criticism of his tolerance of corruption, prompted Karzai to include in several early April 2010 speeches to accuse the international community of attempting to pressure the Afghan government and to undermine its sovereignty. At the same time, U.S. officials have sought, with mixed success, to draw him directly into planning and approving operations against insurgents and trying to rally the Afghan public against the insurgency.

From Karz village in Qandahar Province, Hamid Karzai has led the powerful Popolzai tribe of Durrani Pashtuns since 1999, when his father was assassinated, allegedly by Taliban agents, in Quetta, Pakistan. Karzai attended university in India. He was deputy foreign minister in Rabbani's government during 1992-1995, but he left the government and supported the Taliban as a Pashtun alternative to Rabbani. He broke with the Taliban as its excesses unfolded and forged alliances with other anti-Taliban factions, including the Northern Alliance. Karzai entered Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks to organize Pashtun resistance to the Taliban, supported by U.S. Special Forces. He became central to U.S. efforts after Pashtun commander Abdul Haq entered Afghanistan in October 2001 without U.S. support and was captured and hung by the Taliban. Karzai was slightly injured by an errant U.S. bomb during major combat of Operation Enduring Freedom (late 2001).

His half brother, Ahmad Wali Karzai, is chair of the provincial council of Qandahar and the most powerful political figure in that province, He is key to Karzai's maintenance of support and the cornerstone of his information network in Qandahar but Ahmad Wali has been widely accused of involvement in or tolerating narcotics trafficking. A *New York Times* article on October 28, 2009, said Ahmad Wali is also a paid informant for the CIA and some of his property has been used by U.S. Special Forces. Ahmad Wali was the apparent target of at least two bombings in Qandahar in 2009. Others of Karzai's several brothers have lived in the United States, including Qayyum Karzai. Qayyum Karzai won a parliament seat in the September 2005 election but resigned his seat in October 2008 due to health reasons. Qayyum subsequently represented the government in inconclusive talks, held in several Persian Gulf states, to reconcile with Taliban figures close to Mullah Umar. Another brother, Mahmoud Karzai, is a businessman, reportedly has extensive business interests in Qandahar and Kabul, including auto dealerships and apartment houses. Other Karzai relatives and associates have formed security companies and other contracting firms that have profited extensively from international reconstruction, transportation, and protection funds, including a $2.2 billion U.S. "Host Nation Trucking" contract.

Karzai also relies heavily for advice from tribal and faction leaders from southern Afghanistan, including Sher Mohammad Akhunzadeh, the former governor of Helmand (until 2005), as well as from well-educated professionals such as his current Foreign Minister Zalmay Rasool, and the former foreign minister, now National Security Adviser, Rangeen Spanta.

With heavy protection, Karzai has survived several assassination attempts since taking office, including rocket fire or gunfire at or near his appearances. His wife, Dr. Zenat Karzai, is a gynecologist by profession. They have several children, including one born in 2008. In December 2009, he spoke publicly about personal turmoil among relatives in Karz village that resulted in the death of an 18-year-old relative in October 2009.

First Post-Taliban Elections in 2004

Security conditions precluded the holding of the first post-Taliban elections simultaneously. The first election, for president, was held on October 9, 2004, missing a June constitutional deadline. Turnout was about 80%. On November 3, 2004, Karzai was declared winner (55.4% of the vote) over his 17 challengers on the first round, avoiding a runoff. Parliamentary and provincial council elections were intended for April-May 2005 but were delayed until September 18, 2005. Because of the difficulty in confirming voter registration rolls and determining district boundaries, elections for the 364 district councils, each of which will likely have contentious boundaries because they will inevitably separate tribes and clans, have not been held to date.

Formation of an Elected National Assembly (Parliament)

The National Assembly (parliament), particularly the elected lower house, has emerged as a relatively vibrant body that creates accountability and has often asserted itself politically. The most notable example has been the 2009-2010 confirmation process for Karzai's cabinet choices, in which many of Karzai's nominees were voted down, and the lower house's subsequent vote against a Karzai election decree to govern the September 18, 2010, National Assembly election (see "September 18, 2010, Parliamentary Elections"). The Assembly's assertiveness shows, in part, that the better educated "independents" are emerging as pivotal members of parliament, although some interpret the activism as a product of emboldened "Northern Alliance" opposition to Karzai and his plan to reconcile with senior Taliban figures.

For the 2005 first election to the Assembly, voting was conducted for individuals running in each province, not as party slates. When parliament first convened on December 18, 2005, the Northern Alliance bloc achieved selection of one of its own, Yunus Qanooni—who was Karzai's main competitor in the presidential election—for speaker of the all-elected 249 seat lower house (*Wolesi Jirga*, House of the People). In April 2007, Qanooni and Northern Alliance political leader Rabbani organized this opposition bloc, along with ex-Communists and some royal family members, into a party called the "United Front" (UF), that wants increased parliamentary powers and directly elected provincial governors.

The 102-seat upper house (*Meshrano Jirga*, House of Elders) is selected by the elected provincial councils (which choose two thirds of the seats)[16] and Karzai. Because of its selection structure, the body consists mainly of older, well-known figures, and is more pro-Karzai than is the lower house. It has 23 females (half of Karzai's 34 appointments, as provided for in the constitution, plus six others). The leader of the body is Sibghatullah Mojadeddi, who is pro-Karzai as discussed above, and whose son, a health care professional, is rumored to be in line to be the next Ambassador to the United States. With his bloc of 17 non-female slots, Karzai appointed several other allies.

2009 Presidential and Provincial Elections

The 2009 presidential and provincial elections were expected to further Afghanistan's democratic development. However, because of the widespread fraud identified by Afghanistan's U.N.-appointed "Elections Complaints Commission" (ECC) in the August 20, 2009, first round of the elections, the process did not produce that result, and continues to cloud U.S.-Afghan relations. The official U.S. position is that, because Karzai ultimately acquiesced to an ECC ruling that he did not win a first round victory over his major opponent, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, the process was resolved in accordance with the Afghan constitution. Still, the marred elections process was a factor in the late 2009 high-level U.S. strategy reevaluation because of the centrality of a credible, legitimate partner Afghan government to U.S. strategy.[17] Dr. Abdullah has gone on to become Afghanistan's "opposition leader," and he visited one week after the May 2010 Karzai visit to Washington, DC. Abdullah spent most of his visit speaking at think tanks and explaining his criticism of the Karzai government's corruption and alleged electoral fraud. Afghan politics are

[16] When district elections are held, the elected district councils will then assume their constitutional function of choosing one third of the Meshrano Jirga seats, lessening those chosen by the provincial councils.

[17] Fidler, Stephen and John W. Miller. "U.S. Allies Await Afghan Review." *Wall Street Journal*, September 25, 2009.

discussed further in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

The election fraud difficulty may have contributed to the substantial parliamentary opposition to many of Karzai's nominees for his post-election cabinet. In each of three rounds of cabinet nominations in 2009 and 2010, some, if not most, of Karzai's nominees were voted down by the National Assembly. The latest round of nominations occurred in late June, after Karzai forced Interior Minister Mohammad Hanif Atmar to resign, ostensibly for failing to prevent insurgent attacks in Kabul itself. Atmar was close to and well respected by U.S. officials. Also resigning on June 6 was National Directorate of Security (NDS, Afghan intelligence) chief Amrollah Saleh, a Tajik and an ally of the United Front leaders. Both were believed to oppose Karzai's efforts to reconcile with senior insurgent leaders.

On June 28, 2010, Karzai tried to restore some ethnic and political balance and fill out his cabinet, and he obtained parliamentary approval for five positions out of seven nominees: Bismillah Khan as Interior Minister (a Tajik, then serving as Afghan National Army Chief of Staff); Anwar Al Ahady the U.S.-educated Karzai ally as Commerce Minister; former Qandahar governor Asadullah Khalid as Minister of Border and Tribal Affairs; Abdul Qudos Hamidi as Minister of Public Works; and Jamahir Anwari as Minister of Refugees and Repatriation. However, the plan to restore ethnic balance was not accomplished when two Hazara Shiites—Sarwar Danesh as Minister of Higher Education and ousted IEC chief Daud Ali Najafi as Minister of Transportation—were not approved. Their rejection caused Hazara members in the Assembly to demonstrate their disapproval of the vote, and Karzai called for Hazaras to be approved in the future to ensure all-ethnic participation in government. (Saleh was replaced as NDS head by Rehmat Nabil, a Pashtun (this is not a cabinet post and was not voted on by the National Assembly). The acting director, Ibrahim Spinzada, returned to the National Security Council where, according to Afghan observers, he works closely with U.S. and other intelligence services.) Another senior NSC aide, Zia Salehi—reportedly a key figure in Karzai's efforts to engage Taliban leaders in peace talks—was detained by a U.S., British-backed Afghanistan "Major Crimes Task Force" for allegedly accepting a bribe. Karzai ordered Salehi released, although he still faces charges, and subsequently called for limits to the Task Force's authorities.

September 18, 2010, Parliamentary Elections

A key test of Karzai's repeated commitment to reforms will be the September 18, 2010, National Assembly elections. In February 2010, Karzai opponents and some international officials strongly criticized Karzai for issuing an election decree that eliminated the three international slots on the five-person ECC and "Afghanize" the election oversight process. In a compromise announced March 23, 2010, Karzai said that there would be two international officials on the ECC—down from the three previously but not the all-Afghan body envisioned in the February 2010 election decree. The lower house of the National Assembly voted on March 31 to reject the decree, but the upper house upheld it by refusing to schedule a vote to reject it. Nonetheless, Karzai has implemented the ECC compromise. On April 17, 2010, he also appointed a new IEC head, Fazel Ahmed Manawi, who drew praise from many factions (including "opposition leader" Dr. Abdullah) for impartiality. Registration of candidates and voters have been completed (2,577 candidates, of which over 400 are women. The government and donor community has decided against heeding calls by some groups to postpone the elections. Those calls were made on the basis of violence against candidates, the difficulty of campaigning, and a belief that mechanisms

to prevent fraud are still inadequate.[18] A provision of a FY2010 supplemental appropriation (P.L. 111-212) makes U.S. aid to the IEC and ECC contingent on a certification by the Secretary of State that those Afghan officials who committed fraud in the 2009 presidential election are not involved in the September 2010 parliamentary election.

As the election approaches on September 18, some worry that ethnic differences might again resurge in the various province-by-province elections for the 249 seat body. Some speculate that Pashtun conservative Sayyaf, mentioned above, might try to replace Yunus Qanooni, an Abdullah supporter, as lower house speaker. That could occur if Pashtuns, particularly those who are conservative, do well in the elections. Reports indicate that Karzai allies had sought to recruit parliamentary candidates who, if elected, will increase the proportion in parliament who would tend to follow Karzai's lead and prescriptions.

Other Major Governance Issues

Obama Administration policy, as articulated on March 27, 2009, and December 1, 2009, emphasizes expanding and improving Afghan governance as a long-term means of stabilizing Afghanistan. The latter Obama statement specified that there would be "no blank check" for the Afghan government if it does not reduce corruption and deliver services. This emphasis is expressed extensively in the State Department January 2010 document outlining its policy priorities, entitled *Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy.*[19] The corruption has repeatedly been stressed emphasized by international participants at two international meetings in 2010 (London in January and Kabul in July) as well as by U.S. officials, including top commander in Afghanistan General Petraeus. However, the Obama Administration reportedly has decided to mute its public criticism of Karzai on the grounds that public criticism causes Karzai to become suspicious of U.S. intent and to ally with undemocratic elements in Afghanistan.

"Unity of Effort": U.S. and International Policy Management and U.S. Embassy Kabul

In line with the prioritization of Afghanistan policy, in February 2009, the Administration appointed Ambassador Richard Holbrooke as "Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan" (SRAP), reporting to Secretary of State Clinton. His team at the State Department consists mainly of members detailed from several different agencies; several have long experience on Afghanistan and Pakistan affairs. Karl Eikenberry, who served as commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan during 2004-2005, is U.S. Ambassador. President Obama has said he expects the civilian team to work closely with the U.S. and NATO military structure, and a U.S. civilian-military "joint campaign plan" was developed and released in mid-August 2009.[20]

However, it has been widely that there are differences and divisions among senior policymakers, some of them personal, others about policy preeminence. It was noted in April 2010, during an exchange of recriminations between Karzai and the United States and international community, that both Holbrooke and Eikenberry have inconsistent relations with Karzai. Karzai's perception

[18] http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/09/AR2010070904166.html.

[19] Released by the Office of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, January 2010. http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/135728.pdf.

[20] For a copy of the joint campaign plan, see: http://info.publicintelligence.net/0908eikenberryandmcchrystal.pdf.

that these officials have sought to replace him have, according to observers, caused Karzai to question his alliance with the United States, and to favor his relationship with the top U.S. military leaders in Afghanistan. The previous top commander, Gen. Stanley McChrystal, was dismissed by President Obama on June 23, 2010, for impolitic comments by him and his staff about U.S. civilian policymakers on Afghanistan in an article in *Rolling Stone* magazine.[21] He was replaced by CENTCOM Commander Gen. David Petraeus, whose established reputation calmed Afghan fears of disruption among the U.S. policy team. Gen. Petraeus has met repeatedly with Karzai since taking command on July 4, 2010. Still, some believe that more changes to the senior level civilian policy team might be needed in light of its strained relationship with Karzai.

On February 7, 2010, in an effort to improve civilian coordination between the United States, its foreign partners, and the Afghan government, a NATO "Senior Civilian Representative" in Afghanistan, UK Ambassador Mark Sedwill, took office. Ambassador Sedwill works not only with U.S. military officials but with representatives of the embassies of partner countries and with a special U.N. Assistance Mission–Afghanistan (UNAMA, see **Table 2**).

At U.S. Embassy Kabul, there is a "deputy Ambassador"—senior official Francis Ricciardone. Another Ambassador rank official (Anthony Wayne) manages U.S. assistance issues. Another Ambassador-rank official, Joseph Mussomeli, handles Embassy management. Ambassador Timothy Carney oversaw U.S. policy for the 2009 elections. Another official of Ambassador rank, Hans Klemm, arrived in June 2010 to coordinate U.S. Embassy rule of law programs. Zalmay Khalilzad, an American of Afghan origin discussed above, was Ambassador during December 2003–August 2005; he reportedly had significant influence on Afghan decisions.[22]

The U.S. Embassy, now in newly constructed buildings, has progressively expanded its personnel and facilities and will expand its facilities further to accommodate some of the additional civilian hires and Foreign Service officers who will be posted to Afghanistan as mentors and advisers to the Afghan government. The tables at the end of this report include U.S. funding for State Department and USAID operations, including Embassy construction and running the "Embassy air wing," a fleet of twin-engine turboprops that ferry U.S. officials and contractors around Afghanistan. In a significant development attempting to signal normalization of certain areas of Afghanistan, in early 2010 the United States formally inaugurated U.S. consulates in Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif.

The Afghan Ambassador to the United States, Sayed Tayib Jawad, served as Ambassador from 2004 until his recall in August 2010. He was recalled because of complaints in Kabul about Western-style parties that were being held at the Afghan embassy in the United States. No replacement has been named, to date.

[21] Hastings, Michael. "The Runaway General." *Rolling Stone*, July 6-22, 2010.

[22] Waldman, Amy. "In Afghanistan, U.S. Envoy Sits in Seat of Power." *New York Times*, April 17, 2004. Afghanistan's ambassador in Washington is Seyed Jalal Tawwab, formerly a Karzai aide.

Table 2. U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

The international community is extensively involved in Afghan governance and national building, primarily in factional conflict resolution and coordination of development assistance. The coordinator of U.N. efforts is the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), headed as of March 22, 2010, by Swedish diplomat Staffan de-Mistura, replacing Norwegian diplomat Kai Eide. Mistura formerly played a similar role in Iraq. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1806 of March 20, 2008, expanded UNAMA's authority to coordinating the work of international donors and strengthening cooperation between the international peacekeeping force (ISAF, see below) and the Afghan government. In concert with the Obama Administration's emphasis on Afghan policy, UNAMA is to open offices in as many of Afghanistan's 34 provinces as financially and logistically permissible. (The mandate of UNAMA, reviewed at one-year intervals, ran until March 23, 2010, as provided for by Resolution 1869 of March 23, 2009, and was renewed for another year on March 22, 2010 (Resolution 1917)). Resolution 1917 largely restated UNAMA's expanded mandate and coordinating role with other high-level representatives in Afghanistan, and election support role.

In keeping with its expanding role, in 2008 U.S. Ambassador Peter Galbraith was appointed as Eide's deputy, although he left Afghanistan in early September 2009 in a reported dispute with Eide over how vigorously to insist on investigating fraud in the August 20 Afghan election. Galbraith reportedly pressed Afghan and independent election bodies to be as vigorous as possible in the interests of rule of law and election legitimacy; Eide purportedly was willing to encourage an Afghan compromise to avoid a second round run-off. The split led U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon to remove Galbraith from his post at UNAMA in late September 2009 on the grounds that the disharmony was compromising the UNAMA mission. Several Galbraith supporters subsequently resigned from UNAMA and Galbraith has appealed his firing amid reports he was proposing a plan to replace Karzai had an election runoff been postponed until 2010. The turmoil may have caused Eide to leave his post when his contract with the U.N. expired in March 2010.

UNAMA is co-chair of the joint Afghan-international community coordination body called the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB), and is helping implement the five-year development strategy outlined in a "London Compact," (now called the Afghanistan Compact) adopted at the January 31–February 1, 2006, London conference on Afghanistan. The priorities developed in that document comport with Afghanistan's own "National Strategy for Development," presented on June 12, 2008, in Paris. During his term, Eide urged the furnishing of additional capacity-building resources, and he complained that some efforts by international donors are redundant or tied to purchases by Western countries. In statements and press conferences, Eide continued to note security deterioration but also progress in governance and in reduction of drug cultivation, and he publicly supported negotiations with Taliban figures to end the war. His final speech before leaving criticized the U.S.-led coalition for focusing too much on military success and not enough on governance. UNAMA also often has been involved in local dispute resolution among factions, and it helps organize elections. Under a March 2010 compromise with Karzai, it nominates two international members of the five person Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC), one fewer than the three it selected under the prior election law. UNAMA was a co-convener of the January 28, 2010, and July 20, 2010, London and Kabul Conferences, respectively.

The difficulties in coordinating U.N. with U.S. and NATO efforts were belied in a 2007 proposal to create a new position of "super envoy" that would represent the United Nations, the European Union, and NATO in Afghanistan. The concept advanced and in January 2008, with U.S. support, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon tentatively appointed British diplomat Paddy Ashdown as the "super envoy." However, Karzai rejected the appointment reportedly over concerns about the scope of authority of such an envoy. Karzai might have also sought to show independence from the international community. Ashdown withdrew his name on January 28, 2008. However, the concept reportedly was floated again in late 2009, but was again suppressed by Karzai and others who say it contradicts U.S. and other efforts to promote Afghan leadership. The NATO senior civilian representative post, held by Amb. Mark Sedwill (UK), appears to represent a step in the direction of improved donor coordination in Afghanistan and streamlining of the foreign representative structure there.

For more information on UNAMA, see CRS Report R40747, *United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan: Background and Policy Issues*, by Rhoda Margesson.

U.S. Efforts to Expand and Reform Central Government/Corruption

U.S. policy has been to expand governance throughout the country, a policy that is receiving increased U.S. financial and advisory resources under the Obama Administration. However, in part because building the central government has gone slowly and because official corruption is widespread, there has been a U.S. shift, predating the Obama Administration, away from reliance toward promoting local governance. Some argue that, in addition to offering the advantage of bypassing an often corrupt central government, doing so is more compatible with Afghan traditions of local autonomy. These issues are discussed in greater detail in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*.

Since its formation in late 2001, Karzai's government has grown in capabilities and size, although more slowly than expected, particularly outside Kabul. At the same time, the key security ministries have come to be progressively dominated by ethnic Pashtuns, who have traditionally governed Afghanistan. However, most of the Pashtuns in top positions are Ghilzai Pashtuns, fueling suspicions are resentment among the Durrani Pashtuns (Karzai is one of them) who believe it is the right of the Durranis to rule Afghanistan.

U.S. Embassy officers in Kabul told CRS in October 2009 that, at least among the economic ministries, Karzai has "the best cabinet he has had in eight years." Most of these ministers were retained in the 2009–2010 cabinet nomination and confirmation process, even as many other ministers were replaced or vetoed by the National Assembly.

Others note progress on lesser-known initiatives, such as civil service reform and the Civil Service Commission, which has developed clear government position descriptions, performance criteria, pay and bonus criteria, and other formal procedures. The U.S. efforts to help the Commission, particularly its goal of training about 13,000 additional bureaucrats, are discussed in the State Department civilian strategy document issued in January 2010, and in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

Marginalization of Regional Strongmen

A key to U.S. strategy, particularly during 2002-2006, was to strengthen the central government by helping Karzai curb key regional strongmen and local militias—whom some refer to as "warlords." These actors controlled much of Afghanistan after the Taliban regime disintegrated in late 2001, but there was a decision by the international community to build up an accountable central government rather than leave Afghanistan in the hands of local militias. These forces often arbitrarily administer justice and use their positions to enrich themselves and their supporters.

Karzai has marginalized some of the largest regional leaders, but he is criticized by some human rights groups and international donors for continuing to tolerate or rely on others to keep order in some areas, particularly in non-Pashtun inhabited parts of Afghanistan (the north and west). Karzai's view is that maintaining ties to ethnic and regional faction leaders has prevented the emergence of ethnic conflict that would detract from the overall effort against the Taliban. Others, including "opposition leader" Dr. Abdullah, believe that relying on local faction leaders would have been more successful in preserving stability than dismantling local armed groups in favor of a national security force, whose growth has been slow and its performance problematic.

Some of the faction leaders Karzai has sought to both engage and weaken include Abd al-Rashid Dostam, the Uzbek leader from northern Afghanistan; Ismail Khan, a Tajik leader of western

Afghanistan; UF military strongman Muhammad Fahim; Balkh Province Governor Atta Mohammad Noor, and various Pashtun leaders, such as Nangarhar Governor Ghul Agha Shirzai and Karzai brother Ahmad Wali Karzai. All of these figures, to a degree or another, have been brought into the government structure. Fahim, undergoing medical treatment in Germany as of September 2010, is first Vice President. (These leaders are discussed in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*.)

Anti-Corruption Efforts

An accelerating trend in U.S. policy—and emphasized in both major Obama Administration strategy reviews as well as by many in Congress—is to press Karzai to weed out official corruption. U.S. officials believe that rife corruption in the Afghan government is undermining U.S. domestic support for the U.S. mission in Afghanistan, and causing the Afghan population to sour on the Karzai government. U.S. anti-corruption and rule of law efforts are discussed extensively in the "Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy" issued by Ambassador Holbrooke's office in January 2010, referenced above. These issues are discussed in greater detail in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

Corruption was a focus of the final communiqué of the July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference and of subsequent discussions between Karzai and U.S. officials, including Gen. Petraeus. However, Karzai's commitment to curbing corruption has repeatedly been called into question by some in the Administration and Congress, for example in August 2010, when Karzai established a commission to review, and possibly limit the authority of, a U.S. and British-supported "Major Crimes Task Force" and "Sensitive Investigative Unit." Reflecting his apparent belief that these units are acting at the behest of the international donors that are assisting them, including the United States, Karzai's action to curb their authority came after the late July 2010 arrest of a top Afghanistan National Security Council aide, Zia Salehi. He allegedly accepting a bribe from the New Ansari Exchange, a money changing firm, in return for stopping an investigation of its exportation of cash out of Afghanistan. Some observers said the arrest was more a politically motivated act against Salehi, a Pashtun, by Northern Alliance figures in the security services seeking to retaliate for the Karzai ouster of intelligence chief Amrollah Saleh in June 2010. Corruption, in the form of losses from excessive loans to major shareholders (some of whom are relatives or allies of Karzai) led to a run on the major Kabul Bank in September 2010; speculation continues that the bank may have to be disbanded at some point.

In FY2011 legislation, on June 30, 2010, the State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee of House Appropriations Committee marked up its aid bill. The Subcommittee deferred consideration of much of the Administration's Afghanistan request pending a Committee investigation of allegations of governmental corruption and possible diversion of U.S. aid funds by Afghan officials and other elites.

Enhancing Local Governance

As emphasized in the January 2010 SRAP strategy document cited earlier, there has been a major U.S. and Afghan push to build up local governing structures, reflecting a shift in emphasis from the 2001-2007 approach of focusing on building up central authority. However, building local governance has suffered from a deficit of trained and respected local government administrators ready or willing to serve, particularly where hostilities are ongoing. This deficiency has hindered

U.S. counter-insurgency efforts in southern Afghanistan, as discussed further below. There is also a paucity of equipment and facilities available. According to a September 22, 2009, quarterly U.N. report on Afghanistan, about 180 district governors (there are 364 districts) have no offices, and 288 district governors have no official vehicle.

The Afghan leader in the effort to expand local governance has been the "Independent Directorate of Local Governance" (IDLG), formed in August 2007 and headed by Jelani Popal (a member of Karzai's Popolzai clan). The IDLG reports to Karzai's office, and its establishment was intended to institute a systematic process for selecting capable provincial and district governors by taking the screening function away from the Interior Ministry. The IDLG also selects police chiefs and other local office holders, and in many cases has already begun removing allegedly corrupt local officials. It has, to date, helped replace more than half of Afghanistan's 34 governors and aspires to replace at least 30% of the 364 district governors, either for alleged corruption or for ineffectiveness. Major municipalities have appointed mayors (there are at least 42 mayors in Afghanistan) and there are plans to hold municipal elections for these offices at some point. A draft "subnational governance policy" was approved by the Afghan cabinet on March 22, 2010, and endorsed by the July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference.

The IDLG runs the government's "Social Outreach Program," intended to draw closer connections between tribes and localities to the central government by offering small payments (about $200 per month) to tribal leaders and other participants to persuade them to inform on Taliban insurgent movements.

According to the SRAP Holbrooke document referenced above, the U.S. effort to empower the district leaderships is coordinated by inter-agency, civilian-military "District Development Working Groups." Some U.S. civilians are working with forward deployed U.S. units as "District Support Teams." These teams are working with the IDLG to implement the "District Delivery Program" intended to improve delivery of government services at the district level in the 80 districts, mostly in the south, that are the focus of U.S./ISAF counter-insurgency operations in 2010, as discussed below. Authority for the District Delivery Program was given to the IDLG under a March 18, 2010, Karzai decree. Another U.S. initiative to promote local governance is the "Performance-Based Governor's Fund." This provides a budget to provincial governors who prove responsive to the needs of their constituents, including reduction of narcotics cultivation.

Several districts have received special attention to become "models" of district security and governance are Nawa, in Helmand Province, and Baraki-Barak, in Lowgar Province, both cleared of Taliban militants in 2009. With substantial infusions of U.S. development funds that put sometime insurgents to work on projects (offering $5 per day to perform such tasks as cleaning irrigation canals), these districts are, by several accounts, far more stable and secure than they were in 2009. As part of "Operation Moshtarek" (Operation Together), launched February 13, 2010, to clear the city of Marjah of militants, a district governor (Hajji Zahir) and district administration were selected in advance. Zahir tried to build up his administration after the town was wrested from Taliban control, but governance there has not expanded to the level that was hoped. Zahir was replaced in early July 2010. (Marjah is currently part of Nad Ali district, and is eventually to become its own district, according to Afghan observers.)

Part of the Afghan government and international mission is to empower localities to decide on development projects by forming local "Community Development Councils" (CDCs) that decide on local development projects and are key to the perceived success of the "National Solidarity Program" development program discussed later. There are about 30,000 CDCs formed. Elections

to these councils have been held in several provinces, and almost 40% of those elected have been women.[23]

Human Rights and Democracy

The Administration and Afghan government claim progress in building a democratic Afghanistan that adheres to international standards of human rights practices. The process of confirming Karzai's cabinet selections and legislatively challenging some of Karzai's decisions in 2010 has caused some experts to assess Afghan democracy as perhaps more vibrant than previously believed. However, the State Department report on human rights practices for 2009 (released March 11, 2010)[24] said that Afghanistan's human rights record remained "poor," noting in particular that the government or its agents commit arbitrary or unlawful killings. Still, virtually all observers agree that Afghans are freer than they were under the Taliban.

Afghan political groupings and parties are able to meet and organize freely, but there are also abuses based on ethnicity or political factionalism and arbitrary implementation of justice by local leaders. Since the Taliban era, numerous privately owned media outlets have opened but the State Department say that there are growing numbers of arrests or intimidation of journalists who criticize the central government or local leaders. Some press and other restrictions appear to reflect the government's sensitivity to Afghanistan's conservative society rather than politically motivated action. Some accounts say that the Ulema Council, which advises the government on religious and social matters, is becoming increasingly conservative and at odds with government policy on these issues. The growing conservatism could account for some of the protests in September 2010 by Afghans reacting to U.S. reports that a pastor in Florida was planning to burn Qurans on the 2010 anniversary of the September 11 attacks. Some protests continued despite the fact that the Quran burning action was cancelled.

According to a wide variety of reports, including from the State Department, the Afghan government is promoting the advancement of women. However, numerous abuses, such as denial of educational and employment opportunities, continue primarily because of Afghanistan's conservative traditions. Overall, the security situation has caused increasing difficulties for women and setbacks for the expansion of their rights. In some areas where the Taliban holds sway, girls are being prevented from going to school, women are unable to campaign for parliament and other offices, and Islamic justice is being dispensed. On August 10, 2010, Taliban commanders in a district in Konduz implemented a punishment of stoning to death a couple that had eloped.

The tables at the end of this report contain information on U.S. funding for democracy, governance, rule of law and human rights, and elections support since the fall of the Taliban. Of these, by far the largest category was "good governance," discussed above. FY2009 and FY2010 levels, and funding earmarks for programs benefitting women and girls, are also in the tables. For more depth on Afghanistan human rights issues, see CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, cited above.

[23] Khalilzad, Zalmay (then-U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan). "Democracy Bubbles Up." *Wall Street Journal*, March 25, 2004.

[24] For text, see http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/sca/136084.htm.

Narcotics Trafficking/Insurgent Financing[25]

Narcotics trafficking is regarded by some as a core impediment to the U.S. mission in Afghanistan by undermining rule of law and providing funds to the insurgency. However, it is also an area on which there has been progress in recent years. The trafficking generates an estimated $70 million–$100 million per year for the Taliban.

U.S. officials hope that recent progress will be sustained. A UNODC report of February 10, 2010, continued a positive trend in reporting on this issue, noting that almost all of the 20 provinces (out of 34 provinces in Afghanistan) in the "poppy free" category will remain that way in 2010, although there has been backsliding in several provinces (Baghlan, Faryab and Sar-i-Pul). The report said that further reductions in overall cultivation (such as the 22% decrease in 2009) will probably not continue in 2010. The report added that as many as 25 provinces may be in the "poppy free" category by the end of 2010 if timely elimination, public awareness, and development programs are implemented. On the other hand, an April 2010 UNODC expresses concern over cannabis cultivation and trafficking—which is present in at least 17 Afghan provinces—but which receives substantially less international attention than does the poppy cultivation and opium trafficking.[26]

Obama Administration policy is focusing on promoting legitimate agricultural alternatives to poppy growing and, in conjunction, Ambassador Holbrooke announced in July 2009 that the United States would end its prior focus on eradication of poppy fields. In this view, eradication was driving Afghans into the arms of the Taliban as protectors of their ability to earn a living, even if doing so is from narcotics cultivation. Encouraging alternative livelihoods has always been the preferred emphasis of the Afghan government.

Ambassador Holbrooke has also placed additional focus on the other sources of Taliban funding, including continued donations from wealthy residents of the Persian Gulf. He has established a multinational task force to combat Taliban financing generally, not limited to narcotics, and U.S. officials are emphasizing with Persian Gulf counterparts the need for cooperation.

Other policies promote incentives; Helmand, for example, received about $10 million in good performance funding in 2009 for a 33% cut in poppy cultivation that year. According to Afghan cabinet members, the government also is spending funds on a "social safety net" to help wean landless farmers away from poppy cultivation work.

The de-emphasis on eradication also put aside the long standing differences over whether to conduct spraying of fields, particularly by air. President Karzai strongly and successfully opposed aerial spraying when it was proposed by then Ambassador to Afghanistan William Wood in early 2007, arguing that doing so would cause a backlash among Afghan farmers. Congress sided with Karzai's view; the FY2008 Consolidated Appropriation (P.L. 110-161) prohibited U.S. counter-narcotics funding from being used for aerial spraying on Afghanistan poppy fields without Afghan concurrence. That provision is reiterated in the FY2010 consolidated appropriation (P.L. 111-117).

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[25] For a detailed discussion and U.S. funding on the issue, see CRS Report RL32686, *Afghanistan: Narcotics and U.S. Policy*, by Christopher M. Blanchard.

[26] UNPDC. Afghanistan Cannabis Survey: 2009. http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/Afghanistan_Cannabis_Survey_2009.pdf.

Military Aspects of Counter-Narcotics

How consistently to use U.S. and NATO forces to combat narcotics is another facet under debate. Some NATO contributors, such as Britain, have focused on interdicting traffickers and raiding drug labs, and a Senate Foreign Relations Committee report issued in August 2009 said that U.S. and partner military forces have put 50 major traffickers on a target list to be killed or captured. This listing appears to be an implementation of a February 2009 modification of NATO's posture to one of viewing some drug traffickers as participants in the insurgency, and therefore subject to military operations.

The U.S. military, in support of the effort after initial reluctance, is flying Afghan and U.S. counter-narcotics agents (Drug Enforcement Agency, DEA) on missions and identifying targets; it also evacuates casualties from counter-drug operations. The Department of Defense is also playing the major role in training and equipping specialized Afghan counter-narcotics police, in developing an Afghan intelligence fusion cell, and training Afghan border police, as well as assisting an Afghan helicopter squadron to move Afghan counter-narcotics forces around the country. To help break up narcotics trafficking networks, the DEA presence in Afghanistan is expected to expand from 13 agents now to 68 in September 2009, and then to 81 in 2010, with additional agents in Pakistan.

Narcotics trafficking control was perhaps the one issue on which the Taliban regime satisfied much of the international community. The Taliban enforced a July 2000 ban on poppy cultivation.[27]

Narcotics-Related Aid Conditionality

The Bush Administration repeatedly named Afghanistan as a major illicit drug producer and drug transit country, but did not include Afghanistan on a smaller list of countries that have "failed demonstrably to make substantial efforts" to adhere to international counter-narcotics agreements and take certain counter-narcotics measures set forth in U.S. law.[28] The Bush Administration exercised waiver provisions to a required certification of full Afghan cooperation that was needed to provide more than congressionally stipulated amounts of U.S. economic assistance to Afghanistan. A similar certification requirement (to provide amounts over $300 million) was contained in the FY2008 appropriation (P.L. 110-161); in the FY2009 regular appropriation, P.L. 111-8 ($200 million ceiling); and the FY2010 appropriation, P.L. 111-117, ($200 million ceiling). The FY2009 supplemental (P.L. 111-32) withheld 10% of State Department narcotics funding (International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement, INCLE) pending a report that Afghanistan is removing officials involved in narcotics trafficking or gross human rights violations. No funds for Afghanistan have been held up, and the required certifications have been issued by the Administration or apparently are pending.

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

[28] Afghanistan had been so designated every year during 1987-2002.

Security Policy and Force Capacity Building[29]

The U.S. definition of "success" in Afghanistan, articulated since the ouster of the Taliban in late 2001, is to help build up an Afghan government and security force that can defend itself, expand governance, and develop economically. The Obama Administration's policy reviews in 2009 formally narrowed U.S. goals to preventing Al Qaeda from reestablishing a base in Afghanistan. However, the policy and military tools employed by the Obama Administration in most ways continue and even expand a nation-building goal. The December 1, 2009, speech by President Obama stated U.S. goals as (1) to deny Al Qaeda a safe haven [in Afghanistan]; and (2) to reverse the Taliban's momentum and deny it the ability to overthrow the government. The statement appeared to back the August 30, 2009, recommendations of then-top commander in Afghanistan Gen. Stanley McChrystal's to undertake a fully resourced counter-insurgency mission. The focus of the mission is to be on 121 districts (out of 364 total districts in Afghanistan) deemed restive and in which support for the Afghan government is lowest. Of those, 80 districts are of the most intense focus, according to Defense Department reports and officials.

The two major U.S. policy reviews in 2009 did not significantly change most of the basic pillars of U.S. and NATO security strategy that have been in place since 2001, although the emphasis of some of these components might have shifted. The main elements include: (1) combat operations and patrols by U.S. forces and a NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to "provide space" for the expansion of Afghan governance, security leadership, and infrastructure and economic development; (2) U.S. and NATO operation of "provincial reconstruction teams" (PRTs) to serve as enclaves to facilitate the strategy; and (3) the equipping, training, and expansion of Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF). Some strategy elements that have emerged since 2008, and which are taking precedence as Western public patience with the long war effort erodes, include establishing local protection forces, and backing efforts to reintegrate Taliban fighters and leaders who might want to end armed struggle.

Who is the United States Fighting? Taliban, Al Qaeda, and Related Insurgents and Their Strength

As noted in General McChrystal's August 2009 initial assessment and the Defense Department April 2010 report cited below, security is being challenged by a confluence of related armed groups who are increasingly well equipped and sophisticated in their tactics and operations, particularly by using roadside bombs. According to the April 2010 Defense Department report, "the insurgents perceive 2009 as their most successful year."[30] However, there is not agreement about the relative strength of insurgents in all of the areas where they operate, or their degree of cooperation with each other. Afghan and U.S. assessments are that there are more than 20,000 total insurgents operating in Afghanistan, up from a few thousand in 2003.

Prior to U.S.-led offensives launched in July 2009, the Karzai government was estimated by U.S. officials to control about 30% of the country, while insurgents controlled 4% (13 out of 364 districts). Insurgents "influenced" or "operated in" another 30% (Afghan Interior Ministry

[29] Some of the information in this section is taken from: Department of Defense. "Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan." April 2010. http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/Report_Final_SecDef_04_26_10.pdf.

[30] http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/Report_Final_SecDef_04_26_10.pdf.

estimates in August 2009). Tribes and local groups with varying degrees of loyalty to the central government control the remainder. Outside groups, such as aid groups that released their own findings in September 2010, sometimes report higher percentages of insurgent control or influence.[31] U.S. military officers in Kabul told CRS in October 2009 that the Taliban has named "shadow governors" in 33 out of 34 of Afghanistan's provinces, although many provinces, such as Bamiyan, Faryab, Panjshir, Badakshan, Takhar, and Balkh, appear to have a minimal Taliban presence. At least two of these "shadow governors" have been arrested during U.S.-led operations or by Pakistan in 2010; another (for Nangarhar) was killed in August 2010.

As far as tactics, U.S. commanders increasingly worry about growing insurgent use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), including roadside bombs. NATO officials reported in December 2009 that there were over 7,000 attacks using in 2009, up from 4,170 in 2008, 2,700 in 2007, and 1,920 in 2006. IED attacks nearly doubled again in frequency in the first four months of 2010, according to the U.N. Secretary General's report of June 16, 2010. In January 2010, President Karzai issued a decree banning importation of fertilizer chemicals commonly used for the roadside bombs. This move came one month after international forces uncovered an extremely large cache of the chemicals. Contrary to press reports quoting leaked material about the war effort, U.S. commanders have said they have not seen insurgent use of surface-to-air missiles.[32]

There were about 310 U.S. soldiers killed in 2009, nearly double the previous year, and U.S. deaths in June and July 2010 were at or near the highs of the war effort thus far. Including the U.S. losses, there were about 506 total coalition deaths in Afghanistan in 2009. A UNAMA report issue in August 2010, covering the first half of 2010, noted a 30% increase in Afghan civilian deaths over the same period one year ago. It attributed the increase to insurgent attacks, and said that casualties caused by Afghan or pro-government forces had fallen 30% during the same period.

Groups: The Taliban ("Quetta Shura Taliban")

The core of the insurgency remains the Taliban movement centered around Mullah Umar, who led the Taliban regime during 1996-2001. Mullah Umar and many of his top advisers remain at large and are reportedly running their insurgency from their safe haven in Pakistan. They are believed to be in and around the city of Quetta, according to Afghan officials, thus accounting for the term usually applied to Umar and his aides: "Quetta Shura Taliban" (QST). The prime near term target of their operations is believed to be to capture Qandahar city, the former Taliban stronghold.

Some believe that Umar and his inner circle blame their past association with Al Qaeda for their loss of power and want to distance themselves from Al Qaeda. Other experts see continuing close association that is likely to continue were the Taliban movement to return to power in Afghanistan. On September 19, 2009, Umar issued an audiotape criticizing the Afghan elections as fraudulent. The Taliban also threatened Afghans who voted in the August 20, 2009, elections.

However, the Taliban is suffering significant setbacks at the hands of Pakistan and the United States. Some believe the setbacks could be turning Umar toward accepting Karzai's public offers to negotiate a political settlement to the conflict. Umar's top deputy, Mullah Bradar, was arrested in a reported joint U.S.-Pakistani operation near the city of Karachi in February 2010. Bradar's

[31] http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/12/world/asia/12afghan.html?_r=1

[32] Maj. Gen. John Campbell, commander of RC-E, July 28, 2010, press briefing.

arrest had the potential to cause a surrender or reconciliation of several subordinate commanders, although there is a possibility that his capture set back Afghan government-Taliban reconciliation talks, which are discussed further below. It was also reported in March 2010 that Pakistan had briefly detained another member of the Quetta Shura, Mullah Kabir, and arrested Agha Jhan Motasim, a son-in-law of Umar.[33] In recent years, other top Taliban figures, including Mullah Dadullah, his son Mansoor, and Mullah Usmani have been killed or captured.

To address the losses, Umar reportedly has replaced Bradar with a young leader, Mullah Abdul Qayyum Zakir, a U.S. detainee in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, until 2007.[34] Some reports assert that other aides (most notably Mullah Ghul Agha Akhund) may not recognize Zakir and might themselves be seeking the number two spot in the organization. The Taliban has several official spokespersons still at large, including Qari Yusuf Ahmadi and Zabiullah Mujahid, and it operates a clandestine radio station, "Voice of Shariat" and publishes videos. Two members of the Quetta Shura, Mullah Hassan Rahmani, former Taliban governor of Qandahar, and Mullah Afghan Tayib, another spokesman, are said to have come under some Pakistani pressure.

Al Qaeda/Bin Laden Whereabouts

U.S. commanders say that Al Qaeda militants are facilitators of militant incursions into Afghanistan rather than active participants in the Afghan insurgency. Director of Central Intelligence Leon Panetta said on June 27, 2010, that Al Qaeda fighters in Afghanistan itself might number 50-100.[35] Small numbers of Al Qaeda members—including Arabs, Uzbeks, and Chechens—have been captured or killed in battles in Afghanistan itself, according to U.S. commanders. Some of these fighters apparently belong to Al Qaeda affiliates such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).

Al Qaeda's top leadership has eluded U.S. forces in Afghanistan and other efforts in Pakistan. In December 2001, in the course of the post-September 11 major combat effort, U.S. Special Operations Forces and CIA operatives reportedly narrowed Osama bin Laden's location to the Tora Bora mountains in Nangarhar Province (30 miles west of the Khyber Pass), but the Afghan militia fighters who were the bulk of the fighting force did not prevent his escape. Some U.S. military and intelligence officers (such as Gary Berntsen and Dalton Fury, who have written books on the battle) have questioned the U.S. decision to rely mainly on Afghan forces in this engagement.

Bin Laden and his close ally Ayman al-Zawahiri are presumed to be on the Pakistani side of the border. From this redoubt, these leaders are widely believed to continue to be looking for ways to attack the U.S. homeland or U.S. allies and continuing to issue audio statements threatening such attacks. While there have been no recent public indications that U.S. or allied forces have learned or are close to learning bin Laden's location, a U.S. strike reportedly missed Zawahiri by a few hours in the village of Damadola, Pakistan, in January 2006, suggesting that there was intelligence on his movements.[36] On the ninth anniversary of the September 11 attacks on some U.S. observers said it was still significant to try to capture bin Laden if for no other reason than

[33] Filkins, Dexter and Pir Zubair Shah. "After Arrests, Taliban Promote a Fighter." *New York Times*, March 25, 2010.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Text of the Panetta interview with ABC News is at http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=11025299.

[36] Gall, Carlotta and Ismail Khan. "U.S. Drone Attack Missed Zawahiri by Hours." *New York Times*, November 10, 2006.

for symbolic value. Press reports in early September 2010 say that Al Qaeda's former spokesman, Kuwait-born Sulayman Abu Ghaith, may have been released from house arrest by Iran and allowed to proceed to Pakistan.

Among other efforts, a strike in late January 2008, in an area near Damadola, killed Abu Laith al-Libi, a reported senior Al Qaeda figure who purportedly masterminded, among other operations, the bombing at Bagram Air Base in February 2007 when Vice President Cheney was visiting. In August 2008, an airstrike was confirmed to have killed Al Qaeda chemical weapons expert Abu Khabab al-Masri, and two senior operatives allegedly involved in the 1998 embassy bombings in Africa reportedly were killed by a Predator strike in January 2009.

These strikes have become more frequent under President Obama, indicating that the Administration sees the tactic as effective in preventing attacks. Unmanned vehicle strikes are also increasingly used on the Afghanistan battlefield itself and against Al Qaeda affiliated militants in such countries as Yemen.

Hikmatyar Faction

Another "high value target" identified by U.S. commanders is the faction of former *mujahedin* party leader Gulbuddin Hikmatyar (Hizb-e-Islami Gulbuddin, HIG) allied with Al Qaeda and Taliban insurgents. As noted above, Hikmatyar was one of the main U.S.-backed *mujahedin* leaders during the Soviet occupation era. Hikmatyar's fighters—once instrumental in the U.S.-supported war against the Soviet Union—are most active in Kunar, Nuristan, Kapisa, and Nangarhar provinces, north and east of Kabul. On February 19, 2003, the U.S. government formally designated Hikmatyar as a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist," under the authority of Executive Order 13224, subjecting it to financial and other U.S. sanctions. It is *not* also designated as a "Foreign Terrorist Organization" (FTO). **Table 6** contains estimated numbers of HIG.

While U.S. commanders continue to battle Hikmatyar's militia, on March 22, 2010, both the Afghan government and Hikmatyar representatives confirmed they were in talks in Kabul, including meetings with Karzai. Hikmatyar has expressed a willingness to discuss a cease-fire with the Karzai government since 2007, and some of Karzai's key allies in the National Assembly are former members of Hikmatyar's *mujahedin* party. In January 2010, he outlined specific conditions for a possible reconciliation with Karzai, including elections under a neutral caretaker government following a U.S. withdrawal. These conditions are unlikely to be acceptable to Karzai or the international community, although many of them might be modified or dropped. Some close to Hikmatyar apparently attended the consultative peace *loya jirga* on June 2-4, 2010, which discussed the reconciliation issue, as analyzed further below.

Haqqani Faction

Another militant faction, cited repeatedly as a major threat, is the "Haqqani Network" led by Jalaludin Haqqani and his eldest son, Siraj (or Sirajjudin). Jalaludin Haqqani, who served as Minister of Tribal Affairs in the Taliban regime of 1996-2001, is believed closer to Al Qaeda than to the ousted Taliban leadership in part because one of his wives is purportedly Arab. The group is active around its key objective, Khost city, capital of Khost Province. The Haqqani network may have been responsible for the January 18, 2010, attacks in Kabul that prompted four hours of gun battles with Afghan police in locations near the presidential palace.

U.S. officials say they are continuing to pressure the Haqqani network with military action in Afghanistan and air strikes on the Pakistani side of the border. Haqqani property inside Pakistan has been repeatedly targeted since September 2008 by U.S. aerial drone strikes. Siraj's brother, Mohammad, was reportedly killed by a U.S. unmanned vehicle strike in late February 2010, although Mohammad was not thought to be a key militant commander. In July 2010, it was reported that Gen. Petraeus, as part of his adjustments to policy as top commander in Afghanistan, wants the Haqqani network to be named as an FTO under the Immigration and Naturalization Act. Secretary of State Clinton said on July 19, 2010, during a visit to Pakistan, that U.S. policy is moving in that direction. Such a move would be intended to signal to Pakistan that it should not see the Haqqani network, as a whole, as part of a reconciled political structure in Afghanistan that would protect Pakistan's interests and work to limit the influence of India. This view was emphasized in a *New York Times* story of June 25, 2010.[37] **Table 6** contains estimated numbers of Haqqani fighters.

Pakistani Groups

The Taliban of Afghanistan are increasingly linked politically and operationally to Pakistani Taliban militants. These groups might see a Taliban recapture of Afghanistan's government as helpful to the prospects for these groups inside Pakistan or in their Kashmir struggle.

The Pakistani Taliban (Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, TTP) is primarily seeking to challenge the government of Pakistan, but they facilitate the transiting into Afghanistan of Afghan Taliban and support the Afghan Taliban goals of recapturing Afghanistan. The TTP may also be seeking to target the United States, based on a failed bombing in New York in May 2010. The State Department designated the TTP as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) under the Immigration and Naturalization Act on September 2, 2010, allegedly for having close connections to Al Qaeda.

Another Pakistani group said to be increasingly active inside Afghanistan is Laskhar-e-Tayyiba (LET, or Army of the Righteous). LET is an Islamist militant group that has previously been focused on operations against Indian control of Kashmir.

The U.S. Military Effort

The large majority of U.S. troops in Afghanistan are under NATO/ISAF command. The remainder are part of the post-September 11 anti-terrorism mission Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). There are also Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan under a separate command. Serving under General Petraeus is Maj. Gen. David Rodriguez, who heads a NATO-approved "Intermediate Joint Command" focused primarily on day-to-day operations and located at Kabul International Airport. He has been in this position since 2009. The ISAF/U.S. Forces-Afghanistan commander reports not only to NATO but, through U.S. channels, to U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM).

Whether under NATO or OEF, many U.S. forces in Afghanistan are in eastern Afghanistan and lead Regional Command East of the NATO/ISAF operation. These U.S. forces belong to Combined Joint Task Force 101 (as of June 2010), which is commanded by Maj. Gen. John

[37] Jane Perlez, Eric Schmitt, and Carlotta Gall, "Pakistan Is Said to Pursue Foothold in Afghanistan," *The New York Times*, June 24, 2010.

Campbell. The key restive provinces in the RC-E are Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Kunar, Kapisa, Wardak, Lowgar, Nangarhar, and Nuristan.

Helmand, Qandahar, Uruzgan, Zabol, Nimruz, and Dai Kundi provinces constitute "Regional Command South (RC-S)," a command formally transferred to NATO/ISAF responsibility on July 31, 2006. U.S. forces have not led RC-S; the command was rotated among Britain, the Netherlands, and Canada. However, with the Dutch pullout in July 2010 and the growing U.S. troop strength in RC-S prompted a May 23, 2010, NATO decision to bifurcate RC-S, with the United States to lead a "southwest" subdivision focused on Helmand and Nimruz. This is an evolution of the growing U.S. involvement in RC-S since 2008.

Perception of "Victory" in the First Five Post-Taliban Years

During 2001-mid-2006, U.S. forces and Afghan troops fought relatively low levels of insurgent violence. The United States and Afghanistan conducted "Operation Mountain Viper" (August 2003); "Operation Avalanche" (December 2003); "Operation Mountain Storm" (March-July 2004) against Taliban remnants in and around Uruzgan province, home province of Mullah Umar; "Operation Lightning Freedom" (December 2004–February 2005); and "Operation Pil" (Elephant) in Kunar Province in the east (October 2005). By late 2005, U.S. and partner commanders appeared to believe that the combat, coupled with overall political and economic reconstruction, had virtually ended any insurgency. As a result, NATO/ISAF assumed lead responsibility for security in all of Afghanistan during 2005-2006.

Violence increased significantly in mid-2006, particularly in the east and the south, where ethnic Pashtuns predominate. The increase in violence surprised some U.S. commanders and officials. Reasons for the deterioration include some of those discussed above in the sections on governance: Afghan government corruption; the absence of governance or security forces in many rural areas; the safe haven enjoyed by militants in Pakistan; the reticence of some NATO contributors to actively combat insurgents; civilian casualties caused by NATO and U.S. military operations; and the slow pace of economic development. Many Afghans are said to have turned to the Taliban as a source of impartial and rapid justice, in contrast to the slow and corrupt processes instituted by the central government.

Perception of Deterioration and Growing Force Levels in 2007 and 2008

Since 2006, the key theater of intensified combat—where many of the factors sustaining insurgency converge, such as proximity to Pakistan, widespread drug trafficking, limited and poor Afghan governance—has been eastern and southern Afghanistan. The provinces that are particularly restive include Helmand and Qandahar provinces. NATO counter-offensives in 2006 were only temporary successes, including such operations as Operation Mountain Lion, Operation Mountain Thrust, and Operation Medusa (August-September 2006, in Panjwai district of Qandahar Province). Later, British forces—who believe in negotiated local solutions—entered into an agreement with tribal elders in the Musa Qala district of Helmand Province, under which they would secure the main town of the district themselves. That strategy failed when the Taliban took over Musa Qala town in February 2007. A NATO offensive in December 2007 retook it, although there continue to be recriminations between the Britain, on the one side, and the United States and Karzai, on the other, over the wisdom of the arrangement.

As a further response, NATO and OEF forces tried to apply a more integrated strategy involving preemptive combat, increased development work, and a more streamlined command structure. Major combat operations in 2007 included U.S. and NATO attempted preemption of an anticipated Taliban "spring offensive" ("Operation Achilles," March 2007) in the Sangin district of Helmand Province, around the Kajaki dam, and Operation Silicon (May 2007), also in Helmand. (In September 2010, Britain turned over security leadership in Sangin to U.S. forces in the near future; combat in the district has accounted for nearly half of Britain's entire casualties in Afghanistan to date. U.S. strategy for the district is said to be more expansive, intended to push out the boundaries of secure area of the district; British efforts focused on better securing the district major city.)

Despite the additional resources put into Afghanistan, throughout 2008, growing concern took hold within the Bush Administration. Pessimism was reflected in such statements as one in September 2008 by Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Admiral Mike Mullen that "I'm not sure we're winning" in Afghanistan. These assessments comport with a reported U.S. intelligence estimate on Afghanistan, according to the *New York Times* (October 9, 2008), that described Afghanistan as in a "downward spiral."

Several other major incidents that shook U.S. and partner confidence in 2008 included (1) expanding Taliban operations in provinces where it had not previously been active, particularly Lowgar, Wardak, and Kapisa, close to Kabul; (2) high-profile attacks in Kabul against well-defended targets, such as the January 14, 2008, attack on the Serena Hotel in Kabul and the July 7, 2008, suicide bombing at the Indian Embassy in Kabul, killing more than 50; (3) the April 27, 2008, assassination attempt on Karzai during a military parade celebrating the ouster of the Soviet Union; (4) a June 12, 2008, Sarposa prison break in Qandahar (several hundred Taliban captives were freed, as part of an emptying of the 1,200 inmates there); (5) a July 13, 2008, attack on a U.S. outpost in Nuristan Province that killed nine U.S. soldiers; and (6) an August 18, 2008, attack that killed 10 French soldiers near Sarobi, 30 miles northeast of Kabul. At the same time, in order to present a balanced picture of the security situation, then NATO/ISAF commander U.S. Gen. David McKiernan, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan during June 2008–May 2009, asserted that 70% of the violence in Afghanistan was occurring in only 10% of Afghanistan's 364 districts, an area including about 6% of the Afghan population.

To try to arrest deterioration, the United States and its partners decided to increase force levels. U.S. troop levels started 2006 at about 30,000, and climbed slightly to about 32,000 by December 2008, and about 39,000 by April 2009. Partner forces were increased significantly as well, by about 6,000 during this time, to a total of about 39,000 at the end of 2009 (rough parity between U.S. and non-U.S. forces). Many of the U.S. forces deployed in 2008 and 2009 were Marines that deployed to Helmand, which had fallen almost totally out of coalition control since 2006. The forces added were to partly fulfill a mid-2008, request by Gen. McKiernan for about 30,000 additional U.S. troops (beyond the approximately 35,000 there at the time of the request). The figure included about 4,000 trainers to expand Afghan forces. About 5,000 of the U.S. forces added deployed to Lowgar and Wardak provinces in January 2009, sites of deterioration. However, as the November 2008, U.S. presidential election approached, a decision on whether to fulfill the entire request was deferred to the next Administration.

Obama Administration Strategy Reviews and Further Buildup

In September 2008, the U.S. military and NATO each began strategy reviews. Within the United States, a review was headed by Lt. Gen. Douglas Lute, the Bush Administration's senior adviser

on Iraq and Afghanistan (who was kept on under the Obama Administration); others were conducted by the Department of Defense, by CENTCOM, by NATO, and by the State Department. These reviews were completed and briefed to the incoming Obama Administration.

The Obama Administration, which maintained that Afghanistan needed to be given a higher priority than it was during the Bush Administration, integrated the reviews into an overarching 60-day inter-agency "strategy review." It was chaired by South Asia expert Bruce Riedel and co-chaired by Ambassador Holbrooke and Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michele Flournoy. Ministers from Afghanistan and Pakistan visited Washington, DC, during February 23-27, 2009, as part of the review, and reached agreement to hold regular trilateral meetings (U.S., Afghanistan, Pakistan). The latest, which included the presidents of both Afghanistan and Pakistan, took place during May 4-7, 2009.

March 27, 2009, Policy Announcement and First Command Change

President Obama announced a "comprehensive" strategy on March 27, 2009.[38] In conjunction, he announced the deployment of an additional 21,000 U.S. forces, of which about 4,000 would be trainers. Shortly after the announcement, the Administration decided that U.S. military leadership in Afghanistan was insufficiently innovative. On May 11, 2009, Secretary of Defense Gates and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Michael Mullen announced that Gen. McKiernan had been asked to resign and Lt. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, considered an innovative commander as head of U.S. special operations from 2003 to 2008, was named his successor. He assumed command on June 15, 2009.

McChrystal Initial Assessment and Counter-Insurgency Concept

Gen. McChrystal, after assuming command, began and completed an assessment of the security situation and laid out his vision of a new strategy. His initial assessment was submitted on August 30, 2009, and presented to NATO on August 31, 2009.[39] The main elements are as follows:

- That the goal of the U.S. military should be to protect the population—and to help the Afghan government take steps to earn the trust of the population—rather than to search and combat Taliban concentrations. Indicators such as ease of road travel and normal life for families are more important indicators of success than are counts of numbers of enemy fighters killed.
- That there is potential for "mission failure" unless a fully resourced, comprehensive counter-insurgency strategy is pursued and reverses Taliban momentum within 12-18 months.
- He requested about 44,000 additional U.S. combat troops—which he asserted was needed to have the greatest chance for his strategy's success—beyond those approved by the Obama Administration strategy review in March 2009. His request for more resources apparently included additional trainers for the Afghan forces.

[38] "White Paper": http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Afghanistan-Pakistan_White_Paper.pdf.

[39] Commander NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan, and U.S. Forces, Afghanistan. "Commander's Initial Assessment." August 30, 2009, available at http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment_Redacted_092109.pdf?

Some of the data supporting McChrystal's negative assessment of the security situation—and his recommendations—included Taliban gains in Konduz, Farah, and other areas in the north and west that previously were relatively peaceful, as well as high U.S. casualties (about 45-55 per month in mid-late 2009). McChrystal's report took particular note of Taliban gains in and around Qandahar. A high-profile attack there on August 25, 2009, killing about 40 persons, shook confidence substantially, and there have been several high-profile assassinations, attacks, and incidents of intimidation of the population since then.

Second High-Level Strategy Review and Debate Over Further Force Increases

The McChrystal assessment set off another debate within the Administration and Congress. In September 2009, the Administration began a second high-level review of U.S. strategy, taking into account the McChrystal report and the marred August 20, 2009, presidential election. During the review, President Obama met briefly with Gen. McChrystal on October 2, 2009, following a speech in London (to the International Institute for Strategic Studies), in which McChrystal advocated adoption of the recommendations in his August 30 report.

In the debate on strategy, some senior U.S. officials, such as National Security Adviser Jones, asserted that the situation in Afghanistan might not be as urgent as McChrystal suggested. Others, such as Secretary of Defense Gates, were concerned that adding many more U.S. forces could create among the Afghan people a sense of "occupation" that could prove counter-productive. Some Members of Congress, including Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin, said that the U.S. focus should be on expanding Afghan security forces capabilities before sending additional U.S. forces.

The high-level review included at least nine high-level meetings, chaired by President Obama, and reportedly concluded on November 19, 2009. The President announced his decisions in a speech at West Point military academy on December 1, 2009, and further elaborations were made by Secretary Gates, Secretary Clinton, and Joint Chiefs Chairman Mullen during December 2-11, 2009.[40] The major features of the December 1 statement included the following:

- That 30,000 additional U.S. forces (plus an unspecified number of additional "enablers") would be sent to "reverse the Taliban's momentum" and strengthen the capacity of Afghanistan's security forces and government so that they could eventually take leading roles. U.S. military officials later indicated the 30,000 would all be in place by September 1, 2010,and U.S. force levels did reach about 104,000 at that time. (Perhaps reflecting further need, Gen. Petraeus did request an additional 2,000 NATO/ISAF forces on September 6, 2010, of which 750 are to be trainers for the Afghan national security forces.)
- That there would be a transition, beginning in July 2011, to Afghan leadership of the stabilization effort. This is the policy element that has caused significant controversy, as discussed further below. The pace and scope of the transition is to be determined as a consequence of a major review of the battlefield situation to be completed by December 2010.

[40] President Obama speech, op. cit. Testimony of Secretary Gates, Secretary Clinton, and Admiral Mullen before the Senate Armed Services Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee. December 2, 2009.

McChrystal Replaced by Petraeus

On June 23, 2010, President Obama accepted the resignation of Gen. McChrystal after summoning him to Washington, DC, to discuss the comments by him and his staff to a reporter for *Rolling Stone* (article cited earlier) that disparaged virtually all the civilian figures involved in Afghanistan policy. He named Gen. Petraeus as Gen. McChrystal's successor, a move that appeared to reassure President Karzai. In a June 23, 2010, statement in the Rose Garden, President Obama attributed the change purely to the disrespect of civilian authority contained in the *Rolling Stone* comments, and stated that Afghanistan policy would not change. Gen. Petraeus was confirmed by the Senate on June 30, 2010, and immediately flew to Afghanistan to assume command on July 4, 2010.

Summary of Current U.S. Strategy

With the U.S. and NATO command structure set, the major outlines of Obama Administration strategy, and which Gen. Petraeus has not materially sought to change since taking command, have taken shape as follows:

- *Key Goals*: (1) disrupt terrorist networks in Afghanistan and Pakistan to degrade their ability to launch international terrorist attacks; (2) promote a more capable, accountable, and effective government in Afghanistan; (3) develop self-reliant Afghan security forces; and (4) involve the international community to actively assist in addressing these objectives. These relatively targeted goals are in line with comments by President Obama that he wants to "finish the job" in Afghanistan during his presidency.
- *Strategy Definition*: The overall counter-insurgency strategy is intended to "clear, hold, build, and transition"—to protect the population and allow time for Afghan governance and security forces to take leadership and for infrastructure and economic development to take root.
- *Limiting Civilian Casualties*. Part of the strategy is to win support of Afghans by sharply limiting air strikes and some types of raids and combat that cause Afghan civilian casualties and resentment[41] Some refer to the rules as the "Karzai 12," referring to the number of points of these rules of engagement. Gen. Petraeus has thus far sought to continue the thrust of the policy while emphasizing that U.S. troops can and must defend themselves. Both he and the Karzai government want to prevent any recurrence of incident such as the one that occurred near Herat on August 22, 2008, in which a NATO bomb killed up to 90 civilians, as well as the incident in September 2009 in Konduz in which Germany's contingent called in an airstrike on Taliban fighters who captured two fuel trucks; killing several civilians as well as Taliban fighters. Still, ISAF-caused civilian casualties continue, mainly due to misunderstandings at ISAF checkpoints.
- *July 2011 Deadline*. The Obama Administration emphasis on transition to Afghan security leadership beginning in July 2011 has been interpreted by some Administration officials—and by some Afghan and regional leaders—as laying

[41] See CRS Report R41084, *Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians*, by Susan G. Chesser.

the groundwork for winding down U.S. involvement in coming years.[42] Because the time frame has stimulated considerable debate, it is discussed further below. What might or might not occur in July 2011 is subject to a thorough DOD-led review of the situation in December 2010.

- *Resources and Troops*: The Administration asserts that U.S. and international "inputs" are now sufficient to achieve overall objectives. Officials say these elements were largely lacking during the Bush Administration because of the requirements of the Iraq war.
- *Pressing the Afghan Government:* The Administration asserts that the Karzai government is being held to account for its performance, although, as noted, no specific penalties or alterations have been specified for Afghan government shortcomings.
- *Civilian "Uplift":* A key part of the effort is to develop Afghan institutions not only in the central government but particularly at the provincial and local levels. To be effective, the number of U.S. civilian advisors in Afghanistan reached about 1,000 in early 2010 and is to rise another 300 in 2010. Of these about 350 are serving outside Kabul to build local governance and development in various initiatives such as 32 District Support Teams and other District Working Groups. That is up from 67 outside Kabul in early 2009.
- *Civilian-Military Integration*: There is a commitment to civilian-military integration, as outlined in a DOD-State Department joint campaign plan and Ambassador Holbrooke's January 2010 strategy document, referenced earlier. High-level "Senior Civilian Representatives" have been appointed to help the military formulate strategy for the regional commands where they serve. This is part of a new "Interagency Provincial Affairs" initiative that is less military-focused. (For more information, see CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*.)
- *Reintegration and Reconciliation*: As discussed later, the Administration supports Afghan efforts to provide financial and social incentives to persuade insurgents to lay down their arms and accept the Afghan constitution. The United States does not unconditionally support Karzai's policy of negotiating with senior insurgent leaders.
- *Pakistan*: Engagement with Pakistan and enlisting its increased cooperation is pivotal to U.S. policy. More information is in the section on Pakistan, below, and in CRS Report RL33498, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*, by K. Alan Kronstadt.
- *International Dimension*: New international diplomatic mechanisms have been formed to better coordinate all "stakeholders" in the Afghanistan issue (NATO, Afghanistan's neighbors, other countries in Afghanistan's region, the United Nations, and other donors). Meetings such as the January 28, 2010, meeting in London and the July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference are part of that effort. To date,

[42] Commander NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan, and U.S. Forces, Afghanistan. "Commander's Initial Assessment." August 30, 2009, available at http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment_Redacted_092109.pdf. White House. Remarks by the President In Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan. December 1, 2009; Chandrasekaran, Rajiv. "Differing Views of New Afghanistan Strategy." *Washington Post*, December 26, 2009.

at least 25 nations have appointed direct counterparts to Holbrooke, including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

- *Partner Contributions*: Increased partner contributions of funding and troops are sought, and efforts—not completely successful to date—are being made to try to persuade partner countries to remain in Afghanistan.
- *Metrics:* The Administration will continue to measure progress along clear metrics. Many in Congress, pressing for clear metrics to assess progress, inserted into P.L. 111-32 (FY2009 supplemental appropriation) a requirement that the President submit to Congress, 90 days after enactment (by September 23, 2009), metrics by which to assess progress, and a report on that progress every 180 days thereafter. The Administration's approximately 50 metrics were reported at the website of *Foreign Policy*[43] and were submitted. However, the difficulty in formulating useful and clear metrics that would enable Members and officials to assess progress in the war effort was demonstrated by comments by Ambassador Holbrooke on August 12, 2009, saying that on defining success in Afghanistan and Pakistan: "We will know it when we see it."[44] In its September 22, 2009, report on the situation in Afghanistan (A/64/364-S/2009/475), the United Nations developed its own "benchmarks" for progress in Afghan governance and security.

July 2011 "Deadline"

The Obama Administration emphasis on transition to Afghan security leadership beginning in July 2011 has been perhaps the most widely discussed and debated aspect of policy. It is interpreted by some Administration critics—and by some Afghan and regional leaders—as laying the groundwork for winding down U.S. involvement in coming years.[45] The Administration has said it set the time frame to demonstrate to a war-weary public that U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan is not open-ended. However, Defense Department officials, including in testimony before the Senate and House Armed Services Committees during June 15-16, 2010, have asserted that the pace and scope of any drawdown would be subject to conditions on the ground, as assessed by DOD in ongoing reviews and a more extensive assessment to be completed by December 2010. In a press conference on June 24, 2010, President Obama said "we didn't say we'd be switching off the lights and closing the door behind us [in July 2011]. What we said is we'd begin a transition phase in which the Afghan government is taking on more and more responsibility." In a series of interviews in August 2010, Gen. Petraeus said U.S. drawdowns would be subject to an assessment of conditions at the time, and that he might recommend to President Obama that any drawdown be limited. President Obama's statement marking the end of combat operations in Iraq, on August 31, 2010, said any drawdown would be conditions based. These comments appear to modify the July 18, 2010, Vice President Biden amended earlier

[43] http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/09/16/evaluating_progress_in_afghanistan_pakistan.

[44] Schmitt, Eric. "White House Is Struggling to Measure Success in Afghanistan". *New York Times*, August 7, 2009. Comments by Ambassador Holbrooke at seminar hosted by the Center for American Progress. August 12, 2009.

[45] Commander NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan, and U.S. Forces, Afghanistan. "Commander's Initial Assessment." August 30, 2009, available at http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment_Redacted_092109.pdf. White House. Remarks by the President In Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan. December 1, 2009; Chandrasekaran, Rajiv. "Differing Views of New Afghanistan Strategy." *Washington Post*, December 26, 2009.

remarks by saying that only a few thousand U.S. forces might come out at that time as part of a process of transitioning some Afghan provinces to Afghan lead.

At the same time, with European publics tiring of involvement, on April 23, 2010, NATO adopted a plan to put Afghan forces in the lead role in some of the less restive German-led northern sector (provinces such as Badakshan, Takhar, Balkh, and Faryab) some time in 2010, and fully transition them in 2011. According to some U.S. commanders, some provinces in the U.S.-led eastern sector, such as Panjshir or Bamiyan, could be turned over in 2011, with Nangarhar considered a candidate for turnover thereafter. In the context of the July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference, agreement reportedly was reached on a joint Afghan-NATO board to decide on locations that might be selected for transition to Afghan lead. On the other hand, Gen. Petraeus has discussed a drawdown formula under which U.S. forces might "thin out" as Afghan forces take on more responsibility, rather than to turn over entire geographic areas to Afghan control. As discussed further below under "Alliance Issues: The NATO-Led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Operation Enduring Freedom" some partner countries are pushing for announcing specific provinces to be transitioned to Afghan control at the NATO meeting in Lisbon in November 2010.

Implementation, Early Results, and Doubts

The United States and its partners began to implement the McChrystal strategy in January 2010. The strategy is largely being continued by Gen. Petraeus. The April 2010 Defense Department report, referenced earlier, states that "The continuing decline in stability in Afghanistan, described in the last report, has leveled off in many areas." However, the report added that support for the Afghan government in the 121 districts identified as the most restive remains very low, although many residents are "on the fence" awaiting signs that the coalition and Afghan government will produce security and other signs of progress. There is also concern about Karzai's announcement on August 16, 2010, that he would issue a decree requiring security contractors to be integrated into formal security organizations within four months; DOD and State Department depend on the about 24,000 international and Afghan security contractors to secure locations and shipments.

On the other hand, in an interview with ABC News on September 14, 2010, Gen. Peraeus said that, "in some areas, we have already reversed the momentum of the Taliban. In others, we still need to do that and we are intent on doing that." His reference to those areas where the insurgency still has momentum include previously quiet provinces where violence has increased, including Baghlan, Konduz, and Faryab provinces. In early August 2010, security fears were inflamed by the Taliban killing of ten international medical workers in part of Badakhshan province where there has been little violence.

According to Gen. Petraeus, operations in 2010 have ended Taliban control in large parts of Helmand and are creating a contiguous secure corridor for commerce between Helmand and Qandahar. In August 2010, he took *NBC News* correspondents to Wardak province as a showcase of stability in a province that, in 2008, was considered largely under Taliban influence. The first of the operations in 2009 that produced some of the relatively positive assessments was Operation Khanjar—intended to expel the Taliban and reestablish Afghan governance in parts of the province. The offensive reportedly ended Taliban control of several districts in Helmand, including Nawa, Now Zad, and Musa Qala.

Operation Moshtarek in Marjah/Nad Ali

Some have debated progress based on the still uncertain outcome of "Operation Moshtarek" (Operation Together). It consisted of about 15,000 U.S., foreign partner, and Afghan forces (about 8,000 of the total) that, beginning on February 13, 2010, sought to clear Taliban militants from Marjah city (85,000 population) in Helmand. An Afghan governing structure was identified in advance (so-called "government in a box"), the population had substantial warning, and there were meetings with regional elders just before the offensive began—all of which were an apparent effort to cause militants to flee and to limit civilian losses.[46] The city, for the most part, was declared cleared of militants as of February 26, 2010, but some militants continue to fight in and on the outskirts of Marjah and to assassinate and intimidate Afghans cooperating with U.S. and Afghan forces. Some Afghan officials, such as ministry representatives, have refused to serve inside the city itself and governance building remains slow, with town governor Hajji Zahir being fired in July 2010. This calls into question the feasibility of the "government in a box" concept propounded by U.S. officials in Afghanistan.. The difficulties led Gen. McChrystal to call the city a "bleeding ulcer" in June 2010.

Ambassador Holbrooke, in the CNN interview cited above, said that a "small but high quality team" of U.S. civilians and Afghan officials moved into Marjah to help establish governance and economic development. In concert with their ongoing combat operations, U.S. forces, primarily Marines, have reportedly been disbursing Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP-funds controlled by U.S. officers) funds to clear rubble from schools, clean canals, repair markets, rebuild bridges, and compensate families who lost members due to the combat. Afghans who work on these projects in Marjah and in the previously cleared Nawa district are reportedly being paid about $5 per day as part of an effort to provide livelihoods to Afghans who might previously have supported the Taliban for purely financial reasons.[47] Some fear that many of these workers might rejoin insurgent activities when U.S. funding for these "cash for work" programs decline.

Qandahar Effort

Further doubts about the U.S. mission in Afghanistan have been raised by the delay and downscaling of a U.S.-led operation to stabilize the key province of Qandahar. In late February 2010, U.S. commanders and senior Obama Administration officials told journalists that initial planning had begun for a complex offensive in the province that was to begin in June 2010.[48] During Defense Secretary Gates's visit to Afghanistan in March 2010, he reportedly reviewed planning for the Qandahar effort with President Karzai and Gen. McChrystal.

Gen. McChrystal had emphasized that any Qandahar effort would focus less on combat and more on conducting consultations and *shuras* with tribal leaders and other notables to enlist their cooperation against Taliban infiltrators. U.S. commanders have described the operation as more of a "process," or a slow push into restive districts by setting up Afghan checkpoints to secure the city and districts around it (particularly Arghandab, Zhari, and Panjwai)—and not a classic military offensive. Qandahar's population is far larger (about 2 million in the province), and Qandahar province and city have functioning governments, which Marjah did not. The city hosts

[46] Holbrooke interview on CNN, March 14, 2010, op. cit.

[47] Nissenbaum, Dion. "Marine Forward Operating Base Marjah Takes Root." McClatchy Newspapers, March 16, 2010.

[48] Kornblut, Anne and Greg Jaffe. "U.S. Begins to Lay Groundwork for Kandahar Drive." *Washington Post*, February 27, 2010.

numerous businesses and is relatively vibrant, despite some Taliban infiltration and clandestine activity. During the Gates visit in March 2010, Gen. McChrystal told journalists that, unlike Marjah, Qandahar is not under Taliban control, but it has been under a "menacing Taliban presence, particularly in the districts around it."[49] As part of the effort to stabilize Qandahar U.S. officials are also reportedly trying to strengthen Governor Tooryalai Wesa and balance the flow of U.S. and international funds to the various tribes and clans in the province. An unstated objective is also to weaken the influence of Karzai's brother, Ahmad Wali Karzai, chair of the provincial council, who is discussed above.[50]

A sense of doubt about the prospects for the operation built in April-August 2010 as Afghan tribal and other residential resistance—expressed at local *shuras* —to any combat to secure Qandahar. Despite the doubts, reported operations by U.S. Special Operations Forces against key militants near the city began in April 2010 as preparation for operations. [51] Subsequently, as of September 21, Taliban control has been ended in some neighborhoods and Afghan checkpoints have begun to be established and expanded. Further *shuras* have been held to promote Afghan governance. U.S. forces have tried to employ as little combat as possible in pushing out the boundaries of security in and around Qandahar city.

Local and Other Security Experiments Under Way

Discussed below are some additional or alternative approaches that have been in various stages of implementation since 2008, and which enjoy general support among U.S. partners in Afghanistan.

"Reintegration" and "Reconciliation" With Insurgents

The issue of reintegration fighters and reconciling with insurgent leaders is an Afghan-led process that was discussed extensively by about 1,600 delegates (about 350 were women) to a "consultative peace *loya jirga* held in Kabul during June 2-4, 2010. The issue has made some in the international community, and within Afghanistan, concerned for the potential to involve compromises with insurgents and perhaps some backsliding on human rights. Most insurgents are highly conservative Islamists who agreed with the limitations in women's rights that characterized Taliban rule. Many leaders of ethnic minorities are also skeptical of the effort because they fear that it might further Pashtun political strength within Afghanistan, and enhance the influence of Pakistan in Afghan politics.

Others see these processes as potentially the only way to end the conflict in Afghanistan. Secretary Gates, in a January 2010 trip to the region, said the Taliban is "part of the political fabric of Afghanistan"—an indication that the United States has shifted toward accepting at least some of these approaches as part of overall strategy. The United States and the Karzai government appear to agree that fighters and insurgent commanders could only be reintegrated if they surrender their arms, accept the Afghan constitution, and sever any ties to Al Qaeda or other terrorist groups.

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[49] Bumiller, Elisabeth. Gates and Afghan Leader Review Plan for a Kandahar Offensive" *New York Times*, March 9, 2010.

[50] Partlow, Joshua. "U.S. Seeks to Bolster Kandahar Governor, Upend Power Balance." *Washington Post*, April 29, 2010.

[51] "U.S. Elite Units Step Up Effort in Afghan City." *New York Times*, April 26, 2010.

Reintegration/"Peace Jirga"

The January 28, 2010, London conference, in general, backed devoting more emphasis to reintegration of fighters amenable to surrendering. Britain, Japan, and several other countries announced a total of about $160 million in donations to a new fund to support the reintegration process.[52] The United States is to contribute an additional $100 million. Some of the incentives to surrendering insurgents that the international community deemed likely to fund are jobs, amnesty, and protection, and possibly making them part of the security architecture for their communities. These are elements included in a reintegration plan drafted by the Afghan government and presented to the peace *loya jirga* during June 2-4, 2010.[53] In its final declaration, the *peace jirga* backed the plan, but also called for limits in NATO-led raids and further efforts to limit civilian casualties. It also called for the release of some detained insurgents where allegations against them are weak. The day after the *jirga* concluded, Karzai sought to implement that recommendation by calling for a review of the cases of all insurgent detentions. In late June 2010, President Karzai issued a decree to implement the plan, which involves outreach by Afghan local leaders to tribes and others who are in a position to convince insurgents to lay down their arms. The international community gave its support to the effort in the communiqué of the July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference.

Although it reached some substantive conclusions, the **peace** *jirga* itself received mixed reviews for its inclusiveness or lack thereof. Karzai tried to bring other minority communities along in backing the peace *jirga* and the reintegration process, and to do so he appointed former leader Rabbani to chair the *jirga*. However, "opposition leader" Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Karzai's rival in the 2009 presidential election, boycotted the *jirga*. Taliban attacks on the first day of the *jirga* served as the public justification for the subsequent resignation of intelligence director Saleh and Interior Minister Atmar, discussed above.

However, despite the international funding for the effort, the Afghan-led reintegration process has moved forward only slowly. Only $200,000 of the donated funds have been spent, as of early September 2010, and only about 100 fighters have surrendered since April 2010. However, press reports in September 2010, citing briefings by Gen. Petraeus for senior U.S. officials, say he anticipates many more surrenders of insurgent fighters between September and the end of 2010. In addition, press reports say that some Taliban fighters have been seeking information on or involvement in the September 18, 2010, as a possible prelude to joining the political process.

To help the process along from the international perspective, in November 2009, ISAF set up a "force reintegration cell," headed by Britain's Maj. Gen. Richard Barrons, to develop additional programs and policies to accelerate the effort to cause insurgents to change sides. These strategies are similar to what was employed successfully in Anbar Province in Iraq in 2006 and 2007.

The Obama Administration has been separately expanding U.S. efforts to lure lower-level insurgents off the battlefield with job opportunities and infrastructure construction incentives. Another component of the program has been meetings with tribal elders to persuade Taliban and other insurgents in their areas to give up their fight. Some U.S. commanders are reporting some successes with this effort, using Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds. The National Defense Authorization Act for FY2010 (P.L. 111-84) authorizes the use of CERP funds

[52] See: http://afghanistan.hmg.gov.uk/en/conference/contributions/.

[53] Afghanistan National Security Council. "Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program." April 2010.

to win local support, to "reintegrate" Taliban fighters who renounce violence. FY2011 budget language requested by the Administration would authorize U.S. funds to be contributed to the reintegration fund mentioned above.

Karzai has consistently advocated talks with Taliban militants who want to consider ending their fight. Noted above is the "Program for Strengthening Peace and Reconciliation" (referred to in Afghanistan by its Pashto acronym "PTS") headed by *Meshrano Jirga* speaker Sibghatullah Mojadeddi and former Vice President Karim Khalili, and overseen by Karzai's National Security Council. The program is credited with persuading 9,000 Taliban figures and commanders to renounce violence and join the political process.

Reconciliation With Taliban/Insurgent Leaders

A separate Karzai initiative—far more controversial and widely debated than reintegration—is to conduct negotiations with senior insurgent leaders. Many in the international community, and within the Obama Administration, fear that reconciliation has the potential to result in insurgent leaders obtaining senior positions or control over some Afghan territory, and that these figures will retain ties to Al Qaeda and commit abuses similar to those under the Taliban regime. The July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference did not issue unqualified support for high-level reconciliation talks, instead endorsing establishment of an Afghan High Peace Council to build Afghan consensus on the issue. That Council was established on September 5, 2010, but the names of the members of the Council have not been released.

In March 2009, President Obama publicly ruled out negotiations with Mullah Umar and his aides because of their alignment with Al Qaeda. Secretary of Defense Gates said on March 24, 2010, that "the shift in momentum [toward the United States] is not yet strong enough to convince the Taliban leaders that they are in fact going to lose." CIA director Panetta made similar remarks on June 27, 2010 (interview cited earlier). However, then British Foreign Secretary David Miliband came out in full support of the concept of a negotiated settlement of the conflict in a high-profile speech at M.I.T. on March 10, 2010.[54] The subsequent British government of David Cameron has not abrogated that view.

Although the Taliban as a movement was not invited to the June 2-4, 2010, consultative peace *jirga*, some Taliban sympathizers reportedly were there, and Karzai has said he is open to potential talks to reconcile even high-level leaders such as Mullah Umar. One press report, quoting figures around Umar, says Umar might be willing to enter into direct talks with the Afghan government—this is the first indication, if accurate, that Umar might be willing to reconcile.[55] In advance of the peace *jirga*, the Karzai government and representatives of Hikmatyar confirmed peace talks on March 21, 2010, in which Karzai, his brother, Ahmad Wali, and several Northern Alliance figures met with the Hikmatyar representatives. The representatives reportedly presented a 15-point peace plan to Karzai that does not necessarily demand his government step down immediately, and would demand a July 2010 deadline for all foreign forces to leave Afghanistan. Karzai was reportedly angered by the Pakistani capture of Mullah Bradar in February 2010, believing it disrupted Karzai's efforts to reach out to the Taliban

[54] M.I.T. Compton Lecture by U.K. Foreign Secretary David Miliband. Text at http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=Speech&id=21865587.

[55] Grey, Stephen. "Taliban's Supreme Leader Signals Willingness to Talk Peace." *London Sunday Times*, April 18, 2010.

inner circle. Although the circumstances of the arrest remain unclear, Karzai reportedly believes that Pakistan arrested Bradar in order to be able to influence the course of any Afghan government-Taliban settlement.

Sets of high-level talks have been taking place over the past few years, although with less apparent momentum than is the case in 2010. Press reports said that Afghan officials (led by Karzai's brother Qayyum) and Taliban members had met each other in Ramadan-related gatherings in Saudi Arabia in September 2008. Another round of talks was held in January 2009 in Saudi Arabia, and there are reports of ongoing contacts in Dubai, UAE. Some of these talks apparently involved Arsala Rahmani, a former Taliban official now in parliament, and the former Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan, Abdul Salam Zaeef, who purportedly is in touch with Umar's inner circle. The core Taliban leaders continue to demand that (1) all foreign troops leave Afghanistan; (2) a new "Islamic" constitution be adopted; and (3) Islamic law is imposed. Hikmatyar's demands are somewhat less extreme, as discussed above.

The consultative peace *jirga*, in its final declaration, supported Karzai's call for the removal of the names of some Taliban figures from U.N. lists of terrorists, lists established pursuant to Resolution 1267 and Resolution 1333 (October 15, 1999, and December 19, 2000, both pre-September 11 sanctions against the Taliban and Al Qaeda) and Resolution 1390 (January 16, 2002). Press reports before the July 20 Kabul Conference said the Afghan government has submitted a list of 50 Taliban figures it wants taken off this list as a confidence-building measure. The Conference called on Afghanistan to engage with the U.N. Security Council to provide evidence to justify such de-listings, and U.N., U.S., and other international officials said they would support considering de-listings on a case-by-case basis. On January 26, 2010, Russia, previously a hold-out against such a process, dropped opposition to removing five Taliban-era figures from these sanctions lists, including Taliban-era foreign minister Wakil Mutawwakil, who ran in 2005 parliamentary elections. Also removed was Abdul Hakim Monib, who has served Karzai as governor of Uruzgan, Abdul Hakim Mujahid, who was Taliban representative in the United States, and three others. "Mullah Rocketi," not on the sanctions list, is a former Taliban commander who ran for president in the August 2009 elections.

Local Security Experiments: Afghan Provincial Protection Program (APPP) and Local Defense Initiative

Until mid-2008, U.S. military commanders opposed assisting local militias anywhere in Afghanistan for fear of creating new rivals to the central government who would arbitrarily administer justice. The urgent security needs in Afghanistan caused reconsideration and some relaxation of that stance, but the same conceptual concerns about local security institutions have held back expansion of the practice. Gen Petraeus, who has now taken over command in Afghanistan, is favorable toward these type of local security experiments, based on his similar and successful experiences in Iraq. Press reports in July 2010 say he succeeded, after several of his first meetings with Karzai, in overcoming Karzai's reticence to expand ongoing experiments. Gen. Petraeus reportedly has guaranteed that any local security organs would be under the administration of the Ministry of Interior. The Defense Department has notified Congress in September 2010 that it will reprogram about $35 million in Afghan security forces funding to support the latest iteration of the concept, called the Afghan local police initiative. It is planned that up to 10,000 volunteers will serve in the initiative.

The agreement between Karzai and Petraeus builds on a previous Bush Administration program to try to form local defense organs, although composed of local personnel, not former insurgents. The program begun in 2008, and which will be the model for any new local security organs, is termed the "Afghan Provincial Protection Program" (APPP, commonly called "AP3") and is funded with DOD (CERP) funds. U.S. commanders say that no U.S. weapons are supplied to the militias, but this is an Afghan-led program and the Afghan government is providing weapons (Kalashnikov rifles) to the local groups, possibly using U.S. funds. Participants in the program are given $200 per month.

The program got under way in Wardak Province (Jalrez district) in early 2009 and 100 local security personnel "graduated" in May 2009. It has been expanded to 1,200 personnel, in a province with a population of about 500,000. (These personnel are expected to be integrated into the local police initiative). Before the program was placed on hold, it was to be expanded to Ghazni, Lowgar, and Kapisa provinces and eventually include as many as 8,000 Afghans. Gen. Petraeus showcased Wardak in August 2010 as an example of the success of the APPP and similar efforts. As an indication of divisions among Afghan leaders about the concept, the upper house of the Afghan parliament (*Meshrano Jirga*) passed a resolution in November 2008 opposing the concept. The National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-84) calls for a report within 120 days of enactment (October 28, 2009) on the results of the program.

Another program, the Local Defense Initiative, began in February 2010 in Arghandab district of Qandahar Province. U.S. Special Forces organized about 25 villagers into a neighborhood watch group, which is armed. The program has been credited by U.S. commanders as bringing normal life back to the district. A different militia was allowed to operate in Konduz to help secure the northern approaches to that city. It was not part of the APPP and it is not clear whether it will be integrated into the local police initiative. Problems arose when the militia began arbitrarily administering justice, fueling concerns of Karzai and Ambassador Eikenberry about these local security approaches.

The local security experiments to date are not *arbokai*, which are private tribal militias. Still, some believe that the arbokai concept should be revived as a means of securing Afghanistan, as the arbokai did during the reign of Zahir Shah and in prior pre-Communist eras.

Reversal of Previous Efforts: DDR and DIAG programs

As noted, the local security programs appear to reverse the 2002-2007 efforts to disarm local sources of armed force. The main program, run by UNAMA, was called the "DDR" program—Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration—and it formally concluded on June 30, 2006. The program got off to a slow start because the Afghan Defense Ministry did not reduce the percentage of Tajiks in senior positions by a July 1, 2003, target date, dampening Pashtun recruitment. In September 2003, Karzai replaced 22 senior Tajiks in the Defense Ministry officials with Pashtuns, Uzbeks, and Hazaras, enabling DDR to proceed.

The DDR program was initially expected to demobilize 100,000 fighters, although that figure was later reduced. (Figures for accomplishment of the DDR and DIAG programs are contained in **Table 6** below.) Of those demobilized, 55,800 former fighters have exercised reintegration options provided by the program: starting small businesses, farming, and other options. U.N. officials say at least 25% of these found long-term, sustainable jobs. Some studies criticized the

DDR program for failing to prevent a certain amount of rearmament of militiamen or stockpiling of weapons and for the rehiring of some militiamen.[56] Part of the DDR program was the collection and cantonment of militia weapons, but generally only poor-quality weapons were collected. As one example, Fahim, still the main military leader of the Northern Alliance faction, continues to turn heavy weapons over to U.N. and Afghan forces (including four Scud missiles), although the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) says that large quantities of weapons remain in the Panjshir Valley.

The major donor for the program was Japan, which contributed about $140 million. Figures for collected weapons are contained in **Table 6** and U.S. spending on the program are in the U.S. aid tables at the end of this report.

DIAG

Since June 11, 2005, the disarmament effort has emphasized another program called "DIAG"—Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups. It is run by the Afghan Disarmament and Reintegration Commission, headed by Vice President Khalili. Under the DIAG, no payments are available to fighters, and the program depends on persuasion rather than use of force against the illegal groups. DIAG has not been as well funded as was DDR: it has received $11 million in operating funds. As an incentive for compliance, Japan and other donors have made available $35 million for development projects where illegal groups have disbanded. These incentives were intended to accomplish the disarmament of a pool of as many as 150,000 members of 1,800 different "illegal armed groups": militiamen that were not part of recognized local forces (Afghan Military Forces, AMF) and were never on the rolls of the Defense Ministry. These goals were not met by the December 2007 target date in part because armed groups in the south say they need to remain armed against the Taliban, but UNAMA reports that some progress continues to be achieved. Several U.S.-backed local security programs implemented since 2008, discussed below, appear to reverse the intent and implementation of the DIAG process.

Table 3. The Dutch Experience in Uruzgan

The counterinsurgency strategy pursued by Gen. McChrystal, and now Gen. Petraeus, adopts many of the techniques and policies used in Uruzgan Province by the Netherlands. The Dutch were the lead force there from 2006 until July 2010. A January 2009 DOD report on Afghanistan stability (mandated by P.L. 110-181) noted the substantial success of the Dutch approach in Uruzgan. The Dutch approach focused on development work and engagement with local leaders to understand their development needs.[57] In this strategy, decisions are made jointly—or at least with extensive consultations—by the commander of the military contingent and the Dutch civilian leader for the province, usually a relatively senior Foreign Ministry diplomat.

On March 29, 2009, the Netherlands converted its Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT, see below) in Tarin Kowt to civilian leadership rather than military leadership. Dutch officials say their projects in Uruzgan encourage the follow-on expansion of governance, and clearly place Afghans in the lead in implementing projects, rather than on delivering projects implemented by foreign donors. As a possible sign of success, the Netherlands has not added substantial numbers of troops to the 1,700+ contingent that took over the peacekeeping in the province. Others say the approach is not unique because the Netherlands relies on the Australian contingent to conduct protective combat. Some say the approach cannot be widely applied because Uruzgan geography is not as hostile as in other

[56] For an analysis of the DDR program, see Christian Dennys. *Disarmament, Demobilization and Rearmament?*, June 6, 2005, http://www.jca.apc.org/~jann/Documents/Disarmament%20demobilization%20rearmament.pdf.

[57] Chivers, C.J. "Dutch Soldiers Stress Restraint in Afghanistan." *New York Times*, April 6, 2007.

provinces, and because the Taliban insurgency is not as strong there. The province does not border Pakistan, an entry point for insurgents.

Despite the successes, motions passed in the Dutch parliament required it to pull its military forces out of Afghanistan by the end of 2010. Prime Minister Balkenende, member of one of three parties in a governing coalition, supported continuing the mission, but his coalition collapsed in February 2010 when one of the coalition partners withdrew from the governing alliance over that issue, demanding withdrawal by the late 2010 deadline. As of July 2010, the Dutch troops have departed Afghanistan. U.S. and other partner troops have at least partially assumed the Dutch mission in Uruzgan. Some Dutch troops might return to Afghanistan in the future.

Possible Further Limits on U.S. Operations/Status of Forces Agreement

The issue of a larger Afghan government role in approving NATO-led operations surfaced again at the June 2-4, 2010, peace *jirga*, whose final declaration called for the Afghan government to "be able to lead military operations and coordination" among international forces operating in Afghanistan. Such sentiments arose in 2008, when the Afghan cabinet reacted to some high-profile instances of accidental civilian deaths by demanding negotiation of a formal "Status of Forces Agreement" (SOFA). A SOFA would spell out the combat authorities of non-Afghan forces, and might limit the United States to airstrikes, detentions, and house raids.[58]

A draft SOFA—or technical agreement clarifying U.S./coalition authorities in Afghanistan—reportedly has been under discussion between the United States and Afghanistan since 2007. U.S. forces currently operate in Afghanistan under a "diplomatic note" between the United States and the interim government of Afghanistan that was exchanged in November 2002; the agreement gives the United States legal jurisdiction over U.S. personnel serving in Afghanistan and states the Afghan government's acknowledgment that U.S.-led military operations were "ongoing."

Long-Term Security Commitment

As noted, some Afghan leaders perceive the Obama Administration's 2011 deadline to "begin" a transition to Afghan security leadership as a sign the Administration might want to wind down U.S. involvement in Afghanistan. In part to reassure the Afghan government, President Obama, at a May 12, 2010, press conference with visiting President Karzai, stated that the United States and Afghanistan would renew a five-year-old strategic partnership.

The strategic partnership was first established on May 23, 2005, when Karzai and President Bush issued a "joint declaration"[59] providing for U.S. forces to have access to Afghan military facilities, in order to prosecute "the war against international terror and the struggle against violent extremism." The joint statement did not give Karzai enhanced control over facilities used by U.S. forces, over U.S. operations, or over prisoners taken during operations. Some of the bases, both in and near Afghanistan, that support combat in Afghanistan, include those in **Table 7**. Karzai's signing of the partnership had been blessed by Afghan representatives on May 8, 2005, when he summoned about 1,000 delegates to a consultative *jirga* in Kabul on whether to host

[58] Gall, Carlotta. Two Afghans Lose Posts Over Attack. *New York Times*, August 25, 2008.

[59] See http://merln.ndu.edu/archivepdf/afghanistan/WH/20050523-2.pdf.

permanent U.S. bases. That *jirga* supported an indefinite presence of international forces to maintain security but urged Karzai to delay a decision. A FY2009 supplemental appropriation (P.L. 111-32) and the FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-84) prohibit the U.S. establishment of permanent bases in Afghanistan.

Alliance Issues: The NATO-Led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Operation Enduring Freedom[60]

As discussed, most U.S. troops in Afghanistan remain under the umbrella of the NATO-led "International Security Assistance Force" (ISAF)—consisting of all 26 NATO members states plus partner countries. President Obama's December 1, 2009, policy speech on Afghanistan was explicit in seeking new partner troop commitments, and pledges met or exceeded what some U.S. officials expected. These contributions, to some extent, refuted arguments by observers that U.S. partners were unwilling to contribute more combat troops to the Afghanistan effort. However, several key contingents have ended their combat missions, will end those missions, or are setting notional future deadlines for departure and "transition" to Afghan leadership. Aside from the United States, NATO and other partner forces that continue to bear the brunt of combat in Afghanistan include Britain, Canada, Poland, France, Denmark, Romania, and Australia.

Virtually all the European governments are under pressure from their publics and parliaments to end or reduce the military involvement in Afghanistan. This pressure led Britain, France, and Germany to ask the United Nations to organize the international conference that took place in London on January 28, 2010. The conference did, as these countries sought, endorse the concept of transition to Afghan leadership on security and improvement of its governance. The London conference also encouraged more regional assistance from India, China, and Russia. The transition concept, possibly including specific provinces that might be handed over to Afghan leadership, was again discussed at a the Kabul Conference on July 20, 2010, and will be discussed in depth at the NATO meeting in Lisbon in November 2010. Gen. Petraeus reportedly wants to delay such moves until the July 2011 timeframe.

[60] Twelve other countries provide forces to both OEF and ISAF.

Table 4. Background on NATO/ISAF Formation and U.N. Mandate

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was created by the Bonn Agreement and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 (December 20, 2001, a Chapter 7 resolution),[61] initially limited to Kabul. In October 2003, after Germany agreed to contribute 450 military personnel to expand ISAF into the city of Konduz, ISAF contributors endorsed expanding its presence to several other cities, contingent on formal U.N. approval—which came on October 14, 2003 in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1510. In August 2003, NATO took over command of ISAF—previously the ISAF command rotated among donor forces including Turkey and Britain.

NATO/ISAF's responsibilities broadened significantly in 2004 with NATO/ISAF's assumption of security responsibility for northern and western Afghanistan (Stage 1, Regional Command North, in 2004 and Stage 2, Regional Command West, in 2005, respectively). The transition process continued on July 31, 2006, with the formal handover of the security mission in southern Afghanistan to NATO/ISAF control. As part of this "Stage 3," a British/Canadian/Dutch-led "Regional Command South" (RC-S) was formed. Britain is the lead force in Helmand; Canada is lead in Qandahar, and the Netherlands was lead in Uruzgan until its departure in July 2010; the three rotated the command of RC-S. "Stage 4," the assumption of NATO/ISAF command of peacekeeping in 14 provinces of eastern Afghanistan (and thus all of Afghanistan), was completed on October 5, 2006. As part of the completion of the NATO/ISAF takeover, the United States put about half the U.S. troops then operating in Afghanistan under NATO/ISAF in "Regional Command East" (RC-E).

The ISAF mission was renewed (until October 13, 2010) by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1890 (October 8, 2009), which reiterated previous resolutions' support for the Operation Enduring Freedom mission. Resolution 1890 also welcomed the new joint initiatives to train the Afghan forces, discussed further below. Tables at the end of this report list contributing forces, areas of operations, and their Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

Recent Major Contingent Developments

Despite waning public support in partner countries, there were several additional non-U.S. troop and aid contributions for Afghanistan during 2008–2010. In 2008, France deployed about 1,000 additional forces to Kapisa province to block Taliban movements toward northern Kabul. President Sarkozy won a parliamentary vote of support for the mission, in late September 2008, following the killing of 10 French soldiers in August 2008. In an effort to repair divisions within the Afghanistan coalition over each country's respective domestic considerations, Secretary Gates presented, at a NATO meeting in Scotland on December 13, 2007, a "strategic concept paper" that would help coordinate and guide NATO and other partner contributions and missions over the coming three to five years. This was an effort to structure each country's contribution as appropriate to the politics and resources of that contributor. The concept paper, now titled the "Strategic Vision," was endorsed by the NATO summit in Bucharest, Romania in April 2008.

Following the Obama Administration's March 27, 2009, policy announcement, some additional pledges came through at the April 3-4, 2009, NATO summit. Major new force pledges were issued after the December 1 policy statement, and in conjunction with the January 28, 2010, conference in London. However, some of these forces were intended to compensate for the pullouts by the Netherlands and Canada 2010 and 2011, respectively. The major recent pledges are the following:

- April 2009: Deployment of 3,000 non-U.S. troops to secure the Afghan elections and 2,000 trainers for the Afghan security forces. Contributing forces for the election period include Spain (400), Germany (600), Poland (600), and Britain

[61] Its mandate was extended until October 13, 2006, by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1623 (September 13, 2005); and until October 13, 2007, by Resolution 1707 (September 12, 2006).

(about 900). Other pledges (from Bulgaria, Estonia, Italy, Greece, Portugal, Turkey, and Slovakia) were for trainers to fill out 61 existing Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs), each of which has about 30 trainers.

- April 2009: NATO agreed to new training missions for the ANSF. A NATO Training Mission—Afghanistan (NTM-A) has been established, and a France-led 300-person European Gendarmerie Force has been established to train Afghan forces out in the provinces. Italy said it would send 100 paramilitary trainers (*carabineri*) for the NTM-A mission, medical helicopters, and transport planes.
- April 2009: $500 million in additional civilian assistance to Afghanistan was pledged by several donors.
- November 10, 2009: Ahead of President Obama's visit to Asia, Japan announced a pledge of $5 billion over the next five years for Afghanistan civilian development, although it suspended its naval refueling mission (discussed below).
- July 2009: South Korea announced it would increase its aid contribution to Afghanistan by about $20 million, in part to expand the hospital capabilities at Bagram Air Base. In November 2009, it announced a return of about 150 engineers to Afghanistan for development missions, protected by 300 South Korean forces. The forces will deploy to Parwan Province, probably by June or July 2010. (Until December 2007, 200 South Korean forces at Bagram Air Base, mainly combat engineers, were part of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF); they left in December 2007 in fulfillment of a decision by the South Korean government the previous year. However, many observers believe South Korea did not further extend its mission beyond that, possibly as part of an agreement in August 2007 under which Taliban militants released 21 kidnapped South Korean church group visitors.[62])
- December 2009-January 2010 (London conference): A total of about 9,000 forces were pledged (including retaining 2,000 sent for the August 2009 election who were due to rotate out). The pledges included Britain (500), Poland (600), Romania (600, plus about 30 trainers), Italy (1,000), Georgia (900+), Spain (500), Colombia (240, first time contributor of forces), Slovakia (60), Sweden (125), Portugal (120), and Germany (500 plus 350 on reserve, but still only in the north, not heavy combat zones). France pledged 80 trainers but no new combat forces. Several countries pledged police trainers.
- Other Major Civilian Aid Pledges in Context of London Conference:[63] France ($45 million); Saudi Arabia ($150 million over three years); Australia ($40 million); China ($75 million). Japan agreed to pay ANP salaries for another six months (until the end of 2010), a cost of about $125 million in a six month period, to come out of its $5 billion contribution mentioned above. Japan reiterated that commitment during Karzai's June 17, 2010, visit to Tokyo. Other pledges were made for Taliban reintegration, as noted above.

[62] Two were killed during their captivity. The Taliban kidnappers did not get the demanded release of 23 Taliban prisoners held by the Afghan government.

[63] For more information, see http://afghanistan.hmg.gov.uk/en/conference/contributions/.

- In July 2010, Malaysia became a new contributor to the Afghanistan effort, furnishing 40 military medics.

Upcoming Contingent Withdrawals

The war-weariness in many coalition nations is reflected in drawdown plans announced or contemplated. President Karzai appeared to try to address this sentiment at the July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference by announcing an intent that Afghan forces would take security lead by 2014, even though many experts consider this announcement unrealistic. As noted, the Netherland has completed its combat mission as of the end of July 2010. Canada is following suit by the end of 2011.

Britain has steadily increased its troop commitment in Afghanistan—mainly in high combat Helmand Province—to about 9,500 (plus 500 Special Forces). The British government formed in May 2010 has not formally altered its Afghanistan policy, but U.S. officials said on June 7, 2010, that no additional British troops will be sought henceforth. Prime Minister David Cameron said in the context of the July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference that Britain might follow the Obama Administration lead in beginning a drawdown by July 2011; other British official comments have indicated that Britain might want to end its mission by 2014. Britain has lost over 300 soldiers in Afghanistan.

The ceiling for German force levels in Afghanistan, authorized by the German parliament, is now about 5,300, a steady increase over the past several years. German officials have said they are looking to "transition" some provinces in the northern sector to Afghan lead, as discussed above, by some time in 2011. German officials have indicated they want to wind down troop involvement in 2013 or 2014.

Poland's prime minister said on June 13, 2010, after Poland lost its 17th soldier since deploying in 2006, that it would press at the NATO meeting in Lisbon in November 2010 for a "relatively quick and precise plan for ending this intervention." Poland's leaders are said to want to end their mission by 2014.

Equipment Issues

Some of the pledges address NATO's chronic equipment shortages—particularly helicopters, both for transport and attack—for the Afghanistan mission. In 2007, to try to compensate for the shortage, NATO chartered about 20 commercial helicopters for extra routine supply flights to the south, freeing up Chinooks and Black Hawks for other missions. Some of the Polish troops deployed in 2008 operate and maintain eight helicopters. Germany provides six Tornado combat aircraft to assist with strikes in combat situations in the south. NATO/ISAF also assists the Afghan Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism in the operation of Kabul International Airport (where Dutch combat aircraft also are located). In 2009, Belgium sent two more F-16 fighters.

National "Caveats" on Combat Operations

As noted in McChrystal's assessment, one of the most thorny issues has been the U.S. effort to persuade other NATO countries to adopt flexible rules of engagement that allow all contributing forces to perform combat missions. NATO and other partner forces have not, as they pledged at the NATO summit in April 2008, removed the so-called "national caveats" on their troops'

operations that Lt. Gen. McChrystal says limits operational flexibility. For example, some nations refuse to conduct night-time combat. Others have refused to carry Afghan personnel on their helicopters. Others do not fight after snowfall. These caveats were troubling to those NATO countries with forces in heavy combat zones, such as Canada, which feel they are bearing the brunt of the fighting. (See CRS Report RL33627, *NATO in Afghanistan: A Test of the Transatlantic Alliance*, by Vincent Morelli and Paul Belkin.)

Table 5. Operation Enduring Freedom Partner Forces

Operation Enduring Freedom continues as a separate combat track, led by the United States but joined by a few partners. The caveat issue is less of a factor with OEF, since OEF is known as a combat-intensive mission conducted in large part by Special Forces contingents of contributing nations. The overwhelming majority of non-U.S. forces are under the NATO/ISAF mission. Prior to NATO assumption of command in October 2006, 19 coalition countries—primarily Britain, France, Canada, and Italy contributing approximately 4,000 combat troops to OEF-Afghanistan. Now, that figure is lower as most have been re-badged to ISAF. However, several foreign contingents, composed mainly of special operations forces, including a 200 person unit from the UAE, are still part of OEF-Afghanistan. This includes about 500 British special forces, some German special forces, and other special forces units. In early 2010, U.S. Special Forces operating in Afghanistan were brought under direct command of the top U.S. command in Afghanistan, now Gen. Petraeus.

Under OEF, Japan provided naval refueling capabilities in the Arabian sea, but the mission was suspended in October 2007 following a parliamentary change of majority there in July 2007. The mission was revived in January 2008 when the new government forced through parliament a bill to allow the mission to resume. It was renewed again, over substantial parliamentary opposition, in December 2008, but the opposition party won September 2009 elections in Japan and reportedly has decided on an alternative to continuing the refueling mission—by increasing its financial contributions to economic development in Afghanistan. That led to an October 2009 pledge by Japan—already the third largest individual country donor to Afghanistan, providing about $1.9 billion in civilian reconstruction aid since the fall of the Taliban—to provide another $5 billion over five years. It has been requested to be a major financial donor of an Afghan army expansion, and, in March 2009, it pledged to pay the costs of the Afghan National Police for six months.

As part of OEF outside Afghanistan, the United States leads a multi-national naval anti-terrorist, anti-smuggling, anti-proliferation interdiction mission in the Persian Gulf/Arabian Sea, headquartered in Bahrain. That mission was expanded after the fall of Saddam Hussein to include protecting Iraqi oil platforms in the Gulf.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams

U.S. and partner officials have generally praised the effectiveness of "Provincial Reconstruction Teams" (PRTs)—enclaves of U.S. or partner forces and civilian officials that provide safe havens for international aid workers to help with reconstruction and to extend the writ of the Kabul government—in accelerating reconstruction and assisting stabilization efforts. The PRTs, announced in December 2002, perform activities ranging from resolving local disputes to coordinating local reconstruction projects, although most U.S.-run PRTs and most PRTs in combat-heavy areas focus mostly on counter-insurgency. (U.S. PRTs in restive regions are "co-located" with "forward operating bases" of 300-400 U.S. combat troops.) The PRTs are key to implementing U.S. and international policy to build governance in Afghanistan. Many of the U.S. civilian officials being deployed to Afghanistan will work out of the PRTs, which have facilities, vehicles, and security. There are 27 PRTs in operation; the list of PRTs, including lead country, is shown in **Table 23**. Virtually all the PRTs are now under the ISAF mission. Each PRT operated by the United States has U.S. forces (50-100 U.S. military personnel); Defense Department civil affairs officers; representatives of USAID, State Department, and other agencies; and Afghan government (Interior Ministry) personnel. Most PRTs, including those run by partner forces, have personnel to train Afghan security forces. USAID officers assigned to the PRTs administer PRT

reconstruction projects, although USAID observers say there is little Afghan input, either into project decisionmaking or as contractors for facility and other construction. USAID spending on PRT projects is in the table on USAID spending in Afghanistan at the end of this report, and there is a database on development projects sponsored by each PRT available to CRS, information from which can be provided on request.

In the south, most PRTs are heavily focused on security and are co-located with U.S. military bases or outposts. In August 2005, in preparation for the establishment of Regional Command South (RC-S), Canada took over the key U.S.-led PRT in Qandahar. In May 2006, Britain took over the PRT at Lashkar Gah, capital of Helmand Province. The Netherlands took over the PRT at Tarin Kowt, capital of Uruzgan Province. That PRT is now led by Australia and the United States because Dutch combat forces have departed.

Some aid agencies say they have felt more secure since the PRT program began, fostering reconstruction,[64] and many of the new civilian advisers arriving in Afghanistan under the new Obama Administration strategy work out of the PRTs. On the other hand, some relief groups do not want to associate with military forces because doing so might taint their perceived neutrality. Others, such as Oxfam International, argue that the PRTs are delaying the time when the Afghan government has the skills and resources to secure and develop Afghanistan on its own.

Evolving Civil-Military Concepts at the PRTs

Representing evolution of the PRT concept, some donor countries—as well as the United States—are trying to enhance the civilian component of the PRTs and change their image from mainly military institutions. There has been long been consideration to turn over the lead in the U.S.-run PRTs to civilians rather than military personnel, presumably State Department or USAID officials. That was first attempted in 2006 with the establishment of a civilian-led U.S.-run PRT in the Panjshir Valley. As noted, in March 2009, the Netherlands converted its PRT to civilian lead, although that alteration has not continued with the assumption of U.S. and Australian PRT command as of July 2010. Turkey opened a PRT, in Wardak Province, on November 25, 2006, to focus on providing health care, education, police training, and agricultural alternatives in that region.

As of November 2009, the "civilianization" of the PRT concept has evolved further with the decision to refer to PRTs as Interagency Provincial Affairs (IPA) offices or branches. In this new concept—a local paralled to the Senior Civilian Representatives now assigned to each regional command—State Department officers enjoy enhanced decision-making status at each PRT.

Afghan National Security Forces

As noted, President Obama's December 1, 2009, policy speech sees capable Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)—the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Policy (ANP)—as the means by which the United States and NATO could begin to draw down forces in July 2011. Obama Administration strategy emphasizes expanding the ANSF and improving it through partnering and more intense mentoring and training. On January 21, 2010, the joint U.N.-Afghan "Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board" (JCMB) agreed that, by the end of 2011, the

[64] Kraul, Chris. "U.S. Aid Effort Wins Over Skeptics in Afghanistan." *Los Angeles Times*, April 11, 2003.

ANA would expand to 171,600 and the ANP to about 134,000. As of August 11, 2010, both forces have reached their interim size of 134,000 and 109,000 respectively, and two months earlier than planned (October 2010). However, the stated final goal is fewer than the level recommended by Gen. McChrystal—a total end strength of 400,000 (240,000 ANA and 160,000 ANP). However, Joint Chiefs Chairman Mullen has said this remains an "aspirational goal."

U.S. forces along with partner countries and contractors, train the ANSF. As of early 2010, the U.S.-run "Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan" (CSTC-A) that ran the training has been subordinated to a broader NATO Training Mission—Afghanistan (NTM-A). NTM-A is commanded by U.S. Maj. Gen. William Caldwell. According to Gen. McChrystal's August 2009 report, CSTC-A's mission is being reoriented to building the capacity of the Afghan Defense and Interior Ministries, and to provide resources to the ANSF. The total number of required trainers (U.S. and partner) for these institutions is 4,800. There is still an unfilled gap of trainers totaling about 750. As noted above, on September 6, 2010, Gen. Petraeus requested forces to fill that gap.

Afghan National Army

The Afghan National Army has been built "from scratch" since 2002—it is not a direct continuation of the national army that existed from the 1880s until the Taliban era. That national army all but disintegrated during the 1992-1996 *mujahedin* civil war and the 1996-2001 Taliban period. However, some Afghan military officers who served prior to the Taliban have joined the new military.

U.S. and allied officers say that the ANA is becoming a major force in stabilizing the country and a national symbol. It now has at least some presence in most of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, working with the PRTs, and it deployed outside Afghanistan to assist relief efforts for victims of the October 2005 Pakistan earthquake. According to the Department of Defense, the ANA is now able to lead 75% of the combat operations in the eastern sector, and over 45% of operations overall, and it participates in about 90% of all combat operations. It has demonstrated "increasing competence, effectiveness, and professionalism," and some U.S. officials have praised its bravery and competence in the course of Operation Moshtarek. Among other examples of the ANA taking overall responsibility, in August 2008, the ANA took over security of Kabul city from Italy, and it took formal control of Kabul Province in early 2009. The commando forces of the ANA, trained by U.S. Special Operations Forces, are considered well-trained and are taking the lead in some operations against high-value targets, particularly against HIG elements in Nuristan province.

However, some U.S. military assessments say the force remains poorly led. It still suffers from at least a 20% desertion rate. Many officers are illiterate or poorly motivated.[65] Some accounts say that a typical ANA unit is only at about 50% of its authorized strength at any given time, and there are significant shortages in about 40% of equipment items. Some recruits take long trips to their home towns to remit funds to their families, and often then return to the ANA after a long absence. Others, according to U.S. observers, often refuse to serve far from their home towns. The FY2005 foreign aid appropriation (P.L. 108-447) required that ANA recruits be vetted for terrorism, human rights violations, and drug trafficking.

ANA battalions, or "Kandaks," are the main unit of the Afghan force. There are over 120 Kandaks. The Kandaks are stiffened by the presence of U.S. and partner embeds, called

[65] Report by Richard Engel. NBC Nightly News. December 29, 2009.

"Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams" (OMLTs). Each OMLT—of which there are about 61—has about 12-19 personnel, and U.S. commanders say that the ANA will continue to need embeds for the short term, because embeds give the units confidence they will be resupplied, reinforced, and evacuated in the event of wounding.

The Obama Administration strategy is to also partner the ANA with U.S. and other foreign units to enhance effectiveness. Gen. Petraeus and others have attributed the previous lack of progress in the ANSF to the non-systematic use of the partnering concept. Among the other countries contributing training OMLTs (all or in part) are Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Britain, and the United States.

The United States has built five ANA bases: Herat (Corps 207), Gardez (Corps 203), Qandahar (Corps 205), Mazar-e-Sharif (Corps 209), and Kabul (Division HQ, Corps 201, Air Corps). Coalition officers conduct heavy weapons training for a heavy brigade as part of the "Kabul Corps," based in Pol-e-Charki, east of Kabul.

Ethnic and Factional Considerations

At the time the United States first began establishing the ANA, Northern Alliance figures who were then in key security positions weighted recruitment for the national army toward its Tajik ethnic base. Many Pashtuns, in reaction, refused recruitment or left the ANA program. The naming of a Pashtun, Abdul Rahim Wardak, as Defense Minister in December 2004 reduced desertions among Pashtuns (he remains in that position). U.S. officials in Afghanistan say this problem was further alleviated with better pay and more close involvement by U.S. forces, and that the force is ethnically integrated in each unit and representative. With about 41% Pashtuns, 34% Tajiks, 12% Hazaras, and 8% Uzbeks, the force is roughly in line with the broad demographics of the country, according to the April 2010 DOD report. However, U.S. commanders say that those Pashtuns who are in the force are disproportionately eastern Pashtuns (from the Ghilzai tribal confederations) rather than southern Pashtuns (mostly Durrani tribal confederations). The chief of staff was Gen. Bismillah Khan, a Tajik who was a Northern Alliance commander, although as of June 2010 he is Interior Minister.

Afghan Air Force

Equipment, maintenance, and logistical difficulties continue to plague the Afghan National Army Air Corps (Afghan Air Force). The force is a carryover from the Afghan Air Force that existed prior to the Soviet invasion, and is expanding gradually after its equipment was virtually eliminated in the 2001-2002 U.S. combat against the Taliban regime. It now has about over 3,000 personnel, including 400 pilots, as well as a total of about 46 aircraft. Afghan pilots are based at Bagram air base.

The Afghan goal is to have 61 aircraft by 2011, but Defense Minister Wardak said in September 2008 that it will remain mostly a support force for ground operations rather than a combat-oriented Air Force. Gen. McKiernan, in statements in November 2008, credited the Afghan Air Force with an ability to make ANA units nearly self-sufficient in airlift. In May 2008, the Afghan Air Force received an additional 25 surplus helicopters from the Czech Republic and the UAE, refurbished with the help of U.S. funds. Afghanistan is seeking the return of 26 aircraft, including some MiG-2s that were flown to safety in Pakistan and Uzbekistan during the past conflicts in

Afghanistan. U.S. plans do not include supply of fixed-wing combat aircraft such as F-16s, which Afghanistan wants, according to U.S. military officials. In 2010, Russia and Germany supplied MI-8 helicopters to the Afghan Air Force.

Afghan National Police (ANP)

U.S. and Afghan officials believe that building up a credible and capable national police force is at least as important to combating the Taliban insurgency as building the ANA. The April 2010 DOD report reinforces a widespread consensus that the ANP substantially lags the ANA in its development. Outside assessments are widely disparaging, particularly in asserting that there is rampant corruption to the point where citizens are openly mistrustful of the ANP. Among other criticisms are a desertion rate far higher than that of the ANA; substantial illiteracy; involvement in local factional or ethnic disputes because the ANP works in the communities its personnel come from; and widespread use of drugs. It is this view that has led to consideration of stepped up efforts to promote local security solutions such as the APPP discussed above, rather than relying on expanding and retraining the police.

Some U.S. commanders are more positive, saying that it is increasingly successful in repelling Taliban assaults on villages and that is experiencing fewer casualties from attacks than it was previously. Afghan police in Kabul won praise from the U.S. commanders for putting down, largely on their own and without major civilian casualties, the insurgent attack on Kabul locations near the presidential palace on January 18, 2010, and a similar attack on February 26, 2010. However, the failings of the ANP, and their failure to prevent an insurgent attack on the peace *jirga* on June 2, could have contributed to the firing of Interior Minister Atmar on June 6. He was highly regarded by U.S. officials. Bismillah Khan, the new Interior Minister, was highly respected as ANA chief of staff and is likely to continue to try to improve and weed out corruption in the police force, although some Pashtuns might resent him for his Tajik ethnicity.

Other U.S. commanders credit a November 2009 raise in police salaries (nearly doubled to about $240 per month for service in high combat areas)—and the streamlining and improvement of the payments system for the ANP—with reducing the solicitation of bribes by the ANP. The raise also stimulated an eightfold increase in the number of Afghans seeking to be recruited. Others note the success, thus far, of efforts to pay police directly (and avoid skimming by commanders) through cellphone-based banking relationships (E-Paisa, run by Roshan cell network).

Retraining and Other Initiatives

Some U.S. officials believe that the United States and its partners still have not centered on a clearly effective police training strategy. The latest training reorganization implemented since 2007 is called "*focused district development*," which attempts to retrain individual police forces in districts, which is the basic geographic area of ANP activity. (There are about 10 "districts" in each of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.) In this program, a district force is taken out and retrained, its duties temporarily performed by more highly trained police (Afghan National Civil Order Police, or ANCOP, which number about 5,800 nationwide), and then reinserted after the training is complete. As of April 2010, about police in 83 districts have undergone this process, although the program has had "limited success," according to the DOD April 2010 report, because of continuing governance and other problems in those districts. There has also been some criticism of the ANCOP performance in Marjah, even though the unit is supposed to be elite and well

trained. The ANCOP officers are being used to staff the new checkpoints being set up to better secure Qandahar, as of June 2010.

Police training now includes instruction in human rights principles and democratic policing concepts, and the State Department human rights report on Afghanistan, referenced above, says the government and outside observers are increasingly monitoring the police force to prevent abuses. In March 2010, then-Interior Minister Atmar signed a "strategic guidance" document for the ANP, which prioritizes eliminating corruption within the ANP and winning public confidence. About 1,000 ANP are women, demonstrating some commitment to gender integration of the force.

There have been few quick fixes for the chronic shortage of equipment in the ANP. Most police are under-equipped, lacking ammunition and vehicles. In some cases, equipment requisitioned by their commanders is being sold and the funds pocketed by the police officers. These activities contributed to the failure of a 2006 "auxiliary police" effort that attempted to rapidly field large numbers of new ANP officers.

The U.S. police training effort was first led by State Department/INL, but the Defense Department took over the lead in police training in April 2005. Much of the training is still conducted through contracts with DynCorp. In addition to the U.S. effort, which includes 600 civilian U.S. police trainers (mostly still Dyncorp contractors) in addition to the U.S. military personnel (see **Table 6**), Germany (originally the lead government in Afghan police training) is providing 41 trainers. The European Union has taken over from Germany as lead and is providing a 190-member "EUPOL" training effort, and 60 other experts to help train the ANP. These efforts are being subsumed under NTM-A.

Rule of Law/Criminal Justice Sector

Many experts believe that an effective justice sector is vital to Afghan governance. Some of the criticisms and allegations of corruption at all levels of the Afghan bureaucracy have been discussed throughout this report. U.S. justice sector programs generally focus on promoting rule of law and building capacity of the judicial system, including police training and court construction. A focus has been on helping the Afghan justice sector systematize and automate its case tracking system. Some of these programs are conducted in partnership with Italy, which was technically the "lead" coalition country on judicial reform until 2005. The United States has trained over 900 judges, lawyers, and prosecutors and built at least 40 judicial facilities. USAID also trains court administrators for the Ministry of Justice, the office of the Attorney General, and the Supreme Court. There has been appointed, at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, an Ambassador-rank "rule of law coordinator" (Hans Klemm) is focusing on this issue.

The State Department (INL) has placed at least 30 U.S. advisors in the Interior Ministry to help it develop the national police force and counter-narcotics capabilities. U.S. trainers are also building Border Police and Highway Patrol forces.

Informal Justice

The United States and its partners have, to date, generally refrained from direct interference in traditional mechanisms such as village *jirgas* or *shuras* convened to dispense justice. Doing so would likely raise questions among Afghans that the United States is trying to influence

traditional Afghan culture and impose Western values on Afghanistan. Ambassador Holbrooke's January 2010 says that this will continue to be the case, and that a USAID pilot project will try to re-establish traditional dispute resolution mechanisms in areas cleared of insurgents. The Holbrooke plan says that over time, traditional justice mechanisms will increasingly be linked to the formal justice sectors. Even now, serious criminal cases are generally handled through the formal justice system, which the April 2010 DOD reports says most Afghans are amenable to using for many of their legal problems. Traditional justice mechanisms are widely used in Afghan villages, particularly in Pashtun areas, in part because of the ease of access of these mechanisms. Some traditional justice is dispensed by Taliban members in areas under Taliban influence. In some cases, Afghans of the same tribal confederation trust Taliban justice mechanisms more than they would a justice mechanism run by a pro-government tribe of a different tribal confederation.

U.S. Security Forces Funding/"CERP"

In December 2009, Karzai asserted that the Afghan government could not likely fund its own security forces until 2024. More than half of all U.S. assistance to Afghanistan since 2002 has gone toward building the ANSF. U.S. funds are used to cover ANA salaries as well as to equip and train them. Recent appropriations for the ANA and ANP are contained in the tables at the end of this report, which also contain breakdowns for Commanders Emergency Response Program funds, or CERP. CERP is used for projects that build goodwill and presumably reduce the threat to use forces. The tables at the end also list breakdowns for requested ANSF funding for FY2011 and supplemental FY2010 funding. As noted in the table, as of FY2005, the security forces funding has been DOD funds, not State Department funds.

International Trust Fund for the ANSF

In 2007, ISAF set up a trust fund for donor contributions to fund the transportation of equipment donated to and the training of the ANSF. U.S. funding for the ANSF is provided separately, not through this fund. The fund is estimated to require $2 billion per year. In April 2009, $100 million in contributions were pledged. Of this, $57 million was pledged by Germany. Japan, as noted, separately pledged to pay the expenses of the Afghan police for six months (about $125 million). As noted above, some additional funds for the fund were pledged at the London conference, including by Greece ($4 million); and Japan ($11 million out of the $5 billion mentioned above).

Table 6. Major Security-Related Indicators

Force	Current Level
Total Foreign Forces in Afghanistan	About 145.000: About 104,000 U.S. and 41,000 non-U.S. partner forces. (U.S. total was: 25,000 in 2005; 16,000 in 2003; 5,000 in 2002. ISAF totals were: 12,000 in 2005; and 6,000 in 2003.) US. forces deployed at 88 bases in Afghanistan, and include 1 air wing (40 aircraft) and 1 combat aviation brigade (100 aircraft). U.S. number includes only about 2,000 of the new U.S. troop commitments announced December 1.
U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan	1,172 killed, of which 957 by hostile action. Additional 94 U.S. deaths in other OEF theaters, including the Philippines and parts of Africa. Over 315 U.S. killed in 2009-highest yet. 150 U.S. killed from October 2001-January 2003. 45 killed in each of July and August 2009,and 50-55 in each of September and October 2009. At least 25 U.S. killed per month in 2010, with over 60 in each of June and July. Over 300 UK forces killed in Afghanistan to date.
NATO Sectors (Regional Commands-South, east, north, west, and central/Kabul)	RC-S- 35,000 (U.K. lead). RC-Southwest - 27,000 (U.S. lead); RC-E- 32,000 (U.S. lead); RC-N- 11,000 (German lead); RC-W- 6,000 (Italy lead) RC-Kabul-5,000 (Turkey, Afghan lead).
Afghan National Army (ANA)	134,000, which is the interim goal for October 2010. End goal is 171,600 by late 2011. There are 120+ battalions ranging from 300-1,000 soldiers each. About 2,000 trained per month. 4,000 are commando forces, trained by U.S. Special Forces. ANA private paid about $200 per month; generals receive about $750 per month. ANA being outfitted with U.S. M16 rifles and 4,000 up-armored Humvees.
Afghan National Police (ANP)	109,000, reaching the interim goal of 109,000 by October 2010. End goal is 134,000 by late 2011. Of the force, 14,000 are border police; 3,800+ counter-narcotics police; 5,300 civil order police. 1,000 are female, some serving in very conservative south. Most ANP salaries raised to $240 per month in November 2009, from $120, to counter corruption. Some police paid by E-Paisa system of Roshan cell phone network.
U.S. and Partner Trainers	About 4,000, with target of 4,750.
Legally Armed Fighters disarmed by DDR	63,380; all of the pool identified for the program
Number of Al Qaeda	50-100, according to CIA Director Panetta in June 2010. Also, small numbers of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Pakistan Taliban, others.
Number of Taliban fighters	Over 20,000 (U.S. military and Afghan estimates). Some estimates higher. Plus about 1,000 Haqqani faction and 1,000 Hikmatyar (HIG).
Armed groups disbanded by DIAG	161 illegal groups (five or more fighters) disbanded. Goal is to disband 1,800 groups, of which several hundred groups are "significant." 5,700 weapons confiscated, 1.050 arrested. About 5,000 Taliban reconciled since May 2005.
Weapons collected by DDR	57,630 medium and light; 12,250 heavy.
Attacks per day (average)	1,100 per month in 2009; 1,000 per month in 2008; 800 per month in 2007 and 2006; 400 in 2005. 7,000 IEDs in 2009, almost double the 2008 level.
Afghan casualties	For extended discussion, see CRS Report R41084, *Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians*, by Susan G. Chesser.

Sources: CRS; testimony and public statements by DOD officials.

Policy Alternatives/Support for Reduced U.S. Military Involvement

The continuing difficulty in securing Afghanistan has led to growing discussion of alternatives. Those who support the policy alternatives generally believe that the current Afghanistan effort is unwinnable at acceptable cost, and that it is distracting from other priorities on foreign or

domestic policy. [66] Others believe that pursuing the suggested alternatives could lead to a collapse of the Afghan government, and would produce an unraveling of the economic, political, and social gains made through the international military involvement in Afghanistan since 2001.

"Counter-Terrorism" Strategy Not Adopted

During the late 2009 strategy review, some, purportedly including Vice President Joseph Biden, favored a more limited mission for Afghanistan designed solely to disrupt Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This approach envisioned only a small increase in U.S. or other international forces present in Afghanistan. Advocates of this approach asserted that the government of Afghanistan is not a fully legitimate partner. Such doubts flowed from the flawed August 20, 2009, presidential election, and purported cables from U.S. Ambassador Eikenberry asserting that the corruption of the Karzai government necessitated conditioning more U.S. forces on Afghan performance. This more limited strategy was not adopted, in favor of the U.S. "surge" that was authorized, although some press reports in July 2010 say that some of the most effective U.S. operations consist of Special Operations forces tracking and killing selected key mid-level insurgent commanders. Some believe this strategy could force senior insurgent leaders to negotiate a settlement to the conflict.

Critics of the limited counter-terrorism strategy express the view that the Afghan government might collapse and Al Qaeda would have safe haven again in Afghanistan if there are insufficient numbers of U.S. forces there to protect the government.[67] Others believed it would be difficult for President Obama to choose a strategy that could jeopardize the stability of the Afghan government, after having defined Afghan security and stability as a key national interest in his March 2009 strategy announcement. Still others say that it would be difficult to identify targets to strike with unmanned or manned aircraft unless there were sufficient forces on the ground to identify targets.

Legislative Initiatives: Drawdown Plans

The policy articulated on December 1, 2009, introduced the concept of transition to Afghan security leadership, and specifically stated that better performance is expected of the Afghan government. To this extent, some Afghan, neighboring, and partner country leaders question whether the December 1, 2009, policy statement foreshadows an eventual Obama Administration effort to wind down the U.S. mission there. Perhaps to address growing unrest about the course of the conflict, during the July 2010 Kabul Conference (and contained in the communiqué), President Karzai pledged that Afghan security forces would "lead and conduct military operations in all provinces by the end of 2014."

In Congress, H.Con.Res. 248, a resolution introduced by Representative Kucinich to require removal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan not later than December 31, 2010, was defeated in the House by a vote of 65 to 356 on March 10, 2010.) Other Members have introduced legislation to require the Administration to develop, by January 1, 2011, plans to wind down the U.S. military

[66] This argument is presented by State Dept. director of Policy Planning during the Bush Administration, now President of the Council on Foreign Relations Richard Haass in July 2010. http://www.newsweek.com/2010/07/18/we-re-not-winning-it-s-not-worth-it.html.

[67] Ibid.

presence in Afghanistan. This provision was voted on in consideration of a FY2010 supplemental appropriation (H.R. 4899), where it failed in the Senate (May 27, 2010) by a vote of 18-80. On July 1, 2010, the House voted 162-260 to reject a plan in that bill to require the Administration to submit, by April 4, 2011, a plan and timetable to redeploy from Afghanistan. Earlier, in House consideration of a FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2647), a similar provision failed on June 25, 2009, by a vote of 138-278.

Regional Dimension

Most of Afghanistan's neighbors believed that the fall of the Taliban would immediately stabilize the region, but like-minded militants have been battling the government of Pakistan and continue to pose threats to other countries in the region. The Obama Administration announcement of a beginning of a "transition" to Afghan leadership in July 2011 has led some regional powers to plan for what they believe might be a post-U.S. presence scramble for influence in Afghanistan—or at least for the ability to deny a rival influence there. Iran, which shares with India a fear of any return of radical Taliban extremism in Afghanistan, has begun discussing the future of Afghanistan with other regional countries and may be planning a regional conference on Afghanistan, according to Iran's deputy foreign minister on August 10, 2010. These calculations, to some extent, cast doubt on the commitment of Afghanistan's six neighbors to a non-interference pledge (Kabul Declaration) on December 23, 2002.

At the same time, Afghanistan has been re-integrating into regional security and economic organizations that reflect an effort to conduct relatively normal commerce and diplomatic relationships. In November 2005, Afghanistan joined the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and Afghanistan has observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which is discussed below. Several regional summit meeting series have been established involving Afghanistan, including summit meetings between Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Turkey; and between Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Russia has put together two "quadrilateral summits," the latest of which was on August 18, 2010, among Pakistan, Russia, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan, and focused on counter-narcotics and anti-smuggling. As shown in the table below, cooperation from several of the regional countries are crucial to U.S. and ISAF operations and resupply in Afghanistan.

Table 7. Afghan and Regional Facilities Used for Operations in and Supply Lines to Afghanistan

Facility	Use
Bagram Air Base	50 miles north of Kabul, the operational hub of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and base for CJTF-82. At least 2000 U.S. military personnel are based there. Handles many of the 150+ U.S. aircraft (including helicopters) in country. Hospital constructed, one of the first permanent structures there. FY2005 supplemental (P.L. 109-13) provided about $52 million for various projects to upgrade facilities at Bagram, including a control tower and an operations center, and the FY2006 supplemental appropriation (P.L. 109-234) provided $20 million for military construction there. NATO also using the base and sharing operational costs. Bagram can be accessed directly by U.S. military flights following April 2010 agreement by Kazakhstan to allow overflights of U.S. lethal equipment.
Qandahar Air Field	Just outside Qandahar, the hub of military operations in the south. Turned over from U.S. to NATO/ISAF control in late 2006 in conjunction with NATO assumption of peacekeeping responsibilities. Enhanced (along with other facilities in the south) at cost of $1.3 billion to accommodate influx of U.S combat forces in the south.
Shindand Air Base	In Farah province, about 20 miles from Iran border. Used by U.S. forces and combat aircraft since October 2004, after the dismissal of Herat governor Ismail Khan, who controlled it.
Peter Ganci Base: Manas, Kyrgyzstan	Used by 1,200 U.S. military personnel as well as refueling and cargo aircraft for shipments into Afghanistan. Leadership of Kyrgyzstan changed in April 2005 in an uprising against President Askar Akayev and again in April 2010 against Kurmanbek Bakiyev. Previous Kyrgyz governments demanded the U.S. vacate the base but in both cases, (July 2006 and July 2009) agreement to use the base was extended in exchange for large increase in U.S. payments for its use (to $60 million per year in the latter case). Interim government formed in April 2010 first threatened then retracted eviction of U.S. from the base, but the issue remains open.
Incirlik Air Base, Turkey	About 2,100 U.S. military personnel there; U.S. aircraft supply U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. U.S. use repeatedly extended for one year intervals by Turkey.
Al Dhafra, UAE	Air base used by about 1,800 U.S. military personnel, to supply U.S. forces and related transport into Iraq and Afghanistan. Could see increasing use if Manas closes.
Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar	Largest air facility used by U.S. in region. About 5,000 U.S. personnel in Qatar. Houses central air operations coordination center for U.S. missions in Iraq and Afghanistan; also houses CENTCOM forward headquarters. Could see increased use if Manas closes.
Naval Support Facility, Bahrain	U.S. naval command headquarters for OEF anti-smuggling, anti-terrorism, and anti-proliferation naval search missions, and Iraq-related naval operations (oil platform protection) in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea. About 5,100 U.S. military personnel there.
Karsi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan	Not used by U.S. since September 2005 following U.S.-Uzbek dispute over May 2005 Uzbek crackdown on unrest in Andijon. Once housed about 1,750 U.S. military personnel (900 Air Force, 400 Army, and 450 civilian) supplying Afghanistan. Uzbekistan allowed German use of the base temporarily in March 2008, indicating possible healing of the rift. Could also represent Uzbek counter to Russian offer to U.S. coalition to allow use of its territory to transport equipment into Afghanistan. U.S. relations with Uzbekistan improved in 2009, but U.S. officials said in 2010 that the use of the air base is still not under active discussion. Some shipments beginning in February 2009 through Navoi airfield in central Uzbekistan, and U.S. signed agreement with Uzbekistan on April 4, 2009, allowing nonlethal supplies for the Afghanistan war. Goods are shipped to Latvia and Georgia, some transits Russia by rail, then to Uzbekistan.
Tajikistan	Some use of air bases and other facilities by coalition partners, including France, and emergency use by U.S. India also uses bases under separate agreement. New supply lines to Afghanistan established in February 2009 ("northern route") make some use of Tajikistan.
Pakistan	Discussed further in sections below, most U.S. supplies flow through Pakistan. Heavy equipment docks in Karachi and is escorted by security contractors to the Khyber Pass crossing.

Pakistan/Pakistan-Afghanistan Border[68]

The Obama Administration strategy reviews in 2009 both emphasized the linkage between militants present in Pakistan and the difficulty stabilizing Afghanistan. Since the late 2009 review, in which the concept of a start of a U.S. drawdown beginning in July 2011 was stated, Pakistan appears to have shifted to try to position itself for any political deal between the Afghan government and the insurgency. That has, in turn, created tensions within the Afghan elite and leadership and with Pakistan's key rival, India. The United States had previously criticized Pakistan for refusing or failing to do more to assist the U.S. effort in Afghanistan, but continued to assist and engage extensively with Pakistan as a necessary ally in this effort.

During 2009, the Obama Administration pressed Pakistan for more cooperation against Afghan militants including the Taliban leaders believed in or around Quetta, and against the Haqqani network believe in the north Waziristan area. Pakistan had resisted on the grounds that these militants are not a direct threat to Pakistan,[69] although many believe Pakistan sees the Haqqani network and other militants as tools with which to carve out a role for itself in any conflict settlement negotiations. This possible effort to influence any peace settlement apparently contributed to Karzai's reported anger at the arrest of Taliban senior figure Mullah Bradar, who was said to be in talks with Karzai representatives when he was seized. As part of its efforts to engage Karzai on the shape of any conflict-ending settlement, during 2010 there has been a growing pattern of meetings between Karzai and Pakistan's army chief of staff Gen. Ashfaq Kiyani and with the head of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), Gen. Ahmad Shuja Pasha. Suggesting that Pakistan is sensitive to Afghan assertions that is seeks only to bolster its own interests in Afghanistan, President Karzai and Zardari met on September 15, 2010, reiterating their joint determination to fight militancy that affects them both. Their declaration was made in front of large ministerial delegations from both sides, and could have been intended to set aside Afghan charges that Pakistan's Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) directorate are supporting Afghanistan militants, particularly the Haqqani faction.[70] Haqqani network terrorists were reputedly involved in the July 7, 2008, suicide bombing of India's embassy in Kabul and other attacks in Kabul on India-related targets.

Pakistan's apparent determination to retain influence over Afghanistan is heavily colored by fears of historic rival India. Pakistan viewed the Taliban regime as providing Pakistan strategic depth against rival India, and Pakistan apparently remains wary that the current Afghan government may come under the sway of India. Numerous militant groups, such as LET (Laskhar-e-Tayyiba, or Army of the Righteous) were formed in Pakistan to challenge India's control of part of the disputed territories of Jammu and Kashmir. Some observers believe Pakistan wants to retain the ability to stoke these militants against India, even though these militants may be aiding Islamist groups challenging Pakistan's stability. Pakistan says India is using its Embassy and four consulates in Afghanistan (Pakistan says India has nine such consulates) to train and recruit anti-Pakistan insurgents, and is using its reconstruction funds to build influence there.

Pakistan has also sought to control Afghanistan's trade, particularly with India, leading to U.S. efforts to persuade Pakistan to forge a "transit trade" agreement with Afghanistan. That effort

[68] For extensive analysis of U.S. policy toward Pakistan, and U.S. assistance to Pakistan in conjunction with its activities against Al Qaeda and the Taliban, see CRS Report RL33498, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*, by K. Alan Kronstadt.

[69] Sanger, David and Eric Schmitt. "U.S. Weighs Taliban Strike into Pakistan." *New York Times*, March 18, 2009.

[70] Mazzetti, Mark and Eric Schmitt. "CIA Outlines Pakistan Links With Militants." *New York Times*, July 30, 2008.

bore success with the signature of a trade agreement between the two on July 18, 2010, allowing for an easier flow of Afghan products, which are mostly agricultural products that depend on rapid transit. The agreement could also represent a success for the Canada-sponsored "Dubai Process" of talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan on modernizing border crossings, new roads, and a comprehensive border management strategy to meet IMF benchmarks. The trade agreement comes after earlier signs of growing cooperation, including Afghan agreement to send more Afghan graduate students to study in Pakistan, and a June 2010 Afghan agreement to send small numbers of ANA officers to undergo training in Pakistan.[71]

Cooperation Against Al Qaeda

During 2001-2006, the Bush Administration praised then President Pervez Musharraf for Pakistani accomplishments against Al Qaeda, including the arrest of over 700 Al Qaeda figures since the September 11 attacks.[72] After the attacks, Pakistan provided the United States with access to Pakistani airspace, some ports, and some airfields for OEF. Others say Musharraf acted against Al Qaeda only when it threatened him directly; for example, after the December 2003 assassination attempts against him. Musharraf resigned in August 2008, and the civilian government is led by the party of the late Pakistani secular leader Benazir Bhutto. Her widower, Asif Ali Zardari, is President.

U.S. criticism of Pakistan's approach increased following a *New York Times* report (February 19, 2007) that Al Qaeda had reestablished some small terrorist training camps in Pakistan, near the Afghan border. This possibly was an outgrowth of a September 5, 2006, compromise between Pakistan and tribal elders in this region. That, and subsequent compromises were criticized, including a 2008 "understanding" with members of the Mehsud tribe, among which is Tehrik-e-Taliban (TTP, Pakistan Taliban) leader Baitullah Mehsud (killed in a U.S. strike in August 2009). As noted, the TTP was named a Foreign Terrorist Organization on September 2, and some of its leaders (Hakimullah Mehsud) were named as terrorism supporting entities that day.

Increased Direct U.S. Action[73]

The Obama Administration has tried to combat Afghanistan-focused militants in Pakistan without directly violating Pakistan's restrictions on the U.S. ability to operate "on the ground" in Pakistan. The Obama Administration has significantly increased the use of Predator and Reaper unmanned aircraft to strike militant targets in Pakistan as compared to the Bush Administration. Such a strike reportedly was responsible for the death of Beitullah Mehsud, and some militant websites say the strikes are taking a major toll on their operations and networks. The *New York Times* reported on February 23, 2009, that there are about 70 U.S. military advisers on the ground in Pakistan but they are there to help train Pakistani forces to battle Al Qaeda and Taliban militants.

[71] Partlow, Joshua. "Afghans Build Up Ties With Pakistan." *Washington Post*, July 21, 2010.

[72] Among those captured by Pakistan are top bin Laden aide Abu Zubaydah (captured April 2002); alleged September 11 plotter Ramzi bin Al Shibh (September 11, 2002); top Al Qaeda planner Khalid Shaikh Mohammed (March 2003); and a top planner, Abu Faraj al-Libbi (May 2005).

[73] CRS Report RL34763, *Islamist Militancy in the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Region and U.S. Policy*, by K. Alan Kronstadt and Kenneth Katzman.

Recent History of Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations

The fluctuating nature of Afghanistan-Pakistan relations is not a new feature, and is based on Pakistan's past involvements in Afghanistan's struggles. Afghans fondly remember Pakistan's role as the hub for U.S. backing of the mujahedin that forced the Soviet withdrawal in 1988-89. However, some Afghan leaders resent Pakistan as the most public defender of the Taliban movement when it was in power (Pakistan was one of only three countries to formally recognize it as the legitimate government; Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are the others).

Since 2008, the end of the Musharraf era, there has been a dramatic improvement in Afghanistan-Pakistan relations. Karzai attended the September 9, 2008, inauguration of Zardari. A "peace *jirga*" process—a series of meetings of notables on each side of the border—was launched at a September 28, 2006, dinner hosted by President Bush for Karzai and Musharraf, and meetings of 700 Pakistani and Afghan tribal elders were held in August 2007 and again during October 27-28, 2008. The latter was led on the Afghan side was headed by former Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah and resulted in a declaration to endorse efforts to try to engage militants in both Afghanistan and Pakistan to bring them into the political process. Zardari visited Kabul and met with Karzai on January 9, 2009, where the two signed a joint declaration against terrorism that affects both countries. (The September 2010 meeting appears to be a rededication of this declaration.) Additional progress was made during the visit of Afghan and Pakistani ministers to Washington, DC, during February 23-27, 2009, to participate in the Obama Administration strategic review. As noted above, Karzai and Zardari visit Washington, DC, in May 2009 to continue the strategic dialogue.

In April 2008, in an extension of the Tripartite Commission's work, the three countries agreed to set up five "border coordination centers"—which will include networks of radar nodes to give liaison officers a common view of the border area. These centers build on an agreement in May 2007 to share intelligence on extremists' movements. Three have been established to date, including one near the Torkham Gate at the Khyber Pass, one at Nawa, and one at Liwara. In June 2008, Pakistan ended a six-month suspension in attendance at meetings of the Tripartite Commission under which NATO, Afghan, and Pakistani military leaders meet regularly on both sides of the border.

Regarding the long-term relationship, Pakistan wants the government of Afghanistan to pledge to abide by the "Durand Line," a border agreement reached between Britain (signed by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand) and then Afghan leader Amir Abdul Rahman Khan in 1893, separating Afghanistan from what was then British-controlled India (later Pakistan after the 1947 partition). The border is recognized by the United Nations, but Afghanistan continues to indicate that the border was drawn unfairly to separate Pashtun tribes and should be renegotiated. As of October 2002, about 1.75 million Afghan refugees have returned from Pakistan since the Taliban fell, but as many as 3 million might still remain in Pakistan, and Pakistan says it plans to expel them back into Afghanistan in the near future.

Iran

The Obama Administration initially saw Iran as potentially helpful to its strategy for Afghanistan. Ambassador Holbrooke had advocated a "regional" component of the strategy, which focuses primarily on Pakistan but also envisioned cooperation with Iran on Afghanistan issues. However, as Iran-U.S. relations have worsened since late 2009 over Iran's refusal to accept an international settlement to its nuclear program, the Obama Administration has become more critical of Iran's

activities in Afghanistan. Still, press reports in September 2010 indicate that the view that Iran is key to helping stabilizing Afghanistan may be returning to the forefront, with the Administration reported to be considering a U.S.-Iran dialogue in Kabul on Afghan issues.[74] Early in the Administration, Secretary of State Clinton made a point of announcing that Iran would be invited to the U.N.-led meeting on Afghanistan at the Hague on March 31, 2009. At the meeting, Special Representative Holbrooke briefly met the Iranian leader of his delegation to the meeting, and handed him a letter on several outstanding human rights cases involving Iranian-Americans. At the meeting, Iran pledged cooperation on combating Afghan narcotics and in helping economic development in Afghanistan—both policies Iran is already pursuing to a large degree. The United States and Iran took similar positions at a U.N. meeting in Geneva in February 2010 that discussed drug trafficking across the Afghan border.

Iranian Material Support to Militants in Afghanistan

A U.S.-Iran dialogue on Afghanistan would presumably be intended to address the U.S. concerns about Iran's support for groups that operate against U.S. forces. Iran may be arming groups in Afghanistan to try to pressure U.S. forces that use Afghanistan's Shindand air base,[75] which Iran fears the United States might use to attack or conduct surveillance against Iran. Or, Iran's policy might be to gain broader leverage against the United States by demonstrating that Iran is in position to cause U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan. Yet, the Iranian aid is not at a level that would make Iran a major player in the insurgency in Afghanistan. Others are puzzled by Iran's support of Taliban fighters who are Pashtun, because Iran has traditionally supported Persian-speaking non-Pashtun factions in Afghanistan. U.S. officials, including Gen. Petraeus in his August 2010 press meetings, has called Iranian influence in Afghanistan, including its support for armed groups, "modest."

The State Department report on international terrorism for 2009, released August 5, 2010, said the Qods Force of the Revolutionary Guard of Iran continues to provide training to the Taliban on small unit tactics, small arms, explosives, and indirect weapons fire, as well as ships arms to "selected Taliban members" in Afghanistan. Weapons provided, according to the State Department report, as well as an April 2010 Defense Department report on Iran's military capabilities, include mortars, 107mm rockets, rocket-propelled grenades, and plastic explosives. Some reports, however, say Iran is actively paying Afghan militants to specifically target U.S. forces. On August 3, 2010, the Treasury Department, acting under Executive Order 13224, named two Qods Force officers as terrorism supporting entities (freezing assets in the United States, if any). They are: Hossein Musavi, Commander of the Qods Force Ansar Corps, which is the key Qods unit involved in Afghanistan, and Hasan Mortezavi, who is a Qods officer responsible for providing funds and materiel to the Taliban, according to the Treasury Department. [76]

Bilateral Afghan-Iranian Relations

Iran, like President Karzai, is concerned about how any reduction in U.S. involvement in Afghanistan might improve the prospects for a Taliban return to power. Iran's interest in a broad

[74] Ignatius, David. "A Chance to Engage Iran?" *Washington Post*, September 17, 2010.

[75] Rashid, Ahmed. "Afghan Neighbors Show Signs of Aiding in Nation's Stability." *Wall Street Journal*, October 18, 2004.

[76] Treasury Department. Fact Sheet: U.S. Treasury Department Targets Iran's Support for Terrorism. August 3, 2010.

relationship with Karzai has not, to date, been affected by Iran's continued support for Taliban and other militants in Afghanistan. Aside from its always tense relations with the United States, Iran perceives its key national interests in Afghanistan as exerting its traditional influence over western Afghanistan, which Iran borders and was once part of the Persian empire, and to protect Afghanistan's Shiite and other Persian-speaking minorities. Karzai has, at times, called Iran a "friend" of Afghanistan, and in March 2010 he met with Ahmadinejad on two occasions, possibly to signal to the United States that he might realign with regional actors if the United States continues to criticize his leadership. One of the meetings was just after the departure of visiting Defense Secretary Gates. Previously, Karzai received Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Kabul in August 2007, and he visited Tehran at the end of May 2009 as part of the tripartite diplomatic process between Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. During his visit to the United States in May 2009, Karzai said he had told both the United States and Iran that Afghanistan must not become an arena for the broader competition and disputes between the United States and Iran.[77]

Iran's pledged assistance to Afghanistan has totaled about $1.164 billion since the fall of the Taliban, mainly to build roads and schools and provide electricity and shops to Afghan cities and villages near the Iranian border.[78] However, the Defense Department report cited above suggest that much of the pledge has not been implemented.

Many Afghans look fondly on Iran for helping them try to oust the Taliban regime when it was in power. Iran saw the Taliban regime, which ruled during 1996-2001, as a threat to its interests in Afghanistan, especially after Taliban forces captured Herat (the western province that borders Iran) in September 1995. Iran subsequently drew even closer to the ethnic minority-dominated Northern Alliance than previously, providing its groups with fuel, funds, and ammunition.[79] 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 the 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 out of fear that Pakistan would intervene on behalf of the Taliban. Iran offered search and rescue assistance in Afghanistan during the U.S.-led war to topple the Taliban, and it also allowed U.S. humanitarian aid to the Afghan people to transit Iran. Iran helped construct Afghanistan's first post-Taliban government, in cooperation with the United States—at the December 2001 "Bonn Conference." In February 2002, Iran expelled Karzai-opponent Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, but it did not arrest him. At other times, Afghanistan and Iran have had disputes over Iran's efforts to expel Afghan refugees. About 1.2 million remain, mostly integrated into Iranian society, and a crisis erupted in May 2007 when Iran expelled about 50,000 into Afghanistan. About 300,000 Afghan refugees have returned from Iran since the Taliban fell.

India

The interests and activities of India in Afghanistan are almost the exact reverse of those of Pakistan. India's goal is to deny Pakistan "strategic depth" in Afghanistan, and India supported the Northern Alliance against the Taliban in the mid-1990s. Some believe India is increasingly concerned that any negotiated settlement of the Afghanistan conflict will give Pakistan

[77] Comments by President Karzai at the Brookings Institution. May 5, 2009.

[78] Iranian economic and political influence efforts in Herat were discussed in a CRS visit to Herat in October 2009.

[79] Steele, Jonathon, "America Includes Iran in Talks on Ending War in Afghanistan." *Washington Times*, December 15, 1997.

preponderant influence in Afghanistan, and India is said to be stepping up its contacts with the northern Afghan minorities to discuss possible contingencies.

Many of the families of Afghan leaders have lived in India at one time or another and, as noted above, Karzai studied there. India saw the Taliban's hosting of Al Qaeda as a major threat to India itself because of Al Qaeda's association with radical Islamic organizations in Pakistan dedicated to ending Indian control of parts of Jammu and Kashmir. Some of these groups have committed major acts of terrorism in India, and there might be connections to the militants who carried out the terrorist attacks in Mumbai in November 2008.

Pakistan accuses India of using its four consulates in Afghanistan (Pakistan says there are nine such consulates) to spread Indian influence in Afghanistan. However, many U.S. observers believe India's role in Afghanistan is constructive, and some would support an Indian decision to deploy more security forces in Afghanistan to protect its construction workers, diplomats, and installations. India reportedly decided in August 2008 to improve security for its officials and workers in Afghanistan, but not to send actual troops there. Yet, Tajikistan, which also supported the mostly Tajik Northern Alliance against the Taliban when it was in power, allows India to use one of its air bases.

India is the fifth-largest single country donor to Afghan reconstruction, funding projects worth over $1.2 billion. Indian officials assert that all their projects are focused on civilian, not military, development and are in line with the development priorities set by the Afghan government. India, along with the Asian Development Bank, financed a $300 million project, mentioned above, to bring electricity from Central Asia to Afghanistan. It has also renovated the well-known Habibia High School in Kabul and committed to a $25 million renovation of Darulaman Palace as the permanent house for Afghanistan's parliament. India financed the construction of a road to the Iranian border in remote Nimruz province, and it is currently constructing the 42 megawatt hydroelectric Selwa Dam in Herat Province at a cost of about $80 million. This will increase electricity availability in the province. India is also helping the IDLG with its efforts to build local governance organizations, and it provides 1,000 scholarships per year for Afghans to undergo higher education in India. Some Afghans want to enlist even more Indian assistance in training Afghan bureaucrats in accounting, forensic accounting, oversight, and other disciplines that will promote transparency in Afghan governance.

Russia, Central Asian States, and China

Some neighboring and nearby states take an active interest not only in Afghan stability, but in the U.S. military posture that supports U.S. operations in Afghanistan. The region to the north of Afghanistan is a growing factor in U.S. efforts to secure new supply lines to Afghanistan. Some of these alternative lines have begun to open, at least to non-lethal supplies.

Russia

Russia wants to reemerge as a great power and to contain U.S. power in Central Asia, including Afghanistan. Its hosting of the "quadrilateral summits"mentioned above, the first in July 2009 and the latest on August 18, could represent stepped up efforts by Russia to exert influence on the Afghanistan issue. Still, Russia supports U.S. efforts to combat militants in the region who have sometimes posed a threat to Russia itself. In February 2009, Russia resumed allowing the United States to ship non-lethal equipment into Afghanistan through Russia (following a suspension in

2008 caused by differences over the Russia-Georgia conflict). In July 2009, following President Obama's visit to Russia, it announced it would allow the transit to Afghanistan of lethal supplies as well. Russia reportedly is being urged by NATO (as evidenced in a visit by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen to Russia in December 2009) to provide helicopters and spare parts to the Afghan forces (which still make heavy use of Russian-made Hind helicopters) as well as fuel.

In June 2010, Russia said more economic and social assistance is needed for Afghanistan. Russia provides some humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, although it keeps a low profile in the country because it still feels humiliated by its withdrawal in 1989 and senses some Afghan resentment of the Soviet occupation. Dr. Abdullah told CRS in October 2009, however, that Afghan resentment of Russia because of that occupation has eased in recent years. During the 1990s, Russia supported the Northern Alliance against the Taliban with some military equipment and technical assistance in order to blunt Islamic militancy emanating from Afghanistan.[80] Although Russia supported the U.S. effort against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan out of fear of Islamic (mainly Chechen) radicals, Russia continues to seek to reduce the U.S. military presence in Central Asia. Russian fears of Islamic activism emanating from Afghanistan may have ebbed since 2002 when Russia killed a Chechen of Arab origin known as "Hattab" (full name is Ibn al-Khattab), who led a militant pro-Al Qaeda Chechen faction. The Taliban government was the only one in the world to recognize Chechnya's independence, and some Chechen fighters fighting alongside Taliban/Al Qaeda forces have been captured or killed.

Central Asian States

These states are becoming increasingly crucial to U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. As discussed in the chart, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan are pivotal actors in U.S. efforts to secure supply routes into Afghanistan that avoid Pakistan.

During Taliban rule, Russian and Central Asian leaders grew increasingly alarmed that radical Islamic movements were receiving safe haven in Afghanistan. Uzbekistan, in particular, 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.[81] One of its leaders, Juma Namangani, reportedly was killed while commanding Taliban/Al Qaeda forces in Konduz in November 2001. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan do not directly border Afghanistan, but IMU guerrillas transited Kyrgyzstan during incursions into Uzbekistan in the late 1990s.

During Taliban rule, Uzbekistan supported Uzbek leader Abdul Rashid Dostam, who was part of that Alliance. It allowed use of Karshi-Khanabad air base by OEF forces from October 2001 until a rift emerged in May 2005 over Uzbekistan's crackdown against riots in Andijon, and U.S.-Uzbek relations remained largely frozen. Uzbekistan's March 2008 agreement with Germany for it to use Karshi-Khanabad air base temporarily, for the first time since the rift in U.S.-Uzbek relations developed in 2005, suggests that U.S.-Uzbek cooperation on Afghanistan and other issues might be rebuilt. Ambassador Holbrooke visited in February 2010, indicating further warming. Renewed U.S. discussions with Uzbekistan apparently bore some fruit with the Uzbek

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

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

decision in February 2009 to allow the use of Navoi airfield for shipment of U.S./NATO goods into Afghanistan.

Central Asian Activities During Taliban Rule

In 1996, several of the Central Asian states banded together with Russia and China into a regional grouping called the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to discuss the Taliban threat. It includes China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Reflecting Russian and Chinese efforts to limit U.S. influence in the region, the group has issued statements, most recently in August 2007, that security should be handled by the countries in the Central Asia region. Despite the Shanghai Cooperation Organization statements, Tajikistan allows access primarily to French combat aircraft, and Kazakhstan allows use of facilities in case of emergency. In April 2010, it also agreed to allow U.S. overflights of lethal military equipment to Afghanistan, allowing the United States to use polar routes to fly materiel directly from the United States to Bagram Airfield. A meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to discuss Afghanistan was held in Moscow on March 25, 2009, and was observed by a U.S. official, as well as by Iran.

Of the Central Asian states that border Afghanistan, only Turkmenistan chose to seek close relations with the Taliban leadership when it was in power, possibly viewing engagement as a more effective means of preventing spillover of radical Islamic activity from Afghanistan. It saw Taliban control as facilitating construction of a natural gas pipeline from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan (see above). The September 11 events stoked Turkmenistan's fears of the Taliban and its Al Qaeda guests and the country publicly supported the U.S.-led war. No U.S. forces have been based in Turkmenistan.

China[82]

China's involvement in Afghanistan policy appears to be growing. Some diplomats in Washington, DC, indicated to CRS in November 2009 that, should President Obama ask for China to contribute People's Liberation Army (PLA) forces, even in a non-combat role, to Afghanistan, China might agree to that request. No such commitment resulted from the Obama visit to China in November 2009, but the communiqué of the visit implied a possible larger role for China to help stabilize Afghanistan. In late 2009, China allocated an additional $75 billion in economic aid to Afghanistan, bringing its total to close to $1 billion since 2002. On March 20, 2010, ahead of a visit to China by Karzai, China called for more international support for Afghanistan. During the visit, China stressed that its investments in Afghanistan would continue.

Chinese delegations continue to assess the potential for new investments in such sectors as mining and energy,[83] and a $3.4 billion deal was signed in November 2007 for China Metallurgical Group to develop the Aynak copper mine south of Kabul, and build related infrastructure. The deal represents the largest investment in Afghanistan in history. However, U.S. Embassy officials told CRS in October 2009 that actual work at the mine has been stalled for some time. U.S. forces do not directly protect the project, but U.S. forces are operating in Lowgar

[82] For more information, see CRS Report RL33001, *U.S.-China Counterterrorism Cooperation: Issues for U.S. Policy*, by Shirley A. Kan.

[83] CRS conversations with Chinese officials in Beijing. August 2007.

province, where the project is located, and provide general stability there. China is also a major contender to develop the Hajji Gak iron ore mine near Kabul.

A major organizer of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, China has a small border with a sliver of Afghanistan known as the "Wakhan corridor." China had become increasingly concerned about the potential for Al Qaeda to promote Islamic fundamentalism among Muslims in China. In December 2000, sensing China's increasing concern about Taliban policies, a Chinese official delegation met with Mullah Umar. China did not enthusiastically support U.S. military action against the Taliban, possibly because China was wary of a U.S. military buildup nearby. In addition, China has been allied to Pakistan in part to pressure India, a rival of China.

Persian Gulf States: Saudi Arabia and UAE

The Gulf states are, according to Ambassador Holbrooke, a key part of the effort to stabilize Afghanistan. As noted, Ambassador Holbrooke has focused increasing U.S. attention—and has formed a multilateral task force—to try to curb continuing Gulf resident donations to the Taliban in Afghanistan. Holbrooke has said these donations might be a larger source of Taliban funding than is the narcotics trade.

Saudi Arabia has a role to play in Afghanistan in part because, during the Soviet occupation, Saudi Arabia channeled hundreds of millions of dollars to the Afghan resistance, primarily Hikmatyar and Sayyaf. Drawing on its reputed intelligence ties to Afghanistan during that era, Saudi Arabia worked with Taliban leaders to persuade them to suppress anti-Saudi activities by Al Qaeda. 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. A majority of Saudi citizens practice the strict Wahhabi brand of Islam similar to that of the Taliban, and Saudi Arabia was one of three countries to formally recognize the Taliban government. The Taliban initially served Saudi Arabia as a potential counter to Iran, but Iranian-Saudi relations improved after 1997 and balancing Iranian power ebbed as a factor in Saudi policy toward Afghanistan.

Saudi Arabia has played a role as a go-between for negotiations between the Karzai government and "moderate" Taliban figures. This role was recognized at the London conference on January 28, 2010, in which President Karzai stated in his opening speech that he sees a role for Saudi Arabia in helping stabilize Afghanistan.

According to U.S. officials, Saudi Arabia cooperated extensively, if not publicly, with OEF. It broke diplomatic relations with the Taliban in late September 2001 and 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. airstrikes from it.

The United Arab Emirates, the third country that recognized the Taliban regime, is emerging as another major donor to Afghanistan. Its troop contribution was discussed under OEF, above. At a donors conference for Afghanistan in June 2008, UAE pledged an additional $250 million for Afghan development, double the $118 million pledged by Saudi Arabia. That brought the UAE contribution to Afghanistan to over $400 million since the fall of the Taliban. Projects funded include housing in Qandahar, roads in Kabul, a hospital in Zabol province, and a university in Khost. There are several daily flights between Kabul and Dubai emirate.

U.S. and International Aid to Afghanistan and Development Issues

Many experts have long believed that accelerating economic development would do more to improve the security situation—and to eliminate narcotics trafficking—than intensified anti-Taliban combat. This belief appears to constitute a major element of Obama Administration strategy. Afghanistan's economy and society are still fragile after decades of warfare that left about 2 million dead, 700,000 widows and orphans, and about 1 million Afghan children who were born and raised in refugee camps outside Afghanistan. More than 3.5 million Afghan refugees have since returned, although a comparable number remain outside Afghanistan. The U.N. High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) supervises Afghan repatriation and Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan. The literacy rate is very low and Afghanistan lacks a large pool of skilled labor.

U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan

During the 1990s, the United States became the largest single provider of assistance to the Afghan people. During Taliban rule, no U.S. aid went directly to that government; monies were provided through relief organizations. Between 1985 and 1994, the United States had a cross-border aid program for Afghanistan, implemented by USAID personnel based in Pakistan. Citing the difficulty of administering this program, there was no USAID mission for Afghanistan from the end of FY1994 until the reopening of the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan in late 2001.

For all of FY2002-FY2009, the United States has provided about $40 billion in assistance, including military "train and equip" for the ANA and ANP (which is about $21 billion of these funds). The Obama Administration request for FY2010 (regular and supplemental) and for FY2011 are in separate tables below. The figures in the tables do not include costs for U.S. combat operations. Including those costs, the United States is expected to spend about $105 billion for FY2010 and about $120 billion for FY2011. For further information on combat costs, see CRS Report RL33110, *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11*, by Amy Belasco.

There is also a debate over how aid is distributed. Some of the more stable provinces, such as Bamiyan and Balkh, are complaining that U.S. and international aid is flowing mostly to the restive provinces in an effort to quiet them, and ignoring the needs of poor Afghans in peaceful areas. Later in this report are tables showing U.S. appropriations of assistance to Afghanistan, and **Table 21** lists U.S. spending on all sectors for FY2002-FY2009.

Direct Aid and Budget Support to the Afghan Government

Although the Afghan government has been increasing its revenue (about $1.3 billion for 2009) and is covering about one quarter of its overall budget, USAID provides funding to help the Afghan government meet gaps in its operating budget—both directly and through a U.N.-run multi-donor Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) account, run by the World Bank. The Obama Administration has requested about $200 million in FY2011 funds to provide direct budget support to Afghan ministries that meet reform benchmarks. Those figures are provided in the U.S. aid tables at the end.

Currently, only about 20% of all donated aid funds disbursed are channeled through the Afghan government. The United States views only four ministries as sufficiently transparent to handle donor funds. However, the Kabul Conference (July 20, 2010) communiqué endorsed a goal of increasing that to about 50%.

Aid Oversight

Still heavily dependent on donors, Karzai has sought to reassure the international donor community by establishing a transparent budget and planning process. Some in Congress want to increase independent oversight of U.S. aid to Afghanistan; the conference report on the FY2008 defense authorization bill (P.L. 110-181) established a "special inspector general" for Afghanistan reconstruction, (SIGAR) modeled on a similar outside auditor for Iraq ("Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction," SIGIR). Funds provided for the SIGAR are in the tables below. On May 30, 2008, Maj. Gen. Arnold Fields (Marine, ret.) was named to the position. He has filed several reports on Afghan reconstruction, which include discussions of SIGAR staffing levels and activities, as well as several specific project audits. However, he acknowledged that criticisms in a July 2010 "peer review" of SIGAR operations by the Inspectors General of several U.S. agencies were valid, attributing many of the shortcomings to slow pace of fully funding his office.[84] One recent SIGAR report noted deficiencies in the ability of the Afghan government's Central Audits Office to monitor how funds are used.

[84] http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/peer_review/Section5.pdf.

Table 8. Major Reporting Requirements

Several provisions require Administration reports on numerous aspects of U.S. strategy, assistance, and related issues:

- P.L. 108-458, The Afghanistan Freedom Support Act Amendments require, through the end of FY2010, an overarching annual report on U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. Other reporting requirements expired, including required reports: (1) on long-term U.S. strategy and progress of reconstruction; (2) on how U.S. assistance is being used; (3) on U.S. efforts to persuade other countries to participate in Afghan peacekeeping; and (4) a joint State and Defense Department report on U.S. counter-narcotics efforts in Afghanistan.
- P.L. 110-181 (Section 1230), FY2008 Defense Authorization Act requires a quarterly DOD report on the security situation in Afghanistan; the first was submitted in June 2008. It is required through FY2011.
- Section 1229 of the same law requires the quarterly report of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR).
- P.L. 111-8 (Omnibus Appropriation, explanatory statement) requires a State Department report on the use of funds to address the needs of Afghan women and girls (submitted by September 30, 2009).
- P.L. 111-32, FY2009 Supplemental Appropriation (Section 1116), required a report, by the time of the FY2011 budget submission, on whether Afghanistan and Pakistan are cooperating with U.S. policy sufficiently to warrant a continuation of Administration policy toward both countries, as well as efforts by these governments to curb corruption, their efforts to develop a counter-insurgency strategy, the level of political consensus in the two countries to confront security challenges, and U.S. government efforts to achieve these objectives.
- The same law (Section 1117) required a report, by September 23, 2009, on metrics to be used to assess progress on Afghanistan and Pakistan strategy. A progress report measured against those metrics is to be submitted by March 30, 2010, and every six months thereafter, until the end of FY2011.
- Section 1228 of the FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-84) requires a report, within 120 days, on the Afghan Provincial Protection Program and other local security initiatives. Section 1235 authorizes a DOD-funded study of U.S. force levels needed for eastern and southern Afghanistan, and Section 1226 requires a Comptroller General report on the U.S. "campaign plan" for the Afghanistan (and Iraq) effort.

Aid Authorization: Afghanistan Freedom Support Act

A key post-Taliban aid authorization bill, S. 2712, the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act (AFSA) of 2002 (P.L. 107-327, December 4, 2002), as amended, authorized about $3.7 billion in U.S. civilian aid for FY2003-FY2006. The law, whose authority has now expired, was intended to create a central source for allocating funds; that aid strategy was not implemented. However, some of the humanitarian, counter-narcotics, and governance assistance targets authorized by the act were met or exceeded by appropriations. No Enterprise Funds authorized by the act have been appropriated. The act authorized the following:

- $60 million in total counter-narcotics assistance ($15 million per year for FY2003-FY2006);
- $30 million in assistance for political development, including national, regional, and local elections ($10 million per year for FY2003-FY2005);
- $80 million total to benefit women and for Afghan human rights oversight ($15 million per year for FY2003-FY2006 for the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs, and $5 million per year for FY2003-FY2006 to the Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan);
- $1.7 billion in humanitarian and development aid ($425 million per year for FY2003-FY2006);

- $300 million for an Enterprise Fund;
- $550 million in drawdowns of defense articles and services for Afghanistan and regional militaries. (The original law provided for $300 million in drawdowns. That was increased by subsequent appropriations laws.)

A subsequent law (P.L. 108-458, December 17, 2004), implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, contained "The Afghanistan Freedom Support Act Amendments of 2004." The subtitle mandated the appointment of a U.S. coordinator of policy on Afghanistan and requires additional Administration reports to Congress.

Afghan Freedom Support Act Reauthorization

In the 110th Congress, H.R. 2446, passed by the House on June 6, 2007 (406-10), would have reauthorized AFSA through FY2010. A version (S. 3531), with fewer provisions than the House bill, was not taken up by the full Senate. Some observers say that versions of AFSA reauthorization are expected to be reintroduced in the 111th Congress. The following are the major provisions of H.R. 2446:

- A total of about $1.7 billion in U.S. economic aid and $320 in military aid (including drawdowns of equipment) per fiscal year would be authorized.
- A pilot program of crop substitution to encourage legitimate alternatives to poppy cultivation is authorized. Afghan officials support this provision as furthering their goal of combating narcotics by promoting alternative livelihoods.
- A cut off of U.S. aid to any Afghan province in which the Administration reports that the leadership of the province is complicit in narcotics trafficking. This provision drew criticism from observers who say that the most needy in Afghanistan might be deprived of aid based on allegations.
- $45 million per year for the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, and programs for women and girls.
- $75 million per year for enhanced power generation, a key need in Afghanistan.
- A coordinator for U.S. assistance to Afghanistan.
- Military drawdowns for the ANA and ANP valued at $300 million per year (un-reimbursed) are authorized (versus the aggregate $550 million allowed currently).
- Appointment of a special envoy to promote greater Afghanistan-Pakistan cooperation.
- Reauthorization of "Radio Free Afghanistan."
- Establishment of a U.S. policy to encourage Pakistan to permit shipments by India of equipment and material to Afghanistan.

International Reconstruction Pledges/National Development Strategy

International (non-U.S.) donors have pledged over $30 billion since the fall of the Taliban, as of late 2009. When combined with U.S. aid, this by far exceeds the $27.5 billion for reconstruction identified as required for 2002-2010. The major donors, and their aggregate pledges to date, are

listed below. These amounts were pledged, in part, at the following donor conferences: (Tokyo), Berlin (April 2004), Kabul (April 2005), the London conference (February 2006), and the June 12, 2008, conference in Paris, discussed below. The January 28, 2010, London conference resulted in further pledges, as noted above. The Afghanistan Compact leaned toward the view of Afghan leaders that a higher proportion of the aid be channeled through the Afghan government, a policy adopted by the United States.

Among multilateral lending institutions, in May 2002, the World Bank reopened its office in Afghanistan after 20 years. Its projects have been concentrated in the telecommunications and road and sewage sectors. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has also been playing a major role in Afghanistan. One of its projects in Afghanistan was funding the paving of a road from Qandahar to the border with Pakistan, and as noted above, it is contributing to a project to bring electricity from Central Asia to Afghanistan. On the eve of the London conference on January 28, 2010, the IMF and World Bank announced $1.6 billion in Afghanistan debt relief.

Efforts to build the legitimate economy are showing some results, by accounts of senior U.S. officials, including expansion of roads and education and health facilities constructed. USAID spending to promote economic growth is shown in **Table 21**.

Key Sectors

The following are some key sectors and what has been accomplished with U.S. and international donor funds:

- **Roads.** Road building is considered a U.S. priority and has been USAID's largest project category there, taking up about 25% of USAID spending since the fall of the Taliban. Roads are considered key to enabling Afghan farmers to bring legitimate produce to market in a timely fashion, and former commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan Gen. Eikenberry (now Ambassador) said "where the roads end, the Taliban begin." The major road, the Ring Road, is 78% repaved, according to the Defense Department June 2009 report on Afghan stability. Among other major projects completed are a road from Qandahar to Tarin Kowt, (Uruzgan province) built by U.S. military personnel, inaugurated in 2005; and a road linking the Panjshir Valley to Kabul. In several provinces, U.S. funds (sometimes CERP funds) are being used to build roads connecting remote areas to regional district centers in several provinces in the eastern sector. This is a part of a U.S. effort to link up farming communities to the market for their products. Another key priority is building a Khost-Gardez road, under way currently.
- **Bridges.** Afghan officials are said to be optimistic about increased trade with Central Asia now that a new bridge has opened (October 2007) over the Panj River, connecting Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The bridge was built with $33 million in (FY2005) U.S. assistance. The bridge is helping what press reports say is robust reconstruction and economic development in the relatively peaceful and ethnically homogenous province of Panjshir, the political base of the Northern Alliance.
- **Education.** Despite the success in enrolling Afghan children in school since the Taliban era (see statistics above), setbacks have occurred because of Taliban attacks on schools, causing some to close.

- **Health.** The health care sector, as noted by Afghan observers, has made considerable gains in reducing infant mortality and giving about 65% of the population at least some access to health professionals. In addition to U.S. assistance to develop the health sector's capacity, Egypt operates a 65-person field hospital at Bagram Air Base that instructs Afghan physicians. Jordan operates a similar facility in Mazar-e-Sharif.
- **Electricity/Energy/Hydrocarbons.** About 10% of USAID spending in Afghanistan is on power projects. The Afghanistan Compact states that the goal is for electricity to reach 65% of households in urban areas and 25% in rural areas by 2010. Severe power shortages in Kabul are fewer now than they were two years ago. The power shortages were caused in part by the swelling of Kabul's population to about 3 million, up from half a million when the Taliban was in power. Power to the capital has grown due to the Afghan government's agreements with several Central Asian neighbors to import electricity, although other electricity projects have suffered from a lack of fuel to run them. Many shops in Kabul are now lit up at night, as observed by CRS in October 2009. Afghanistan has no hydrocarbons energy export industry and a small refining sector that provides some of Afghanistan's needs for gasoline or other fuels. Russia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan are its main fuel suppliers.

  A major power project is the Kajaki Dam, located in unstable Helmand Province. USAID has allocated about $500 million to restore and expand the capacity of the dam. As of October 2009, two turbines were operating—one was always working, and the second was repaired by USAID contractors. This has doubled electricity production in the south and caused small factories and other businesses to come to flourish. USAID plans to further expand capacity of the dam by installing a third turbine (which there is a berth for but which never had a turbine installed.) In an operation involving 4,000 NATO troops (Operation Ogap Tsuka), components of the third turbine were successfully delivered to the dam in September 2008. It was expected to be operational in mid-late 2009 but technical and security problems, such as inability to secure and build roads leading to the dam, have delayed the project and there is no public estimate as to when the third turbine will be completed. In the interim, U.S. officials have agreed on a U.S. military plan, funded with CERP funds, to focus on small generator projects that can bring more electricity to Qandahar and other places in the south quickly.
- **Railways.** Afghanistan does not currently have any functioning railway. However, a railway from Mazar-i-Sharif to the border with Uzbekistan, is now under construction with $165 million from the Asian Development Bank. The rail will eventually link up with Herat and will integrate Afghanistan to the former Soviet railway system in Central Asia, increasing Afghanistan's economic integration in the region.

Agriculture Sector

With about 80% of Afghans living in rural areas, the agriculture sector has always been key to Afghanistan's economy and stability. Ambassador Holbrooke, including in his January 2010 strategy document, has outlined U.S. policy to boost Afghanistan's agriculture sector not only to reduce drug production but also as an engine of economic growth. Prior to the turmoil that

engulfed Afghanistan in the late 1970s, Afghanistan was a major exporter of agricultural products.

USAID has spent about 15% of its Afghanistan funds on agriculture (and "alternative livelihoods" to poppy cultivation), and this has helped Afghanistan double its legitimate agricultural output over the past five years. One emerging "success story" is growing Afghan exports of high-quality pomegranate juice called Anar. Other countries are promoting not only pomegranates but also saffron rice and other crops that draw buyers outside Afghanistan. Wheat production was robust in 2009 because of healthy prices for that crop, and Afghanistan is again self-sufficient in wheat production. According to the SRAP January 2010 strategy document reference earlier, 89 U.S. agricultural experts (64 from U.S. Department of Agriculture and 25 from USAID) are in Afghanistan. Their efforts include providing new funds to buy seeds and agricultural equipment, and to encourage agri-business.

U.S. strategy has addressed not only crop choice but also trying to construct the entirety of the infrastructure needed for a healthy legitimate agriculture sector, including road building, security of the routes to agriculture markets, refrigeration, storage, transit through Pakistan and other transportation of produce, building legitimate sources of financing, and other aspects of the industry. U.S. officials in Kabul say that Pakistan's restrictions on trade between Afghanistan and India have, to date, prevented a rapid expansion of Afghan pomegranate exports to that market. Dubai is another customer for Afghan pomegranate exports. A key breakthrough on this issue was reached with the July 18, 2010, signing of a transit trade agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan, reportedly brokered by the United States. It will allow for more rapid transit of Afghan and Pakistani trucks through each others' territories, ending a requirement that goods be offloaded at border crossings.

To help Afghanistan develop the agriculture sector, the National Guard from several states (Texas, for example) is deploying "Agribusiness Development Teams" in several provinces to help Afghan farmers with water management, soil enhancement, crop cultivation, and improving the development and marketing of their goods. The timber industry in the northwest is said to be vibrant as well.

Private Sector Initiatives

Some sectors are being developed primarily with private investment funding. There is substantial new construction, particularly in Kabul, such as the Serena luxury hotel (opened in November 2005) and a $25 million Coca Cola bottling factory (opened in September 2006). The bottling factory is located near the Bagrami office park (another private initiative), which includes several other factories. The Serena was built by the Agha Khan foundation, a major investor in Afghanistan; the Agha Khan is a leader of the Isma'ili community, which is prevalent in northern Afghanistan. The foundation has also funded the successful Roshan cellphone company. Some say that private investment could be healthier if not for the influence exercised over it by various faction leaders and Karzai relatives.

- **Telecommunications and Transportation.** Several Afghan telecommunications firms have been formed, including Afghan Wireless (another cell phone service, which competes with Roshan) and Tolo Television. A Gold's Gym has opened in Kabul as well. The 52-year-old national airline, Ariana, is said to be in significant financial trouble due to corruption that has affected its safety ratings and left it unable to service a heavy debt load, but there are new privately run airlines, such

as Pamir Air, Safi Air (run by the Safi Group, which has built a modern mall in Kabul), and Kam Air. Major new buildings include several marriage halls in Kabul city, as observed by CRS in October 2009.

- **Mining and Gems**. Afghanistan's mining sector has been largely dormant since the Soviet invasion. Some Afghan leaders complain that not enough has been done to revive such potentially lucrative industries as minerals mining, such as of copper and lapis lazuli (a stone used in jewelry). The issue became more urgent in June 2010 when a Defense Department development team announced, based on surveys, that Afghanistan may have untapped minerals worth over $1 trillion.[85] Gen. Petraeus, in an interview with NBC News on August 15, 2010, said the amount could be in the "trillions." Among the most valuable are significant reserves of such minerals as lithium in western Afghanistan; lithium is crucial to the new batteries being used to power electric automobiles.

  Still, in November 2007, the Afghan government signed a deal with China Metallurgical Group for the company to invest $3.4 billion to develop Afghanistan's Aynak copper field in Lowgar Province. The agreement, viewed as generous to the point where it might not be commercially profitable for China Metallurgical Group, includes construction of two coal-fired electric power plant (one of which will supply more electricity to Kabul city); a freight railway (in conjunction with the Asian Development Bank project above); and a road from the project to Kabul. However, work on the mine reportedly has been slowed by the need to clear mines in the area. Bids are being accepted for another large mining project, the Haji Gak iron ore mine (which may contain 60 billion tons of iron ore) near Kabul. China Metallurgy, as well as companies from India, are said to be finalists for the project.

- **Hydrocarbons and Pipelines.** As noted, Afghanistan has virtually no operational hydrocarbon energy sector. Afghanistan's prospects in this sector appeared to brighten by the announcement in March 2006 of an estimated 3.6 billion barrels of oil and 36.5 trillion cubic feet of gas reserves. Experts believe these amounts, if proved, could make Afghanistan relatively self-sufficient in energy and able to export energy to its neighbors. USAID is funding a test project to develop gas resources in northern Afghanistan.

  Another major energy project remains under consideration. During 1996-1998, the Clinton Administration supported proposed natural gas and oil pipelines through western Afghanistan as an incentive for the warring factions to cooperate. A consortium led by Los Angeles-based Unocal Corporation proposed a $2.5 billion Central Asia Gas Pipeline, estimated to cost $3.7 billion to construct, that would originate in southern Turkmenistan and pass through Afghanistan to Pakistan, with possible extensions into India.[86] The deterioration in U.S.-Taliban relations after 1998 largely ended hopes for the pipeline projects. Prospects for the project have improved in the post-Taliban period. In a summit

[85] Risen, James. "U.S. Identifies Mineral Riches in Afghanistan." *New York Times*, June 14, 2010.

[86] 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. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (Moscow), October 30, 1997, p. 3.

meeting in late May 2002 between the leaders of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, the three countries agreed to revive the project. Sponsors held an inaugural meeting on July 9, 2002, in Turkmenistan, signing a series of preliminary agreements. Turkmenistan's leadership (President Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov, succeeding the late Saparmurad Niyazov) favors the project as well. Some U.S. officials view this project as a superior alternative to a proposed gas pipeline from Iran to India, transiting Pakistan.

National Solidarity Program

The United States and the Afghan government are also trying to promote local decision making on development. The "National Solidarity Program" (NSD) largely funded by U.S. and other international donors—but implemented by Afghanistan's Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development—seeks to create and empower local governing councils to prioritize local reconstruction projects. It is widely hailed as a highly successful, Afghan-run program. The assistance, channeled through donors, provides block grants of about $60,000 per project to the councils to implement agreed projects, most of which are water projects. The U.S. aid to the program is part of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) account.

The FY2009 supplemental request asked about $85 million for the ARTF account, of which much of those funds would be used to fill a $140 million shortfall in the NSP program. P.L. 111-32, the FY2009 supplemental discussed above, earmarks $70 million to defray the shortfall. The FY2010 consolidated appropriation (P.L. 111-117) earmarked another $175 million in ESF for the program.

The FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-84) authorizes the use of some CERP funds, controlled by the U.S. military, to supplement the funding for the NSP. However, this authorization, if implemented, is likely to incur opposition from some international NGOs who are opposed to combining military action with development work.

Trade Initiatives/Reconstruction Opportunity Zones

The United States is trying to build on Afghanistan's post-war economic rebound with trade initiatives. In September 2004, the United States and Afghanistan signed a bilateral trade and investment framework agreement (TIFA). These agreements are generally seen as a prelude to a broader and more complex bilateral free trade agreement, but negotiations on an FTA have not yet begun. On December 13, 2004, the 148 countries of the World Trade Organization voted to start membership talks with Afghanistan. Another initiative supported by the United States is the establishment of joint Afghan-Pakistani "Reconstruction Opportunity Zones" (ROZ's) which would be modeled after "Qualified Industrial Zones" run by Israel and Jordan in which goods produced in the zones receive duty free treatment for import into the United States. For FY2008, $5 million in supplemental funding was requested to support the zones, but P.L. 110-252 did not specifically mention the zones.

Bills in the 110th Congress, S. 2776 and H.R. 6387, would have authorized the President to proclaim duty-free treatment for imports from ROZ's to be designated by the President. In the 111th Congress, a version of these bills was introduced (S. 496 and H.R. 1318). President Obama specifically endorsed passage of these bills in his March 2009 strategy announcement. H.R. 1318 was incorporated into H.R. 1886, a Pakistan aid appropriation that is a component of the new U.S. strategy for the region, and the bill was passed by the House on June 11, 2009, and then

appended to H.R. 2410. However, another version of the Pakistan aid bill, S. 1707, did not authorize ROZ's; it was passed and became law (P.L. 111-73).

Table 9. Major International (Non-U.S.) Pledges to Afghanistan Since January 2002

(as of March 2010; $ in millions)

Japan	6,900
Britain	2,897
World Bank	2,803
Asia Development Bank	2,200
European Commission (EC)	1,768
Netherlands	1,697
Canada	1,479
India	1,200
Iran	1,164
Germany	1,108
Norway	977
Denmark	683
Italy	637
Saudi Arabia	533
Spain	486
Australia	440
Total Non-U.S. Pledges (including donors not listed)	**30,800**

Sources: Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. October 2008 report, p. 140; various press announcements. Figures include funds pledged at April 2009 NATO summit and Japan's October 2009 pledge of $5 billion over the next five years.

Note: This table lists donors pledging over $400 million total.

Table 10. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY1978-FY1998

($ 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[a]	49.9
1998	—	—	3.6	—	49.14[b]	52.74

Source: Department of State.

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

b. 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.

Table 11. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY1999-FY2002

($ 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)	131.1 (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 NGOs 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 NGOs)
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 NGOs)	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	
Counter-Narcotics			1.50	63.0
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)
Foreign Military Financing				57.0 (for Afghan national army)
Anti-Terrorism				36.4
Economic Support Funds (E.S.F)				105.2
Peacekeeping				24.0
Totals	**76.6**	**113.2**	**182.6**	**815.9**

Source: CRS.

Table 12. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2003

($ in millions, same acronyms as Table 11)

FY2003 Foreign Aid Appropriations (P.L. 108-7)	
Development/Health	90
P.L. 480 Title II (Food Aid)	47
Peacekeeping	10
Disaster Relief	94
ESF	50
Non-Proliferation, De-mining, Anti-Terrorism (NADR)	5
Refugee Relief	55
Afghan National Army (ANA) train and equip (FMF)	21
Total from this law:	**372**
FY2003 Supplemental (P.L. 108-11)	
Road Construction (ESF, Kabul-Qandahar road)	100
Provincial Reconstruction Teams (ESF)	10
Afghan government support (ESF)	57
ANA train and equip (FMF)	170
Anti-terrorism/de-mining (NADR, some for Karzai protection)	28
Total from this law:	**365**
Total for FY2003	**737**

Source: CRS.

Note: Earmarks for programs benefitting women and girls totaled: $65 million. Of that amount, $60 million was earmarked in the supplemental and $5 million in the regular appropriation.

Table 13. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2004

($ in millions, same acronyms as previous tables)

Afghan National Police (FMF)	160
Counter-Narcotics	125.52
Afghan National Army (FMF)	719.38
Presidential Protection (NADR)	52.14
DDR Program (disarming militias)	15.42
MANPAD destruction	1.5
Terrorist Interdiction Program	0.41
Border Control (WMD)	0.23
Good Governance Program	113.57
Political Competition, Consensus Building (Elections)	24.41
Rule of Law and Human Rights	29.4
Roads	348.68
Education/Schools	104.11
Health/Clinics	76.85
Power	85.13
PRTs	57.4
CERP (DOD funds to build good will)	39.71
Private Sector Development/Economic Growth	63.46
Water Projects	28.9
Agriculture	50.5
Refugee/IDPs	82.6
Food Assistance	88.25
De-Mining	12.61
State/USAID Program Support	203.02
Total Aid for FY2004	**2,483.2**

Laws Derived: FY2004 supplemental (P.L. 108-106); FY2004 regular appropriation (P.L. 108-199). Regular appropriation earmarked $5 million for programs benefitting women and girls.

Table 14. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2005

($ in millions)

Afghan National Police (State Dept. funds, FMF, and DOD funds, transition to DOD funds to Afghan security forces	624.46
Counter-Narcotics	775.31
Afghan National Army (State Dept. funds, FMF, and DOD funds)	1,633.24
Presidential (Karzai) Protection (NADR funds)	23.10
DDR	5.0
Detainee Operations	16.9
MANPAD Destruction	0.75
Small Arms Control	3.0
Terrorist Interdiction Program	0.1
Border Control (WMD)	0.85
Good Governance	137.49
Political Competition/Consensus-Building/Election Support	15.75
Rule of Law and Human Rights	20.98
Roads	334.1
Afghan-Tajik (Nizhny Panj) Bridge	33.1
Education/Schools	89.63
Health/Clinics	107.4
Power	222.5
PRTs	97.0
CERP	136.0
Civil Aviation (Kabul International Airport)	25.0
Private Sector Development/Economic Growth	77.43
Water Projects	43.2
Agriculture	74.49
Refugee/IDP Assistance	54.6
Food Assistance (P.L. 480, Title II)	108.6
Demining	23.7
State/USAID Program Support	142.84
Total Aid for FY2005	**4,826.52**
Laws Derived: FY2005 Regular Appropriations (P.L. 108-447); Second FY2005 Supplemental (P.L. 109-13). The regular appropriation earmarked $50 million to be used for programs to benefit women and girls.	

Source: CRS.

Note: In FY2005, funds to equip and train the Afghan national security forces was altered from State Department funds (Foreign Military Financing, FMF) to DOD funds.

Table 15. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2006

($ in millions)

Afghan National Police (DOD funds)	1,217.5
Counter-narcotics	419.26
Afghan National Army (DOD funds)	735.98
Presidential (Karzai) protection (NADR funds)	18.17
Detainee Operations	14.13
Small Arms Control	2.84
Terrorist Interdiction	.10
Counter-terrorism Finance	.28
Border Control (WMD)	.40
Bilateral Debt Relief	11.0
Budgetary Support to the Government of Afghanistan	1.69
Good Governance	10.55
Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund	47.5
Political Competition/Consensus Building/Elections	1.35
Civil Society	7.77
Rule of Law and Human Rights	29.95
Roads	235.95
Education/Schools	49.48
Health/Clinics	51.46
Power	61.14
PRTs	20.0
CERP Funds (DOD)	215.0
Private Sector Development/Economic Growth	45.51
Water Projects	.89
Agriculture	26.92
Food Assistance	109.6
De-mining	14.32
Refugee/IDP aid	36.0
State/USAID program support	142.42
Total	**3,527.16**

Laws Derived: FY2006 Regular Foreign Aid Appropriations (P.L. 109-102); FY06 supplemental (P.L. 109-234). The regular appropriation earmarked $50 million for programs to benefit women and girls.

Source: CRS.

Table 16. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2007

($ in millions)

Afghan National Police (DOD funds)	2,523.30
Afghan National Army (DOD funds)	4,871.59
Counter-Narcotics	737.15
Presidential (Karzai) Protection (NADR)	19.9
Detainee Operations	12.7
Small Arms Control	1.75
Terrorist Interdiction Program	0.5
Counter-Terrorism Finance	0.4
Border Control (WMD)	0.5
Budget Support to Afghan Government	31.24
Good Governance	107.25
Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (incl. National Solidarity Program)	63
Political Competition/Election support (ESF)	29.9
Civil Society (ESF)	8.1
Rule of Law/Human Rights (ESF)	65.05
Roads (ESF)	303.1
Education/Schools (ESF)	62.75
Health/Clinics	112.77
Power (ESF)	194.8
PRTs (ESF)	126.1
CERP (DOD funds)	206
Private Sector Development/Economic Growth	70.56
Water Projects (ESF)	2.3
Agriculture (ESF)	67.03
Refugee/IDP Assistance	72.61
Food Assistance	150.9
Demining	27.82
State/USAID Program Support	88.7
Total	**9,984.98**

Laws Derived: Regular Appropriation P.L. 110-5; DOD Appropriation P.L. 109-289; and FY2007 Supplemental Appropriation P.L. 110-28. The regular appropriation earmarked $50 million for programs to benefit women/ girls. Providing ESF in excess of $300 million subject to certification of Afghan cooperation on counter-narcotics.

Sources: CRS; Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, October 2008 report.

Table 17. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2008

(appropriated, $ in millions)

Afghan National Army (DOD funds)	1,724.68
Afghan National Police (DOD funds)	1,017.38
Counter-Narcotics (INCLE and DOD funds)	619.47
NADR (Karzai protection)	6.29
Radio Free Afghanistan	3.98
Detainee operations	9.6
Small Arms Control	3.0
Terrorist Interdiction Program	.99
Counter-Terrorism Finance	.60
Border Control (WMD)	.75
Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP, DOD funds)	269.4
Direct Support to Afghan Government	49.61
Good Governance	245.08
Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (incl. National Solidarity program)	45.0
Election Support	90.0
Civil Society Building	4.01
Rule of Law and Human Rights	125.28
Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR)	2.0
Roads	324.18
Education/Schools	99.09
Health/Clinics	114.04
Power (incl. Kajaki Dam rehabilitation work)	236.81
PRT programs	75.06
Economic Growth/Private Sector Development	63.06
Water Projects	16.4q
Agriculture	34.44
Refugee/IDP Assistance	42.1
Food Aid	101.83
De-Mining	15.0
State/USAID Program Support	317.4
Total	**5,656.53**
Appropriations Laws Derived: Regular FY2008 (P.L. 110-161); FY2008 Supplemental (P.L. 110-252). The regular appropriation earmarked $75 million for programs to benefit woman and girls. ESF over $300 million subject to narcotics cooperation certification.	

Sources: Special Inspector General Afghanistan Reconstruction, October 2008 report; CRS.

Table 18. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2009

($ in millions)

	Regular Appropriation (P.L. 111-8)	Bridge Supplemental (P.L. 110-252)	FY2009 Supplemental (P.L. 111-32)	Total
ANSF Funding		2,000	3,607	5,607
CERP (DOD funds)		683		683
Detainee ops (DOD)		4		4
Counternarcotics (C-N) (DOD)	24	150	57	232
C-N (DEA)	19			19
C-N—Alternative. Livelihoods (INCLE)	100	70	87	257
C-N—Eradication, Interdiction (INCLE)	178	14	17	209
IMET	1.4			1.4
ARTF (Incl. National Solidarity Program)	45	20	85	150
Governance building	100	68	115	283
Civil Society promotion	8	4		12
Election Support	93	56	25	174
Strategic Program Development			50	50
Rule of Law Programs (USAID)	8	15	20	43
Rule of Law (INCLE)	34	55	80	169
Roads (ESF)	74	65		139
Power (ESF)	73	61		134
Agriculture (ESF and DA)	25		85	110
PRTs/Local Governance (ESF)	74	55	159	288
Education	88	6		94
Health	61	27		88
Econ Growth/"Cash for Work"	49	37	220	306
Water, Environment, Victims Comp.	31	3		34
Karzai Protection (NADR)	32		12	44
Food Aid (P.L. 480, Food for Peace)	14	44		58
Migration, Refugee Aid		50	7	57
State Ops/Embassy Construction	308	131	450	889
USAID Programs and Ops	18	2	165	185
State/USAID IG/SIGAR	3	11	7	20
Cultural Exchanges, International Orgs	6	10		16
Totals	**1,463**	**3,640**	**5,248**	**10,352**

Notes: P.L. 111-32 (FY2009 supplemental): provides requested funds, earmarks $70 million for National Solidarity Program; $150 million for women and girls (all of FY2009); ESF over $200 million subject to narcotics certification; 10% of supplemental INCLE subject to certification of Afghan government moves to curb human rights abuses, drug involvement.

Table 19. FY2010 Assistance (Includes Supplemental Request)

($ in millions)

Afghan Security Forces Funding (DOD funds)	9,162 (6,563 appropriated plus 2,600 supplemental request)
CERP (DOD funds)	1,000
Counternarcotics (DOD)	361
INCLE: all functions: interdiction, rule of law, alternative livelihoods	620 (420 regular approp. plus 200 supplemental request)
IMET	1.5
Global Health/Child Survival	92.3
Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (Incl. National Solidarity Program) (ESF)	200
Governance building (ESF)	191
Civil Society promotion (ESF)	10
Election Support (ESF)	90
Strategic Program Development (ESF)	100
USAID Rule of Law Programs (ESF)	50
Roads (ESF)	230
Power (ESF)	230
Agriculture (ESF)	230
PRT programs/Local governance (ESF)	251
Education (ESF)	95
Health (ESF)	102
Econ Growth/"Cash for Work" (ESF)	274
Water, Environment, Victim Comp. (ESF)	15
Karzai Protection (NADR)	58
Food Aid (P.L. 480, Food for Peace)	16
Refugees and Migration	11
State Ops/Embassy Construction	697 (486 regular plus 211 supplemental)
Cultural Exchanges	6
SIGAR	37 (23 regular plus 14 supp request)
FY2010 supplemental ESF request (for ESF programs above)	1,576
Total Appropriated (Incl. Supplemental)	**15,700**
Laws derived: FY2010 foreign aid appropriation in Consolidated Appropriation (P.L. 111-117), which earmarks: $175 million (ESF and INCLE) for programs for women and girls, and $175 million (ESF) for the National Solidarity Program. The FY2010 Defense Appropriation (P.L. 111-118), which cut $900 million from the requested amount for the ANSF (regular defense appropriation). Requested FY2010 supplemental funds appropriated by H.R. 4899 (P.L. 111-212)	

Source: CRS.

Table 20. FY2011 Regular Request

($ in millions)

Program/Area	Request
Afghan National Security Forces (DOD funds)	11,600
CERP	1,100
Economic Support Funds (ESF)	3,316.3
Global Health/ Child Survival	71.1
INCLE	450
Karzai Protection (NADR funds)	69.3
IMET	1.5
State Dept. Operations (not incl. security)	754
SIGAR	35.3
Total	**17,398**

In FY2011 legislation, on June 30, 2010, the State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee of House Appropriations Committee marked up its aid bill, deferring consideration of much of the Administration request for Afghanistan pending a Committee investigation of allegations of governmental corruption in Afghanistan and of possible diversion of U.S. aid funds by Afghan officials and other elites.

Table 21. Total Obligations for Major Programs: FY2001-FY2009

($ millions)

Security Related Programs (mostly DOD funds)	
Afghan National Security Forces	21,297
Counter-Narcotics	3,436
Karzai Protection (NADR funds)	226
DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration of militias)	20.42
Detainee Operations	57.33
MANPAD Destruction (Stingers left over from anti-Soviet war)	2.25
Small Arms Control	10.59
Commander Emergency Response Program (CERP)	1,976
De-Mining Operations (Halo Trust, other contractors)	98.53
International Military Education and Training Funds (IMET)	3
Humanitarian-Related Programs	
Food Aid (P.L. 480, other aid)	958
Refugee/IDP aid	743
Debt Relief for Afghan government	11
Democracy and Governance Programs (mostly ESF)	
Support for Operations of Afghan Government	80.86
Good Governance (incentives for anti-corruption, anti-narcotics)	1,044
Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (funds National Solidarity Program)	305.5
Civil Society (programs to improve political awareness and activity)	31.88
Elections Support	600
Rule of Law and Human Rights (USAID and INCLE funds)	552.66
Economic Sector-Related Programs (mostly ESF)	
Roads	1,908
PRT-funded projects (includes local governance as well as economic programs)	698.11
Education (building schools, teacher training)	535.93
Health (clinic-building, medicines)	620.59
Power	934.38
Water (category also includes some funds to compensate Afghan victims/Leahy)	128.02
Agriculture (focused on sustainable crops, not temporary alternatives to poppy)	441
Private Sector Development/Economic Growth (communications, IT, but includes some cash-for-work anti-narcotics programs)	627.52
State Dept. operations/Embassy construction/USAID operations/educational and cultural exchanges/SIGAR operations	2,445
Total (including minor amounts not included in table)	**39,730**

Table 22. NATO/ISAF Contributing Nations

(As of August 6, 2010; http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/isaf_placemat.pdf)

NATO Countries		Non-NATO Partners	
Belgium	575	Albania	295
Bulgaria	540	Armenia	40
Canada	2,830	Austria	3
Czech Republic	500	Australia	1,455
Denmark	730	Azerbaijan	90
Estonia	160	Bosnia-Herzegovina	10
France	3,750	Croatia	295
Germany	4,590	Finland	80
Greece	75	Georgia	925
Hungary	360	Ireland	6
Iceland	5	Jordan	6
Italy	3,400	Macedonia	240
Latvia	170	Malaysia	40
Lithuania	245	Mongolia	195
Luxemburg	9	Montenegro	30
Netherlands	380	New Zealand	205
Norway	500	Singapore	30
Poland	2,630	South Korea	270
Portugal	250	Sweden	530
Romania	1,750	Ukraine	15
Slovakia	300	United Arab Emirates	15
Slovenia	70		
Spain	1,555		
Turkey	1,740		
United Kingdom	9,500		
United States	78,430		
Total Listed ISAF: 119,819			

Note: This ISAF table likely does not include the full extent of U.S. buildup that is under way, and may also reflect differences in counting U.S. forces as part of ISAF or as part of the separate OEF mission. As noted elsewhere in this report, U.S. force totals in Afghanistan are approximately 94,000. Non-U.S. forces in the table total 41,000. In addition, the NATO/ISAF site states that troop numbers in this table are based on broad contribution and do not necessarily reflect the exact numbers on the ground at any one time.

Table 23. Provincial Reconstruction Teams

Location (City)		Province/Command
U.S.-Lead (all under ISAF banner)		
1. Gardez		Paktia Province (RC-East, E)
2. Ghazni		Ghazni (RC-E). with Poland.
3. Jalalabad		Nangarhar (RC-E)
4. Khost		Khost (RC-E)
5. Qalat		Zabol (RC-South, S). with Romania.
6. Asadabad		Kunar (RC-E)
7. Sharana		Paktika (RC-E). with Poland.
8. Mehtarlam		Laghman (RC-E)
9. Jabal o-Saraj		Panjshir Province (RC-E), State Department lead
10. Qala Gush		Nuristan (RC-E)
11. Farah		Farah (RC-SW)
Partner Lead (most under ISAF banner)		
PRT Location	**Province**	**Lead Force/Other forces**
12. Qandahar	Qandahar (RC-S)	Canada (seat of RC-S)
13. Lashkar Gah	Helmand (RC-S)	Britain. with Denmark and Estonia
14. Tarin Kowt	Uruzgan (RC-S)	Australia (and U.S.)
15. Herat	Herat (RC-W)	Italy (seat of RC-W)
16. Qalah-ye Now	Badghis (RC-W)	Spain
17. Mazar-e-Sharif	Balkh (RC-N)	Sweden
18. Konduz	Konduz (RC-N)	Germany (seat of RC-N)
29. Faizabad	Badakhshan (RC-N)	Germany. with Denmark, Czech Rep.
20. Meymaneh	Faryab (RC-N)	Norway. with Sweden.
21. Chaghcharan	Ghowr (RC-W)	Lithuania. with Denmark, U.S., Iceland
22. Pol-e-Khomri	Baghlan (RC-N)	Hungary
23. Bamiyan	Bamiyan (RC-E)	New Zealand (not NATO/ISAF).
24. Maidan Shahr	Wardak (RC-C)	Turkey
25. Pul-i-Alam	Lowgar (RC-E)	Czech Republic
26. Shebergan	Jowzjan (RC-N)	Turkey
27. Charikar	Parwan (RC-E)	South Korea (Bagram, in Parwan Province, is the base of RC-E)

Note: RC = Regional Command.

Table 24. Major Factions/Leaders in Afghanistan

Party/ Leader	Leader	Ideology/ Ethnicity	Regional Base
Taliban	Mullah (Islamic cleric) Muhammad Umar (still at large possibly in Afghanistan). Jalaludin and Siraj Haqqani allied with Taliban and Al Qaeda. Umar, born in Tarin Kowt, Uruzgan province, is about 65 years old.	Ultra-orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Insurgent groups, mostly in the south and east.
Islamic Society (leader of "Northern Alliance")	Burhannudin Rabbani/ Yunus Qanooni (speaker of lower house)/Muhammad Fahim/Dr. Abdullah Abdullah (Foreign Minister 2001-2006). Ismail Khan, a so-called "warlord," heads faction of the grouping in Herat area. Khan, now Minister of Energy and Water, visited United States in March 2008 to sign USAID grant for energy projects.	Moderate Islamic, mostly Tajik	Much of northern and western Afghanistan, including Kabul
National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan	Abdul Rashid Dostam. During OEF, impressed U.S. commanders with horse-mounted assaults on Taliban positions at Shulgara Dam, south of Mazar-e-Sharif, leading to the fall of that city and the Taliban's subsequent collapse. About 2,000 Taliban prisoners taken by his forces were held in shipping containers, died of suffocation, and were buried in mass grave. Grave excavated in mid-2008, possibly an effort by Dostam to destroy evidence of the incident. Was Karzai rival in October 2004 presidential election, then his top "security adviser" but now in exile in Turkey.	Secular, Uzbek	Jowzjan, Balkh, Faryab, Sar-i-Pol, and Samangan provinces.
Hizb-e-Wahdat	Composed of Shiite Hazara tribes from central Afghanistan. Karim Khalili is Vice President, but Mohammad Mohaqiq is Karzai rival in 2004 presidential election and parliament. Generally pro-Iranian. Was part of Rabbani 1992-1996 government, and fought unsuccessfully with Taliban over Bamiyan city. Still revered by Hazara Shiites is the former leader of the group, Abdul Ali Mazari, who was captured and killed by the Taliban in March 1995.	Shiite, Hazara tribes	Bamiyan, Ghazni, Dai Kundi province
Pashtun Leaders	Various regional governors and local leaders in the east and south; central government led by Hamid Karzai.	Moderate Islamic, Pashtun	Dominant in the south and east
Hizb-e-Islam Gulbuddin (HIG)	*Mujahedin* party leader Gulbuddin Hikmatyar. Was part of Soviet-era U.S.-backed "Afghan Interim Government" based in Peshawar, Pakistan. Was nominal "prime minister" in 1992-1996 mujahedin government but never actually took office. Lost power base around Jalalabad to the Taliban in 1994, and fled to Iran before being expelled in 2002. Still allied with Taliban and Al Qaeda in operations east of Kabul, but open to ending militant activity. Leader of a rival Hizb-e-Islam faction, Yunus Khalis, the mentor of Mullah Umar, died July 2006.	Orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Small groups in Nangarhar, Nuristan, and Kunar provinces
Islamic Union	Abd-I-Rab Rasul Sayyaf. Islamic conservative, leads a pro-Karzai faction in parliament. Lived many years in and politically close to Saudi Arabia, which shares his "Wahhabi" ideology. During anti-Soviet war, Sayyaf's faction, with Hikmatyar, was a principal recipient of U.S. weaponry. Criticized the U.S.-led war against Saddam Hussein after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.	orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Paghman (west of Kabul)

Source: CRS.

Residual Issues from Past Conflicts

A few issues remain unresolved from Afghanistan's many years of conflict, such as Stinger retrieval and mine eradication.

Stinger Retrieval

Beginning in late 1985 following internal debate, the Reagan Administration provided about 2,000 man-portable "Stinger" anti-aircraft missiles to the *mujahedin* for use against Soviet aircraft. Prior to the U.S.-led ouster of the Taliban, common estimates suggested that 200-300 Stingers remained at large, although more recent estimates put the number below 100.[87] The Stinger issue resurfaced in conjunction with 2001 U.S. war effort, when U.S. pilots reported that the Taliban fired some Stingers at U.S. aircraft during the war. No hits were reported. Any Stingers that survived the anti-Taliban war are likely controlled by Afghans now allied to the United States and presumably pose less of a threat, in part because of the deterioration of the weapons' batteries and other internal components.

In 1992, after the fall of the Russian-backed government of Najibullah, the United States reportedly spent 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 buy-back effort. On March 7, 1994, the *Washington Post* reported that the CIA had recovered only a fraction (maybe 50 or 100) of the at-large Stingers. In February 2002, the Afghan government found and returned to the United States "dozens" of Stingers.[88] In late January 2005, Afghan intelligence began a push to buy remaining Stingers back, at a reported cost of $150,000 each.[89]

The danger of these weapons has become apparent on several occasions, although U.S. commanders have not reported any recent active firings of these devices. Iran bought 16 of the missiles in 1987 and fired one against U.S. helicopters; some reportedly were transferred to Lebanese Hizballah. 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.[90] It was a 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 missed their targets. SA-7s were discovered in Afghanistan by U.S. forces in December 2002.

Mine Eradication

Land mines laid during the Soviet occupation constitute one of the principal dangers to the Afghan people. The United Nations estimates that 5 million to 7 million mines remain scattered throughout the country, although some estimates are lower. U.N. teams have destroyed one

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

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

[89] "Afghanistan Report," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. February 4, 2005.

[90] "U.S.-Made Stinger Missiles—Mobile and Lethal." Reuters, May 28, 1999.

million mines and are now focusing on de-mining priority-use, residential and commercial property, including lands around Kabul. As shown in the U.S. aid table for FY1999-FY2002 (**Table 11**), the U.S. de-mining program was providing about $3 million per year for Afghanistan, and the amount increased to about $7 million in the post-Taliban period. Most of the funds have gone to HALO Trust, a British organization, and the U.N. Mine Action Program for Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Compact adopted in London in February 2006 states that by 2010, the goal should be to reduce the land area of Afghanistan contaminated by mines by 70%.

Appendix. U.S. and International Sanctions Lifted

Virtually all U.S. and international sanctions on Afghanistan, some imposed during the Soviet occupation era and others on the Taliban regime, have now been lifted.

- P.L. 108-458 (December 17, 2004, referencing the 9/11 Commission recommendations) repealed bans on aid to Afghanistan outright. On October 7, 1992, President George H.W. Bush had issued Presidential Determination 93-3 that Afghanistan is no longer a Marxist-Leninist country, but the determination was not implemented before he left office. Had it been implemented, the prohibition on Afghanistan's receiving Export-Import Bank guarantees, insurance, or credits for purchases under Section 8 of the 1986 Export-Import Bank Act, would have been lifted. In addition, Afghanistan would have been able to receive U.S. assistance because the requirement would have been waived that Afghanistan apologize for the 1979 killing in Kabul of U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Adolph "Spike" Dubs. (Dubs was kidnapped in Kabul in 1979 and killed when Afghan police stormed the hideout where he was held.)
- U.N. sanctions on the Taliban imposed by Resolution 1267 (October 15, 1999), Resolution 1333 (December 19, 2000), and Resolution 1363 (July 30, 2001) have now been narrowed to penalize only Al Qaeda (by Resolution 1390, January 17, 2002). Resolution 1267 banned flights outside Afghanistan by Ariana, and directed U.N. member states to freeze Taliban assets. Resolution 1333 prohibited the provision of arms or military advice to the Taliban (directed against Pakistan); ordered a reduction of Taliban diplomatic representation abroad; and banned foreign travel by senior Taliban officials. Resolution 1363 provided for monitors in Pakistan to ensure that no weapons or military advice was provided to the Taliban.
- On January 10, 2003, President Bush signed a proclamation making Afghanistan a beneficiary of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), eliminating U.S. tariffs on 5,700 Afghan products. Afghanistan had been denied GSP on May 2, 1980, under Executive Order 12204 (45 F.R. 20740).
- On April 24, 1981, controls on U.S. exports to Afghanistan of agricultural products and phosphates were terminated. Such controls were imposed on June 3, 1980, as part of the sanctions against the Soviet Union for the invasion of Afghanistan, 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].
- 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 March 31, 1993, after the fall of Najibullah in 1992, President Clinton, on national interest grounds, waived restrictions provided for in Section 481 (h) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 mandating sanctions on Afghanistan, including 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 GSP; additional duties on exports to the United States; and

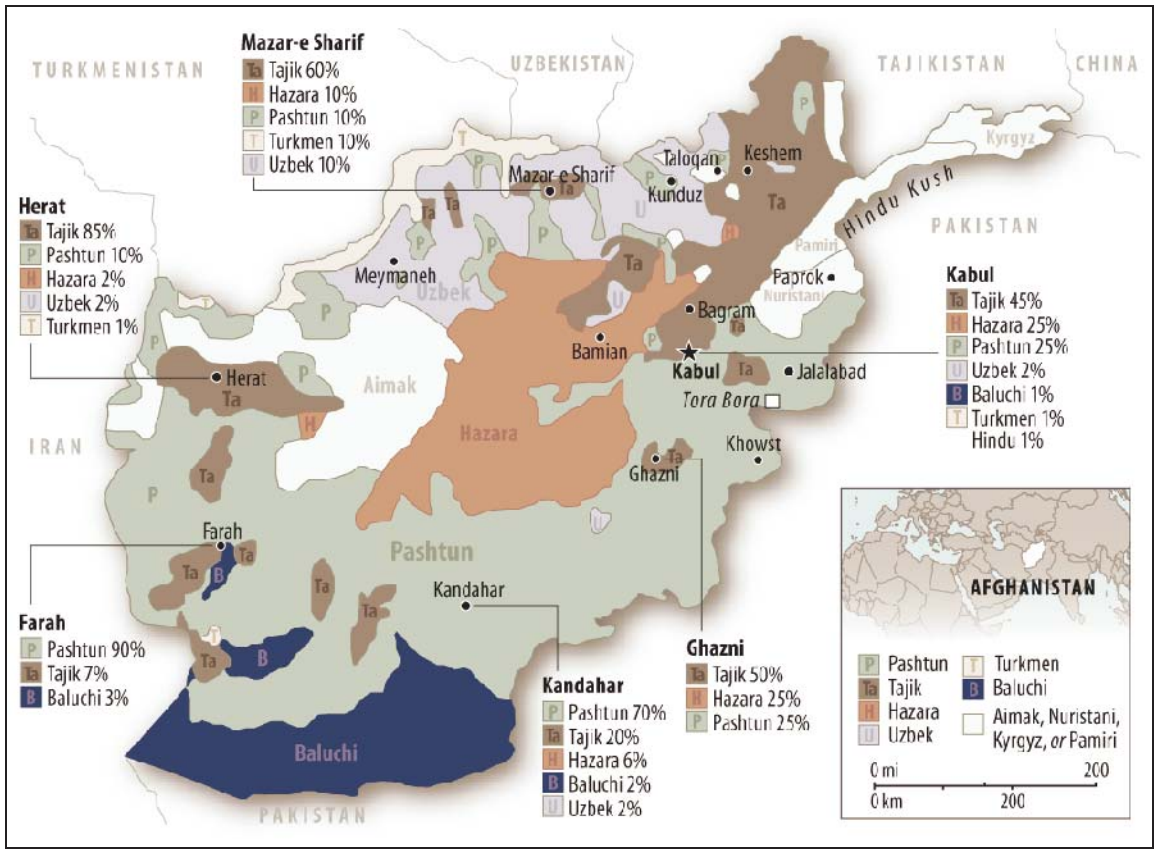
curtailment of air transportation with the United States. Waivers were also granted in 1994 and, after the fall of the Taliban, by President Bush.

- On May 3, 2002, President Bush restored normal trade treatment to the products of Afghanistan, reversing the February 18, 1986, proclamation by President Reagan (Presidential Proclamation 5437) that suspended most-favored nation (MFN) tariff status for Afghanistan (51 F.R. 4287). The Foreign Assistance Appropriations for FY1986 [Section 552, P.L. 99-190] had authorized the denial of U.S. credits or most-favored-nation (MFN) status for Afghanistan.
- On July 2, 2002, the State Department amended U.S. regulations (22 C.F.R. Part 126) to allow arms sales to the new Afghan government, reversing the June 14, 1996, addition of Afghanistan to the list of countries prohibited from importing U.S. defense articles and services. Arms sales to Afghanistan had also been prohibited during 1997-2002 because Afghanistan had been designated 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.
- On July 2, 2002, President Bush formally revoked the July 4, 1999, declaration by President Clinton of a national emergency with respect to Taliban because of its hosting of bin Laden. The Clinton determination and related Executive Order 13129 had blocked Taliban assets and property in the United States, banned U.S. trade with Taliban-controlled areas of Afghanistan, and applied these sanctions to Ariana Afghan Airlines, triggering a blocking of Ariana assets (about $500,000) in the United States and a ban on U.S. citizens' flying on the airline. (The ban on trade with Taliban-controlled territory had essentially ended on January 29, 2002, when the State Department determination that the Taliban controls no territory within Afghanistan.).

Figure A-1. Map of Afghanistan

Source: Map Resources. Adapted by CRS.

Figure A-2. Map of Afghan Ethnicities



Source: 2003 National Geographic Society. http://www.afghan-network.net/maps/Afghanistan-Map.pdf. Adapted by Amber Wilhelm, CRS Graphics.

Notes: This map is intended to be illustrative of the approximate demographic distribution by region of Afghanistan. CRS has no way to confirm exact population distributions.

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