



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

Kenneth Katzman
Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs

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Summary

Upon taking office, the Obama Administration faced a deteriorating security environment in Afghanistan, despite a build-up of U.S. forces there in preceding years. Signs of deterioration have included an expanded militant presence in some areas, increasing numbers of civilian and military deaths, Afghan and international disillusionment with corruption in the government of Afghan President Hamid Karzai, and the ease of infiltration of Taliban militants from safe havens in Pakistan. Building on assessments completed in the latter days of the Bush Administration, the Obama Administration conducted a “strategic review,” the results of which were announced on March 27, 2009.

The outcome of the review leaned toward those in the Administration who believe that adding combat troops is less crucial than building governance, although the review did announce an increase of 21,000 U.S. troops by October 2009. The strategy emphasized non-military steps such as increasing the resources devoted to economic development, building Afghan governance primarily at the local level, reforming the Afghan government, expanding and reforming the Afghan security forces, and trying to improve Pakistan’s efforts to curb militant activity on its soil. Still, the Administration decided that more innovative counter-insurgency tactics that limit civilian casualties and holds territory cleared of insurgents was needed to promote those goals, and in May 2009, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. David McKiernan, was replaced by Lt. Gen. Stanley McChrystal. On August 30, 2009, McChrystal submitted his review of the military strategy in Afghanistan, which recommends pursuing a comprehensive counter-insurgency strategy in order to avoid mission failure, and reportedly recommends that about 44,000 additional U.S. combat forces are needed to be reasonably sure of success for that strategy. President Obama said on September 20, 2009, he would first decide on whether the United States “has the strategy right” before deciding on “resources,” and a series of high level meetings to again review strategy began September 30.

U.S. strategy was complicated by the August 20, 2009, presidential election, which was marred by widespread fraud allegations. On October 26, 2009, President Hamid Karzai accepted a judgment of a U.N.-backed electoral complaints body that his certified total was below a 50%+ threshold and he accepted a required run-off vote. However, his opponent, Dr. Abdullah, pulled out of the run-off and Karzai was declared the winner of the presidency on November 2. President Obama congratulated Karzai on the victory, but indicated that the United States expects him to act decisively to curb the rampant corruption in his government in order to build credibility and legitimacy.

Of the approximately 68,000 U.S. forces in Afghanistan, about 56,000 are part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) that operates throughout Afghanistan, and the remainder are under the separate U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom. U.S. and partner forces also run 26 regional enclaves to secure reconstruction (Provincial Reconstruction Teams, PRTs), and are expanding an Afghan National Army and reforming an Afghan National Police force—the two combined now total about 175,000. The United States has provided about \$40 billion in assistance to Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban, of which about \$18 billion was to equip and train these Afghan forces. Breakdowns are shown in the tables at the end. See also CRS Report RL33627, *NATO in Afghanistan: A Test of the Transatlantic Alliance*, by Vincent Morelli and Paul Belkin; and CRS Report RL32686, *Afghanistan: Narcotics and U.S. Policy*, by Christopher M. Blanchard.

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Background

From Early History to the 19th Century

From the third to the eighth century, A.D., Buddhism was the dominant religion in Afghanistan. In the 10th century, Muslim rulers called Samanids, from Bukhara (in what is now Uzbekistan), extended their influence into 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. 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 also began to build large infrastructure projects in Afghanistan.

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 killed¹ 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,

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

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; some are loyal to the current government, others such as Hikmatyar are fight it. Their weaponry included portable shoulder-fired anti-aircraft systems called "Stingers," which proved highly effective against Soviet aircraft. The *mujahedin* also hid and stored weaponry in a large network of natural and manmade tunnels and caves throughout Afghanistan. The Soviet Union's losses mounted—about 13,400 Soviet soldiers were killed in the war, according to Soviet figures), and Soviet domestic opinion turned anti-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 his 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.

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. The Soviet pullout decreased the perceived strategic value of Afghanistan, causing a reduction in subsequent covert funding.² As indicated below in **Table 7**, U.S. assistance to Afghanistan remained at relatively

² For FY1991, Congress reportedly cut covert aid appropriations to the *mujahedin* from \$300 million the previous year (continued...)

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 Abdal 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.

(...continued)

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 I. Afghanistan Social and Economic Statistics

Population:	33 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; Baha'i'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.
GDP:	\$13 billion est. for 2008. Value of opium production in 2008 est. \$732 million (7% of GDP), down from 13% of GDP for 2007. (Aug. 2008 UNODC report.)
GDP Per Capita/Growth Rate:	\$400/yr; (\$800 purchasing power parity, 2008). Up from \$150 year per capita when Taliban was in power. 9% average yearly GDP growth since Taliban fall.
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	85% 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; 40 provincial courthouses built
Afghan Airlines	Ariana (national) plus three privately owned: Safi, Kam, and Pamir.
Agriculture	Self-sufficiency in wheat production as of May 2009 (first time in 30 years).
Banks Operating	14, including branches in some rural areas. Zero during Taliban era. Some limited acceptance of credit cards. Half of Afghan security forces now paid electronically.
Access to Electricity	15%-20% of the population. Third turbine to Kajaki dam (Helmand), Sept. 2008.
Revenues	About \$900 million in 2008; \$715 million in 2007; \$550 million 2006
Expenditures	About \$2.7 billion in 2008; \$1.2 billion in 2007; 900 million in 2006. Afghan government to contribute \$6.8 billion during 2008-2013 for \$50 billion Afghan National Development Strategy; the remainder from international donors.
External Debt:	\$8 billion bilateral, plus \$500 million multilateral. U.S. forgave \$108 million in debt.
Foreign/Private Investment	\$500 billion est. for 2007; about \$1 billion for 2006. Foreign exchange: \$3 billion. Projects include Bagrami office park, Coca Cola plant, Safi mall in Kabul.
Major Legal Exports	80% of the population is involved in agriculture. Products for export include fruits, raisins, melons, pomegranate juice (Anar), nuts, carpets, lapis lazuli gems, marble tile, timber products (Kunar, Nuristan provinces)
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.
Major Imports	food, petroleum, capital goods, textiles, autos
Import Partners	Pakistan 38.6%; U.S. 9.5%; Germany 5.5%; India 5.2%.
Cellphone Subscriptions	About 10 million, up from several hundred used by Taliban government officials
Tourism	Foreign-owned hotel in Bamiyan for tourism; national park opened June 2009

Source: CIA, *The World Factbook*; International Religious Freedom Report, September 19, 2008; Afghan National Development Strategy; DOD "Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan" report, January 2009.

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’s radical faction of the Islamist Hizb-e-Islami (Islamic Party)-Gulbuddin 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, anti-Pashtun, and responsible for civil war. The four years of civil war (1992-1996) created popular support for the Taliban as a movement that could deliver Afghanistan from the warfare. With the help of defections, the Taliban seized control of the southeastern city of Qandahar in November 1994; by February 1995, it had reached the gates of Kabul, after which an 18-month stalemate around the capital ensued. In September 1995, the Taliban captured Herat province, bordering Iran, and imprisoned its governor, Ismail Khan, ally of Rabbani and Masud, who later escaped and took refuge in Iran. In September 1996, 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,” but he remained in the Taliban power base in Qandahar, almost never appearing in public. Umar forged a close bond with bin Laden and refused U.S. demands to extradite him. Like Umar, most of the Taliban were Ghilzai Pashtuns, which predominate in eastern Afghanistan. They are rivals of the Durrani Pashtuns, who are predominant in the south.

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

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.

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 Asst. Sec. of State Karl Indurfurth and NSC senior official Bruce Riedel) visited Afghanistan but the Taliban refused to hand over bin Laden. 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 other opportunities to strike him, including following a purported sighting of him by an unarmed Predator drone at his Karnak Farms camp in Afghanistan in mid-2000. 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 20**.

- **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" who gained power during the anti-Soviet war, Dostam first joined those seeking to oust Rabbani during his 1992-96 presidency, but later joined Rabbani's Northern Alliance against the Taliban.
- **Hazara Shiites.** Members of Hazara tribes, mostly Shiite Muslims, are prominent in Bamiyan Province (central Afghanistan) and are always wary of repression by Pashtuns and other larger ethnic factions. During the various

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.

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.

- **Pashtun Islamists/Sayyaf.** Abd-I-Rab Rasul Sayyaf, now a parliament 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 his ideology is similar to that of the Taliban, Sayyaf joined the Northern Alliance to try to oust the Taliban.

Policy Pre-September 11, 2001

Throughout 2001, 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 wanted to assist anti-Taliban Pashtun forces. Other covert options were under consideration as well.⁶ In a departure from Clinton Administration policy, the Bush Administration stepped up engagement with Pakistan to try to end its support for the Taliban. 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 the Taliban representative continued to operate informally. In March 2001, Administration officials received a Taliban envoy to discuss bilateral issues.

Fighting with some Iranian, Russian, and Indian financial and military 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 alleged Al Qaeda suicide bombers posing as journalists. He was succeeded by his intelligence chief, Muhammad Fahim, a veteran figure but 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.

⁶ Drogin, Bob. “U.S. Had Plan for Covert Afghan Options Before 9/11.” *Los Angeles Times*, May 18, 2002.

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:⁷

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 the Northern Alliance and Pashtun anti-Taliban forces. Some U.S. ground 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; most of the ground combat was between Taliban and its Afghan opponents. Some critics believe that U.S. dependence on local Afghan militia forces in the war strengthened them and set back post-war democracy building efforts.

The Taliban regime unraveled rapidly after it lost Mazar-e-Sharif on November 9, 2001, to forces led by Dostam. 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.-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.

In December 2001, U.S. Special Operations Forces and CIA officers 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. 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 Building⁸

With Afghanistan devastated after more than 20 years of warfare, the fall of the Taliban paved the way for the success of a long-stalled U.N. effort to form a broad-based Afghan government and for a U.S.-led coalition to begin building legitimate governing institutions. Post-September 11, 2001 U.S. policy was predicated on the assumption that preventing Afghanistan from again becoming a terrorism safehaven required the building of strong governing institutions,

⁷ Another law (P.L. 107-148) established a "Radio Free Afghanistan" under RFE/RL, providing \$17 million in funding for it for FY2002.

⁸ See also: CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

functioning democracy, and economic development, rather than a more limited effort to combat terrorist concentrations in Afghanistan. The “nation-building” task has proved more difficult than anticipated because of the devastation that years of war wrought on Afghan local governing institutions, on the education, and on the already limited infrastructure. The Obama Administration’s “strategic review” of Afghanistan policy, the results of which were announced on March 27, 2009, narrowed official U.S. goals to preventing terrorism safehaven in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but, as discussed below, the elements of the strategy in many ways enhance the nation-building strategy put in place by the Bush Administration.

Political Transition

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 Afghan exile efforts, including discussion groups launched by Hamid Karzai’s 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 was adopted on November 14, 2001, calling 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 a conference in Bonn, Germany.

On December 5, 2001, the factions signed the “Bonn Agreement.”⁹ It was endorsed by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1385 (December 6, 2001). The agreement, reportedly forged with substantial Iranian diplomatic help because of Iran’s support for the Northern Alliance faction:

- formed the interim administration headed by Hamid Karzai.
- 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.

⁹ Text of Bonn agreement at <http://www.ag-afghanistan.de/files/petersberg.htm>.

- applied the constitution of 1964 until a permanent constitution could be drafted.¹⁰

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 Mojadeddi (mentioned above), ended with approval of the constitution with only minor changes. The Northern Alliance faction failed in its effort to set up a prime minister-ship, but they did achieve a fallback objective of checking presidential powers by assigning major authorities to the elected 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, 2007.¹¹ 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.

Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Hamid Karzai, about 51, was selected to lead Afghanistan at the Bonn Conference because he was a credible Pashtun leader, who was involved in Taliban-era political talks among prominent exiled Afghans and who is viewed as seeking compromise rather than intimidation through armed force. However, some observers consider his compromises a sign of weakness, and criticize what they allege is his toleration of corruption among members of his clan and his government. 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).

One 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 popular support 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. Mahmoud denies allegations of corruption and criticizes Afghan policy for failing to adequately facilitate private direct investment in Afghanistan’s economy. With heavy protection, President 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.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ Text of constitution: <http://arabic.cnn.com/afghanistan/ConstitutionAfghanistan.pdf>.

First Post-Taliban Elections

Security conditions precluded the holding of all major elections simultaneously. The first election, for president, was held on October 9, 2004, slightly missing a June deadline. Turnout was about 80%. On November 3, 2004, Karzai was declared winner (55.4% of the vote) over his seventeen 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.

For the 2005 parliamentary election, 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—who was Karzai’s main competitor in the presidential election—Yunus Qanooni, 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), selected by the elected provincial councils and Karzai, consists mainly of older, well-known figures, as well as 17 females (half of Karzai’s 34 appointments, as provided for in the constitution). The leader of that body is Sibghatullah Mojadeddi, a pro-Karzai former *mujahedin* party leader and elder statesman. With his bloc of 17 non-female slots available, Karzai appointed several other allies, such as Sher Mohammad Akhunzadeh, a Helmand Province strongman, to the body. (This body does not immediately change composition as a result of the August 20, 2009 provincial council elections, even though these councils, for now, choose two-thirds of the members of the House of Elders; the next selection for this House will be following the 2010 parliamentary elections.)

2009 Presidential and Provincial Elections

The 2009 presidential and provincial elections were anticipated to represent an important step in Afghanistan’s political development—they are the first post-Taliban elections that were run by the Afghan government itself. Special Representative Ambassador Richard Holbrooke said at a public forum on August 12, 2009, that the elections were key to legitimizing the Afghan government, no matter who wins. Yet, because of the widespread fraud identified by Afghanistan’s U.N.-appointed “Elections Complaints Commission” in the first round of the elections, the process has not necessarily produced a legitimate government and might still set off some violence between some of Afghanistan’s different ethnicities. The marred elections process has been a major factor in a September – November 2009 high-level U.S. strategy reevaluation because of the centrality of a credible, legitimate partner Afghan government to U.S. strategy.¹² An extended discussion of the elections is contained in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

On October 20, 2009, the ECC determined, based on its investigation, that about 1 million Karzai votes, and about 200,000 Abdullah votes, were considered fraudulent and were deducted from

¹² Fidler, Stephen and John W. Miller. “U.S. Allies Await Afghan Review.” *Wall Street Journal*, September 25, 2009.

their totals. The final, certified, results of the first round were as follows: Karzai – 49.67% (according to the IEC; with a slightly lower total of about 48% according to the ECC determination); and Abdullah – 30.59%, with much smaller totals for other candidates.¹³

During October 16-20, 2009, U.S. and international officials, including visiting Senator John Kerry, met repeatedly with Karzai to attempt to persuade him to acknowledge that his vote total did not legitimately exceed the 50%+ threshold to claim a first round victory. On October 21, 2009, the IEC accepted the ECC findings and Karzai conceded the need for a runoff election. A date was set as November 7, 2009. The various pre-runoff scenarios were mooted on November 1, 2009 when Dr. Abdullah, addressing hundreds of supporters at Kabul University, said he would not compete in the runoff, asserting that the problems that plagued the first round would likely recur in a run-off. On November 2, 2009, the IEC issued a statement saying that, by consensus, the body had determined that Karzai, being the only candidate remaining in a two-person runoff, should be declared the winner and the second round not held. The United States, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon (visiting Kabul), and several governments congratulated Karzai on the victory, while other U.S. officials, including Secretary of State Clinton, praised Dr. Abdullah for his relatively moderate speech announcing his pullout. U.S. and international officials, particularly British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, publicly called on Karzai to choose his next cabinet based on competence, merit, and dedication to curbing corruption, and indicated that some continued international participation in the security mission in Afghanistan might be contingent on his doing so.

Other Governance Issues

The Obama Administration strategy, announced March 27, 2009, emphasizes additional U.S. focus on improving Afghan governance. As noted, President Obama has said that he has told President Karzai, in the aftermath of his reelection, that he must move decisively against official corruption.

U.S. Policy Management and U.S. Embassy Kabul

In line with the enhanced policy priority of Afghanistan in the Obama Administration, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke was appointed Special Representative on Afghanistan and Pakistan. He has a large team at State Department overseeing U.S. policy on Afghanistan and Pakistan. Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry, who served as commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan during 2004-2005, is now Ambassador. Eikenberry and the rest of the U.S. works closely with Holbrooke, as well as with the U.S. and NATO military structure, and a civilian-military “joint campaign plan” was developed and released in mid-August 2009. There is a “deputy Ambassador,” senior official Francis Ricciardone, and Ambassador Anthony Wayne managing U.S. assistance issues. Another Ambassador rank official, Joseph Mussomeli, handles Embassy management issues. Ambassador Timothy Carney oversaw U.S. policy for the 2009 elections. Zalmay Khalilzad, an American of Afghan origin discussed above, was ambassador during December 2003-August 2005; he reportedly had significant influence on Afghan decisions.¹⁴

¹³ See IEC website for final certified tallies. <http://www.iec.org.af/results>

¹⁴ 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.

The U.S. embassy, now in newly constructed buildings, has progressively expanded its personnel and facilities to several hundred. The Embassy will need 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 under the Obama Administration strategy. About \$87 million was provided for new construction in the FY2009 supplemental appropriations (P.L. 111-32), and \$1.15 billion in State Department operations and Embassy construction funds are requested for FY2010. Of that latter amount, \$60 million is to enhance the air service that takes State Department and USAID people around the country (“Embassy Air Wing”). The tables at the end of this paper include U.S. funding for State Department and USAID operations.

Although the Afghan government is increasing its revenue (to about \$1.2 billion for 2009) and is covering some of its budget, USAID provides funding to help the Afghan government meet gaps in its budget—both directly and through a U.N.-run multi-donor Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) account, run by the World Bank. Those figures are provided in the U.S. aid tables at the end.

The Central Government and the National Assembly

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, it has narrowed ethnically, progressively dominated by ethnic Pashtuns, which have traditionally governed Afghanistan. Among the key security bodies, only the Intelligence Directorate continues to be headed by a non-Pashtun (Amrollah Saleh, a Tajik). Adhering to a tacit consensus, the other security ministries (Defense, Interior) tend to have Pashtun leaders but non-Pashtuns in key deputy positions. One prominent example is the defense ministry, in which the chief of staff is a Tajik (Bismillah Khan), who reports to a Pashtun Defense Minister, former *mujahedin* commander Abdul Rahim Wardak.

The parliament has emerged as a relatively vibrant body that creates accountability and has often asserted itself politically. However, some criticize it for the large presence of *mujahedin* leaders—figures who gained prominence from their anti-Soviet war effort. In 2007, the parliament compelled Karzai to oust several major conservatives from the Supreme Court in favor of those with more experience in modern jurisprudence. In mid-2007, parliament enacted a law granting amnesty to former *mujahedin* commanders—an attempt to put past schisms to rest in building a new Afghanistan. The law was rewritten to give victims the ability to bring accusations of past abuses; its status is unclear because Karzai did not veto it but he did not sign it either.

In May 2007, the UF bloc in the lower house engineered a vote of no confidence against Foreign Minister Rangeen Spanta for failing to prevent Iran from expelling 50,000 Afghan refugees. Karzai opposed Spanta’s dismissal on the grounds that refugee affairs are not his ministry’s prime jurisdiction. The Afghan Supreme Court has sided with Karzai and Spanta remains in position.

On the other hand, on some less contentious issues, the executive and the legislature appear to be working well. Since 2007, parliament has passed numerous laws, including a labor law, a mines law, a law on economic cooperatives, and a convention on tobacco control. The *Wolesi Jirga* also has confirmed Karzai nominees in several cabinet shifts. In April 2009, parliament enacted a personal status law for Shiites that caused an outcry in the international community and has since been altered. The altered version was enacted and is now law.

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

With a permanent national government fully assembled, U.S. policy has been to expand governance throughout the country, and this policy will receive increased U.S. financial and advisory resources under the new Obama Administration strategy. The Karzai government is widely estimated by U.S. officials to control about 30% of the country, while the Taliban controls 4% (13 out of 364 districts, prior to the July 2, 2009, beginning of a U.S. offensive in Helmand Province) and influences another 30% (Afghan Interior Ministry estimates in August 2009). Tribes and local groups with varying degrees of loyalty to the central government control the remainder. Outside groups sometimes report higher percentages of Taliban control or influence. U.S. military commanders say that U.S. offensives in Helmand Province (where most of the Taliban controlled districts were located) since July 2009 may have reduced the number of districts controlled by the Taliban.

In part because building the central government has gone slowly, there has been a U.S. shift, predating the Obama Administration's March 2009 strategy announcement, away from reliance only on strengthening central government 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, because Afghans have always sought substantial regional autonomy and resisted strong governance from Kabul. Other saw this trend as part of Karzai's reelection strategy by emplacing local officials who supported his reelection, and some attribute the alleged election fraud to this trend.

To address the purported ineffectiveness of Karzai's government, there is discussion of his appointing a strong "chief of staff" to help manage the bureaucracy. Figures purportedly mentioned, if Karzai wins reelection, include Afghan born former Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, presidential candidate Ashraf Ghani, or Interior Minister Mohammad Hanif Atmar. However, some Afghans assert that there is no provision in the constitution for a powerful appointed position along these lines.

On the other hand, 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." Others note progress on little known initiatives, such as civil service reform and the civil service reform commission, which has developed clear government position descriptions, performance criteria, pay and bonus criteria, and other formal procedures.

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 an accountable 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. This

issue is discussed in more detail in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*.

Some of the major faction leaders that Karzai has tried to both engage and simultaneously 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; and various Pashtun strongmen, such as Nangarhar governor Ghul Agha Shirzai. All of these figures were instrumental in Karzai's 2009 election victory, leading to questions as to whether Karzai now must indulge their individual demands. More detail on these figures and on Karzai's strategy for dealing with these leaders is discussed in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*.

Militia Disarmament: DDR and DIAG Programs

Several programs were put in place after the fall of the Taliban to dismantle 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 been expected to demobilize 100,000 fighters, although that figure was later reduced. (Figures for accomplishment of the DDR and DIAG programs are contained in the "security indicators table" 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.¹⁵ 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 the security indicators table, and U.S. spending on the program are in the U.S. aid tables at the end of this paper.

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

¹⁵ 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>.

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. Still, more recent U.S. programs, discussed below, of recruiting tribal militias might contradict the intent and perception of the DIAG.

Anti-Corruption Efforts/Metrics

An accelerating trend in U.S. policy—and emphasized by the Obama Administration’s review as well as the U.S. reaction to Karzai’s reelection—is to press Karzai to weed out official corruption. The Administration developed and submitted to Congress “metrics” (by the mandated September 23, 2009, deadline) to measure Afghan progress against corruption (as well as on many different variables). A list of potential metrics published by Foreign Policy website in mid-September (www.foreignpolicy.com) presents several metrics on corruption, rule of law, and related issues, including measuring public perceptions of the justice sector, demonstrable action by the Afghan government against corruption, and level of corruption within the Afghan security forces.

A separate report on Afghan corruption is required by the conference report on H.R. 2346 (P.L. 111-32, FY2009 supplemental appropriation). This law also withholds some U.S. funding subject to certification that the Afghan government is taking steps against official corruption. The widespread corruption has tainted Karzai’s image in the United States and is widely perceived as a cause of security deterioration as Afghans lose faith in the Karzai government. Many of the allegations of corruption focus on lower level government bureaucrats and Afghan police officers who routinely demand bribes, or who sell some of the equipment provided to them by donors. The corruption issue is discussed in greater detail in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

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 2008 by Norwegian diplomat Kai Eide. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1806 of March 20, 2008, extended UNAMA's mandate for another year and, more significantly, expanded its authority to coordinating the work of international donors and strengthening cooperation between the international peacekeeping force (ISAF, see below) and the Afghan government. In keeping with its expanding role, U.S. Ambassador Peter Galbraith is 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. Under the Obama Administration strategy review, UNAMA is to open offices in as many of Afghanistan's 34 provinces as financially and logistically permissible.

UNAMA is co-chair of the joint Afghan-international community coordination body called the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMBUNAMA 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, as discussed further below under "assistance." In Washington, D.C., in April 2008 and after, Eide has 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 several statements and press conferences, Eide has continued to note security deterioration but also progress in governance and in reduction of drug cultivation, and he publicly supports negotiations with Taliban figures to end the war. UNAMA also often has been involved in local dispute resolution among factions, and it is helping organize the coming elections.

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, including the potential to dilute the U.S. role. Karzai might have also sought to show independence from the international community. Ashdown withdrew his name on January 28, 2008. However, at a speech at an international security conference in Munich on February 8, 2009, the Obama Administration special representative for Afghanistan, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, asserted that the "super-envoy" concept still might have merit for better coordinating donors.

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

Enhancing Local Governance

As noted, there has been a major U.S. and Afghan push to build up local governance, reflecting a shift from the 2001-2007 approach of building only the central government. The approach represents an attempt to rebuild some of the tribal and other local structures, such as "*jirgas*" and "*shuras*"—traditional local councils—that were destroyed in the course of constant warfare over several decades, as well as to reduce reliance on the central government. The Afghan leader in this initiative has been the "Independent Directorate of Local Governance" (IDLG), formed in August 2007 and headed by Jelani Popal (a member of Karzai's Popalzai 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 is also selecting police chiefs and other local office holders, and in many cases has already begun removing allegedly corrupt local officials. Some see the IDLG

initiatives as part of Karzai's efforts to achieve reelection by placing sympathetic officials in key local positions. The issue of local governance is discussed in considerably more depth in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, cited above.

Building up district level administration is a major Obama Administration focus. According to a U.N. report of September 22, 2009, about 180 district governors (there are 364 districts) have no offices, and 288 district governors have no official vehicle. U.S. Embassy officers in Kabul told CRS in October 2009 that the U.S. effort to empower the district leaderships is coordinated by inter-agency, civilian-military "District Development Working Groups." Two districts receiving special attention to become "models" of district security and governance are Nawa, in Helmand Province, and Baraki-Barak, in Wardak Province, both recently cleared of Taliban militants.

Part of its mission is to empower localities to decide on development projects by forming local "Community Development Councils" (CDC's) that decide on local development projects and are key to the perceived success of the "National Solidarity Program" development program discussed later. There are 23,000 CDC's formed thus far and the program might ultimately form over 30,000 such local councils.

In 2008, with the support of the Bush Administration, the IDLG launched the government's "Social Outreach Program," intended to draw closer connections between tribes and localities to the central government. The program includes small payments (about \$200 per month) to tribal leaders and other participants, in part to persuade them to inform on Taliban insurgent movements. The Social Outreach program's security dimensions—primarily the "Afghan Public Protection Force"—are discussed later in this report.

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 and presumably is able to earn the support of the Afghan people. However, the State Department report on human rights practices for 2008 (released February 25, 2009)¹⁶ 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 nature rather than politically motivated action. For more depth on Afghanistan human rights issues, see CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, cited above.

On one major issue that has received wide attention, in March 2009, the parliament and executive branch attempted to accommodate Shiite demands by passing and signing a new personal status law for members of the sect. However, in April 2009, following an international condemnation of provisions that human rights groups say would legalize the rape of a wife by her husband and

¹⁶ For text, see <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/sca/119131.htm>.

restrict the ability of women to go outside the home, Karzai placed the law under review by the Justice Ministry, which drafts government bills. President Obama called the provisions “abhorrent.” Karzai said during his May visit to the United States that it would be amended and resubmitted to the parliament, and the amended law—removing the clauses at issue—was adopted by the cabinet in July 2009 and passed by parliament late that month. H.Con.Res. 108 and S.Con.Res. 19 (passed by the Senate on May 19), expressed the sense of Congress that the first law should be repealed. The National Assembly has recently approved a long awaited bill (“Elimination of Violence Against Women Bill”) allowing women to prosecute their husbands for abuses. Religious freedom is discussed further in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman and in the October 26, 2009, State Department “International Religious Freedom” report for 2009.¹⁷

Advancement of Women

According to the State Department human rights report for 2008, the Afghan government is promoting the advancement of women, but numerous abuses, such as denial of educational and employment opportunities, continue primarily because of Afghanistan’s conservative traditions. A major development in post-Taliban Afghanistan was the formation of a Ministry of Women’s Affairs dedicated to improving women’s rights, although numerous accounts say the ministry’s influence is limited. It promotes the involvement of women in business ventures, and it plays a key role in trying to protect women from domestic abuse by running a growing number of women’s shelters across Afghanistan. The issue of women’s rights and advancement is discussed in detail in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman, cited above.

The Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002 (AFSA, P.L. 107-327) authorized \$15 million per year (FY2003-FY2006) for the Ministry of Women’s Affairs. Those monies are donated to the Ministry from Economic Support Funds (ESF) accounts controlled by USAID. S. 229, “Afghan Women Empowerment Act of 2009,” introduced in the 111th Congress, would authorize \$45 million per year in FY2010-FY2012 for grants to Afghan women; for the ministry of Women’s Affairs (\$5 million), and the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (\$10 million).

Overall Democracy and Governance Funding Issues

During FY2002-2008, a total of \$1.8 billion was spent on democracy, governance, rule of law and human rights, and elections support. Of these, by far the largest category was “good governance,” which, in large part, are grant awards to provinces that make progress against narcotics. FY2009 and FY2010 levels, and funding earmarks for programs benefitting women and girls is contained in the tables at the end of the paper.

Combating Narcotics Trafficking/Agricultural Development¹⁸

Narcotics trafficking is regarded by some as core impediment to the U.S. mission in Afghanistan. Afghanistan, generating what is estimated to be about \$70 million-\$100 million per year for the

¹⁷ See <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2009/127362.htm>

¹⁸ 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.

Taliban. Afghanistan is the source of about 93% of the world's illicit opium supply, and according to UNODC, "... leaving aside 19th Century China, no country in the world has ever produced narcotics on such a deadly scale."

Counter-narcotics is one area where there are widespread accounts of progress, although it is not certain whether the progress will be sustained. A UNODC report of September 2009 continued a positive trend in reporting on this issue over the past two years, noting a further decrease of 22% in opium cultivation in 2009. The report also places 20 provinces in the "poppy free" category, up from 18 in the 2008 report and 13 in the 2007 report (out of 34 total provinces). The report adds that cultivation in Helmand, which produces more than half the poppy crop of all Afghanistan, has, as predicted, fallen in 2009. However, Nangarhar province was considered poppy free in 2008 but has moved back into the production column in the 2009 report. The 2009 report attributes much of the progress to strong leadership by some governors, such Ghulab Mangal of Helmand. On the other hand, some poppy growers are turning to marijuana cultivation and trafficking, perhaps sensing less pressure on that activity, and the September 2009 report contained ominous warnings that "narco-cartels" may be starting to form in Afghanistan.

The Obama Administration's strategic review focused attention 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 his 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.

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.

Ambassador Holbrooke's team, in a public session on August 12, 2009, outlined U.S. policy to boost Afghanistan's agriculture sector as the long term means of reducing drug production. U.S. efforts include new funds to buy seeds and agricultural equipment, and to encourage agribusiness. Some countries are promoting alternative crops and are reporting good results by encouraging the growing of pomegranates and of saffron rice as alternative crops that draw buyers outside Afghanistan. Wheat production has been robust in 2009 because of healthy prices for that crop, and Afghanistan is again self-sufficient in wheat production. Encouraging alternative livelihoods has always been the preferred emphasis of the Afghan government. In FY2008, the United States provided \$38 million in "Good Performers" funds to provinces that have eliminated poppy cultivation, such as Balkh province. 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 puts aside the long standing over whether to conduct spraying of fields, particularly by air. President Karzai strongly opposed aerial spraying when it was proposed by former Ambassador to Afghanistan William Wood in early 2007, arguing that doing so would cause a backlash among Afghan farmers; he appears to have won this argument. 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.

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 appears to be a follow-up to a February 2009, NATO modification of its posture somewhat toward viewing some drug traffickers as active participants in the insurgency, and therefore subject to military operations, rather than as a purely criminal/legal issue. At a NATO meeting on October 10, 2008, NATO accepted a policy of using force against narcotics traffickers. Under the agreement, each country can choose to keep their forces out of such missions, and press reports say that several NATO nations have done just that, causing continued U.S.-NATO frictions over the policy on this tactic.

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.

The Bush Administration took some legal steps against suspected Afghan drug traffickers; in April 2005, a DEA operation successfully caught the alleged leading Afghan narcotics trafficker, Haji Bashir Noorzai, arresting him after a flight to New York. The United States funded a Counternarcotics Justice Center (\$8 million) in Kabul to prosecute and incarcerate suspected traffickers.

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.¹⁹ 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 House version of the FY2008 appropriation (P.L. 110-161), and in the FY2009 regular appropriation, P.L. 111-8 (\$200 million ceiling). The FY2009 supplemental (P.L. 111-32) withholds 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 due to these certification requirements. 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.²⁰

¹⁹ Afghanistan had been so designated every year during 1987-2002.

²⁰ Crossette, Barbara. “Taliban Seem to Be Making Good on Opium Ban, U.N. Says.” *New York Times*, February 7, 2001.

Security Policy and Force Capacity Building

The U.S. definition of “victory” in Afghanistan, articulated since 2001, has been to build and Afghan government and security force that can defend itself as economic growth and development takes hold. The Obama Administration review, the results of which were announced March 27, 2009, narrowed the formal U.S. mission goals to preventing Al Qaeda from reestablishing a base in Afghanistan—although the policy tools announced, including the military strategy, in many ways expand the nation-building mission. On the other hand, the March 27 statement by President Obama apparently did not settle the internal debate over strategy, which has intensified following the August 30, 2009, submission of Gen. Stanley McChrystal’s (top overall commander in Afghanistan) review of the battlefield situation.²¹ An announcement of a potentially altered U.S. strategy, based on McChrystal’s recommendations, is expected in mid-November 2009.

The early 2009 Obama Administration strategy emphasize Afghan governance and economic development, but the basic components of the U.S. security strategy were little changed from that of the Bush Administration. These main components include (1) combat operations by U.S. forces and a NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to secure areas that can subsequently be held and developed by international and then Afghan government forces and civilian officials; (2) U.S. and NATO operation of “provincial reconstruction teams” (PRTs) that promote stability, Afghan governance, and economic development; (3) the equipping, training, and expansion of an Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) force; (4) establishing or improving local security solutions; and (5) backing Afghan efforts to engage Taliban leaders who might want to end their armed struggle.

Taliban, Al Qaeda, and Related Insurgent Groups

As noted in McChrystal’s August 2009 assessment, 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. U.S. military reports say that there were over 800 improvised explosive device (IED) attacks in July 2009, a post-Taliban high.

The core of the insurgency is still the Taliban movement centered around Mullah Umar. Mullah Umar and many of his top advisers from their time in power remain at large and are trying to run a “shadow government,” from their safehaven 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” or, by some, the “Qandahari clique.” The latter term reflects their origins and the purported prime target of their operations—the recapture, as a first step, of the former Taliban stronghold of Qandahar. One of Umar’s top deputies still at large is Mullah Bradar, but others, including Mullah Dadullah, his son Mansoor, and Mullah Usmani, have been killed or captured. The Taliban has several official spokespersons, including Qari Yusuf Ahmadi and Zabiullah Mujahid, and it operates a clandestine radio station, “Voice of Shariat,” and publishes videos. On September 19, 2009, Umar issued an audiotape criticizing the Afghan

²¹ 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

elections as fraudulent. The Taliban sought to intimidate the population by killing government supporters, and it threatened Afghans who voted in the August 20, 2009, elections.

The Taliban of Afghanistan are increasingly linked politically to Pakistani Taliban militants such as those led by Beitullah Mehsud (who was killed by a U.S. air strike in August 2009). The Pakistani Taliban are 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. Some Pakistani militants are increasingly focused on interrupting U.S. supply lines into Afghanistan that run through Pakistan.

Al Qaeda/Bin Laden Whereabouts

U.S. commanders say that, with increased freedom of action in Pakistan, Al Qaeda militants are increasingly facilitating, through financing and recruiting, militant incursions in Afghanistan. Small, but possibly increasing, numbers of Al Qaeda members—including Arabs, Uzbeks, and Chechens—are being captured or killed in battles in Afghanistan itself, according to U.S. commanders. U.S. National Security Adviser James Jones said on *CNN* on October 4, 2009, that the “maximum estimate” of Al Qaeda fighters in Afghanistan itself is less than 100, with no bases there.²²

The two most notable Al Qaeda leaders at large, and believed in Pakistan, are Osama bin Laden himself and his close ally, Ayman al-Zawahiri. There have been no recent public indications that U.S. or allied forces have learned or are close to learning bin Laden’s location. In February 2009, some independent U.S. scientists, using geographic mapping and other methodology based on bin Laden’s likely needs and lifestyle, speculated that he might be across the border from his former Afghan stronghold at Tora Bora. As of June 2009, some U.S. officials said that Pakistan’s ongoing offensives against militants in the border regions might lead to bin Laden’s capture. Still, he continues to issue video and audio messages, the most recent of which was on the 2009 anniversary of the September 11 attacks.

A purported U.S.-led strike reportedly missed Zawahiri by a few hours in the village of Damadola, Pakistan, in January 2006, suggesting that the United States and Pakistan have some intelligence on his movements.²³ 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 continued under President Obama, indicating the new Administration continues to see the tactic as effective in preventing attacks.

²² CNN “State of the Union” program. October 4, 2009.

²³ Gall, Carlotta and Ismail Khan. “U.S. Drone Attack Missed Zawahiri by Hours.” *New York Times*, November 10, 2006.

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. Hikmatyar’s fighters – once instrumental in the U.S.-supported war against the Soviet Union, are operating in Kunar, Nuristan, and Nangarhar provinces, 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 designated as a “Foreign Terrorist Organization.”) The security tables indicator contains estimated numbers of HIG.

While U.S. commanders continue to battle Hikmatyar’s militia, the Afghan government reportedly is negotiating with his representatives. Some of Karzai’s key allies in the National Assembly are former members of Hikmatyar’s *mujahedin* party. Hikmatyar has expressed a willingness to discuss a cease-fire with the Karzai government since 2007, but such talks appeared to gain specificity in May 2009. No further developments have been reported since, and HIG fighters continue their fight in the northeast border regions.

Haqqani Faction

Yet another militant faction, cited in McChrystal’s assessment, 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 Khost Province, and the August 2009 McChrystal reports says that taking Khost is a major goal of the Haqqani network. Haqqani property inside Pakistan has been repeatedly targeted since September 2008 by U.S. aerial drone strikes. Some reports in May 2009 suggest this faction might also be in talks with the Afghan government, although Haqqani faction attacks in that region have not waned. The security indicators table contains estimated numbers of Haqqani fighters.

The War to Date: Post-2006 Taliban “Resurgence” and Causes

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. Lt. Gen. Stanley McChrystal is commander of NATO/ISAF (COMISAF) and U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A). His deputy is Maj. Gen. David Rodriguez, who now heads a NATO-approved “Integrated Command” focused primarily on combat operations and located in a section of Kabul International Airport. Whether under NATO or OEF, many U.S. forces in Afghanistan are in eastern Afghanistan, under Combined Joint Task Force 82 (as of June 2009), which is commanded by Maj. Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti. Lt. Gen. McChrystal reports not only to NATO but, through U.S. channels, to U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM, headed as of October 31, 2008, by General David Petraeus).

During 2001-mid-2006, U.S. forces and Afghan troops fought relatively low levels of insurgent violence by the Taliban and other groups discussed above. 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.

An increase in violence beginning in mid-2006 took some U.S. commanders and officials by surprise. Reasons for the deterioration include some of those discussed above in the sections on governance—Afghan government corruption and the absence of governance or security forces in many rural areas—as well as the safehaven 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.

The main theater of combat—where many of these factors converge—is southern Afghanistan: particularly, Uruzgan, Helmand, and Qandahar provinces—areas that NATO/ISAF assumed primary responsibility for on July 31, 2006. Along with Zabol and Nimruz provinces, these provinces constitute “Regional Command South (RC-S).” 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 without an active NATO presence. 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 British deal.

Growing U.S. Force Levels in 2007 and 2008

To address the “resurgence,” NATO and OEF forces tried to apply a more integrated strategy involving preemptive combat, increased development work, and a more streamlined command structure, in addition to a slow and steady troop buildup. U.S. and partner country troop levels have been increasing significantly since 2006, when NATO/ISAF took over operations nationwide (after October 5, 2006). U.S. troop levels started 2006 at about 30,000, but, by April 2009, had reached about 39,000. Partner forces were increased significantly as well, by about 6,000 during this time. Many of the new U.S. forces were Marines that deployed to Helmand, which had fallen almost totally out of coalition control. Continuing to believe that combat operations might blunt the new challenges, in 2007, U.S. and NATO forces preempted an anticipated Taliban “spring offensive” with “Operation Achilles” (March 2007) in the Sangin district of Helmand Province, around the Kajaki dam, and Operation Silicon (May 2007), also in Helmand.

Perception of Deterioration in 2008

Despite the additional resources put into Afghanistan, throughout 2008, growing concern took hold within and outside the Bush Administration. Within the Administration, the 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, as well as one by him on October 10, 2008, that “I anticipate next year [2009] would be a tougher year.” 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”—language used

also by Commander of U.S. Central Command General David Petraeus (in that position since October 31, 2008).

The indicators that fed pessimism in 2008 included (1) 2008 recording the most U.S. combat casualties, of the war to that date (about 150); (2) numbers of suicide bombings at a post-Taliban high; (3) number of roadside bombings (2,000 in 2008) at a post-Taliban high; (4) expanding Taliban operations in provinces where it had not previously been active, including Lowgar, Wardak, and Kapisa, close to Kabul; (5) 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 gates of the Indian Embassy in Kabul, killing more than 50; (6) the April 27, 2008, assassination attempt on Karzai during a military parade celebrating the ouster of the Soviet Union; (7) 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); (8) a July 13, 2008, on a U.S. outpost in Nuristan Province that killed nine U.S. soldiers; and (9) a August 18, 2008, attack that killed ten French soldiers near Sarobi, 30 miles northeast of Kabul.

However, 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 occurs in 10% of Afghanistan's 364 districts, an area including about 6% of the Afghan population. To address the deterioration, Gen. McKiernan was, in September 2008 made head of U.S. troops in OEF and in the training mission for the Afghan security forces as commander of "U.S. Forces Afghanistan"—an attempt to give McKiernan greater ability to deploy U.S. forces throughout the war zone. He submitted his assessment that reversing the deterioration required about 30,000 additional U.S. troops to be deployed, including about 4,000 trainers to expand Afghan forces.

Obama Administration Strategy Review and Re-Review

As the perception of deterioration continued, it was reported in September 2008 that both the U.S. military and NATO were conducting a number of different strategy reviews. One 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. Almost all of the reviews were completed prior to the start of the Obama Administration.

The Obama Administration—which stated that Afghanistan needed to be given a higher priority than it was during the Bush Administration—integrated the Bush Administration reviews into an overarching 60-day inter-agency "strategy review." It was chaired by South Asia expert Bruce Riedel, on temporary assignment, and co-chaired by Ambassador Holbrooke and by Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Michele Flournoy. Ambassador Holbrooke invited both Afghanistan and Pakistan to participate in the review. Several ministers from each country visited Washington, D.C. during February 23-27, 2009, as part of the process, 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.

President Obama announced the new "comprehensive" strategy on March 27, 2009, addressing all interlocking factors that have caused security in Afghanistan to deteriorate since 2006.

According to the President's statement, and an associated "White Paper" of the inter-agency group that performed the review:²⁴

- *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 that can lead the counter-insurgency with reduced U.S. assistance; and (4) involve the international community to actively assist in addressing these objectives. These relatively targeted goals were in line with comments by President Obama in an interview with "60 Minutes," broadcast March 22, 2009, saying that there needs to be an "exit strategy" for Afghanistan so that U.S. policy does not appear to be "perpetual drift." President Obama set no deadlines for reducing U.S. troops or criteria for scaling back U.S. involvement in Afghanistan, and many believe that bringing permanent stability will require U.S. involvement for another decade or more. Former commander of international forces in Afghanistan, British Gen. David Richards, said in August 2009 that the mission could take 40 years of international commitment.
- *Resources and Troops.* The strategy would provide the resources to the stabilization effort in Afghanistan that U.S. officials say were lacking during the Bush Administration. However, the strategy emphasizes promoting Afghan governance and the growth of its own forces, rather than U.S.-led combat. 17,000 additional combat troops were authorized (and have deployed) to help secure the restive south and east of Afghanistan—in line with a February 17, 2009, authorization. In addition, Gen. McKiernan's long-standing requirement for 4,000 U.S. military personnel to train the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) was authorized as well (and arrived in October 2009).
- *Afghan Forces.* The additional trainers were expected to enable the Afghan National Army to reach its planned goal of 134,000 (from the existing 94,000) by 2011.
- *Civilian "Uplift."* To develop Afghan institutions not only in the central government but particularly at the provincial and local levels, the strategy outlined a significant increase (about 450, including 51 direct hires) in U.S. civilian advisors in Afghanistan, both new hires and assignment of existing State Department and other agency personnel.²⁵ This would more than double the number of civilian experts in country, of which only 13 were serving in the southern sector. Some U.S. civilians accompanied U.S. forces in the July – August 2009 offensive in Helmand (see below).²⁶ U.S. Embassy officers in Kabul told CRS in October 2009 that the number of civilians in country would reach about 1,000 by the end of 2009. Substantial new contributions of personnel from U.S. allies and partners in Afghanistan are expected as well (see below). An FY2009 supplemental appropriation (P.L. 111-32) includes \$600 million to fund

²⁴ "White Paper": http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Afghanistan-Pakistan_White_Paper.pdf

²⁵ According to subsequent testimony and announcements, USAID is to provide 150 of the civilians (45 of which would be in Kabul); U.S. Department of Agriculture is to provide 50 experts; and the remainder would be furnished by the Department of State.

²⁶ Comments of Ambassador Holbrooke at reception for Afghan ethnographer Nancy Hatch Dupree. September 16, 2009.

the “civilian surge,” including new Embassy construction costs to handle more personnel.

- As implemented, U.S. Embassy officers in Kabul described to CRS in October 2009 several other elements of the governance strategy: appointment of high level civilians to jointly, with the U.S. military, formulate strategy for the localities where they serve, including at the PRTs (discussed further below). This is to be part of a new “Interagency Provincial Affairs” initiative that is less military-focused. As an example, a high level USAIF official, Dawn Liberi, is serving as a senior governance and development official at Regional Command East, which is run by Maj. Gen. Scaparotti and based at Bagram Airfield.
- *Reconciliation.* The strategy expressed clear support for longstanding Afghan efforts to persuade insurgent commanders and their foot soldiers to lay down their arms and accept the Afghan constitution. However, the U.S. strategy rules out negotiations with Mullah Umar and his aides because of their alignment with the Al Qaeda organization. The Afghan side differs from this view.
- *Pakistan.* According to Administration officials in briefings for Congressional staff (March 27, 2009),²⁷ the new Administration strategy treats Afghanistan and Pakistan as organically linked. Specific points include (1) institutionalizing stronger mechanisms for bilateral and trilateral cooperation among the United States, Afghanistan, and Pakistan; (2) providing U.S. military assistance to help Pakistani forces conduct counter-insurgency against militants in Pakistan; (3) increasing economic assistance to Pakistan to \$1.5 billion per year for the next five years;²⁸ (4) fostering reform of local governance in areas of Pakistan where militants are operating; and (5) supporting legislation to create “Reconstruction Opportunity Zones.” These are areas of Afghan-Pakistan economic cooperation the products of which would enjoy preferential duties for U.S. import.
- *International Dimension.* The Administration is to explore new diplomatic mechanisms, including establishing an “Contact Group” consisting of all nations that have a stake in the security of the region—NATO allies and other U.S. partners, as well as the Central Asian states, the Gulf nations and Iran, Russia, India, and China. To date, 25 nations have appointed direct counterparts to Holbrooke, including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.
- *Partner Contributions.* As explained by Administration officials in briefings to congressional staff (March 27, 2009), NATO and other partners can contribute whatever they are comfortable contributing—whether that be troops, economic aid, civilian mentors, ANSF trainers—as long as the contribution fills an identified requirement. Some pledges—mostly aid and trainers, rather than combat troops—were made at the NATO summit in France April 3-4, 2009, and subsequently. However, as noted later, a few NATO contributors are planning to take out combat troops in coming years and others are perceived as wavering in their commitments due to growing public opposition to the involvement.
- *Review Process and Long Term Commitment.* The strategy is intended to be reviewed regularly to assess its results against metrics of progress to be

²⁷ Unclassified briefing by Administration officials. March 27, 2009.

²⁸ This has been largely implemented in a new U.S. aid authorization act for Pakistan. P.L. 111-73, October 15, 2009.

developed by the Administration. An initial assessment of the strategy's effectiveness, as measured against the "metrics" discussed below, is to take place March 30, 2010.

- *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. Another section of that legislation requires a report, by the date of submission of the 2011 budget request, assessing Afghan effort to curb corruption, actions taken to develop a counter-insurgency strategy, the level of political consensus in Afghanistan to confront security challenges, and U.S. government efforts to achieve these objectives. The Administration's approximately 50 metrics were reported at the website of Foreign Policy.²⁹ However, the difficulty in formulating useful and clear metrics that would enable Members and officials to assess progress in the war effort was belied 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."³⁰ 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.

U.S. Troop Buildup in 2009, McChrystal Assessment, and New Strategy Review

As noted above, even before the strategy was announced in March 2009, there was a consensus that U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan needed to increase. In beginning to fulfill Gen. McKiernan's request for about 30,000 more forces, 5,000 additional U.S. forces deployed to Afghanistan in January 2009. They were sent to Lowgar and Wardak provinces, south of Kabul, where there has been significant Taliban infiltration since 2008. U.S. force levels in Afghanistan reached about 39,000 by April 2009, prior to the increase announced by the Obama strategy review. The additional deployments (17,000 combat troops and 4,000 trainers), which are now deployed, have brought U.S. force levels to about 68,000 as of November 2009.

Appointment of Lt. Gen. McChrystal and Initial Assessment

On May 11, 2009, Secretary of Defense Gates and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Michael Mullen announced that, in concert with the new U.S. strategy announced in March 2009 (discussed below), Gen. McKiernan had been asked to resign and Lt. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, considered an innovative commander as head of U.S. special operations (2003-2008), was named his successor. Confirmed and assuming command on June 15, 2009, McChrystal is assisted by Lt. Gen. David Rodriguez, who heads the new Integrated Command, as noted above.

²⁹ http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/09/16/evaluating_progress_in_afghanistan_pakistan.

³⁰ 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.

Gen. McChrystal, after assuming command, began and completed an assessment of the security situation. His assessment was submitted on August 30, 2009, and presented to NATO on August 31, 2009.³¹ The main elements are:

- That the goal of the U.S. military should be to protect the population – and to help the Afghan government take steps to earn it 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. As part of his approach, McChrystal has ordered changes to U.S. procedures in order to sharply limit Afghan civilian casualties.
- That the overall situation is difficult, and his report warns of potential “mission failure” unless a fully resourced, comprehensive counter-insurgency strategy is pursued. The stressed a need to reverse Taliban momentum within 12-18 months or risk losing the potential to defeat the insurgency.
- That there needs to be a major expansion of the Afghan security forces to about 400,000, from the current goal of about 220,000. This would include 240,000 ANA (up from the current goal of 134,000) and 160,000 ANP (up from the current goal of about 85,000).

Some of the data supporting a negative assessment of the security situation are recent Taliban operations in Konduz, Herat, Farah, and other areas that previously were relatively peaceful, and increasing U.S. casualties (to about 45 – 55 per month in mid-late 2009). Figures compiled by NATO/ISAF during 2009 show continued sharp increases (75% +) in all categories of insurgent-initiated violence. Contributing to the sense of deterioration have been reports that the Taliban, in some areas under their control, are setting up courts and other “shadow government” structures. Prior to a U.S.-led July 2009 offensive discussed below, Afghan Interior Ministry figures made public in August 2009 said that 133 of the 364 districts are at high risk of Taliban attack, and 13 districts were under Taliban control, most of them in Helmand or Qandahar Provinces. Some high-profile Taliban attacks, such as a large attack in Qandahar on August 25, 2009, killing about 40 persons, has further shaken confidence. Some press reports say Qandahar is increasingly infiltrated by Taliban agents and fighters to the point where the city is threatened. There have been several suicide bombings in Kabul since August 1, including one on September 17 that killed six Italian soldiers and at least 10 Afghans. Violence in the normally quiet north, in the Konduz area, has increased sharply in recent months, prompting a coalition/Afghan offensive there in early November 2009.

In beginning to command operations, McChrystal sent the additional U.S. Marines that arrived in Helmand in June 2009 into their first major offensive on July 2—Operation Khanjar—intended to expel the Taliban and reestablish Afghan governance in the province by allowing the Afghan government to take root in cleared areas. The offensive, coordinated with a British offensive into western Helmand, has purportedly ended Taliban control of ten or eleven districts in Helmand. However, U.S. commanders have said that the 800 Afghan troops that accompanied them were smaller than expected and needed to accomplish long term objectives.

³¹ 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?

September – November Strategy Review/More Troops in 2010?

With the release in the *Washington Post* of the McChrystal assessment that recommends a comprehensive counter-insurgency, it has been widely reported that McChrystal has recommended about 45,000 additional U.S. combat troops – which he reportedly believes is the number 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. Even before the broader request has been submitted, press reports say the Pentagon has authorized about 3,000 more “enablers” to deploy, which is understood to mean intelligence assets and IED-elimination crews.

The McChrystal assessment—and foreshadowed request for more forces—set off a debate within the Administration and Congress over whether adding combat troops comports with the March 2009 Administration strategy of building civilian governance and economic development capabilities of the Afghans. In late September 2009, the Administration began another high-level review of U.S. strategy, taking into account the McChrystal report, the marred August 20, 2009, election, and other developments. The new review reportedly consists of a series of meetings of senior officials, chaired by President Obama. 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) by McChrystal in which the commander appeared to advocate 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 reflected in the McChrystal report, and President Obama stressed that the new review was primarily to decide on strategy rather than to decide on troop levels. Some U.S. officials believe that adding many more U.S. forces could create among the Afghan people a sense of “occupation” that could prove counter-productive.

Those who advocate for the reported maximum McChrystal request say that his assessment is correct and that such forces are needed to blunt Taliban momentum and create permissive security conditions to enable the building of Afghan governance capabilities. Since September 2009, Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen have made comments appearing open to or even supportive of a request for more combat forces, and have indicated that the way these forces would be used to build governance and population security mitigates the sense that they are occupiers. The debate comes amid comments from some Members of Congress, including Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin, that the U.S. focus should be on expanding Afghan security forces capabilities before sending additional U.S. forces. Senate consideration of a FY2010 defense appropriation (H.R. 3326) in early October resulted in passage of an amendment requiring Lt. Gen. McChrystal and other senior officials to testify before Congress, but only after the Administration review has settled on its strategy, and not within any short term fixed time frame such as the November 15 deadline recommended in another amendment that did not pass.

Beyond the addition of troops and command, there is a growing question of equipment. Some experts say that the United States is too reliant on armor in Afghanistan which is not suited for Afghanistan’s poor roads and steep mountain passes. Others say there should be more emphasis on mobility provided by more helicopters and on greater availability of aerial surveillance assets.

Decisions on Strategy and Resources?

No deadline has been set for the completion of the high-level review, although Administration officials said on November 9, 2009 that it would likely be announced after President Obama's visit to Asia that begins in mid November. Some press reports in early November 2009, including a *CBS Evening News* report of November 9, 2009, say the President is leaning toward approving almost as many forces as recommended by McChrystal, although with a gradual infusion into Afghanistan and with the purpose of first reinforcing ten or so key population centers, such as Qandahar. White House press Secretary Robert Gibbs stated on November 10, 2009, that the President has made no tentative decisions on a new strategy or resource allocation.

Additional or Alternative Options Under Way or Under Consideration

Discussed below are some additional or alternative approaches that are in various stages of implementation/experimentation or under consideration in the September – November 2009 Administration review. One option, to “Afghanize,” or accelerate the training of Afghan forces to take the lead in securing Afghanistan, is discussed later in this report in the analysis of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

Counter-Terrorism Operations

Some, purportedly including Vice President Joseph Biden, favor a more limited mission for Afghanistan designed solely to implement the key goal of the Obama Administration – disrupting and dismantling Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan. A more limited approach, according to experts, would envision no increase in U.S. or other international forces present in Afghanistan. Yet, such as strategy might represent a limitation of U.S. efforts to build Afghan governance and economic development, and would represent, to many, a reversal of the strategy announced in March 2009. Some explain the potential justification for such a shift as the assessment that the government of Afghanistan might not be a fully legitimate partner prepared to implement a fully resourced counter-insurgency and nation-building policy. Such doubts flow from the flawed August 20, 2009, presidential election.

However, critics of this strategy express the view that the Afghan government might collapse and Al Qaeda would have safehaven again in Afghanistan if there are insufficient numbers of U.S. forces there to protect the government.³² Others believe 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.

Another potential difficulty for this choice is that the insurgency in Afghanistan is more complex. Gen McChrystal and other senior commanders have said that Al Qaeda itself is not operating in large numbers directly in Afghanistan. Lt. Gen. McChrystal's August 2009 report says that “Most insurgent fighters [in Afghanistan] are Afghans.” Therefore, it is not clear what the target of a “counter-terrorism” mission in Afghanistan itself might be.

³² Ibid.

Negotiations With the Taliban

Since 2008, there has been growing U.S. support for various plans to try to lure Taliban fighters off the battlefield and into the political process. President 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 overseen by Karzai’s National Security Council. The program is credited with persuading 5,000 Taliban figures and commanders to renounce violence and join the political process. Several Taliban figures, including its foreign minister Wakil Mutawwakil, ran in the parliamentary elections. “Mullah Rocket” a former Taliban commander, is running for president in the August 2009 elections.

The issue had momentum in late 2008. 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 late January 2009 in Saudi Arabia, and there are reports of ongoing contact in Dubai, UAE.

Since the Obama Administration strategy was announced in March 2009, talks broadened to include negotiations with the Hikmatyar faction. Other talks reportedly include Afghans close to Mullah Umar. The 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 Taliban and other militants are still demanding that (1) all foreign troops leave Afghanistan; (2) a new “Islamic” constitution be adopted; and (3) Islamic law is imposed. However, recent press reports say that talks center on lower level confidence building measures, such as removal of the names of Taliban figures from U.N. lists of terrorists, lists established pursuant to Resolution 1390 (January 2002).

The Obama Administration strategy has backed negotiations to bring mid and lower level Taliban leaders and their foot soldiers off the battlefield. Even though the recent negotiations involve harder core Taliban figures, U.S. officials have not sought to obstruct these talks, even though President Obama ruled out compromise with Umar in the strategy announcement. In his election campaign, Karzai has said that, if he wins, he intends to call a *loya jirga*, to include Taliban figures, to try to bring about an end to the insurgency.

Another trend, however, has been efforts by U.S. military commanders to try to negotiate with or even buy off Taliban and other insurgent fighters in a strategy similar to what was employed in Anbar Province in Iraq in 2006 and 2007. Some U.S. commanders are reporting some successes with this effort. The National Defense Authorization Act for FY2010 (P.L. 111-84) authorizes the use of Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds, used by the military to win local support, to “reintegrate” Taliban fighters who renounce violence.

Local Supplemental Security: Afghan Public Protection Program (APPP)

Since June 2006, Karzai and international force donors have been considering arming some local tribal militias in eastern Afghanistan, building on established tribal structures, to help in local policing. 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, but the urgent security needs in Afghanistan caused reconsideration.

In late 2008, the Bush Administration and Karzai government reached tentative agreement to try the concept. The militia formation is being conducted as part of the IDLG's Social Outreach Program, which was discussed above, and is intended to strengthen the ability of local communities to keep Taliban infiltrators out. It is being termed the "Afghan Public Protection Program" (APPP) and is funded with DOD (CERP) funds. The program began in Wardak Province in early 2009 and might be expanded to Ghazni, Lowgar, and Kapisa provinces and eventually include as many as 8,000 Afghans in the force. Participants in the program are given a reported \$200 per month. 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.

Some elders in Wardak oppose the program, partly due to Taliban intimidation, and have been slow to recommend recruits for it. Ambassador Holbrooke indicated in April 2009 that the results of the pilot program in Wardak are not yet clear. However, some press stories in August 2009 indicated the program might be helping quiet Wardak. U.S. commanders and Afghan officials say can keep the militias "under control," because they are part of the Interior Ministry. As such, they are not *arbokai*, which are private tribal militias. 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.

Adopting the Dutch Approach in Uruzgan

The counterinsurgency strategy recommended by Gen. McChrystal appears to adopt techniques and policies used in Uruzgan Province by the Netherlands, the lead force there. The January 2009 DOD report on Afghanistan stability (mandated by P.L. 110-181) notes the substantial success of the Dutch approach in Uruzgan.

The approach focuses on development work and engagement with local leaders to understand their development needs.³³ 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. This approach has been adopted by the Obama Administration, as discussed above. 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. The Netherlands has not added troops to the 1,700+ contingent that took over the peacekeeping in the province in mid-2006, but the government says that motions passed in parliament require it to pull its military forces out of Afghanistan by the end of 2010. The government is continuing to try to change parliamentary opinion, and is likely, if unable to do that, to substitute its forces for trainers or other contributors. Australia's leaders have said they do not plan to add troops when the Netherlands leaves, an indication that Australia is not willing to replace the Netherlands as the lead force there.

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

³³ Chivers, C.J. "Dutch Soldiers Stress Restraint in Afghanistan." *New York Times*, April 6, 2007.

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

Limiting Civilian Casualties/U.S. Military Presence/SOFA

As noted above, Lt. Gen. McChrystal said in his report that it is vital to limit civilian Afghan casualties that occur as a consequence of U.S. combat operations, and he has issued guidance for international forces to use air strikes only when absolutely necessary to protect U.S. forces. This issue gained urgency since 2008 as the Taliban have benefitted politically from the backlash caused by Afghan civilian casualties inflicted particularly by U.S. or NATO airstrikes. One such disputed incident occurred near Herat on August 22, 2008, that UNAMA said killed 90 civilians but U.S. investigators say killed only 30 non-combatants. Another incident occurred in early November 2008 in which an alleged 37 Afghan civilians at a wedding party were killed. The latest incident, on May 4, 2009, occurred in a battle in Farah province. Afghan officials say 140 civilians were killed but the U.S. says far fewer were killed by U.S. strikes and combat. In public statements, Karzai has been increasingly critical of these casualties, and the new Ambassador, Karl Eikenberry, went with Karzai to Farah to apologize and pledge compensation. Another major incident occurred in early September in Konduz in which Germany's contingent called in an airstrike on Taliban fighters who captured two fuel trucks; several civilians were killed in the strike as well as Taliban fighters.

After the Herat incident, the Afghan cabinet demanded negotiation of a formal "Status of Forces Agreement" (SOFA) that would spell out the combat authorities of non-Afghan forces, and would limit the U.S. of airstrikes, detentions, and house raids.³⁴ In late November 2008, at a multi-lateral conference, Karzai called for a timetable for a withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan, perhaps borrowing from similar nationalistic calls by the government of Iraq in its negotiations with the United States. He has since, including in his campaign, demanded a larger Afghan role in U.S. operations, and particularly whether or not to use air strikes in selected cases. A purported draft "SOFA"—or "technical agreement" clarifying U.S./coalition authorities in Afghanistan—is reportedly under discussion between the United States and Afghanistan.

U.S. forces currently operate in Afghanistan under a "diplomatic note" between the United States and the interim government of Afghanistan in November 2002; the agreement gives the United States legal jurisdiction over U.S. personnel serving in Afghanistan and stated the Afghan government's acknowledgment that U.S.-led military operations were "ongoing."

Even if the Taliban insurgency ends, Afghan leaders say they want the United States to maintain a long-term presence in Afghanistan. On May 8, 2005, Karzai summoned about 1,000 delegates to a consultative *jirga* in Kabul on whether to host permanent U.S. bases. They supported an indefinite presence of international forces to maintain security but urged Karzai to delay a decision. On May 23, 2005, Karzai and President Bush issued a "joint declaration"³⁵ 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 3**. The FY2009 supplemental appropriation (P.L.

³⁴ Gall, Carlotta. Two Afghans Lose Posts Over Attack. *New York Times*, August 25, 2008.

³⁵ See <http://merln.ndu.edu/archivepdf/afghanistan/WH/20050523-2.pdf>.

111-32) states that no funds may be used to establish permanent U.S. bases in Afghanistan. The FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-84) prohibits the U.S. establishment of permanent bases in Afghanistan.

Table 3. 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-101 and Gen. Schloesser. At least 500 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.
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. Being enhanced (along with other facilities in the south) at cost of \$1.3 billion in expectation of 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. Successor, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, demanded large increase in the \$2 million per year U.S. contribution for use of the base; dispute eased in July 2006 with U.S. agreement to give Kyrgyzstan \$150 million in assistance and base use payments. Dispute flared again in February 2009 with Kyrgyz order that the base close. Kyrgyz parliament backed the expulsion in late February, giving U.S. six months to vacate. Decision reversed and access agreement renewal signed in July 2009 when U.S. agreed to increase yearly rent for the access to \$60 million, from \$17 million.
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) in supply missions to 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. purportedly exploring new overtures to Uzbekistan that could lead to reopening to U.S. use of the base. 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. July 2009, following Obama visit, Russia agreed to allow lethal equipment to transit as well.
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 make some use of Tajikistan.

Alliance Issues: The NATO-Led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Operation Enduring Freedom³⁶

The Administration's March 2009 strategy notes that future contributions might take the form of finances and civilian mentors and advisers, rather than combat troops. U.S. cooperation with other donor countries is a major issue, in part because the effectiveness of the NATO alliance in general has come under question—including in the August 2009 McChrystal assessment—as the Afghanistan stabilization effort has not produced quick results. As noted below, many European governments are under pressure from their publics and parliaments to end or reduce the military involvement in Afghanistan, although several countries continue to announce troop increases in line with the U.S. buildup. 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.

Background of ISAF

ISAF was created by the Bonn Agreement and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 (December 20, 2001, a Chapter 7 resolution),³⁷ 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 is lead in Uruzgan; the three rotate the command of RC-S. “Stage 4,” the assumption of NATO/ISAF command of peacekeeping in fourteen 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 operating in Afghanistan under NATO/ISAF in “Regional Command East” (RC-E).

Some accounts say that, with the proportion of U.S. forces in RC-S increasing, the United States might assume overall command of RC-S in November 2010, after rotations by the Netherlands (2008-2009) and Britain (2009-2010). As of the fall of 2008, a one-star U.S. general, John Nicholson, is deputy commander of RC-S, giving the United States added weight there.

The ISAF mission was renewed (until October 13, 2009) by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1833 (September 22, 2008), which reiterated the previous year's renewal resolution (1776) support for the Operation Enduring Freedom mission. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1890 of

³⁶ Twelve other countries provide forces to both OEF and ISAF.

³⁷ 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).

October 8, 2009, extended ISAF's mission until October 13, 2010, and 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.

NATO Force Pledges in 2008 and 2009

Despite waning public support, there continue to be new non-U.S. troop contributions for Afghanistan. NATO and other partner forces that continue to bear the brunt of combat in Afghanistan include Britain, Canada, Poland, the Netherlands, France, Denmark, Romania, and Australia. 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 ten French soldiers in August 2008. Britain has increased its troop commitment in Afghanistan—mainly in high combat Helmand Province—to about 9,000, and has said in November 2009 it would increase that ceiling to 9,500. Germany repeatedly turned U.S. requests to send forces to the combat-heavy south, but it has increased its contingent to 4,300, still in the northern sector.

Still, the need to line up new pledges became urgent in February 2008, when Canada said it would not extend its 2,500 troop deployment beyond 2009 unless other partners contribute 1,000 forces to assist with combat in the Canadian sector (Qandahar province). As noted, the Netherlands and Canada say their mission in Afghanistan will end in 2010 and 2011, respectively. In November 2009, Canada's senior military officer ordered the start of preparations for the pullout.³⁸ Reflecting the waning European support for the mission – which might have been amplified by the fact that the United States is again reviewing overall strategy in Afghanistan—Germany, Britain, and France said in September 2009 they are planning a late 2009 or early 2010 conference to discuss how to transfer more security responsibilities to Afghan forces and to encourage more regional assistance from India, China, and Russia.

The Obama Administration's March 2009 strategy review was intended to help build support for new pledges of combat forces, Afghan force trainers, trainers and mentors for Afghan government bureaucrats, and other financial assistance to Afghanistan. Some of those pledges came through at the April 3 - 4, 2009, NATO summit, and since, including

- 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 (about 900). Those forces have remained even though the elections have now ended. Belgium has sent two more F-16 fighters.
- Other military trainers—to fill out 61 existing Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs)—have recently been sent from Bulgaria, Estonia, Italy, Greece, Portugal, Turkey, and Slovakia. Each OMLT has about 30 trainers.
- NATO has 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 is planned, to help train Afghan forces out in the provinces rather than rely on bringing them to Kabul. Italy is sending

³⁸ Gillies, Rob. "Canada Making Plans for Afghan Pullout." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. November 7, 2009.

- 100 paramilitary trainers (*carabinieri*) for the NTM-A mission, medical helicopters, and military transport planes.
- \$100 million in contributions to an Afghan National Security Forces trust fund were pledged, to help finance expansion of the ANSF. 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).
 - \$500 million in additional civilian assistance to Afghanistan was pledged at the meeting. On November 10, 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 is suspended its naval refueling mission (discussed below).
 - In mid-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. As of November 2009, it reportedly is also discussing with the United States returning as many as 150 engineers to Afghanistan for development missions, protected by several hundred South Korean forces, the location of which is to be determined. (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.³⁹)
 - Sweden has pledged to increase its force to about 500. U.S. forces are currently training Georgian military personnel who are to deploy to Afghanistan, and in September 2009 Spain announced a 220 person force increase.

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 are operating and maintain eight helicopters. Germany notes that it 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 October 2008, Hungary added 60 troops to take over security at the airport.

National "Caveats" on Combat Operations

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

³⁹ Two were killed during their captivity. The Taliban kidnappers did not get the demanded release of 23 Taliban prisoners held by the Afghan government.

contributor. The concept paper, now titled the “Strategic Vision,” was endorsed by the NATO summit in Bucharest, Romania in April 2008.

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 4. 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—were contributing approximately 4,000 combat troops to OEF-Afghanistan. Now, only a few foreign contingents, composed mainly of special operations forces, including a 200 person unit from the UAE, are still part of OEF - Afghanistan.

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. Japan is already the third largest individual country donor to Afghanistan, providing about \$1.9 billion in civilian reconstruction aid since the fall of the Taliban. 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.) Some aid agencies say

they have felt more secure since the PRT program began, fostering reconstruction,⁴⁰ and many of the new civilian advisers arriving in Afghanistan under the new Obama Administration strategy will 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.

There are 26 PRTs in operation. Virtually all the PRTs, including those run by the United States, are now under the ISAF mission, but with varying lead nations. The list of PRTs, including lead country, is shown in a table at the end of this paper. Each PRT operated by the United States is composed of 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. USAID spending on PRT projects is in the table on USAID spending in Afghanistan at the end of this paper, and there is a database on development projects completed by each PRT available to CRS.

In the south, most PRTs are heavily focused on security. In August 2005, in preparation for the establishment of 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. Poland reportedly is considering taking over the U.S. PRT in Ghazni, where its combat troops operate alongside U.S. forces.

Evolving Civil-Military Concepts at the PRTs

Representing evolution of the PRT concept, 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. There also has 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.

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, higher level State Department officers will enjoy enhanced decisionmaking status at each PRT, in concert with rather than subordinate to a military officer who commands the PRT. As part of the new concept, “District Development Working Groups” are now being formed, consisting of U.S. civilians and military personnel working together to build governance at the local levels.

⁴⁰ Kraul, Chris. “U.S. Aid Effort Wins Over Skeptics in Afghanistan.” *Los Angeles Times*, April 11, 2003.

Afghan National Security Forces

As noted above, some see capable Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)—the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP)—as the means by which the United States and NATO might avoid major new increases in force deployments in Afghanistan. The Obama Administration strategy review emphasized expanding the ANSF and helping it “take the lead” in securing Afghanistan, rather than placing it in a “back seat” to U.S.-led combat—a clear contrast with the 2007 “troop surge” in Iraq. U.S. forces (“Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan,” CSTC-A), headed as of November 2008 by Maj. Gen. Richard Formica, along with partner countries and contractors, are training the ANSF. CSTC-A is under the authority of U.S. Forces-Afghanistan. However, according to the August 2009 report by Lt. Gen. McChrystal, the training mission is being revamped by making CSTC-A part of the new NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A), with CSTC-A’s mission reoriented to building the capacity of the Afghan Defense and Interior Ministries, and to provide resources to the ANSF.

As of now, the Administration strategy plans to expand the ANA to 134,000 by 2011—essentially a continuation of the Bush Administration expansion plan outlined in September 2008. The Obama Administration strategy announcement of the 4,000 additional U.S. trainers is intended to help meet that goal. The funds for the expansion—estimated at up to \$12 billion in that time frame—are expected to come mainly from the United States, possibly defrayed by partner contributions by Japan, Germany (see above), South Korea, or other donors.

As noted above, Lt. Gen. McChrystal’s August 2009 recommends expanding the ANA to an end strength of about 240,000, and the ANP to about 160,000, in order to be able to secure the Afghan population countrywide. These figures are double the size of current goals for the ANA and about 50% above the goal for the ANP.

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 did rejoin the new military after the fall of the Taliban.

U.S. and allied officers say that the ANA, now about 94,000 trained and assigned is becoming a major force in stabilizing the country and a national symbol. It is planned to reach its current target size of 134,000 by the end of 2011, but Gen. McChrystal recommends this initial target be reached by October 2010. 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; it participates in about 90% of all combat operations. It has demonstrated “increasing competence, effectiveness, and professionalism,” although U.S. military assessments say the force remains poorly led. It still suffers from about a 20% desertion rate and is still too small to provide enough troops to secure the population in cleared areas such as those cleared by Operation Khanjar. 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. The Obama Administration strategy review says that ANA units will be partnered with foreign donor units to enhance effectiveness.

Among specific 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. 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).

ANA battalions, or “Kandaks,” are the main unit of the Afghan force. There are 109 Kandaks at this time. The Kandaks are stiffened by the presence of U.S. and partner embeds, called “Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams” (OMLTs). Each OMLT 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. Coalition officers also are conducting heavy weapons training for a heavy brigade as part of the “Kabul Corps,” based in Pol-e-Charki, east of Kabul. Among the partner countries contributing 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, and additional OMLT contributions and other training initiatives, such as NTM-A and the European Gendarmerie, were discussed above in the section on the new U.S. strategy.

Ethnic and Factional Considerations

At the time the United States first began establishing the ANA, Northern Alliance figures reportedly weighted recruitment for the national army toward its Tajik ethnic base. Many Pashtuns, in reaction, refused recruitment or left the ANA program. U.S. officials in Afghanistan say this problem has been at least partly alleviated with better pay and more close involvement by U.S. forces, and that the force is ethnically integrated in each unit. The naming of a Pashtun, Abdul Rahim Wardak, as Defense Minister in December 2004 also reduced desertions among Pashtuns (he remains in that position). The chief of staff is Gen. Bismillah Khan, a Tajik who was a Northern Alliance commander. U.S. officers in Afghanistan add that 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.

Afghan Air Force

Equipment, maintenance, and logistical difficulties continue to plague the Afghan Air Force, now called the ANA Air Corps. 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 400 pilots, as well as 22 helicopters and cargo aircraft. Its 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, bought and refurbished with the help of U.S. funds. Afghan pilots are based at Bagram air base. 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.

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. There is a widespread consensus that the ANP lags the ANA in its development by about 18 months, and is riddled with corruption. Its desertion rate is higher than that of the ANA, according to the U.S. military. However, some U.S. commanders say that it is increasingly successful in repelling Taliban assaults on villages and that it is experiencing fewer casualties from attacks. It is currently close to its goal size of about 86,000, although, as noted McChrystal recommends it reach a size of about 160,000 over the next two years.

The major criticism of the ANP is widespread corruption, to the point where many Afghans are more afraid of the police than they are of the Taliban. To try to advance reform, the U.S. military is conducting reforms to take ANP out of the bureaucracy and onto the streets and it is trying to bring ANP pay on par with the ANA. It has been conducting a retraining program called “*focused district development*” to concentrate resources on developing individual police forces in districts, which is the basic geographic area of ANP activity. (There are about ten “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, and then reinserted after the training is complete. As of August 2009, more than 4,000 ANP officers have undergone this process, which is expected to take five years to complete for the remainder of the country. A similar process is being applied to Afghanistan’s border forces.

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. 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 on security indicators), 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. New training institutions, such as NTM-A and the European Gendarmerie, are being established, as discussed above.

Criminal Justice Sector

Many experts believe that comprehensive justice sector reform 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 paper. 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. However, some governments criticized Karzai for setting back police reform in June 2006 when he approved a new list of senior police commanders that included 11 (out of 86 total) who had failed merit exams. His approval of the 11 were reportedly to satisfy faction leaders and went against the recommendations of a police reform committee. The ANP work in the communities they come from, often embroiling them in local factional or ethnic disputes.

The State Department (INL) has placed 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.

U.S. justice sector programs generally focus on building capacity of the judicial system, including police training and court construction; many of these programs are conducted in partnership with Italy, which is technically the “lead” coalition country on judicial reform. 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.

The United States and its partners have, to date, generally refrained from interfering 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. The traditional mechanisms are still more widely used in Afghan villages, particularly in Pashtun areas, than are the secular judicial mechanisms, in part because of the ease of access of these mechanisms.

U.S. Security Forces Funding/“CERP”

About 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 paper. In addition to the train and equip funds provided by DOD, the U.S. military in Afghanistan has additional funds to spend on reconstruction projects that build goodwill and presumably reduce the threat to use forces. These are Commanders Emergency Response Program funds, or CERP. Figures for CERP funds are in the aid tables at the end of this paper. U.S. funds are supplemented by funds from U.S. partners, although exact numbers are not available. As noted in the table, as of FY2005, the security forces funding has been DOD funds, not State Department funds.

Table 5. Major Security-Related Indicators

Force	Current Level
Total Foreign Forces in Afghanistan	100,000+, of which about 88,000 are NATO/ISAF. (12,000 ISAF in 2005; and 6,000 in 2003.) U.S. forces: 57,000 in July 2009, rising to 68,000 by November 2009. Of these, about 11,000 U.S. (plus 2,000 partner forces) are in OEF-Afghanistan (DOD figures) . (U.S. total was: 25,000 in 2005; 16,000 in 2003; 5,000 in 2002). US. forces deployed at 88 bases in Afghanistan, and include 1 air wing (40 aircraft) and 1 combat aviation brigade (100 aircraft).
U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan	836 killed, of which 643 by hostile action. Additional 72 U.S. deaths in other OEF theaters, including the Philippines and parts of Africa. 155 U.S. killed in 2008-highest yet. 30 killed Jan and Feb. 2009. 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.
NATO Sectors (Regional Commands-South, east, north, west, and central/Kabul)	RC-S- 34,800. Canada, UK, Netherlands rotate lead; 9,000 in Helmand); RC-E-16,250 (U.S. lead); RC-N- 5,600; RC-W- 4,400 (Italy lead) RC-Kabul-6,400 (France, Afghan lead).
Afghan National Army (ANA)	94,000 assigned, including civilian support. There are 109 battalions. Goal is 134,000 by the end of 2011. About 2,000 trained per month. 4,000 are commando forces, trained by U.S. Special Forces. ANA private paid about \$150 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)	84,000 assigned, close to authorized strength: 86,000. 11,000 are border police/18,000 authorized; 3,800+ counter-narcotics police; 5,300 civil order police. 700 are female. Salaries raised to \$150 per month in 2008 from \$70 to counter corruption.
U.S. and Partner Trainers	About 11,000 total: 6,200 U.S. military trainers as Embedded Training Troops and Police Mentoring Teams. 3,000 civilian trainers. 800 coalition trainers, including EUPOL for ANP (European Union contingent of 190 trainers, organized as OMLTs), and 41 German trainers of senior ANP. Partners have recently sent several hundred more, including establishing NATO Training Mission- Afghanistan.
Legally Armed Fighters disarmed by DDR	63,380; all of the pool identified for the program
Number of Taliban fighters	10,000-15,000 (U.S. military and Afghan estimates). Plus about 1,000 Haqqani faction and 1,000 HIG. 7,000 killed 2007-8.
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. 2,000 roadside bombs in 2008, highest yet.
Number of Suicide Bombings	35 to date in 2009; 200+ in 2008; 160 in 2007; 123 in 2006; 21 in 2005
Afghan Casualties	2,100 Afghan civilians killed in 2008; 1,523 killed in 2007. 6,340 Afghans killed in 2008 incl. Taliban; 6,500 killed in 2007.

Source: CRS.

Regional Context

Most of Afghanistan's neighbors believed that the fall of the Taliban would stabilize the region, but like-minded militants now threaten the government of Pakistan. Six of Afghanistan's neighbors signed a non-interference pledge (Kabul Declaration) on December 23, 2002. 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. (Karzai attended the SCO summit in Tajikistan on August 30, 2008.)

Pakistan/Pakistan-Afghanistan Border⁴¹

The Obama Administration strategy review in March 2009 emphasized the linkage between militants present in Pakistan and the difficulty stabilizing Afghanistan, and the review outlined several new initiatives to strengthen and enhance Pakistan's ability to defeat militants on its territory. The review indicated that additional U.S. aid should be provided to Pakistan.

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.⁴² 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. The President is her widower, Asif Ali Zardari. Some Afghan leaders still 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) and many suspect Pakistan wants to have the option to restore a Taliban-like regime, or at least a pro-Pakistan regime, if the international community abandons Afghanistan.

Pakistan's policy in 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 Lashkar-e-Tayyba (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. Afghan officials have said they have evidence that, to counter that influence, ISI agents were involved in the July 7, 2008, suicide bombing of India's embassy in Kabul. In connection with that act, U.S. officials, in July 2008, confronted Pakistani officials with evidence that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency (ISI) is actively helping Afghanistan militants, particularly the Haqqani faction.⁴³

⁴¹ 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.

⁴² 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).

⁴³ Mazzetti, Mark and Eric Schmitt. "CIA Outlines Pakistan Links With Militants." *New York Times*, July 30, 2008.

Pakistan's unwillingness to confront militants on its soil led the Bush Administration, in 2007, to criticize Pakistan even during Musharraf's rule. That shift accelerated following a *New York Times* report (February 19, 2007) that Al Qaeda had reestablished some small Al Qaeda 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—such as a 2008 “understanding” with members of the Mehsud tribe, among which is Tehrik-e-Taliban (Pakistan Taliban) leader Baitullah Mehsud (reportedly killed in a U.S. strike in August 2009)—stimulated major U.S. concerns about the willingness of the Pakistani government to confront militants. A February 2009 Pakistani truce with militants in Swat Valley contributed to militant advances to areas as close as 60 miles from Islamabad. Since then, Pakistan has stepped up military operations and set back the militants.

U.S. officials have consistently hoped that improving Pakistani cooperation could assist the U.S. mission in Afghanistan. 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. In April 2008, in an extension of the Tripartite Commission's work, the three 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. Only one has been established to date—near the Torkham Gate at the Khyber Pass.

To some extent assisting the U.S. mission in Afghanistan has been a dramatic improvement in Afghanistan-Pakistan relations since the Musharraf era. 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, held in a climate of improved Afghanistan-Pakistan relations, 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 and abandon violence. Zardari and Karzai held bilateral meetings in Turkey on December 6, 2008, and, in the clearest sign of closer ties, Zardari visited Kabul and met with Karzai on January 9, 2009, where the two signed a joint declaration against terrorism that affects both countries. Additional progress was made during the visit of Afghan and Pakistani ministers to Washington, D.C. during February 23- 27, 2009, to participate in the Obama Administration strategic review. As noted above, Karzai and Zardari visit Washington, D.C. in May 2009 to continue the strategic dialogue.

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). It 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.

Increased Direct U.S. Action⁴⁴

The Obama Administration has continued to combat militants in Pakistan without directly violating Pakistan's restrictions on the U.S. ability to operate "on the ground" in Pakistan. Pakistani political leaders across the spectrum publicly oppose any presence of U.S. combat forces in Pakistan, although the *New York Times* reported on February 23, 2009, that there are about 70 U.S. military advisers in Pakistan to help train Pakistani forces to battle Al Qaeda and Taliban militants. U.S. cross-border raids still appear to be "off limits"—on September 3, 2008, a U.S. helicopter borne force reportedly crossed the border to raid a suspected militant encampment, drawing criticism and possibly some weapons fire from Pakistani forces. U.S. forces in Afghanistan acknowledge that they shell purported Taliban positions on the Pakistani side of the border, and do some "hot pursuit" a few kilometers over the border into Pakistan.

The Obama Administration has continued to use Predator and Reaper unmanned aircraft to strike militant targets in Pakistan, often incurring Pakistani official protestations. Such a strike reportedly was responsible for the apparent death of Beitullah Mehsud in August 2009. Some militant websites say the strikes are taking a major toll on their operations and networks. A major issue for the Obama Administration is whether Pakistan will tacitly permit such UAV attacks on the core of the Afghan Taliban leadership that is believed based in Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan province of Pakistan. To date, Pakistan has not cooperated with the United States to pressure Taliban leaders in this area.⁴⁵

Iran

As it attempts to stabilize Afghanistan, nearly eight years after the United States helped Afghan militias overthrow the Taliban, the Obama Administration sees Iran as potentially helpful to its new strategy for Afghanistan, announced March 27, 2009. The U.S. special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, has advocated a "regional" component of the strategy, which focuses primarily on Pakistan but also envisions cooperation with Iran to help keep Afghanistan calm. Karzai was criticized in Afghanistan for quickly recognizing the disputed June 12, 2009, election victory of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Still, Iran and U.S. interests in Afghanistan, while in many ways coincident, are not identical. 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 minority. Iran's 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.⁴⁶ This makes Iran among the top financial donors to Afghanistan and is in many ways supportive of the U.S. policy of attempting to pacify Afghanistan in part through economic development.

In public statements, in part because of the economic development work done by Iranian firms, President Hamid Karzai has, at times, called Iran a "friend" of Afghanistan. Karzai received

⁴⁴ CRS Report RL34763, *Islamist Militancy in the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Region and U.S. Policy*, by K. Alan Kronstadt and Kenneth Katzman

⁴⁵ Sanger, David and Eric Schmitt. "U.S. Weighs Taliban Strike into Pakistan." *New York Times*, March 18, 2009.

⁴⁶ Iranian economic and political influence efforts in Herat were discussed in a CRS visit to Herat in October 2009

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Kabul in August 2007, and he visited Tehran at the end of May 2009 as part of a new 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.⁴⁷

In discussing conflict between Iran and the United States in Afghanistan, Karzai was referring to the reports that Iran has sporadically offered support for Taliban and other militants in Afghanistan. The State Department report on international terrorism for 2008, released April 30, 2009, said Iran continues to provide some training to and ships arms to “selected Taliban members” in Afghanistan. Weapons provided, according to the State Department report, include mortars, 107mm rockets, rocket-propelled grenades, and plastic explosives. Several shipments of such weapons were captured by the U.S. military in Afghanistan in 2007. Secretary of Defense Gates testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee in late January 2009 that the Defense Department had seen a slight increase in Iranian shipments of arms into Afghanistan in the few preceding months. Iran has opposed the U.S. use of the Shindand air base,⁴⁸ which Iran fears the United States might use to attack or conduct surveillance against Iran. U.S. officials, including the former top U.S. commander in Afghanistan Gen. Dan McNeill, have said the Iranian shipments are sufficiently large that the Iranian government would have to have approved them.

Iranian aid to Taliban fighters puzzle some experts since these shipments would appear to conflict with Iran’s support for the government of Karzai—which Iran actively helped put together, in cooperation with the United States—at the December 2001 “Bonn Conference.” In addition, Iran has traditionally supported Persian-speaking non-Pashtun factions in Afghanistan, who would presumably be suppressed and marginalized by any new Taliban-led regime in Afghanistan. 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.⁴⁹ 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. In attempting to explain the continuing shipments, some experts believe Iran’s policy might be shifting somewhat to gain leverage against the United States by causing U.S. combat deaths, or by demonstrating that Iran is in position to cause U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan.

Others see Iran as a marginal player in Afghanistan, because it is identified primarily with non-Pashtuns and its links to Taliban fighters are tenuous and sporadic. Those who take this view question whether U.S. engagement with Iran would contribute much to solving the core problems

⁴⁷ Comments by President Karzai at the Brookings Institution. May 5, 2009.

⁴⁸ Rashid, Ahmed. “Afghan Neighbors Show Signs of Aiding in Nation’s Stability.” *Wall Street Journal*, October 18, 2004.

⁴⁹ Steele, Jonathon, “America Includes Iran in Talks on Ending War in Afghanistan.” *Washington Times*, December 15, 1997.

plaguing the U.S. mission there. Still others believe that talks with Iran on Afghanistan could lead to broader U.S.-Iran talks, or potentially even open up the possibility of using Iran as a supply line for non-U.S. NATO forces in Afghanistan. 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 handing 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.

After the fall of the Taliban in late 2001, President Bush warned Iran against meddling in Afghanistan. Partly in response to the U.S. criticism, in February 2002 Iran expelled Karzai-opponent Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, but it did not arrest him. At other times, Afghanistan and Iran the two countries 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. Tajikistan allows India to use one of its air bases; Tajikistan supports the mostly Tajik Northern Alliance. 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.

India is the fifth largest single country donor to Afghan reconstruction, funding projects worth about \$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. 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.

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. It supports U.S. efforts to combat militants in the region who have sometimes posed a threat to Russia itself. In an effort to try to cooperate more with NATO at least in Afghanistan, in conjunction with the April 2008 NATO summit, Russia agreed to allow NATO to ship non-lethal supplies to coalition forces in Afghanistan by land over Russian territory. That pledge was put into doubt following the August 2008 crisis over Georgia, an outcome of which has been suspension of Russian military cooperation with NATO; Russia says this land route cooperation constitutes military coordination covered under that suspension announcement. In February 2009, Russia said it would again allow the United States to ship non-lethal equipment into Afghanistan through Russia, and, as noted, some of these shipments began in February 2009. 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 provides some humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, although it keeps a low profile in Afghanistan because it still feels humiliated by its withdrawal from Afghanistan 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.⁵⁰ 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. Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan are pivotal actors in U.S. efforts to secure alternate supply routes into Afghanistan. These states are increasingly important in light of Kyrgyzstan's decision in February 2009 to end U.S. use of Manas airbase, although that decision might be reversed.

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

⁵⁰ Risen, James. "Russians Are Back in Afghanistan, Aiding Rebels." *New York Times*, July 27, 1998.

simultaneous February 1999 bombings in Tashkent that nearly killed President Islam Karimov, is linked to Al Qaeda.⁵¹ 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. Stepped up U.S. discussions with Uzbekistan, in light of Kyrgyzstan's initial denial (reversed in July 2009) of the U.S. use of Manas air base, have apparently borne some fruit with the Uzbek decision in February 2009 to allow the use of Navoi airfield for shipment of U.S./NATO goods into Afghanistan. At the April 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest, Uzbekistan proposed to revive the "6 + 2" process of neighbors of Afghanistan to help its stability, but Karzai reportedly opposes this idea as unwanted Central Asian interference.

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. 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.

China⁵²

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

⁵¹ The IMU was named a foreign terrorist organization by the State Department in September 2000.

⁵² For more information, see CRS Report RL33001, *U.S.-China Counterterrorism Cooperation: Issues for U.S. Policy*, by Shirley A. Kan.

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.

Still, Chinese delegations continue to assess the potential for new investments in such sectors as mining and energy,⁵³ and a deal was signed in November 2007 for China Metallurgical Group to develop the Aynak copper mine south of Kabul, and build related infrastructure. However, U.S. Embassy officials told CRS in October 2009 that actual work at the mine has been stalled for some time.

Some diplomats in Washington D.C. 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. Such a development would be viewed as a major boost to the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan.

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, Amb. Holbrooke is focusing increasing U.S. intention—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 is playing a growing role in hosting negotiations between the Karzai government and “moderate” Taliban figures for a negotiated settlement. Saudi Arabia has leverage because, during the Soviet occupation, Saudi Arabia channeled hundreds of millions of dollars to the Afghan resistance, primarily Hikmatyar and Sayyaf. Saudi Arabia, a majority of whose citizens practice the strict Wahhabi brand of Islam similar to that of the Taliban, 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. 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.

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

⁵³ CRS Conversations with Chinese officials in Beijing. August 2007.

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 underpin the 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.

Since FY2002 and including regular and supplemental funds for FY2009 (including P.L. 111-32, FY2009 supplemental), the United States has provided about \$40 billion in reconstruction assistance, including military “train and equip” for the ANA and ANP (which is about \$18 billion of these funds). The Obama Administration request for FY2010 is in a separate table below. However, in line with the new Obama emphasis on Afghanistan and civilian development, press reports in August 2009 say Ambassador Eikenberry is working with the Administration to request about \$2.5 billion in civilian development funding beyond that already requested. The figures in the tables do not include costs for U.S. combat operations, which are running about \$2.5 to 3 billion per month. The FY2008 Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 110-181, Section 1229) requires a quarterly DOD report on the security situation in Afghanistan; the first was submitted in June 2008. For further information, see CRS Report RL33110, *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11*, by Amy Belasco.)⁵⁴

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

⁵⁴ In some cases, aid figures are subject to variation depending on how that aid is measured. The figures cited might not exactly match figures in appropriated legislation; in some, funds were added to specified accounts from monies in the September 11-related Emergency Response Fund.

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 three reports on Afghan reconstruction, most recently on April 30, 2009,⁵⁵ which include discussions of SIGAR staffing levels and activities, and lays out plans to audit specific projects.

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. For the most part, the humanitarian, counter-narcotics, and governance assistance targets authorized by the act were met or exceeded by appropriations. However, no Enterprise Funds have been appropriated, and ISAF expansion (\$1 billion in U.S. funds were authorized in the act) was funded by the contributing partner forces. 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 mandates the appointment of a U.S. coordinator of policy on Afghanistan and requires additional Administration reports to Congress, including (1) on long-term U.S. strategy and progress of reconstruction, an amendment to the report required in the original law; (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. An overarching annual report on U.S. strategy in Afghanistan is required until 2010, the other reporting requirements expired.

⁵⁵ For text of the reports, see <http://www.sigar.mil>.

Afghan Freedom Support Act Reauthorization

In the 110th Congress, H.R. 2446, passed by the House on June 6, 2007 (406-10), would reauthorize 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.
- enhanced anti-corruption and legal reform programs.
- U.S. aid would be cut off to any Afghan province in which the Administration reports that the leadership of the province is complicit in narcotics trafficking. This provision has 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.
- reauthorizes “Radio Free Afghanistan.”
- establishes 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 provided over another \$25 billion since the fall of the Taliban, as of 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 Afghanistan Compact leaned toward the view of Afghan leaders that a higher proportion of the aid be channeled through the Afghan government rather than directly by the donor community. Only about 10% of the donated funds disbursed are channeled through the Afghan government, although a few ministries, such as the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Communications, are viewed as sufficiently transparent to handle donor funds. In the Afghanistan Compact, the Afghan government promised greater financial transparency and international (United Nations) oversight

to ensure that international contributions are used wisely. Ambassador Holbrooke has said that part of the Obama Administration strategy is to channel a larger percentage of funds through the Afghan government.

At the June 12, 2008, conference in Paris, Afghanistan formally presented its Afghan National Development Strategy, asking for \$50.1 billion during 2009-2014 from international donors. Of that, \$14 billion was requested to improve infrastructure, including airports and to construct a railway. Another \$14 billion would be to build the ANSF, and about \$4.5 billion would be for agriculture and rural development. However, citing in part a relative lack of transparency in Afghan governance, donors pledged about \$21 billion, but that included \$10.2 billion already committed by the United States. Of the other major pledges, the Asian Development bank pledged \$1.3 billion, the World Bank pledged \$1.1 billion, Britain pledged \$1.2 billion; France pledged \$165 million over two years; Japan pledged \$550 million; Germany offered \$600 million over two years, and the European Union pledged \$770 million.

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.

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 17**, and U.S. and international assistance to Afghanistan are discussed in the last sections of this paper.

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, 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. A key priority is building a Khost-Gardez road, under way currently.
- **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 improving Afghans' 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.
- **Agriculture.** 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. Afghan and U.S. officials say agricultural assistance and development is a top U.S. priority as part of a strategy of encouraging legitimate alternatives to poppy cultivation and for export-led growth. One emerging "success story" is growing Afghan exports of high quality pomegranate juice called Anar. On the other hand, U.S. officials in Kabul say that Pakistan's restrictions on trade between Afghanistan and India has prevented a rapid expansion of Afghan pomegranate exports to that market. Dubai is another customer for Afghan pomegranate exports. Other crops now substituting for poppy include wheat and saffron. To help Afghanistan develop this 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.
- **Electricity.** 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. Many shops in Kabul are now lit up at night, as observed by CRS in October 2009.
- A major power project is the Kajaki Dam, located in unstable Helmand Province. USAID has allocated about \$500 million to restore the three electricity-generating turbines (two are operating) of the dam which, when functional, will provide electricity for 1.7 million Afghans and about 4,000 jobs in the reconstruction. In an operation involving 4,000 NATO troops (Operation Ogap Tsuka), components of the third and final turbine was successfully delivered to the dam in September 2008. It was expected to be operational in mid-late 2009 but technical problems may cause a delay of at least one year.

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, and it is widely hailed as a success. 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. Elections to the nearly 30,000 local councils—

discussed above in the discussion on the IDLG—have been held in several provinces, and almost 40% of those elected have been women.⁵⁶ The U.S. aid to the program is part of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) account.

The FY2009 supplemental request asks 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 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 authorize 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. Another version of the Pakistan aid bill, S. 1707, did not authorize ROZ's; it was passed and became law (P.L. 111-73).

Major Private Sector Initiatives

Some international investors are implementing projects, and there is substantial new construction, such as the Serena luxury hotel that opened in November 2005 (long considered a priority Taliban target, the hotel was attacked by militants on January 14, 2008, killing six) and a \$25 million new Coca Cola bottling factory that opened in Kabul on September 11, 2006. It is located near another private initiative, the Bagrami office park, which has several other factories in it. The Serena was built by the Agha Khan foundation which is a major investor in Afghanistan; the Agha Khan is a

⁵⁶ Khalilzad, Zalmay (Then U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan). "Democracy Bubbles Up." *Wall Street Journal*, March 25, 2004.

leader of the Isma'ili community which is prevalent in northern Afghanistan. It also has funded the successful Roshan cellphone company. The Nadery clan is a prominent Isma'ili clan.

Several other Afghan companies are growing as well, including Afghan Wireless (cell phone service), 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. There are several new major buildings, including numerous marriage halls, in Kabul city, as observed by CRS in October 2009.

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). In November 2007, the Afghan government signed a deal with China Metallurgical Group for the company to invest \$2.8 billion to develop Afghanistan's Aynak copper field in Lowgar Province; the agreement includes construction of a coal-fired electric power plant and a freight railway. However, work on the mine reportedly is stalled. Some say that private investment could be healthier if not for the influence over it exercised by various faction leaders and Karzai relatives.

Afghanistan's prospects also 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.

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 will further assist 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.

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.⁵⁷ 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 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.

⁵⁷ 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.

Some of the more stable provinces, such as Bamiyan, are complaining that 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 paper are tables showing U.S. appropriations of assistance to Afghanistan, and **Table 17** lists USAID spending on all of these sectors for FY2002-FY2007.

Table 6. Major International (Non-U.S.) Pledges to Afghanistan Since January 2002
(as of October 2009. \$ 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
Total Non-U.S. Pledges (including donors not listed)	30,800 (includes pledges at April 2009 NATO summit)

Source: Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. October 2008 report, p. 140; various press announcements.

Note: This table lists donors pledging over \$500 million total.

Table 7. 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 8. 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 9. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2003

(\$ in millions, same acronyms as Table 8)

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 10. 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
PRT's	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/IDP's	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 II. 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)	1633.24
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 Dept. funds (Foreign Military Financing, FMF) to DOD funds.

Table 12. 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
PRT's	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 13. 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.

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

Table 14. 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 15. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2009
(\$ in millions)

	Regular Appropriation (P.L. 111-8)	Bridge Supplemental (P.L. 110-252)	FY2009 Supp. (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 16. FY2010 Request
(\$ in millions)

Afghan Security Forces Funding	7,463
CERP (DOD funds)	1,198
Counternarcotics (DOD)	361
Counternarcotics – Alternative Livelihoods (INCLE)	275
Counternarcotics – Eradication, interdiction (INCLE)	200
IMET	1.5
Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (Incl. National Solidarity Program)	200
Governance building	191
Civil Society promotion	10
Election Support	90
Strategic Program Development	100
Rule of Law Programs (USAID)	50
Rule of Law (INCLE)	160
Roads (ESF)	230
Power	230
Agriculture	230
PRT programs/Local governance	251
Education	95
Health	102
Econ Growth/"Cash for Work"	274
Water, Environment, Victim Comp.	15
Karzai Protection (NADR)	58
Food Aid (P.L. 480, Food for Peace)	16
Refugees and Migration	11
State Ops/Embassy Construction	1,152
USAID Ops	130
Cultural Exchanges	6
State, USAID IG, SIGAR	27
Totals	13,124

H.R. 3081, FY2010 foreign aid appropriation, and H.R. 2236, FY2010 Defense Appropriation, provides approximately these amounts. Senate version of H.R. 2236 provides \$900 million less than request for ANSF, reducing amount for sustainment of the forces.

Source: CRS

Table 17. USAID Obligations FY2002-FY2008
(\$ millions)

Sector	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007 (reg + supp)	FY2008 (reg + supp)	FY2002- FY2008
Agriculture	27	56	50	77	27	67	31	335
Alternative Livelihoods	3	1	5	185	121	229	121	665
Roads	51	142	354	276	250	365	398	1836
Power	3		77	286	66	195	203	830
Water	2	1	27	21	1	2	1	54
Econ. Growth	21	12	84	91	46	69	61	383
Education	19	21	104	86	51	63	53	397
Health	8	56	83	111	52	113	66	489
Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund	38	40	67	87	45	46	45	368
Support to Afghan Gov't	3		36	31	15	15	17	117
Democracy	22	34	132	88	17	134	17	444
Rule of Law	4	8	21	15	6	10	4	68
PRT Programs		11	56	85	20	126	30	328
Program Suppt	5	6	17	16	4	35	15	98
Internally Displaced Persons	108	23	10			-		141
Food Aid	159	51	49	57	60	-	10	386
Civilian Assistance						10		10
Totals	471	462	1171	1510	779	1478	1108	6979

Source: CRS.

Table 18. NATO/ISAF Contributing Nations

(As of October 1, 2009; http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/isaf_placemat.pdf)

NATO Countries		Non-NATO Partner Nations	
Belgium	510	Albania	250
Bulgaria	460	Austria	4
Canada	2830	Australia	1200
Czech Republic	340	Azerbaijan	90
Denmark	700	Bosnia – Herzegovina	2
Estonia	150	Croatia	290
France	3070	Finland	130
Germany	4245	Georgia	1
Greece	125	Ireland	7
Hungary	310	Macedonia	185
Iceland	8	New Zealand	220
Italy	2795	Sweden	430
Latvia	165	Ukraine	10
Lithuania	250	Jordan	7
Luxemburg	8	Singapore	2
Netherlands	2160	United Arab Emirates	25
Norway	600	Total ISAF force, according to NATO figures October 1, 2009, (which does not include full extent of U.S. buildup under way: 64,500	
Poland	2025		
Portugal	105		
Romania	990		
Slovakia	240		
Slovenia	80		
Spain	1000		
Turkey	820		
United Kingdom	9000		
United States (see note)	31,855		

Note: With full extent of U.S. buildup, U.S. figure in this table likely close to 52,000, and likely total ISAF figure is closer to 88,000.

Table 19. Provincial Reconstruction Teams

Location (City)		Province/Command
U.S.-Lead (all under ISAF banner)		
Gardez		Paktia Province (RC-East, E)
Ghazni		Ghazni (RC-E). with Poland.
Bagram A.B.		Parwan (RC-C, Central)
Jalalabad		Nangarhar (RC-E)
Khost		Khost (RC-E)
Qalat		Zabol (RC-South, S). with Romania.
Asadabad		Kunar (RC-E)
Sharana		Paktika (RC-E). with Poland.
Mehtarlam		Laghman (RC-E)
Jabal o-Saraj		Panjshir Province (RC-E), State Department lead
Qala Gush		Nuristan (RC-E)
Farah		Farah (RC-W)
Partner Lead (all under ISAF banner)		
PRT Location	Province	Lead Force/Other forces
Qandahar	Qandahar (RC-S)	Canada
Lashkar Gah	Helmand (RC-S)	Britain. with Denmark and Estonia
Tarin Kowt	Uruzgan (RC-S)	Netherlands. With Australia and 40 Singaporean military medics and others
Herat	Herat (RC-W)	Italy
Qalah-ye Now	Badghis (RC-W)	Spain
Mazar-e-Sharif	Balkh (RC-N)	Sweden
Konduz	Konduz (RC-N)	Germany
Faizabad	Badakhshan (RC-N)	Germany. with Denmark, Czech Rep.
Meymaneh	Faryab (RC-N)	Norway. with Sweden.
Chaghcharan	Ghowr (RC-W)	Lithuania. with Denmark, U.S., Iceland
Pol-e-Khomri	Baghlan (RC-N)	Hungary
Bamiyan	Bamiyan (RC-E)	New Zealand (not NATO/ISAF). 10 Singaporean engineers
Maidan Shahr	Wardak (RC-C)	Turkey
Pul-i-Alam	Lowgar (RC-E)	Czech Republic

Note: RC = Regional Command.

Table 20. 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, and in Pakistan
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	Mazar-e-Sharif, Shebergan, and environs
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 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)	<i>Mujahedin</i> 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 may be 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 around Jalalabad, 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 100.⁵⁸ 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.⁵⁹ In late January 2005, Afghan intelligence began a push to buy remaining Stingers back, at a reported cost of \$150,000 each.⁶⁰

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 1999.⁶¹ 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 -7 million mines remain scattered throughout the country, although some estimates are lower. U.N. teams have destroyed one million mines and

⁵⁸ Saleem, Farrukh. "Where Are the Missing Stinger Missiles? Pakistan," *Friday Times*. August 17-23, 2001.

⁵⁹ Fullerton, John. "Afghan Authorities Hand in Stinger Missiles to U.S." Reuters, February 4, 2002.

⁶⁰ "Afghanistan Report," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. February 4, 2005.

⁶¹ "U.S.-Made Stinger Missiles—Mobile and Lethal." Reuters, May 28, 1999.

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 8**), 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.

Author Contact Information

Kenneth Katzman
Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs
kkatzman@crs.loc.gov, 7-7612