



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

Kenneth Katzman
Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs

January 4, 2013

Congressional Research Service

7-5700

www.crs.gov

RL30588

Summary

The United States and its partner countries are gradually reducing military involvement in Afghanistan as the Afghan government and security forces assume ever greater responsibility in preparation for the end of international mission in Afghanistan by the end of 2014. Afghan forces are to assume much of the security lead nationwide by mid-2013. The number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, which peaked at about 100,000 in June 2011, has been reduced to a “pre-surge” level of 66,000 as of September 20, 2012, and will likely continue to draw down as the transition proceeds. No U.S. decision has been announced on the rate of that drawdown, or on the size of the U.S. force that will remain in Afghanistan after 2014. U.S. military recommendations for the post-2014 force reportedly range from 6,000 to 20,000, mostly advisors and trainers but including some forces that will continue to combat Taliban forces. The drawdown and post-2014 size decisions will likely hinge on assessments of the performance of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), insurgent strength, and the progress of reconciliation talks with Taliban figures, resiliency. The post-2014 U.S. presence is dependent on finalization of a bilateral security agreement, currently under negotiation with the Afghan government, pursuant to a May 1, 2012, U.S.-Afghan Strategic Partnership Agreement. In keeping with that agreement, on July 7, 2012 (one day in advance of a major donors’ conference on Afghanistan in Tokyo), the United States named Afghanistan a “Major Non-NATO Ally,” further assuring Afghanistan of long-term U.S. support.

The Administration view is that, no matter the U.S. and allied drawdown schedule, Afghan stability after the 2014 transition is at risk from weak and corrupt Afghan governance and insurgent safe haven in Pakistan. Among other efforts to promote effective and transparent Afghan governance, U.S. officials are pushing for substantial election reform to ensure that the next presidential election, scheduled for April 2014, will not experience the fraud of the elections in 2009 and 2010. A potential contributor to stability would be a negotiated settlement to the conflict. Negotiations have proceeded sporadically since early 2010, but, by the end of 2012, began to evolve into a discussion of specific proposals to settle the conflict. Afghanistan’s minorities and women’s groups worry about a potential settlement, fearing it might produce compromises with the Taliban that erode human rights and ethnic power-sharing.

To promote long-term growth and prevent a severe economic downturn as international donors scale back their involvement in Afghanistan, U.S. officials also hope to draw on Afghanistan’s vast mineral and agricultural resources. Several major privately funded mining, agricultural, and even energy development programs have begun or are beginning. U.S. officials also seek greater Afghanistan integration into regional trade and investment patterns. Persuading Afghanistan’s neighbors to support Afghanistan’s stability instead of their own particular interests has been a focus of U.S. policy since 2009, but with mixed success.

Even if these economic efforts succeed, Afghanistan will likely remain dependent on foreign aid indefinitely. Through the end of FY2012, the United States has provided nearly \$83 billion in assistance to Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban, of which about \$51 billion has been to equip and train Afghan forces. During FY2001-FY2012, the Afghan intervention has cost about \$557 billion, including all costs. About \$9.7 billion in economic aid and \$82 billion in additional U.S. military costs are requested for FY2013. As announced in the context of the July 8, 2012, Tokyo donors’ conference, Administration economic aid requests for Afghanistan are likely to continue at current levels through at least FY2017. See CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

Contents

Background.....	1
From Early History to the 19 th Century	1
Early 20 th Century and Cold War Era	1
Soviet Invasion and Occupation Period.....	2
The Seven Major “ <i>Mujahedin</i> ” Parties and Their Activities.....	3
Geneva Accords (1988) and Soviet Withdrawal.....	3
The <i>Mujahedin</i> Government and Rise of the Taliban.....	4
Taliban Rule (September 1996-November 2001).....	5
U.S. Policy Toward the Taliban During Its Rule/Bin Laden Presence.....	5
The “Northern Alliance” Congeals.....	6
Policy Pre-September 11, 2001	7
September 11 Attacks and Operation Enduring Freedom	8
Post-Taliban Governance-Building Efforts	9
U.S. and International Civilian Policy Structure	11
Security Policy, 2011-2014 “Transition, and Beyond”	13
Who Is “The Enemy”? Taliban, Haqqani, Al Qaeda, and Others.....	13
Groups: The Taliban/“Quetta Shura Taliban”(QST)	13
Al Qaeda/Bin Laden.....	14
Hikmatyar Faction.....	15
Haqqani Faction	15
Pakistani Groups	17
Insurgent Tactics.....	17
Insurgent Financing: Narcotics Trafficking and Other Methods.....	18
The U.S.-Led Military Effort: 2001-2008	19
Perception of “Victory,” Followed by Setback and Deterioration.....	20
Obama Administration Surge	21
McChrystal Assessment and December 1, 2009, Surge Announcement.....	21
Progress of the Transition and Drawdown	23
Tranches of Territory in Transition:.....	23
Unwinding of the Surge Announced June 22, 2011	24
Surge Implementation and Results/Current Security Assessments	24
Beyond 2014: Size of Residual Force, Strategic Partnership Agreement, and Bilateral Security Agreement	27
Likely Size and Structure of Post-2014 Force.....	27
Strategic Partnership Agreement/Legal Status of Post-2014 Force.....	29
Transition Pillar: Building Afghan Forces and Establishing Rule of Law	32
Current and Post-2014 Size of the Force.....	33
Training Overview	35
The Afghan National Army (ANA).....	35
Afghan Air Force.....	36
Afghan National Police (ANP)	37
Rule of Law/Criminal Justice Sector.....	40
Policy Component: Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)	41
Cooperation With Allies/Managing the 2014 Exit.....	42
Major Contingent Developments During the U.S. “Surge”	43
Potential Upside Surprises: Reintegration and Reconciliation With Insurgents.....	44

Regional Dimension	48
Pakistan/Pakistan-Afghanistan Border	51
Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations	52
Iran	53
Iran’s Development Aid for Afghanistan.....	54
Iranian Assistance to Afghan Militants and to Pro-Iranian Groups and Regions	54
Bilateral Government-to-Government Relations	55
India	56
India’s Development Activities in Afghanistan.....	57
Russia, Central Asian States, and China.....	57
Russia/Northern Distribution Network	57
Central Asian States	59
China	60
Persian Gulf States.....	61
Saudi Arabia	61
UAE.....	62
Qatar.....	62
Keys to Afghanistan’s Post-War Future: U.S. and International Aid and	
Economic Development.....	62
U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan.....	63
Aid Oversight	63
Aid Authorization: Afghanistan Freedom Support Act	64
Direct Support to the Afghan Government.....	64
Sustaining Aid Beyond the Transition.....	66
Development in Key Sectors	67
Education.....	68
Health	68
Roads.....	68
Bridges	69
Railways	69
Electricity	69
Agriculture	71
Telecommunications.....	72
Airlines	72
Mining and Gems	72
Oil, Gas, and Related Pipelines.....	73
Trade Promotion/Reconstruction Opportunity Zones.....	74
Residual Issues from Past Conflicts.....	85
Stinger Retrieval	85
Mine Eradication	85

Figures

Figure A-1. Map of Afghanistan	88
Figure A-2. Map of Afghan Ethnicities	89

Tables

Table 1. Afghanistan Political Transition Process.....	10
Table 2. U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).....	12
Table 3. Summary of Current U.S. Strategy and Implementation	23
Table 4. Operation Enduring Freedom Partner Forces	32
Table 5. Background on NATO/ISAF Formation and U.N. Mandate.....	43
Table 6. Major Security-Related Indicators	48
Table 7. Afghan and Regional Facilities Used for Operations in and Supply Lines to Afghanistan	50
Table 8. Major Reporting Requirements.....	66
Table 9. Comparative Social and Economic Statistics.....	75
Table 10. Major Non-U.S. Pledges for Afghanistan 2002-2012	77
Table 11. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY1978-FY1998.....	78
Table 12. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY1999-FY2001	79
Table 13. Post-Taliban U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan	80
Table 14. Total Obligations for Major Programs: FY2001-FY2011	81
Table 15. NATO/ISAF Contributing Nations	82
Table 16. Provincial Reconstruction Teams.....	83
Table 17. Major Factions/Leaders in Afghanistan	84

Appendixes

Appendix. U.S. and International Sanctions Lifted	86
---	----

Contacts

Author Contact Information.....	89
---------------------------------	----

Background

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

From Early History to the 19th Century

Alexander the Great conquered what is now Afghanistan in three years (330 B.C.E. to 327 B.C.E), although at significant cost and with significant difficulty, and requiring, among other steps, marriage to a resident of the conquered territory. For example, he was unable to fully pacify Bactria, an ancient region spanning what is now northern Afghanistan and parts of the neighboring Central Asian states. (A collection of valuable Bactrian gold was hidden from the Taliban when it was in power and emerged from the Taliban period unscathed.) From the third to the eighth century, A.D., Buddhism was the dominant religion in Afghanistan. At the end of the seventh century, Islam spread in Afghanistan when Arab invaders from the Umayyad Dynasty defeated the Persian empire of the Sassanians. In the 10th century, Muslim rulers called Samanids, from Bukhara (in what is now Uzbekistan), extended their influence into Afghanistan, and the complete conversion of Afghanistan to Islam occurred during the rule of the Gaznavids in the 11th century. They ruled over the first vast Islamic empire based in what is now Ghazni province of Afghanistan.

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

A strong ruler, Dost Muhammad Khan, emerged in Kabul in 1826 and created concerns among Britain that the Afghans were threatening Britain’s control of India; that fear led to a British decision in 1838 to intervene in Afghanistan, setting off the first Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1842). Nearly all of the 4,500-person British force was killed in that war, which ended with a final British stand at Gandamak. 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. In part, the countryside was secured during the King’s time by local tribal militias called *arbokai*.

However, possibly believing that he could limit Soviet support for Communist factions in Afghanistan, Zahir Shah also built ties to the Soviet government by entering into a significant political and arms purchase relationship with the Soviet Union. The Soviets built large infrastructure projects in Afghanistan during Zahir Shah's time, such as the north-south Salang Pass/Tunnel and Bagram airfield.

This period was the height of the Cold War, and the United States sought to prevent Afghanistan from falling into the Soviet orbit. As Vice President, Richard Nixon visited Afghanistan in 1953, and President Eisenhower visited in 1959. President Kennedy hosted King Zahir Shah in 1963. The United States tried to use aid to counter Soviet influence, providing agricultural and other development assistance. Among the major U.S.-funded projects were large USAID-led irrigation and hydroelectric dam efforts in Helmand Province, including Kajaki Dam (see below).

Afghanistan's slide into instability began in the 1970s, during the Nixon Administration, 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, during the Carter Administration, by People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA, Communist party) military officers under the direction of two PDPA (Khalq, or "Masses" faction) leaders, Hafizullah Amin and Nur Mohammad Taraki, in what is called the *Saur* (April) Revolution. Taraki became president, but he was displaced in September 1979 by Amin. Both leaders drew their strength from rural ethnic Pashtuns and tried to impose radical socialist change on a traditional society, in part by redistributing land and bringing more women into government. The attempt at rapid modernization sparked rebellion by Islamic parties opposed to such moves.

Soviet Invasion and Occupation Period

The Soviet Union sent troops into Afghanistan on December 27, 1979, to prevent further gains 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, or "Banner" faction of the PDPA), who was part of the 1978 PDPA takeover but was exiled by Taraki and Amin.

Soviet occupation forces numbered about 120,000. They were assisted by Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) military forces of about 25,000-40,000, supplemented by about 20,000 paramilitary and tribal militia forces, including the PDPA-dominated organization called the *Sarandoy*. The combined Soviet and Afghan forces were never able to pacify the outlying areas of the country. DRA forces were consistently plagued by desertions and its effectiveness on behalf of the Soviets was limited. 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).

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

The Seven Major “*Mujahedin*” Parties and Their Activities

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 and their parties—sometimes referred to as the “Peshawar 7”—were Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi (Islamic Revolutionary Movement of Afghanistan); Sibghatullah Mojaddedi (Afghan National Liberation Front); Gulbuddin Hikmatyar (Hezb-i-Islam—Gulbuddin, Islamic Party of Gulbuddin); Burhanuddin Rabbani (Jamiat Islami, Islamic Society); Yunus Khalis (Hezb-i-Islam); Abd-i-Rab Rasul Sayyaf (Ittihad Islami, Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan); and Pir Gaylani (National Islamic Front). Mohammadi and Khalis died of natural causes in 2002 and 2006, respectively, and Rabbani was killed in a September 20, 2011, assassination. The others are still active in Afghan politics and governance or, in the case of Hikmatyar, fighting the Afghan government.

The *mujahedin* weaponry included U.S.-supplied portable shoulder-fired anti-aircraft systems called “Stingers,” which proved highly effective against Soviet aircraft. The United States decided in 1985 to provide these weapons to the mujahedin after substantial debate within the Reagan Administration and some in Congress over whether they could be used effectively and whether doing so would harm broader U.S.-Soviet relations. The *mujahedin* also hid and stored weaponry in a large network of natural and manmade tunnels and caves throughout Afghanistan. However, some warned that a post-Soviet power structure in Afghanistan could be adverse to U.S. interests because much of the covert aid was being channeled to the Islamist groups including those of Hikmatyar and Sayyaf.

Partly because of the effectiveness of the Stinger in shooting down Soviet helicopters and fixed wing aircraft, the Soviet Union’s losses mounted—about 13,400 Soviet soldiers were killed in the war, according to Soviet figures—turning Soviet domestic opinion against the war. In 1986, after the reformist Mikhail Gorbachev became leader, the Soviets replaced Karmal with the director of Afghan intelligence, Najibullah Ahmedzai (known by his first name). Najibullah was a Ghilzai Pashtun, and was from the Parcham faction of the PDPA. Some Afghans say that some aspects of his governing style were admirable, particularly his appointment of a prime minister (Sultan Ali Keshtmand and others) to handle administrative duties and distribute power.

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 as of January 1, 1992, which was implemented by all accounts.

The State Department has said that a total of about \$3 billion in economic and covert military assistance was provided by the U.S. to the Afghan *mujahedin* from 1980 until the end of the Soviet occupation in 1989. Press reports say the covert aid program grew from about \$20 million per year in FY1980 to about \$300 million per year during FY1986-FY1990.² The Soviet pullout

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

was viewed as a decisive U.S. “victory.” The Soviet pullout caused a reduction in subsequent covert funding and, as indicated in **Table 11**, U.S. assistance to Afghanistan remained at relatively low levels after the Soviet withdrawal. There was little support for a major U.S.-led effort to rebuild the economy and society of Afghanistan. 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.

Despite the Soviet troop withdrawal in 1989, Najibullah still enjoyed Soviet financial and advisory support and Afghan forces beat back the first post-Soviet withdrawal *mujahedin* offensives – defying expectations that his government would immediately collapse after a Soviet withdrawal. However, military defections continued and his position weakened subsequently, particularly after the Soviets cut off financial and advisory support as of January 1, 1992 under the agreement with the United States discussed above. On March 18, 1992, Najibullah publicly agreed to step down once an interim government was formed. That announcement set off rebellions by Uzbek and Tajik militia commanders in northern Afghanistan—particularly Abdul Rashid Dostam, who joined prominent *mujahedin* commander Ahmad Shah Masoud of the Islamic Society, a largely Tajik party headed by Burhannudin Rabbani. Masoud had earned a reputation as a brilliant strategist by preventing the Soviets from conquering his power base in the Panjshir Valley north of Kabul. Najibullah fell, and the *mujahedin* regime began April 18, 1992.³

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. That decision was strongly opposed by other *mujahedin* leaders, including Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, a Pashtun, and leader of the Islamist conservative Hizb-e-Islam Gulbuddin *mujahedin* party. Hikmatyar and several allied factions began fighting to dislodge Rabbani. Rabbani reached an agreement for Hikmatyar to serve as Prime Minister, if Hikmatyar would cease the shelling Kabul that had destroyed much of the western part of the city. However, because of Hikmatyar’s distrust of Rabbani, he never formally assumed a working prime ministerial role in Kabul.

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 interpretation of Islam is similar to the “Wahhabism” that is practiced in Saudi Arabia. Taliban practices were also consonant with conservative Pashtun tribal traditions. The Taliban’s leader, Mullah Muhammad Umar, had been a fighter in Khalis’s Hezb-i-Islam party during the anti-Soviet war—Khalis’ party

(...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.

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.

was generally considered moderate Islamist during the anti-Soviet war, but Khalis and his faction turned against the United States in the mid-1990s. Many of his fighters, such as Mullah Umar, followed Khalis' lead. Umar had lost an eye in the anti-Soviet war.

The Taliban viewed the Rabbani government as corrupt and anti-Pashtun, and the four years of civil war (1992-1996) created popular support for the Taliban as able to deliver stability. With the help of defections, the Taliban peacefully took control of the southern city of Qandahar in November 1994. Upon that capture, Mullah Umar ordered the opening of the Qandahar shrine containing the purported cloak used by the Prophet Mohammad; he reportedly donned the purported cloak briefly in front of hundreds of followers.⁵ By February 1995, it was approaching Kabul, after which an 18-month stalemate ensued. In September 1995, the Taliban captured Herat province, bordering Iran, and imprisoned its governor, Ismail Khan, ally of Rabbani and Masoud, who later escaped and took refuge in Iran. In September 1996, new Taliban victories near Kabul led to the withdrawal of Rabbani and Masoud 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 held the title of Head of State and “Commander of the Faithful.” He remained in the Taliban power base in Qandahar and almost never appeared in public, although he did occasionally receive high-level foreign officials. Al Qaeda leaders Osama bin Laden relocated from Sudan to Afghanistan, where he had been a recruiter of Arab fighters during the anti-Soviet war, in May 1996. He at first was located in territory in Nangarhar province controlled by Hezb-i-Islam of Yunus Khalis (Mullah Umar’s party leader) but then had free reign in Afghanistan as the Taliban captured nearly all the territory in Afghanistan. Umar reportedly forged a political and personal bond with Bin Laden and refused U.S. demands to extradite him. Like Umar, most of the senior figures in the Taliban regime were Ghilzai Pashtuns, which predominate in eastern Afghanistan. They are rivals of the Durrani Pashtuns, who are predominant in the south.

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

U.S. Policy Toward the Taliban During Its Rule/Bin Laden Presence

The Clinton Administration opened talks with the Taliban after it captured Qandahar in 1994, and engaged the movement after it took power. However, the Administration was unable to moderate

⁵ According to press reports in December 2012, the cloak remains in the shrine, which is guarded by a family of caretakers who, despite professions of political neutrality, have suffered several assassinations over the years.

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

The Taliban's hosting of Al Qaeda's leadership gradually became the Clinton Administration's overriding agenda item with Afghanistan. In April 1998, then-U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson (along with Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth and NSC senior official Bruce Riedel) visited Afghanistan, but the Taliban refused to hand over Bin Laden. They did not meet Mullah Umar. After the August 7, 1998, Al Qaeda bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the Clinton Administration began to strongly pressure the Taliban to extradite him, imposing U.S. sanctions on Taliban-controlled Afghanistan and achieving adoption of some U.N. sanctions as well. On August 20, 1998, as a response to the Africa embassy bombings, the United States fired cruise missiles at alleged Al Qaeda training camps in eastern Afghanistan, but Bin Laden was not hit.⁶ Some observers assert that the Administration missed several other opportunities to strike him, including a purported sighting of him by an unarmed Predator drone at a location called Tarnak Farm in Afghanistan in the fall of 2000.⁷ Clinton Administration officials said that domestic and international support for ousting the Taliban militarily was lacking.

The "Northern Alliance" Congeals

The Taliban's policies caused different Afghan factions to ally with the Tajik core of the anti-Taliban opposition—the ousted President Rabbani, Ahmad Shah Masoud, and their ally in the Herat area, Ismail Khan. Joining the Tajik factions in the broader "Northern Alliance" were Uzbek, Hazara Shiite, and even some Pashtun Islamist factions discussed below. Virtually all the figures mentioned remain key players in politics in Afghanistan, sometimes allied with and at other times adversaries of President Hamid Karzai. The Soviet occupation-era parties remain relatively intact informally, although they do not remain organized under those prior names. (Detail on these figures is in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.)

- **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 1992-1996 presidency, but later joined him and the other Northern Alliance factions opposed to the Taliban.
- **Hazara Shiites.** Members of Hazara tribes, mostly Shiite Muslims, are prominent in Bamiyan, Dai Kundi, and Ghazni provinces (central Afghanistan)

⁶ 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.

⁷ <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/4540958>.

and are always fearful of, and subject to some extent to, repression by Pashtuns and other larger ethnic factions. The Hazaras have tended to serve in working class and domestic household jobs, although more recently they have been prominent in technology jobs in Kabul, raising their economic status. They are also increasingly cohesive politically. During the various Afghan wars, the main Hazara Shiite militia was Hizb-e-Wahdat (Unity Party, composed of eight different groups). Hizb-e-Wahdat suffered a major setback in 1995 when the Taliban captured and killed its leader Abdul Ali Mazari. One of Karzai's vice president's Karim Khalili, is a Hazara. Another prominent Hazara faction leader, Mohammad Mohaqeq, is a Karzai critic.

- **Pashtun Islamists/Sayyaf.** Abd-i-Rab Rasul Sayyaf, now a leading Islamic conservative in parliament, headed a Pashtun-dominated hardline Islamist *mujahedin* faction (Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan, *Ittihad Islami*) during the anti-Soviet war. Even though he is an Islamist conservative, Sayyaf viewed the Taliban as selling out Afghanistan to Al Qaeda and he joined the Northern Alliance.

Policy Pre-September 11, 2001

Throughout 2001, but prior to the September 11 attacks, Bush Administration policy differed little from Clinton Administration policy: applying economic and political pressure on the Taliban while retaining some dialogue with it, and refusing to militarily assist the Northern Alliance. The September 11 Commission report said that, in the months prior to the September 11 attacks, Administration officials leaned toward providing such aid, as well as aiding anti-Taliban Pashtun. Other covert options were reportedly under consideration as well.⁸ In accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1333, in February 2001 the State Department ordered the Taliban representative office in New York closed, although Taliban representative Abdul Hakim Mujahid continued to operate informally.⁹ In March 2001, Administration officials received Taliban envoy Rahmatullah Hashemi (who enrolled as a student at Harvard University after the fall of the Taliban) to discuss bilateral issues. In one significant departure from Clinton Administration policy, the Bush Administration stepped up engagement with Pakistan to try to reduce its support for the Taliban. At that time, there were widespread but unconfirmed allegations that Pakistani advisers were helping the Taliban in their fight against the Northern Alliance.

Even though the Northern Alliance was supplied with 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, and possibly a part of, the September 11 attacks), when Ahmad Shah Masoud was assassinated by Al Qaeda operatives posing as journalists. He was succeeded by one of his top lieutenants, Muhammad Fahim,¹⁰ a veteran Tajik figure but who lacked Masoud's charisma and undisputed authority.

⁸ Drogin, Bob. "U.S. Had Plan for Covert Afghan Options Before 9/11." *Los Angeles Times*, May 18, 2002.

⁹ Mujahid has reconciled with the current Afghan government, and serves as one of the deputy leaders of the 70-member High Peace Council on political reconciliation.

¹⁰ Some Afghan sources refer to him by the name "Fahim Khan," or "Marshal Fahim."

September 11 Attacks and Operation Enduring Freedom

After the September 11 attacks, the Bush Administration decided to militarily overthrow the Taliban when it refused a final U.S. offer to extradite Bin Laden in order to avoid military action. President Bush articulated a policy that equated those who harbor terrorists to terrorists themselves, and judged that a friendly regime in Kabul was needed to enable U.S. forces to search for Al Qaeda personnel there.

U.N. and Congressional Authorization for Military Action

The Administration sought U.N. backing for military action, although the outcome was perhaps less clear cut than was sought. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1368 of September 12, 2001, said that the Council “expresses its readiness to take all necessary steps to respond (implying force) to the September 11 attacks.” This was widely interpreted as a U.N. authorization for military action in response to the attacks, but it did not explicitly authorize Operation Enduring Freedom to oust the Taliban. Nor did the Resolution specifically reference Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, which allows for responses to threats to international peace and security.

In Congress, S.J.Res. 23 (passed 98-0 in the Senate and with no objections in the House, P.L. 107-40, signed September 18, 2001), was somewhat more explicit than the U.N. Resolution, authorizing¹¹ “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.*”

The War Begins

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 reported small numbers (about 1,000) of U.S. special operations forces and Central Intelligence Agency operatives. The purpose of these operations was to help the Northern Alliance and Pashtun anti-Taliban forces by providing information to direct U.S. air strikes against Taliban positions. In part, the U.S. forces and operatives worked with such Northern Alliance contacts as Fahim and Amrollah Saleh, who during November 2001-June 2010 served as Afghanistan’s intelligence director (National Directorate of Security), to weaken Taliban defenses on the Shomali plain north of Kabul. The plain extends south of Bagram Airfield, which marked the forward position of the Northern Alliance during Taliban rule. Some U.S. combat units (about 1,300 Marines) moved into Afghanistan to pressure the Taliban around Qandahar at the height of the fighting (October-December 2001), but there were few pitched battles between U.S. and Taliban soldiers.

The Taliban regime unraveled rapidly after it lost Mazar-e-Sharif on November 9, 2001, to forces led by Dostam.¹² Northern Alliance forces—the commanders of which had initially promised then-Secretary of State Colin Powell that they would not enter Kabul—did so on November 12,

¹¹ Another law (P.L. 107-148) established a “Radio Free Afghanistan” under RFE/RL, providing \$17 million in funding for it for FY2002.

¹² In the process, Dostam captured Taliban fighters and imprisoned them in freight containers, causing many to suffocate. They were buried in a mass grave at *Dasht-e-Laili*.

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 Pashtun tribal law.

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, then-Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld announced an end to “major combat.”

Post-Taliban Governance-Building Efforts¹³

The George W. Bush Administration argued that the U.S. departure from the region after the 1989 Soviet pullout allowed Afghanistan to degenerate into chaos, and that this pattern not be repeated after the defeat of the Taliban. The Bush Administration and international partners of the United States decided to try to dismantle local security structures and try to build a relatively strong, democratic, Afghan central government and develop Afghanistan economically. The effort, which many outside experts described as “nation-building,” was supported by the United Nations, international institutions, and U.S. partners in post-Taliban international meetings.

The Obama Administration’s strategy review in late 2009 initially narrowed official U.S. goals to preventing terrorism safe haven in Afghanistan, but Obama Administration strategy during 2009-2011 in some ways expanded the nation-building policy.¹⁴ No matter how expansively the U.S. mission has been defined, building the capacity of and reforming Afghan governance have been consistently judged to be key to the success of U.S. policy. This has been stated explicitly in each Obama Administration policy review, strategy statement, and report on progress in Afghanistan, as well as all major international conferences on Afghanistan, including the NATO summit in Chicago during May 20-21, 2012, and the Tokyo donors’ conference on July 8, 2012.

The conclusion of virtually every Administration and outside assessment has been that Afghan central governmental capacity and effectiveness has increased, but that local governance remains weak and all levels of government are plagued particularly by governmental corruption. U.S. assessments say that the deficiencies in governance could jeopardize stability after the 2014 transition. Afghan governance is assessed extensively in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman. **Table 1** depicts, in brief, the process and events that led to the formation of the post-Taliban government of Afghanistan.

¹³ Governance issues are analyzed in detail in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

¹⁴ Text of the released summary is at <http://documents.nytimes.com/the-obama-administrations-overview-on-afghanistan-and-pakistan>.

Table I. Afghanistan Political Transition Process

Interim Administration	Formed by Bonn Agreement. Headed by Hamid Karzai, an ethnic Pashtun, but key security positions dominated by mostly minority “Northern Alliance.” Karzai reaffirmed as leader by June 2002 “emergency <i>loya jirga</i> .” (A <i>jirga</i> is a traditional Afghan assembly.)
Constitution	Approved by January 2004 “Constitutional <i>Loya Jirga</i> ” (CLJ). Set up strong presidency, a rebuke to Northern Alliance that wanted prime ministership to balance presidential power, but gave parliament significant powers to compensate. Gives men and women equal rights under the law, allows for political parties as long as they are not “un-Islamic;” allows for court rulings according to Hanafi (Sunni) Islam (Chapter 7, Article 15). Set out electoral roadmap for simultaneous (if possible) presidential, provincial, and district elections by June 2004. Named ex-King Zahir Shah to non-hereditary position of “Father of the Nation;” he died July 23, 2007.
Presidential Election	Elections for president and two vice presidents, for five-year term, held October 9, 2004. Turnout was 80% of 10.5 million registered. Karzai and running mates (Ahmad Zia Masoud, a Tajik and brother of legendary <i>mujahedin</i> commander Ahmad Shah Masoud, who was assassinated by Al Qaeda two days before the September 11 attacks, and Karim Khalili, a Hazara) elected with 55% against 16 opponents. Second highest vote getter, Northern Alliance figure (and Education Minister) Yunus Qanooni (16%). One female ran. Funded with \$90 million from donors, including \$40 million from U.S. (FY2004, P.L. 108-106).
First Parliamentary Elections	Elections held September 18, 2005, on “Single Non-Transferable Vote” System; candidates stood as individuals, not in party list. Parliament consists of a 249 elected lower house (<i>Wolesi Jirga</i> , House of the People) and a selected 102 seat upper house (<i>Meshrano Jirga</i> , House of Elders). 2,815 candidates for <i>Wolesi Jirga</i> , including 347 women. Turnout was 57% (6.8 million voters) of 12.5 million registered. Upper house is appointed by Karzai (34 seats, half of which are to be women), and by the provincial councils (68 seats). When district councils are elected, they will appoint 34 of the seats. Funded by \$160 million in international aid, including \$45 million from U.S. (FY2005 supplemental, P.L. 109-13).
First Provincial Elections/ District Elections	Provincial elections held September 18, 2005, simultaneous with parliamentary elections. Exact powers vague, but now taking lead in deciding local reconstruction Provincial council sizes range from 9 to the 29 seats on the Kabul provincial council. Total seats are 420, of which 121 held by women. 13,185 candidates, including 279 women. District elections not held due to complexity and potential tensions of drawing district boundaries.
Second Presidential/Provincial Elections	Presidential and provincial elections were held August 20, 2009, but required a runoff because no candidate received over 50% in certified results issued October 20. Second round not held because Dr. Abdullah pulled out of runoff. Election costs: \$300 million.
Parliamentary Elections	Originally set for May 22, 2010; held September 18, 2010. Results disputed, but agreement reached for Karzai inaugurate new lower house on January 26, 2011, six days after original date. 70 women elected, two more than quota. Speaker selected on February 27, Abdul Raouf Ibrahim, an ethnic Uzbek. Special tribunal set up to investigate results and on June 23 ruled that 62 results be altered, prompting a backlash from those who might be deprived of seats and threats of impeaching Karzai. Crisis eased on August 11, 2011, when Karzai disbanded special tribunal and announced that only the election bodies have standing to overturn results. Independent Election Commission announced August 21 that nine lower house winners would be unseated for fraud. They were sworn in September 4; but a broad lower house boycott rendered it non-functional until October 9, 2011. For the upper house, 68 seats council are appointed to four-year terms by the elected provincial councils in each of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces, and remain in office. Karzai made his 34 appointments on February 19, 2011. The speaker of that body is Muslim Yaar (a Pashtun).
Third Presidential Election	To be held on April 5, 2014. Karzai has repeatedly said he will not seek to alter the constitution to allow him to run again. There is no clear Pashtun front runner to succeed him, and many of the major political figures are discussing coalescing around one consensus candidate. Specific candidates are discussed in CRS Report RS21922, <i>Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance</i> , by Kenneth Katzman, referenced throughout.

U.S. and International Civilian Policy Structure

Building the capacity of the Afghan government, and helping it develop economically, is primarily, although not exclusively, the purview of U.S. and international civilian officials and institutions. In line with the prioritization of Afghanistan policy, in February 2009, the Administration set up the position of appointed “Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan” (SRAP), occupied first by Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, reporting to Secretary of State Clinton. Holbrooke died on December 13, 2010, and that office at the State Department was led during February 2011—November 2012 by Ambassador Marc Grossman. Grossman was replaced by his deputy, veteran diplomat David Pearce.

At the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Ambassador Ryan Crocker replaced Karl Eikenberry on July 25, 2011, but departed in July 2012 and was succeeded by James Cunningham, formerly the “deputy Ambassador,” who was confirmed in late July 2012. There are separate Ambassador rank officials to manage U.S. economic assistance issues, to oversee Embassy operations, and to coordinate U.S. rule of law programs. Under various programs, U.S. civilian and coalition military personnel are assigned to various Afghan ministries in advisory capacities.

The U.S. Embassy has progressively expanded its personnel and facilities to accommodate the additional civilian hires and Foreign Service officers who have been posted to Afghanistan since 2009 as mentors and advisers to the Afghan government. U.S. officials say there are more than 1,300 U.S. civilian officials in Afghanistan up from only about 400 in early 2009. Of these at least 400 serve outside Kabul to help build governance at the provincial and district levels. That is up from 67 outside Kabul in 2009. However, press reports in late 2012 say the State Department is planning for a 20% reduction in staff by the completion of the transition in 2014.

On February 7, 2010, in an effort to improve civilian coordination between the United States, its foreign partners, and the Afghan government, the powers of the NATO “Senior Civilian Representative” in Afghanistan were enhanced as UK Ambassador Mark Sedwill took office. This office works not only with U.S. military officials but with representatives of the embassies of partner countries and with a special U.N. Assistance Mission-Afghanistan (UNAMA, see **Table 2**). In April 2011 Sedwill was replaced by the former British Ambassador to Iran, Sir Simon Gass.

Afghan Ambassador to the United States Sayed Tayib Jawad served as Ambassador from 2004 until his recall in August 2010. Then deputy Foreign Minister Eklil Hakimi replaced him on February 23, 2011.

Consulate in Herat and Others Planned

The tables at the end of this report include U.S. funding for State Department and USAID operations, including Embassy construction and running the “Embassy air wing,” a fleet of twin-engine turboprops that ferry U.S. officials and contractors around Afghanistan. In a significant development attempting to signal normalization of certain areas of Afghanistan, in June 2010, Deputy Secretary of State William Burns formally inaugurated a U.S. consulate in Herat. The State Department spent about \$80 million on a facility in Mazar-e-Sharif that was slated to open as a U.S. consulate in April 2012, but plans to open the facility have been delayed because of concerns about the security of the facility. A U.S. consulate there is considered an important signal of U.S. interest in engagement with the Tajik and Uzbek minorities of Afghanistan.

Alternative locations are being considered,¹⁵ and consulates are planned for the major cities of Qandahar and Jalalabad by the end of 2014.

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

The United Nations 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). It was headed during March 2010-December 2011 by Swedish diplomat Staffan de Mistura, replacing Norwegian diplomat Kai Eide. Mistura formerly played a similar role in Iraq. Slovakian diplomat Jan Kubis replaced him in January 2012.

U.N. Security Council Resolution 1806 of March 20, 2008, expanded UNAMA's authority to strengthen cooperation between the international peacekeeping force (ISAF, see below) and the Afghan government. In concert with the Obama Administration's emphasis on Afghan policy, UNAMA is to open offices in as many of Afghanistan's 34 provinces as financially and logistically permissible. The mandate of UNAMA, was renewed for another year on March 22, 2011, by Resolution 1974. As did Resolution 1917 the previous year, Resolution 1974 largely restated UNAMA's coordinating role with other high-level representatives in Afghanistan and election support role, while referring to UNAMA's role in facilitating the coming transition to Afghan leadership. As part of the expansion of its mandate, UNAMA is playing a role in reintegration of surrendering insurgent fighters through a "Salaam (Peace) Support Group" that coordinates with Afghanistan's High Peace Council (that is promoting reconciliation and reintegration). UNAMA has always been involved in local dispute resolution and disarmament of local militias,

UNAMA is also playing a growing role in engaging regional actors in Afghan stability. It was a co-convenor of the January 28, 2010, and July 20, 2010, London and Kabul Conferences, respectively. Along with Turkey, UNAMA chairs a "Regional Working Group" to enlist regional support for Afghan integration.

On development, UNAMA co-chairs the joint Afghan-international community coordination body called the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB), and is helping implement Afghanistan's development strategy based on Afghanistan's "National Strategy for Development," presented on June 12, 2008, in Paris. However, UNAMA's donor coordination role did not materialize because of the large numbers and size of donor-run projects in Afghanistan.

The difficulties in coordinating U.N. with U.S. and NATO efforts were evident 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. In January 2008, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon tentatively appointed British diplomat Paddy Ashdown as the "super envoy," but Karzai rejected the appointment over concerns about the scope of authority of such an envoy and the issue was dropped. The NATO senior civilian representative post, discussed above, appears to represent a step toward streamlining of the foreign representative structure there.

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

¹⁵ Ernesto Londono. "U.S. Abandons Consulate Plan in Northern Afghanistan." *Washington Post*, May 6, 2012.

Security Policy, 2011-2014 “Transition, and Beyond”¹⁶

The Obama Administration policy goal is to prevent Afghanistan from again becoming a safe haven for global terrorism. But, the Administration has defined that goal in terms of the ability of the Afghan government and security forces to defend the country and govern effectively and transparently. The U.S. security mission is in the process of changing from a combat leadership to a mentoring and “overwatch” role by mid-2013. Still, the basic pillars of U.S. and NATO security strategy that have been in place since 2001 will remain intact until the end of the transition in 2014.

Who Is “The Enemy”? Taliban, Haqqani, Al Qaeda, and Others

Security in Afghanistan is challenged by several armed groups, loosely allied with each other.¹⁷ There has not been agreement about the relative strength of insurgents in all of the areas where they operate. The top commander in Afghanistan, General John Allen, told journalists in October 2011 that the numbers of insurgents may be far fewer than the 25,000 previously assessed.

Groups: The Taliban/“Quetta Shura Taliban”(QST)

The core insurgent faction in Afghanistan remains the Taliban movement, much of which remains at least nominally loyal to Mullah Muhammad Umar, leader of the Taliban regime during 1996-2001. Although press reports say even many of his top aides do not see him regularly, he and those subordinates reportedly still operate from Pakistan, probably the city of Quetta but possibly also Karachi. This accounts for the term usually applied to Umar and his aides: “Quetta Shura Taliban” (QST). In recent years, Umar has lost some of this top aides and commanders to U.S.-led military action or Pakistan arrests, including Mullah Dadullah, Mullah Obeidullah Akhund, Mullah Usmani. His top aide, Mullah Abdul Ghani Bradar, was arrested by Pakistan in February 2010. Since mid-2012, an offshoot of the Taliban has undertaken several major attacks under the name “Mullah Dadullah Front.”

Some of Umar’s inner circle has remained intact, and the release by Pakistan in late 2012 of several top Taliban figures close to Umar has helped him fill out his leadership circle. Akhtar Mohammad Mansoor, a logistics expert,¹⁸ is head of the Taliban’s senior *shura* council and a reputed pragmatist. Other senior pragmatists include Shahabuddin Delawar and Noorudin Turabi, who was released by Pakistan in December 2012. Some experts believe that Umar and these figures blame their past association with Al Qaeda for their loss of power. Signals of Mullah Umar’s potential for compromise have been several recent statements including: his statement on the 10th anniversary of the September 11 attacks on the United States (September 11, 2011) acknowledging there have been some settlement talks, although only over prisoner exchanges; a

¹⁶ Much of the information in this section is taken from U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), “Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan,” December 2012. http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/1230_Report_final.pdf

¹⁷ http://www.defense.gov/news/1230_1231Report.pdf.

¹⁸ Ibid.; Moreau, Ron. “New Leaders for the Taliban.” *Newsweek*, January 24, 2011.

statement marking a Muslim holiday on November 10, 2011, admonishing Taliban commanders to avoid causing civilian casualties; an August 16, 2012 statement marking the Eid al-Fitr holiday saying that the Taliban would not allow Afghan territory to be used against outside countries; and his message marking the Eid al-Adha on October 24, 2012 indicating that the Taliban does not seek to regain a monopoly of power. On the other hand, the latter statement added that the Taliban sees attacks on international forces by pro-Taliban members of the Afghan security forces as a key strategy going forward.

The pragmatists are facing debate from younger and reputedly hardline, anti-compromise leaders such as Mullah Abdul Qayyum Zakir. Zakir, a U.S. detainee in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba until 2007, is the top military commander of the Taliban and purportedly believes outright Taliban victory is possible after 2014. The Taliban has several official spokespersons at large, including Qari Yusuf Ahmadi and Zabiullah Mujahid, and it operates a clandestine radio station, “Voice of Shariat” and publishes videos.

Al Qaeda/Bin Laden

U.S. officials have long considered Al Qaeda to have been largely expelled from Afghanistan itself, characterizing Al Qaeda militants in Afghanistan as facilitators of militant incursions into Afghanistan rather than active fighters. That view was expressed by Director of National Intelligence James Clapper in his annual worldwide threat assessment testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee on January 31, 2012. U.S. officials put the number of Al Qaeda fighters in Afghanistan at about 50-100.¹⁹ Some of them are believed to belong to Al Qaeda affiliates such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). However, in late May 2012, a Pentagon spokesman said Al Qaeda has safe haven in some areas of eastern Afghanistan, and can move back and forth from Pakistan; the statement came after the United States announced killing an Al Qaeda figure in Kunar Province.

Until the death of Bin Laden at the hands of a U.S. Special Operations Force raid on May 1, 2011, there had been frustration within the U.S. government that Al Qaeda’s top leadership had eluded U.S. efforts to capture them. In December 2001, in the course of the post-September 11 major combat effort, U.S. Special Operations Forces and CIA operatives reportedly narrowed Osama Bin Laden’s location to the Tora Bora mountains in Nangarhar Province (30 miles west of the Khyber Pass), but the Afghan militia fighters who were the bulk of the fighting force did not prevent his escape into Pakistan. Some U.S. military and intelligence officials later publicly questioned the U.S. decision to rely mainly on Afghan forces in this engagement.

U.S. efforts to find Al Qaeda leaders now reportedly focus on his close ally Ayman al-Zawahiri, who is also presumed to be on the Pakistani side of the border and who was named new leader of Al Qaeda in June 2011. CNN reported October 18, 2010, that assessments from the U.S.-led coalition said Zawahiri was likely in a settled area, and not in a remote area. A U.S. strike reportedly missed Zawahiri by a few hours in the village of Damadola, Pakistan, in January 2006.²⁰ Many observers say that Zawahiri is not well liked within Al Qaeda, while other accounts say he has successfully held the group together since bin Laden’s death and is focused on taking political advantage of the Arab uprisings since 2011.

¹⁹ Text of the Panetta interview with ABC News is at <http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=11025299>.

²⁰ Gall, Carlotta and Ismail Khan. “U.S. Drone Attack Missed Zawahiri by Hours.” *New York Times*, November 10, 2006.

Other senior Al Qaeda leaders are either in or are allowed to transit or reside in Iran. Among them are Al Qaeda's former spokesman, Kuwait-born Sulayman Abu Ghaith, as well as Sayf al Adl. The United States has no diplomatic relations with Iran and has called on Iran to arrest and submit any Al Qaeda operatives to international authorities for trial.

U.S. efforts—primarily through armed unmanned aerial vehicles—have killed numerous other senior Al Qaeda operatives in recent years. 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 an unmanned aerial vehicle strike in January 2009. Following the killing of Bin Laden, two top operational leaders, Ilyas Kashmiri, and Attiyah Abd al-Rahman, were killed in Pakistan by armed drone strikes (June 2011 and August 2011, respectively). Their successor, Abu Yahya al-Libi, was killed by an armed drone in Pakistan in early June 2012.

Hikmatyar Faction

Another significant insurgent leader is former *mujahedin* party leader Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, who leads Hizb-e-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG). The faction received extensive U.S. support against the Soviet Union, but turned against its *mujahedin* colleagues after the Communist government fell in 1992. Hikmatyar was displaced by the Taliban as the main opposition to the 1992-1996 Rabbani government, but it is now active against U.S. and Afghan forces in Kunar, Nuristan, Kapisa, and Nangarhar provinces, north and east of Kabul. The group is ideologically and politically allied with Al Qaeda and Taliban insurgents but sometimes has armed clashes with Taliban fighters over control of territory. A suicide bombing on September 18, 2012, which killed twelve persons, including eight South African nationals working for a USAID-chartered air service, was allegedly carried out by a female HIG member. On February 19, 2003, the U.S. government formally designated Hikmatyar as a “specially designated global terrorist,” under Executive Order 13224, subjecting it to a freeze of any U.S.-based assets. The group is *not* designated as a “Foreign Terrorist Organization” (FTO).

At the same time, HIG is widely considered amenable to a reconciliation deal with Kabul. In January 2010, Hikmatyar outlined specific conditions for reconciliation, including elections under a neutral caretaker government following a U.S. withdrawal. On March 22, 2010, both the Afghan government and HIG representatives confirmed talks in Kabul, including meetings with Karzai, and Karzai subsequently acknowledged additional meetings with group representatives. Some close to Hikmatyar attended the consultative peace *loya jirga* on June 2-4, 2010, which discussed the reconciliation issue. HIG figures interacted with Karzai government representatives at a June 2012 academic conference in Paris and a follow up meeting in Chantilly, France on December 20-21, 2012.

Haqqani Faction²¹

Another militant faction, cited by U.S. officials as perhaps the most potent threat to Afghan security, is the “Haqqani Network,” founded by Jalaludin Haqqani, a *mujahedin* commander and U.S. ally during the U.S.-backed war against the Soviet Union. He subsequently joined the

²¹ A profile of the faction and its activities is provided in: Joshua Partlow. “In Afghan War, Haqqani Group Is ‘Resilient’ Foe.” *Washington Post*, May 30, 2011.

Taliban regime (1996-2001), serving as its Minister of Tribal Affairs. Since 2001, he has staunchly opposed the Karzai government and his faction is believed closer to Al Qaeda than to the Taliban in part because one of the elder Haqqani's wives is purportedly Arab. Over the past few years, he has delegated operation control to his sons Siraj (or Sirajjudin), Badruddin, and Nasiruddin. Badruddin was reportedly killed in a U.S. or Pakistani strike in late August 2012.

On the other hand, the faction, which may have as many as 3,000 active fighters and operatives, is less ideological than either the Taliban or Al Qaeda. It is believed primarily interested in earning funds through licit and illicit businesses in Pakistan and the Persian Gulf and in controlling parts of Khost Province. Suggesting it may sometimes act as a tool of Pakistani interests, the Haqqani network has primarily targeted Indian interests. It claimed responsibility for two attacks on India's embassy in Kabul (July 2008 and October 2009), and reportedly was involved, possibly with other groups, on the December 2009 attack on a CIA base in Khost that killed seven CIA officers. U.S. officials attribute the June 28, 2011, attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul and a September 10, 2011, truck bombing in Wardak Province (which injured 77 U.S. soldiers) to the group. U.S. officials say the attacks on the U.S. Embassy and ISAF headquarters in Kabul on September 13, 2011, were the work of the faction as well.

That the faction is tolerated or protected in the North Waziristan area of Pakistan and also its purported ties to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) has caused sharp U.S. criticism of Pakistan. The ISI is believed to see the Haqqanis as a potential ally in any Afghan political structure that might be produced by a political settlement in Afghanistan. The most widely cited criticism was by then Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Mullen, following the September 2011 attacks on the U.S. Embassy. Admiral Mullen testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee on September 22, 2011, that the Haqqani network acts "as a veritable arm" of the ISI. Other senior officials reiterated the thrust of that criticism, although with caveats.

During a visit to Afghanistan on June 7, 2012, the Secretary of Defense, referring to the Haqqani presence in Pakistan, said, "we are reaching the limits of our patience here, and for that reason it is extremely important that Pakistan take action to prevent this kind of safehaven." In addition to pressing Pakistan to deny the group safe haven, U.S. officials say they are increasingly pressuring the Haqqani network with military action in Afghanistan and air strikes on the Pakistani side of the border, as well as with direct ground action.

Experts debate whether the faction is amenable to a political settlement with the Afghan government. Siraj Haqqani said after the September 13, 2011, attacks on the U.S. Embassy that the faction might, at some point, participate in settlement talks. It has also been reported that U.S. officials—as part of their drive to facilitate a political settlement of the Afghanistan conflict—met with Haqqani representatives over the summer of 2011, in meetings in UAE facilitated by the ISI.²² On November 13, 2012, a top Haqqani commander said that the Haqqani Network would participate in political settlement talks with the United States if Taliban leader Mullah Umar decided to undertake such talks.²³

²² Matthew Rosenberg. "U.S. Secretly Met Afghan Militants." *Wall Street Journal*, October 5, 2011.

²³ Jibrán Ahmad. "Afghan Haqqani Factions Would Consider Talks Under Taliban." Reuters, November 13, 2012.

FTO Designation

The faction's calculations might be affected by how the United States characterizes the group. In July 2010, then-top U.S. commander in Afghanistan General David Petraeus advocated that the Haqqani network be named as an FTO under the Immigration and Naturalization Act—a signal to Pakistan that it should not continue to support the Haqqani network.²⁴ A number of Haqqani leaders had already been sanctioned as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT) under Executive Order 13224. Some in the State Department reportedly opposed an FTO designation because that could complicate efforts to conduct reconciliation talks with the faction. Others said the designation could create pressure for Pakistan to be named a state sponsor of terrorism. Some in Congress sought the FTO designation and S. 1959 (Haqqani Network Terrorist Designation Act of 2012)—was passed and signed into law on August 10, 2012 (P.L. 112-168). It required, within 30 days of enactment, an Administration report on whether the group meets the criteria for FTO designation and, if not, explanation of why not. On September 9, 2012 (at the legislatively-mandated deadline), the Administration reported to Congress that the Haqqani Network does meet the criteria for FTO designation. U.S. officials said the key goal of the designation is to help convince other countries to shut down Haqqani-run businesses and other funding sources, including those it cultivates among wealthy figures in the Persian Gulf monarchy states.

Pakistani Groups

A major Pakistani group, the Pakistani Taliban (Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, TTP), is primarily seeking to challenge the government of Pakistan, but it supports the Afghan Taliban goals of recapturing Afghanistan and some of its fighters might operate in Afghanistan alongside those of the Afghan Taliban. Based in part on a failed bombing in New York City in May 2010 allegedly by the TTP, the State Department designated the TTP as an FTO on September 2, 2010. Its current leader, Hakimullah Mehsud, was named as terrorism supporting entities that day. (He succeeded Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in a U.S. drone strike in August 2009.)

Another Pakistani group said to be increasingly active inside Afghanistan is Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LET, or Army of the Righteous). LET is an Islamist militant group that has previously been focused on operations against Indian control of Kashmir. Some assess the group as increasingly active in South Asia and elsewhere, and could rival Al Qaeda or Al Qaeda affiliates as potential threat to U.S. interests. Another Pakistan-based group that is said to be somewhat active in Afghanistan is Lashkar-i-Janghvi—it has been accused of several attacks on Afghanistan's Hazara Shiite community during 2011-2012.

Insurgent Tactics

As far as tactics, prior to 2011, U.S. commanders worried most about insurgent use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), including roadside bombs. In January 2010, President Karzai issued a decree banning importation of fertilizer chemicals (ammonium nitrate) commonly used for the roadside bombs, but there reportedly is informal circumvention of the ban for certain civilian uses, and the material reportedly still comes into Afghanistan from at least two major production plants in Pakistan. U.S. commanders have said they have verified some use of surface-to-air

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

missiles.²⁵ It does not appear that sophisticated missiles were involved in the apparent shootdown of a U.S. Chinook helicopter in which about 30 U.S. soldiers were killed on August 6, 2011.

During 2011-2012, insurgents have made increased use of infiltrators within the Afghan security forces, persons impersonating Afghan security personnel, or recruits to their ranks from among the security forces.²⁶ Afghan officials have tried to increase monitoring over the sale of military-style clothing that might be used for such attacks, and U.S. commanders have altered some of the procedures governing how U.S. forces interact with their Afghan counterparts. Other insurgents have used bombs hidden in turbans, which had, until October 2011, generally not been searched out of respect for Afghan religious traditions. Such a bomb killed former President Rabbani on September 20, 2011, as noted above. There have been reports that a suicide bomber who wounded intelligence chief Asadullah Khalid in December 2012 might have had explosives surgically sewn into his body.

Insurgent Financing: Narcotics Trafficking and Other Methods

All of the insurgent groups in Afghanistan benefit, at least in part, from narcotics trafficking. However, the adverse effects are not limited to funding insurgents; the trafficking also undermines rule of law within government ranks. At the same time, narcotics trafficking is an area on which there has been progress in recent years, although some question whether progress is sustainable. In particular, the trafficking generates an estimated \$70 million-\$100 million per year for insurgents. A UNODC report of September 2011 reversed, to some extent, the relatively positive trend in reporting on this issue, noting that 17 provinces out of 34 provinces in Afghanistan) fall into the “poppy free” category—down from 20 provinces in the previous year’s UNODC report.²⁷ A UNODC report released on November 20, 2012, assessed the number of poppy free provinces remained at 17, but said that area under cultivation increased 18% from the previous year (154,000 hectares compared to 131,000 hectares under cultivation in 2011). The agency attributed the increase to high opium prices.²⁸

The Obama Administration approach focuses on promoting legitimate agricultural alternatives to poppy growing in line with Afghan government preferences. In July 2009, the United States ended its prior focus on eradication of poppy fields on the grounds that this practice was driving Afghans into the arms of the Taliban as protectors of their ability to earn a living. The de-emphasis on eradication also put aside the long-standing differences with Karzai over whether to conduct aerial spraying of fields. Congress apparently has sided with Karzai’s view; successive annual appropriations laws since FY2008 have prohibited U.S. counter-narcotics funding from being used for aerial spraying on Afghanistan poppy fields without Afghan concurrence. Some U.S. programs, such as “Good Performance Initiative” (GPI) funds, give an incentive to provinces to actively work against cultivation. In 2011, 22 of 34 provinces received awards totaling a combined \$19.2 million.

The U.S. military flies Afghan and U.S. counter-narcotics agents (Drug Enforcement Agency, DEA) on missions and identifying targets; it also evacuates casualties from counter-drug

²⁵ Major General John Campbell, commander of RC-E, July 28, 2010, press briefing.

²⁶ For more information on the insider attack, see CRS General Distribution memorandum “Insider Attacks in Afghanistan,” October 1, 2012, available on request.

²⁷ UNDOC, http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/Executive_Summary_2011_web.pdf

²⁸ http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/Summary_Findings_FINAL.pdf

operations and assists 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 has expanded from 13 agents in 2008 to over 80 as of early 2012.

The Bush and Obama Administrations have exercised waiver provisions to required certifications of full Afghan cooperation needed to provide more than congressionally stipulated amounts of U.S. economic assistance to Afghanistan. Although successive appropriations have required certification of Afghan cooperation on counter-narcotics, no funds for Afghanistan have been held up on these grounds. Narcotics trafficking control was perhaps the one issue on which the Taliban regime satisfied much of the international community. However, cultivation flourished in provinces under Northern Alliance control, such as Badakhshan.

Donations from Gulf State individuals

The Obama Administration has placed additional focus on the other sources of Taliban funding, including continued donations from wealthy residents of the Persian Gulf. It 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. On June 29, 2012, the Administration sanctioned (by designating them as terrorism supporting entities under Executive Order 13224) two money exchange networks (*hawalas*) in Afghanistan and Pakistan allegedly used by the Taliban to move its funds earned from narcotics and other sources. However, the sanctions prevent U.S. persons from dealing with those money exchanges, and will likely have limited effect on the networks' operations in the South Asia region.

The U.S.-Led Military Effort: 2001-2008

To combat the insurgency, the United States is in partnership with 49 other countries and the Afghan government and security forces. Until late September 2012, there were about 90,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, down from about 100,000 in mid-2011, the height of the U.S. presence. That number fell to 66,000 as of late September 2012 as the “troop surge” was unwound, and remains at that level. The forces operate under NATO/ISAF command, although small numbers might remain part of the post-September 11 anti-terrorism mission Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).

Lieutenant General John Allen took over the command in Afghanistan on July 18, 2011, succeeding General David Petraeus. Serving under the top U.S. and NATO/ISAF commander is an “Intermediate Joint Command” focused primarily on day-to-day operations. On October 11, 2012, Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, the assistant Marine commandant, was nominated to take overall command in Afghanistan. He was confirmed by the Senate on December 3, 2012, and is to take command in February 2013—that schedule did not change despite the DOD scrutiny of Gen. Allen's conduct in connection with events related to those that caused Petraeus to resign as CIA Director in November 2012.

Prior to the U.S. surge in 2009, most U.S. forces were in eastern Afghanistan, leading Regional Command East (RC-E) of the NATO/ISAF operation. The most restive provinces in RC-E have been Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Kunar, and Nuristan. Helmand, Qandahar, Uruzgan, Zabol, Nimruz, and Dai Kundi provinces constituted a “Regional Command South (RC-S),” a command formally transferred to NATO/ISAF responsibility on July 31, 2006. The increased U.S. troop strength in RC-S in 2009 and 2010—a product of the fact that most of the 2009-2010 U.S. “surge” was

focused on the south—prompted a May 2010 NATO decision to bifurcate RC-S, with the United States leading at first leading a “southwest” subdivision for Helmand and Nimruz. U.S. commanders now lead both RC-S and RC-SW. About 4,000 U.S. forces are under German command in RC-North, headquartered in Konduz. Turkey commands ISAF forces in the capital, Kabul, and on October 7, 2011, Turkey agreed to continue in that role for another year. Afghan forces are in overall lead in the capital, however.

Perception of “Victory,” Followed by Setback and Deterioration

During 2001 to mid-2006, U.S. forces and Afghan troops fought relatively low levels of insurgent violence with focused combat operations against Taliban concentrations in the south and east. For example, the United States and partner forces conducted “Operation Mountain Viper” (August 2003); “Operation Avalanche” (December 2003); “Operation Mountain Storm” (March-July 2004); “Operation Lightning Freedom” (December 2004-February 2005); and “Operation Pil” (Elephant, October 2005). Toward the end of this period, U.S. and partner commanders appeared to believe that the insurgency had been mostly defeated. Anticipating further stabilization, NATO/ISAF assumed lead responsibility for security in all of Afghanistan during 2005-2006.

The optimistic assessments proved misplaced when violence increased significantly in mid-2006, particularly in the east and the south, where ethnic Pashtuns predominate. Reasons for the deterioration included popular unrest over the ineffectiveness and corruption in the Afghan government; the absence of governance or security forces in many rural areas; the safe haven enjoyed by militants in Pakistan; the reticence of some NATO contributors to actively combat insurgents; a popular backlash against civilian casualties caused by military operations; and unrealized expectations of economic development.

NATO counter-offensives during 2006-2008, focused on the Pashtun-dominated areas, cleared key districts but did not prevent subsequent re-infiltration because Afghan governance was not established in cleared areas. NATO/ISAF also tried preemptive combat and increased development work, without durable success. As a result, growing U.S. concern took hold, reflected in such statements as a September 2008 comment by then Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Admiral Mike Mullen that “I’m not sure we’re winning” in Afghanistan. Several major incidents supported that assessment, including (1) expanding Taliban operations in provinces where it had not previously been active, particularly Lowgar, Wardak, and Kapisa, close to Kabul; (2) high-profile attacks in Kabul, such as the January 14, 2008, attack on the Serena Hotel in Kabul and the July 7, 2008, suicide bombing at the Indian Embassy in Kabul, killing more than 50; (3) the April 27, 2008, assassination attempt on Karzai during a military parade celebrating the ouster of the Soviet Union; and (4) a June 12, 2008, Sarposa prison break in Qandahar, in which several hundred Taliban captives were freed.

A Small Buildup in 2008-9

To try to arrest deterioration, the United States and its partners decided to increase force levels by partly fulfilling a mid-2008 request by General David McKiernan for 30,000 additional U.S. troops. The decision whether to fulfill the entire request was deferred to the next Administration. U.S. troop levels started 2006 at 30,000; climbed slightly to 32,000 by December 2008; and reached 39,000 by April 2009. Partner forces increased by about 6,000 during this time, to a total of 39,000 at the end of 2009—achieving rough parity between U.S. and non-U.S. forces.

In September 2008, the U.S. military and NATO each began strategy reviews. The primary U.S. review was headed by Lieutenant General Douglas Lute, the Bush Administration's senior adviser on Iraq and Afghanistan (who is in the Obama NSC with responsibility for Afghanistan). These reviews were briefed to the incoming Obama Administration.

Obama Administration Surge

The Obama Administration maintained that Afghanistan needed to be given a higher priority than it was during the Bush Administration, but that the U.S. mission in Afghanistan not be indefinite. The Administration integrated the reviews under way at the end of the Bush Administration's into an overarching 60-day inter-agency "strategy review," chaired by South Asia expert Bruce Riedel and co-chaired by then SRAP Holbrooke and then-Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michele Flournoy. President Obama announced a "comprehensive" strategy on March 27, 2009,²⁹ including deployment of an additional 21,000 U.S. forces – most of General McKiernan's request for 30,000 additional forces.

McChrystal Assessment and December 1, 2009, Surge Announcement

On May 11, 2009, then-Secretary of Defense Gates announced that General McKiernan would be replaced by General Stanley McChrystal, who headed U.S. Special Operations forces from 2003 to 2008. He assumed the command on June 15, 2009 and immediately assessed the security situation and suggested a strategy in a report of August 30, 2009.³⁰

- That the goal of the U.S. military should be to protect the population rather than to focus on searching out and combating Taliban concentrations. Indicators of success such as ease of road travel, participation in local *shuras*, and normal life for families are more significant than counts of enemy fighters killed.
- That there is potential for "mission failure" unless a fully resourced, comprehensive counter-insurgency strategy is pursued and reverses Taliban momentum within 12-18 months. About 44,000 additional U.S. combat troops (beyond those approved in March 2009) would be needed to have the greatest chance for his strategy's success.

The McChrystal assessment set off debate within the Administration and another policy review. Some senior U.S. officials, such as then-Secretary of Defense Gates, were concerned that adding many more U.S. forces could create among the Afghan people a sense of "occupation" that could prove counter-productive. The high-level review included at least nine high-level meetings, chaired by President Obama, and reportedly concluded on November 19, 2009. The President announced the following decisions at West Point military academy on December 1, 2009.³¹

²⁹ "White Paper," http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Afghanistan-Pakistan_White_Paper.pdf.

³⁰ 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?

³¹ President Obama speech, op. cit. Testimony of Secretary Gates, Secretary Clinton, and Admiral Mullen before the Senate Armed Services Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee. December 2, 2009.

- That 30,000 additional U.S. forces (a “surge”) would be sent - bringing U.S. levels close to 100,000 - to “reverse the Taliban’s momentum” and strengthen the capacity of Afghanistan’s security forces and government.
- There would be a transition, beginning in July 2011, to Afghan leadership of the stabilization effort and a corresponding drawdown of U.S. force levels.

NATO Decision on Transition by the End of 2014/Petraeus Takes Command

The Obama Administration emphasis on transition to Afghan security leadership beginning in July 2011 was widely debated. The Administration argued that the time frame would compel the Afghan government to assume greater responsibility for the mission. However, the deadline was interpreted by some experts and Afghan and regional leaders as signaling a rapid decrease in U.S. involvement.³² To address that criticism, on August 31, 2010, the President asserted that the pace and scope of any drawdown would be subject to conditions on the ground. The debate over the July 2011 deadline abated substantially following the November 19-20, 2010, NATO summit in Lisbon. At that meeting, it was agreed that the transition to Afghan leadership would begin in 2011 and would be completed by the end of 2014.

As this debate over transition timeframes was taking place, on June 23, 2010, President Obama accepted the resignation of General McChrystal after summoning him to Washington, DC, to discuss the comments by him and his staff to a reporter for *Rolling Stone* magazine that disparaged several civilian figures involved in Afghanistan policy. He named General Petraeus as General McChrystal’s successor. General Petraeus was confirmed by the Senate on June 30, 2010, and assumed command on July 4, 2010.

³² Commander NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan, and U.S. Forces, Afghanistan. Commander’s Initial Assessment.” August 30, 2009, available at http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment_Redacted_092109.pdf. White House. Remarks by the President In Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan. December 1, 2009.

Table 3. Summary of Current U.S. Strategy and Implementation

Goals: to prevent terrorist networks in the region from again taking root in Afghanistan.

Strategy Definition: to build Afghan capable and transparent security and governing institutions and transfer security lead to them by mid-2013 and full responsibility by the end of 2014.

Surge and then Drawdown: U.S. force levels reached a high of 100,000 in mid-2011, then fell to 66,000 by September 20, 2012. Remaining drawdown pace until 2014 not determined.

Long-Term Involvement. A strategic partnership agreement, signed in Kabul on May 1, 2012, pledges U.S. security and economic assistance to Afghanistan until 2024. U.S. military training and some combat against high value targets to continue after 2014, subject to U.S.-Afghan agreement on legal status of forces. Exact post-2014 U.S. force levels not determined precisely, but options reportedly presented to the White House in December 2012 range from 6,000—12,000 U.S. forces. Post-2014 force also depends in part on negotiations with the Afghans on legal immunities for U.S. troops in a potential Bilateral Security Agreement.

Reintegration and Reconciliation: to support Afghan efforts to reach a settlement with insurgent leaders.

Pakistan/Regional: to enlist Pakistan's cooperation against militant groups, such as the Haqqani network, that have a measure of safe haven in Pakistan. And integrate Afghanistan into regional diplomatic and economic structures.

Partner Participation: to encourage partner forces to remain in Afghanistan until the completion of the transition and to participate in training efforts after 2014.

Economic Development: To build an economy that can be self-sufficient by 2024.

Metrics: to measure progress along clear metrics. P.L. 111-32 (FY2009 supplemental appropriation) required, by September 23, 2009, metrics by which to assess progress on U.S. policy objectives in Afghanistan and Pakistan, with a reports every 180 days thereafter until September 30, 2011. The metrics³³ and reports were submitted.

Progress of the Transition and Drawdown

Despite doubts about the durability of progress to date, the results of the surge were considered sufficient to permit the transition to Afghan security leadership to begin, as planned, in July 2011. The transition is being conducted in five “tranches”—the first was announced by Karzai in March 2011, the second in November 2011, and the third in May 2012. By the end of 2013, the completion of transition in the third tranche would put 75% of the population under the security lead of Afghan forces, up from 50% covered in the first and second tranches. In each area of transition, the process of completing the transition to Afghan responsibility takes 12-18 months.

Tranches of Territory in Transition:

- Tranche 1 (began transition in July 2011): Three provinces: Kabul (except Sarobi district, which is still restive), Panjshir, and Bamiyan. In Kabul, Afghan forces have already been in the lead for at least one year. Four cities: Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, Lashkar Gah, and Mehtarlam. The former two cities are widely considered stable. The latter two are in restive areas, Helmand and Laghman provinces, respectively, and the announcement of transition in these cities surprised many observers.
- Tranche 2 (began transition in December 2011): Complete provinces: Balkh, Dai Kundi, Takhar, Samangan, Nimruz, and those areas of Kabul province not

³³ http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/09/16/evaluating_progress_in_afghanistan_pakistan.

transitioned already (Sarobi district). Large cities: Jalalabad (capital of Nangarhar), Gachcharan (capital of Ghowr), Shebergan (capital of Jowzjan), Faizabad (capital of Badakhshan), Midan Shahr (capital of Wardak), and Qali Now (capital of Badghis). Districts of several other provinces in this and the preceding transition phase, including Nawa, Nad Ali, and Marjah of restive Helmand province; six districts of Badakhshan; Abkamari district of Badghis; all districts of Herat except for Shindand; three districts of Laghman; three districts of Nangarhar (outside Jalalabad city); all districts of Parwan except Shiwari and Siahgherd; all districts of Sar-i-Pol except Sayyad and the part of Behsud city that is in that province; and Jalrez and the center of Behsud city in Wardak province.

- Tranche 3 (began transition in June 2012): Territory that includes 122 districts, bringing the total districts undergoing transition to 260 (out of 364) in all 34 provinces. All provincial capitals will be under Afghan security lead after this tranche is completed, and this tranche includes some of the most restive areas of Afghanistan—providing an opportunity to test the capabilities of the Afghan government.
- Tranche 4. Parameters under discussion at the end of 2012. Will likely include insecure areas and, when completed, would put nearly 90% of the population under Afghan security lead.

Unwinding of the Surge Announced June 22, 2011

As preparations got under way to begin the transition in 2011, then top commander in Afghanistan General Petraeus recommended a gradual drawdown in which the overwhelming majority of the surge forces would be in combat through the end of 2012. He also wanted to redeploy some troops to RC-E, where there had not been as intensive an effort since 2010 as in RC-S or RC-SW. In considering these recommendations, President Obama took into account the assessment that the killing of Osama Bin Laden represented a key accomplishment of the core U.S. mission, and financial needs to reduce the size of the U.S. budget deficit. President Obama announced on June 22, 2011, that:

- 10,000 U.S. forces would be withdrawn by the end of 2011. That drawdown was accomplished, then bringing U.S. force levels to 90,000.
- 23,000 forces (the remainder of the surge forces) would be withdrawn by September 2012. This draw-down, completed as of September 20, 2012, brought U.S. force levels to 66,000.

General Petraeus and Admiral Mullen, in their testimonies on June 23, 2011, acknowledged that the President’s decision represented an “aggressive” drawdown but both said that they could still carry out U.S. policy with it.

Surge Implementation and Results/Current Security Assessments

The pace and scope of the transition to Afghan security leadership was to be determined by assessments of how well U.S. policy—primarily in the form of the surge—has worked. Prior to the surge, the Karzai government was estimated to control about 30% of the country, while insurgents controlled 4% (13 out of 364 districts). Insurgents “influenced” or “operated in”

another 30% (Afghan Interior Ministry estimates in August 2009). Tribes and local groups with varying degrees of loyalty to the central government controlled the remainder. Some outside groups report higher percentages of insurgent control or influence.³⁴ The Taliban had named “shadow governors” in 33 out of 34 of Afghanistan’s provinces, although many provinces in northern Afghanistan were assessed as having minimal Taliban presence.

In 2012, assessments of the results of the surge were mixed. On January 24, 2012, ISAF released a summary statement of its accomplishments in 2011, calling it a “remarkably successful year” that has caused insurgents to have “largely lost control of [the south] and [to] rely on IED’s as their primary method of attack.”³⁵ The April 2012 DOD report on Afghan stability and security, covering October 1, 2011-March 31, 2012, said that ISAF and its Afghan partners “have continued to build on and expand this progress.” The December 2012 report, covering April 1, 2012 – September 30, 2012, says that ISAF and the Afghan forces “blunted the insurgent summer offensive, continued to transition the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) into security lead, pushed violence out of the most populated areas, and coalition member nations signed several international agreements to support the long-term stability and security of Afghanistan.” Secretary of Defense Panetta said on November 20, 2012, in a speech to the Center for a New American Security, that “The insurgency has been pushed out of population centers and strategic areas. Security dramatically improved this year in most of Afghanistan’s largest municipalities, with attacks dropping 22 percent in Kabul and 62 percent in Qandahar.”

Providing specific accomplishments, U.S. commanders and other observers note that Qandahar city had become considerably more secure. Afghan and U.S. officials point to revolts against Taliban infiltration of Ghazni and Wardak provinces since the summer of 2012 as a sign that the Taliban will not be able to recapture lost ground after 2014. ISAF commanders say that about 80% of Afghanistan is free of substantial violence.

Less optimistic assessments of the surge—and of the future of Afghanistan after the 2014 transition—are based on observations that the insurgents continue to be able to penetrate into normally quiet provinces and cities, and to conduct high profile attacks in many places. Some assess that insurgents will be able to capture much, if not all, of the territory and political influence lost since the international intervention in October 2001.

Among specific incidents, on June 28, 2011, insurgents stormed the historic Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul, prompting a several hour gun battle with Afghan authorities backed by NATO-led forces. The September 13, 2011, rocket and gunfire attack on the U.S. Embassy in Kabul and ISAF headquarters demonstrated insurgents could strike at the heart of coalition power. On April 15, 2012, about 35 insurgents attacked several locations in downtown Kabul, as well as conducted attacks in a few other provinces. On June 21, 2012, insurgents killed 20 Afghan civilians in an attack on a hotel at a lake just north of Kabul city. On August 14, 2012, 40 Afghans were killed in a range of attacks in various areas of Afghanistan. A major blow to the impression of success came on September 14, 2012 when fifteen militants penetrated the perimeter of the British Camp Bastion airbase in Helmand and destroyed eight Marine Harrier jets on the tarmac before being killed. On October 26, 2012, an insurgent bomb killed more than 40 worshippers at a mosque in Faryab Province, which has not previously been a center of insurgent activity. On November 23, 2012, a suicide truck bomb leveled several government buildings in the capital of

³⁴ http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/12/world/asia/12afghan.html?_r=1.

³⁵ Lawrence Bartlett, “NATO Hails 2011 Successes in Afghanistan.” Agence France Presse, January 24, 2012.

Wardak Province. Some express concern that violence has picked up since mid-2012 in normally quiescent Bamiyan Province, inhabited mostly by Hazaras who resist Pashtun infiltration. U.N. figures showed that August 2012 was the second deadliest month in five years for Afghan civilians.

As expressed in Gen. Dunford's November 15, 2012, testimony as well as Defense Secretary Panetta's speech on November 20, 2014, there are concerns that Afghan governance is lagging to the point where the Afghans may not be able to hold U.S./NATO gains on their own. Gains are also threatened by the continuing safe haven that insurgents enjoy in Pakistan, a point emphasized in successive DOD reports on Afghan stability.

Faster Transition to Afghan Combat Lead by Mid-2013

In spite of doubts about the success of the surge and the ability of Afghan forces to secure Afghanistan, in December 2011, top commander in Afghanistan General Allen, revealed a mission change: some U.S. mentoring and advisory forces would be sent to Afghanistan in 2012 in an effort to transfer more combat burden to the Afghan forces, and thereby allow more U.S. regular combat forces to withdraw than was previously forecast. On March 15, 2012, President Obama affirmed this shift in emphasis, and the mid-2013 time frame for it. This accelerated transition to Afghan security lead by mid-2013 was affirmed by the NATO summit meeting in Chicago during May 20-21, 2012.

Drawdowns in 2013-2014

No decision on further drawdowns of the 66,000 U.S. forces in Afghanistan has been announced, and press reports in early January 2013 indicate that General Allen has not, to date, made his recommendations on the pace of 2012-2014 drawdowns. Reports purporting to reflect General Allen's thinking suggests he wants to keep as many as possible of the 66,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan until the end of the fighting season (late fall) of 2013. This may be somewhat at odds with statements of President Obama since 2011 that there would be steady drawdowns from the September 2012 end of the surge until the end of the transition at the end of 2014.³⁶

Still, there are already signs that U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan is winding down. Some U.S. airpower in country has been drawn down, reducing the capability to conduct strike missions against insurgent positions.³⁷ France turned over control of Kapisa Province on July 4, 2012, in conjunction with its accelerated pullout discussed below. U.S.-run bases are being closed down and/or turned over to Afghan forces, and the provincial reconstruction teams, discussed below, are being turned over to Afghan forces and governing institutions. On the other hand, U.S. forces stepped up combat against insurgents in Ghazni Province during March—September 2012 to address security concerns in a province where few of the U.S. surge troops were previously deployed.

³⁶ <http://www.cnn.com/2012/05/01/politics/obama-afghanistan-speech/index.html>

³⁷ C.J. Chivers. "Afghan Conflict Losing Air Power as U.S. Pulls Out." *New York Times*, July 7, 2012.

Legislatively Mandated Accelerated Drawdown?

In Congress, some have expressed support for efforts or plans to wind down the U.S. involvement in Afghanistan far more rapidly than those outlined by the Administration. That effort appears to have gained momentum in the aftermath of the death of Osama Bin Laden on May 1, 2011. In the 111th Congress, H.Con.Res. 248, a resolution introduced by Representative Kucinich to require removal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan not later than December 31, 2010, was defeated in the House by a vote of 65 to 356 on March 10, 2010. Other legislation, requiring the Administration to develop (by January 1, 2011) plans to wind down the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan failed 18-80, May 27, 2010) in a Senate vote during consideration of a FY2010 supplemental appropriation (H.R. 4899). On July 1, 2010, the House voted 162-260 to reject a plan in that bill to require the Administration to submit, by April 4, 2011, a plan and timetable to redeploy from Afghanistan. Earlier, in House consideration of a FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2647), a similar provision failed on June 25, 2009, by a vote of 138-278.

In the 112th Congress, on May 26, 2011, an amendment to the defense authorization bill (H.R. 1540) that would have required a plan to accelerate the transition to Afghan-lead security failed narrowly by a vote of 204-215: it contained the main elements of the “Afghanistan Exit and Accountability Act” (H.R. 1735). A day earlier (May 25, 2011), an amendment to that same bill that would require U.S. troops to withdraw most of its forces failed 123-294. Among other bills, H.R. 651 requires an agreement with Afghanistan under which U.S. forces redeploy from Afghanistan within one year of entry into that agreement, and H.Con.Res. 28, H.R. 780, and H.Con.Res. 248 require a withdrawal. The latter bill failed by a vote of 356 to 65 on March 10, 2011. On November 28, 2012, the Senate passed (62-33) an amendment to S. 3254, the FY2013 defense authorization bill, expressing the Sense of Congress that the United States draw down troops at a steady pace through the end of 2014. The main elements of the provision, with some modifications to avoid limiting the President’s prerogatives to alter strategy as needed, was incorporated into the final version of the bill (Section 1226 of H.R. 4310) that was passed by both chambers and signed by President Obama.

Beyond 2014: Size of Residual Force, Strategic Partnership Agreement, and Bilateral Security Agreement

President Obama and other senior U.S. officials have consistently sought to reassure the Afghan government and public by saying that the end of 2014 will not produce a complete U.S. pullout. The concluding statement from the May 2012 NATO summit in Chicago made that clear as well, not only for the United States but also for partner contingents as well.³⁸ Some Afghan factions warn of civil war after 2014, and some elites are said to be moving their businesses and funds out of Afghanistan out of fear of chaos and war after international forces end the ISAF mission.

Likely Size and Structure of Post-2014 Force

According to press reports, Gen. Allen has submitted his recommendations to the White House about the size of the post-2014 U.S. force. According to the reports, he presented three options: 6,000, 10,000 or 20,000 forces - with decreasing levels of risk to U.S. gains associated as the

³⁸ http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-B42E2249-9DB272D0/natolive/official_texts_87595.htm.

number of troops increase with each option. The option providing for the fewest forces envisions mainly Special Operations forces remaining to help combat high-value targets. The mid-range option provides for continued training of Afghan security forces. The largest option would provide for some continued U.S. patrols in highly contested areas.³⁹

The post-2014 presence will be predicated on agreement with the Afghan government on the legal status of U.S. forces. This is to be spelled out in a Bilateral Security Agreement—an agreement that will include a Status of Forces Agreement as well as an agreement on the mission of U.S. troops to remain after 2014. On October 3, 2012, Secretary Clinton named deputy SRAP James Warlick as lead U.S. negotiator for the Bilateral Security Agreement, and the negotiations formally began on November 15, 2012, starting the clock on the one year time period to complete the Bilateral Security Agreement. However, Afghan officials have said that the issue of the legal immunities of post-2014 U.S. forces could be a hurdle to an agreement—and statements by Karzai and other Afghan officials since mid-2012 indicate negotiations on this issue will be difficult, but an agreement is considered a requirement for DOD to operate in Afghanistan after 2014. President Karzai is visiting Washington, D.C. the week of January 7, 2013 in part to discuss these issues, as well as the likely size of the post-2014 international force presence in Afghanistan.

U.S. forces currently operate in Afghanistan under “diplomatic notes” between the United States and the interim government of Afghanistan—primarily one that was exchanged in November 2002. The notes give the United States legal jurisdiction over U.S. personnel serving in Afghanistan. A draft SOFA reportedly has been under discussion between the United States and Afghanistan since 2007.

No matter the force level, after 2014, the ISAF mission will end and the U.S. and allied force presence will operate under bilateral strategic partnership agreements, such as the one signed between the United States and Afghanistan on May 1, 2012. As noted below, several other countries have signed separate partnership agreements with Afghanistan and will keep unspecified numbers of trainers and advisors in Afghanistan after 2014.

Many experts and former commanders in Afghanistan believe that the force levels discussed above and accompanying strategy would be sufficient to prevent a collapse of Afghan forces or the Afghan government, even if the Taliban remains as active as it is today. These experts believe that the post-2014 international presence—coupled with local Afghan efforts to resist Taliban strength—will convince Taliban factions that their return to power is unlikely and facilitate a political settlement.

Others believe the planned level of post-2014 forces is insufficient, and would likely lead to Taliban gains in the south and east and potentially an unraveling of the Afghan security forces and government.⁴⁰ These assessments are fed in part by doubts that Afghan forces, based on their current and projected performance, can secure the country, and that Al Qaeda would regain a safe haven again in Afghanistan if there are insufficient numbers of U.S. forces there.⁴¹

³⁹ Elisabeth Bumiller and Eric Schmitt. “Afghan War Commander Gives Options For After ’14.” *New York Times*, January 3, 2012.

⁴⁰ Kimberly Kagan and Frederick Kagan. “What We’ll Need in Afghanistan.” *Washington Post*, November 25, 2012.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Whatever the level of post-2014 international forces, it is likely that, as international forces thin out sharply after 2014, local militias will re-form to try to prevent the Taliban from re-infiltrating areas they were expelled from. This was illustrated in a November 2012 meeting organized by Herat leader Ismail Khan, in which he reportedly began taking steps to reorganize his Soviet and Taliban-era militia. Vice President Muhammad Fahim has also discussed potentially reconstituting the Northern Alliance force in anticipation of the need to assist Afghan government forces against the Taliban. These and similar moves could spark ethnic and communal conflict from an all-out struggle for power and a reversion to Afghan rule by faction leaders rather than elected leaders.

Strategic Partnership Agreement/Legal Status of Post-2014 Force

U.S. troops that remain after 2014 would do so under the auspices of a Strategic Partnership Agreement formally signed by President Obama and President Karzai in Afghanistan on May 1, 2012. The agreement signals that the United States is committed to Afghan stability and development for many years after the transition is complete. Formal negotiations on the agreement began in February 2011, pursuant to President Obama's statement, at a May 12, 2010, press conference with visiting President Karzai, that the United States and Afghanistan would renew and expand an existing, five-year-old strategic partnership.

The negotiations were repeatedly plagued by two disagreements in particular—Afghan insistence on control over detention centers and a halt to or control over nighttime raids on insurgents by U.S. forces. The detainee issue was mostly resolved on March 10, 2012, with a U.S. agreement to accelerate the transfer of imprisoned insurgents to Afghan control, to occur over six months. In keeping with that agreement, the prison at Bagram Airfield was turned over to Afghan control in early September 2012, although 50 non-Afghans remain in U.S. custody there. In November 2012, Karzai called on the United States to turn these detainees over to Afghan control.

In early April 2012, the two sides reached agreement to give Afghans more control over night raids, including requiring an Afghan court warrant to hold any raid captives for more than 48 hours. The resolution of these two issues allowed for the initialing of the agreement in April 2012. Unlike the Iraq case, few major Afghan figures have called for an outright end to U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan after 2014, although tensions in the partnership over various issues have increased over the past year, and particularly after the February-March 2012 Quran burning and Afghan civilian killings discussed below.

The strategic partnership agreement represents a broad outline of the post-2014 relationship, with details to be filled in subsequently. It has a duration of 10 years. The major provisions include the following:⁴²

- A commitment to continued U.S.-Afghan cooperation to secure Afghanistan. It is not specifically stated, although it is strongly implied, that U.S. troops will remain in Afghanistan after 2014. No numbers are discussed in the document. The document does discuss the need to forge a Bilateral Security Agreement that provides for the legal status of post-2014 U.S. forces, as discussed above.

⁴² The text is at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/2012.06.01u.s.-afghanistanspassignedtext.pdf>

- The United States will seek funds (appropriations) to provide training and arms to the Afghan security forces. The agreement does not stipulate which systems are to be provided. The Afghans are said to have overly ambitious plans to buy major U.S. combat systems, such as F-16s, that the Afghans cannot likely sustain without significant long-term assistance.
- The United States will designate Afghanistan as a “Major Non-NATO Ally,” a designation reserved for close U.S. allies and which would expedite the arms sale process for Afghanistan.
- There will be no “permanent” U.S. bases or the use of Afghan facilities for use against neighboring countries, but the agreement would apparently allow long-term U.S. use of Afghan facilities.
- The Administration will request economic aid for Afghanistan for the duration of the agreement (2014-2024). No amounts were specified in the document. The Afghan government reportedly wanted a \$2 billion per year commitment written into the agreement but the United States told Afghanistan that amounts can only be determined through the appropriations process.

In October 2011, even when negotiations were stalled, Karzai called a *loya jirga* to endorse the concept of the pact as well as his insistence on Afghan control over detentions and approval authority for U.S.-led night raids. A November 16-19, 2011, traditional *loya jirga* (the *jirga* was conducted not in accordance with the constitution and its views are therefore non-binding), consisting of about 2,030 delegates, gave Karzai the approvals he sought, both for the pact itself and his suggested conditions. The final agreement was submitted to the Afghan National Assembly for formal ratification, and it was ratified on May 26, 2012, by a vote of 180-4.

The strategic partnership was first established on May 23, 2005, when Karzai and President Bush issued a “joint declaration”⁴³ providing for U.S. forces to have access to Afghan military facilities, in order to prosecute “the war against international terror and the struggle against violent extremism.” The joint statement did not give Karzai enhanced control over facilities used by U.S. forces, over U.S. operations, or over prisoners taken during operations. Some of the bases, both in and near Afghanistan, that support combat in Afghanistan, include those in **Table 7**. Karzai’s signing of the partnership had been blessed by 1,000 Afghan representatives on May 8, 2005, at a consultative *jirga* in Kabul. That *jirga* supported an indefinite presence of international forces to maintain security but urged Karzai to delay a firm decision to request such a presence. Karzai stated on March 22, 2011, that he would likely call another *loya jirga* to evaluate the renewed and expanded partnership, if it is agreed with the United States. A FY2009 supplemental appropriation (P.L. 111-32) and the FY2010, FY2011, and FY2012 National Defense Authorization Acts (P.L. 111-84, P.L. 111-383, and H.R. 1540, respectively) prohibit the U.S. establishment of permanent bases in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan Declared “Major Non-NATO Ally As Pledged

On July 7, 2012, Secretary Clinton stopped in Afghanistan on her way to an Afghanistan donors’ conference in Tokyo and announced that Afghanistan had been named a “Major Non-NATO Ally” of the United States, as provided in the Strategic Partnership Agreement. The designation opens

⁴³ See <http://merln.ndu.edu/archivepdf/afghanistan/WH/20050523-2.pdf>.

Afghanistan to receive (sale, donation) U.S. weaponry of the same level of sophistication as that sold to U.S. NATO allies, and facilitates provision of training and funds to leasing defense articles.

Afghan Attitudes Toward a Long-Term U.S. Presence in Afghanistan

The attitudes of the Afghan public might be a factor for those international forces that remain in Afghanistan after 2014, and there are signs that the public welcome of foreign forces might be eroding. On April 1, 2011, crowds of Afghans in the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif demonstrated against the March 2011 burning of a Quran by a Florida pastor. The demonstration turned violent, with protesters storming the U.N. compound in the city and killing 12, including 7 U.N. staff. Demonstrations in other Afghan cities followed. A wave of demonstrations and attacks followed reports that U.S. soldiers had mistakenly burned several Qurans on February 20, 2012, after removing them from Bagram Airfield detention center on suspicion that books were being used by insurgents to plot while in detention. The reaction was less pronounced to the alleged killing of 16 Afghans by a U.S. soldier, Sergeant Robert Bates, who has been arrested and flown back to the United States for trial, which is now under way. On September 17, 2012, several hundred Afghans demonstrated near a U.S.-Afghan training facility east of Kabul city (Camp Phoenix) to protest a video made in the United States “The Innocence of Muslims.” About 40 Afghan police reportedly were wounded preventing the crowd from reaching the facility. The demonstrations and attacks raise questions as to whether the Afghan public has begun to see international forces as occupiers, and appeared to illustrate that a long-term presence of large numbers of international forces might be opposed broadly within Afghanistan.

Table 4. Operation Enduring Freedom Partner Forces

Operation Enduring Freedom continues as a separate combat track, led by the United States but joined by at least 12 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—contributed approximately 4,000 combat troops to OEF-Afghanistan. Most were subsequently rebadged to ISAF. However, several foreign contingents, composed mainly of special operations forces, including forces from the UAE, are still part of OEF-Afghanistan. This includes about 500 British special forces, some German special forces, and other special forces units. In early 2010, U.S. Special Forces operating in Afghanistan were brought under direct command of the top U.S. command in Afghanistan.

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

Transition Pillar: Building Afghan Forces and Establishing Rule of Law

Key to the transition to Afghan lead is the effectiveness of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), consisting primarily of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP). The ANSF have expanded considerably since 2002, and Obama Administration strategy has thus far emphasized improving it through partnering and more intense mentoring and training. About 90% of ANSF units are partnered with international forces, and many combat operations even in the most restive areas of Afghanistan are now led by the ANSF. U.S. and allied strategy is to place the ANSF in the lead security role throughout Afghanistan by mid-2013.

There are still widespread doubts about their ability to take the lead on the increased responsibility. About 35% of the force does not re-enlist each year, meaning that about one-third of the force must be recruited to replenish its ranks. Many believe that the force was expanded to quickly since 2009 to allow for thorough vetting or for recruitment of the most qualified personnel. As noted above, incidents of ANSF attacks on coalition personnel have increased since early 2011 and created increased tensions between the Afghans and their mentors. This complicates the transition in cases in which there is less interaction between Afghan forces and their U.S.-led mentors. Many units also suffer from a deficiency of weaponry, spare parts, and fuel, and the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) reported in late October 2012 that the Afghan government will likely prove incapable of sustaining ANSF installations after 2014, mainly because of a lack of skilled maintenance personnel.

Some of the deficiency throughout the ANSF is due to illiteracy, which prompted NTM-A to increasingly focus on providing literacy training. To date, about 220,000 ANSF personnel have

received literacy training. Over 70% of the ANSF now have at least first grade literacy, up from only 14% in 2009.

Current and Post-2014 Size of the Force

On January 21, 2010, the joint U.N.-Afghan “Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board” (JCMB) agreed that, by October 2011, the ANA would expand to 171,600 and the ANP to about 134,000, (total ANSF of 305,600). Both forces reached that level in September 2011. In August 2011, a larger target size of 352,000 (195,000 ANA and 157,000 ANP) was set, to be reached by November 2012. The gross size of the force reached approximately that level by the end of September 2012, although some of the later recruits have not been trained and will not be assigned to units until early 2013. The target level is slightly smaller than a General Petraeus recommendation of 378,000, which was not adopted because of the concerns about the Afghan ability to sustain so large a force. About 1,700 women serve in the ANSF, of which about 1,370 are police.

As planning for the post-2014 period proceeded in the run-up to the May 20-21, 2012, NATO summit in Chicago, which focused on long-term financial and military sustainment of the ANSF, there was agreement to reduce the total ANSF to 228,500 by 2017, although this level will be subject to constant review. This lower figure was adopted to reduce the cost of sustaining it to \$4.1 billion per year. Sustaining the 352,000 force would cost an estimated \$6 billion per year, a figure that some donors balked at as too expensive.

ANSF Funding

The subject of sustaining the ANSF after 2014 was a major issue at the May 20-21, 2012, NATO summit in Chicago because the Afghan security sector is funded almost entirely through international donations. Planning for a \$4.1 billion ANSF budget during 2017-2024, the United States said it expects to contribute about \$2.3 billion yearly, and \$500 million per year would be provided by the Afghan government, with that figure to rise steadily until 2024, at which time Afghanistan is expected to fund its own security needs, according to Chicago summit statements. The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction issued an audit in October 2012 saying the Afghan government will have major difficulty meeting its obligations to fund the force as donor countries wind down their involvement.⁴⁴ As noted elsewhere, the Afghan government will take in less than \$2 billion in total revenue in 2011.

In advance of the Chicago summit, the United States sought allied contributions to fund the remaining \$1.3 billion in yearly post-2014 ANSF costs. At the summit, various countries reportedly pledged about \$1 billion per year, close to the total sought. The specific known yearly pledges included Germany (\$190 million per year), Britain (\$110 million per year), and Australia (\$100 million per year). Other countries that are confirmed to have made pledges, but of unspecified amounts, include Denmark, Italy, Estonia, and the Netherlands.

In 2011, NTM-A had a budget of \$10 billion, almost all of which is U.S. funded, including \$3 billion for infrastructure; \$3 billion for equipment; \$1 billion for training; and \$3 billion for “sustainment” (food and salaries for the Afghan forces, and related costs). The United States is

⁴⁴ <http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/2012-10-30audit-13-1.pdf>

spending about \$11.2 billion on the ANSF in FY2012, but a reduction to \$5.75 billion is requested for FY2013. Recent appropriations for the ANA and ANP are contained in the tables at the end of this report, which also contain breakdowns for Commanders Emergency Response Program funds, or CERP, which is used for projects that build goodwill and presumably reduce the threat to use forces. CERP has also been used for what could be considered development projects, a point of contention among some observers. As of FY2005, the security forces funding has been DOD funds, not State Department funds (Foreign Military Financing, FMF).

NATO Trust Fund for the ANA

In 2007 ISAF set up a trust fund for donor contributions to fund the transportation of equipment donated to and the training of the ANA; the mandate was expanded in 2009 to include sustainment costs. In November 2010 a further expansion was agreed on to support literacy training for the ANA. As of September 30, 2012, donor contributions and pledges to the ANA Trust Fund total about \$570 million. U.S. funding for the ANA is provided separately, not through this fund.

Law and Order Trust Fund for the ANP

There is also a separate “Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan” (LOTFA), run by the U.N. Development Program (UNDP), which is used to pay the salaries of the ANP and other police-related functions. From 2002-2012, donors contributed \$2.3 billion to the Fund, of which the United States contributed about \$760 million, according to the Defense Department report on Afghan stability released in December 2012 (p. 98). Japan’s 2009 pledge to pay the expenses of the Afghan police for at least six months (about \$125 million for each six month period) is implemented through the LOTF. The EU has pledged about \$175 million for the fund from January 2011-March 2013.

In May 2012, there were reports of misfeasance at the fund. UNDP began to investigate the allegations and immediately terminated the contracts of three personnel and placed two others on administrative leave. As of late September 2012, the UNDP is continuing to investigate the issue.

Other Bilateral Donations

The DOD reports discuss other bilateral donations to the ANSF, both in funds and in arms and equipment donations. There is a “NATO Equipment Donation Program,” through which donor countries supply the ANSF with equipment. Since 2002, about \$2.9 billion in assistance to the ANSF has come from these sources. As an example, in October 2011, Croatia and Slovenia donated a total of over 20,000 AK-47 assault rifles to the ANP. Australia contributed \$40 million to relocate the ANA’s 205th Corps, and South Korea contributed \$30 million for medical and communications equipment.

There is also a NATO-Russia Council Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund. Launched in March 2011, this fund provides maintenance and repair capacity to the Afghan Air Force helicopter fleet, much of which is Russian-made.

Training Overview

U.S. forces, along with partner countries and contractors, train the ANSF and will likely continue to do so after 2014. In February 2010, the U.S.-run “Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan” (CSTC-A) that ran the training was subordinated to the broader NATO Training Mission—Afghanistan (NTM-A). CSTC-A’s mission was reoriented to building the capacity of the Afghan Defense and Interior Ministries, and to provide resources to the ANSF.

A core element of NATO’s training efforts are its mentoring teams—known as Operational Mentoring Liaison Teams (OMLTs) and Police Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (POMLTs). The OMLTs and POMLTs are responsible for training and mentoring deployed ANSF units. OMLTs, which operate with the Afghan National Army (ANA), consist of 11-28 personnel from one or several countries. POMLTs, which mentor the Afghan National Police (ANP), are composed of 15-20 personnel each. Of the approximately 150 OMLTs, 77 are comprised of U.S. trainers. U.S. trainers comprise 279 of the approximately 330 POMLTs. The total number of required trainers (U.S. and partner) for the ANSF has been 4,750, but it is not how this structure will change, if at all, after the 2014 transition. The main ANP training facility was turned over to Afghan control on April 26, 2012.

Working with NTM-A is a separate France-led 300-person European Gendarmerie Force (EGF) has been established to train Afghan forces in the provinces. The European Union is providing a 190-member “EUPOL” training effort, and 60 other experts to help train the ANP.

The Afghan National Army (ANA)

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 army disintegrated entirely during the 1992-1996 *mujahedin* civil war and the 1996-2001 Taliban period. However, some Afghan officers who served prior to the Taliban have joined the ANA.

U.S. and allied officers say that the ANA is becoming a major force in stabilizing the country and a national symbol. The ANA now leads about 80% of all combat operations, and lead operation in 261 of Afghanistan’s 364 districts. However, according to the Defense Department report of December 2012, only one of 23 ANA Kandaks (battalions) is assessed as able to operate “Independent with Advisors” (p.93). The commando forces of the ANA, trained by U.S. Special Operations Forces, and numbering about 5,300, are considered well-trained and are taking the lead in some operations against high-value targets.

There is a problem of absenteeism within the ANA because soldiers do not serve in their provinces of residences. Many in the ANA take long trips to their home towns to remit funds to their families, and often then return to the ANA after a long absence. However, that problem has eased somewhat in recent years because 98% of the ANA is now paid electronically, according to U.S. officials. The FY2005 foreign aid appropriation (P.L. 108-447) required that ANA recruits be vetted for terrorism, human rights violations, and drug trafficking.

To assist its performance, the United States is attempting to better equip the ANA. Approximately \$2.7 billion worth of vehicles, weapons, equipment, and aircraft were provided during August 2011-March 2012. The United States is also helping the ANSF build up an indigenous weapons production capability. However, in line with U.S. efforts to cut costs for the ANSF, the Defense

Department reportedly plans to shift in FY2013 from providing new equipment to maintaining existing equipment, including Russian-supplied helicopters.

The United States has built five ANA bases: Herat (Corps 207), Gardez (Corps 203), Qandahar (Corps 205), Mazar-e-Sharif (Corps 209), and Kabul (Division HQ, Corps 201, Air Corps). Coalition officers conduct heavy weapons training for a heavy brigade as part of the “Kabul Corps,” based in Pol-e-Charki, east of Kabul. U.S. funds are being used to construct a new Defense Ministry headquarters in Kabul at a cost of about \$92 million.

ANA Ethnic and Factional Considerations

At the time the United States first began establishing the ANA, Northern Alliance figures who were then in key security positions weighted recruitment for the national army toward its Tajik ethnic base. Many Pashtuns, in reaction, refused recruitment. The naming of a Pashtun, Abdul Rahim Wardak, as Defense Minister in December 2004 reduced desertions among Pashtuns. (In August 2012, he was ousted by the National Assembly on accusation of corruption and failing to prevent shelling from Pakistan in August 2012. U.S. officials in Afghanistan say this problem was further alleviated with better pay and more close involvement by U.S. forces, and that the force is ethnically integrated in each unit and representative. According to the December 2012 Defense Department report, the overall ANSF force is roughly in line with the broad demographics of the country, although Tajiks might be slightly overrepresented in the officer ranks (p.58). However, U.S. commanders say that those Pashtuns who are in the force are disproportionately eastern Pashtuns (from the Ghilzai tribal confederations) rather than southern Pashtuns (mostly Durrani tribal confederations). In recent years, a greater proportion of southern Pashtuns have recruited to redress that imbalance somewhat, and the October 2011 DOD report said that a re-evaluation in 2011 shows that there are more southern Pashtuns in the force than previously thought.

Until 2010, the chief of staff was General Bismillah Khan, a Tajik who was a Northern Alliance commander. He was replaced by a Pashtun, Lt. Gen. Sher Mohammad Karimi. Until his ouster by the National Assembly in August 2012—on the same grounds as the ousting of Wardak—Bismillah Khan was Interior Minister since June 2012. In that position, he reportedly promoted his Tajik allies to key positions—a development closely watched and opposed by Pashtuns in government. In early September 2012, Karzai named Bismillah Khan as Defense Minister; and professional police commander Ghulam Mojtaba Patang as Interior Minister. He also named a new intelligence director (National Directorate of Security, NDS)—Asadullah Khalid, former Qandahar governor and a close Karzai ally, to replace Rehmat Nabil. All three were confirmed overwhelmingly by the National Assembly, and the reshuffling preserves the relative ethnic balance among the top security chiefs. Khalid was wounded in an assassination attempt in December 2012, but he is expected to survive and continue his duties after treatment abroad.

Afghan Air Force

Equipment, maintenance, and logistical difficulties continue to plague the Afghan Air Force, and it remains mostly a support force for ground operations rather than a combat-oriented force. However, the Afghan Air Force has been able to make ANA units nearly self-sufficient in airlift. 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 has about over 5,725 personnel, including 400 pilots, of a target size of about 8,000 by 2016. It has about 98 aircraft including gunship, attack, and transport

helicopters—of a planned fleet of 140 aircraft. The approximately 135 Afghan pilots are based at Bagram air base. There are five female Afghan Air Force personnel; four arrived in the United States in July 2011 for training as military helicopter pilots.

Afghanistan also 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 as part of a broader request for the United States to augment Afghan air capabilities, according to U.S. military officials. There is a concern that Afghanistan will not soon have the capability to sustain operations of an aircraft as sophisticated as the F-16. In 2010, Russia and Germany supplied MI-8 helicopters to the Afghan Air Force. The Brazilian firm Embraer was under a DOD contract (\$355 million) to provide 20 Super Tucano turboprop aircraft to the Afghan Air Force, although the work fell behind schedule and DOD may rebid all or part of the contract.

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 insurgency as building the ANA. The DOD reports on Afghanistan, cited earlier, contains substantial detail on U.S.-led efforts to continue what it says are “significant strides [that] have been made in professionalizing the ANP.” Outside assessments are widely disparaging, asserting that there is rampant corruption to the point where citizens mistrust and fear the ANP. Among other criticisms are a desertion rate far higher than that of the ANA; substantial illiteracy; involvement in local factional or ethnic disputes because the ANP works in the communities its personnel come from; and widespread use of drugs. It is this view that has led to consideration of stepped up efforts to promote local security solutions such as those discussed above.

Bismillah Khan, the former Interior Minister, was highly respected as ANA chief of staff and took steps to try to improve the ANP, including through unannounced visits to stations around the country. He also instituted salary increases and objective standards for promotions and assignments. His reform efforts build on those taken in March 2010, by then-Interior Minister Atmar when he signed a “strategic guidance” document for the ANP, which prioritizes eliminating corruption within the ANP and winning public confidence. About 1,300 ANP are women, demonstrating some commitment to gender integration of the force. His successor, police Gen. Patang, is expected to earn high respect and loyalty as Interior Minister because he is the first professional officer to be appointed to the top police leadership slot.

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

The United States has worked to correct longstanding equipment deficiencies. The ANP is increasingly being provided with heavy weapons and now have about 5,000 armored vehicles countrywide. Still, most police units lack adequate ammunition and vehicles. In some cases, equipment requisitioned by their commanders is being sold and the funds pocketed by the police officers. These activities contributed to the failure of a 2006 “auxiliary police” effort that attempted to rapidly field large numbers of new ANP officers.

The U.S. police training effort was first led by State Department/INL, but DOD took over the lead in police training in April 2005. Some U.S. officials believe that the United States and its partners still have not centered on a clearly effective police training strategy. A number of programs, such as the auxiliary police program attempted during 2005 was discarded as ineffective, and replaced during 2007-2011 with a program called “*focused district development*.” In that program, a district police force was taken out and retrained, its duties temporarily performed by more highly trained police (Afghan National Civil Order Police, or ANCOP, which number about 9,400 nationwide), and then reinserted after the training is complete. However, the ANCOP officers are currently being used mostly to staff new checkpoints that are better securing the most restive districts. Police training 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 observers are increasingly monitoring the police force to prevent abuses.

Supplements to the National Police: Afghan Local Police (ALP) and Other Local Forces

The failure of several police training efforts led to efforts, beginning in 2008, to develop local forces to protect their communities. Until then, U.S. military commanders opposed assisting local militias anywhere in Afghanistan for fear of re-creating militias that commit abuses and administer arbitrary justice. However, the urgent security needs in Afghanistan caused General Petraeus and his successors to expand local security experiments, based on successful experiences in Iraq and after designing mechanisms to place them firmly under Afghan government (mainly Ministry of Interior) control. Among these initiatives are:

- *Village Stability Operations/Afghan Local Police (ALP)*. The Village Stability Operations concept began in February 2010 in Arghandab district of Qandahar Province. U.S. Special Operations Forces organized about 25 villagers into an armed neighborhood watch group, and the program was credited by U.S. commanders as bringing normal life back to the district. The pilot program was expanded and formalized into a joint Afghan-U.S. Special Operations effort in which 12 person teams from these forces live in communities to help improve governance, security, and development.
- An outgrowth of the Village Stability Operations is the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program in which the U.S. Special Operations Forces conducting the Village Stability Operations set up and train local security organs of about 300 members each. These local units are under the control of district police chiefs and each fighter is vetted by a local shura as well as Afghan intelligence. There are about 17,000 ALP operating in over 60 different districts, including out of three ALP centers in Helmand province. A total of 137 districts have been approved for the program, which is expected to bring the target size of the program to about 30,000 by the end of 2015. However, the ALP program, and associated and preceding such programs discussed below, were heavily criticized in a September 12, 2011, Human Rights Watch report citing wide-scale human rights abuses (killings, rapes, arbitrary detentions, and land grabs) committed by the recruits. The report triggered a U.S. military investigation which substantiated many of the report’s findings, although not the most serious of the allegations.⁴⁵ In May

⁴⁵ Ernesto Londono. “U.S. Cites Local Afghan Police Abuses.” *Washington Post*, December 16, 2011. The Human (continued...)

2012, Karzai ordered one ALP unit in Konduz disbanded because of its alleged involvement in a rape there. And, ALP personnel reportedly were responsible for some of the insider attacks in 2012.

- The ALP initiative was also an adaptation of another program, begun in 2008, termed the “Afghan Provincial Protection Program” (APPP, commonly called “AP3”), funded with DOD (CERP) funds. The APPP got under way in Wardak Province (Jalrez district) in early 2009 and 100 local security personnel “graduated” in May 2009. It was subsequently expanded to 1,200 personnel. U.S. commanders said no U.S. weapons were supplied to the militias, but the Afghan government provided weapons (Kalashnikov rifles) to the recruits, possibly using U.S. funds. Participants in the program are given \$200 per month. General Petraeus showcased Wardak in August 2010 as an example of the success of the APPP and similar efforts. The National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-84) called for a report on the program within 120 days of the October 28, 2009, enactment.
- *Afghan Public Protection Force*. This force is growing, under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior, to guard development sites and organizations. The force was developed to implement Karzai’s August 17, 2010, decree (No. 62) that private security contractor forces be disbanded and their functions performed by official Afghan government forces by March 20, 2012. That deadline was extended to March 2013 because of the slow pace of standing up the new protection force, and some development organizations continue to use locally hired guard forces. At about 11,000 personnel as of October 2012, it has begun operations to secure supply convoys. It is intended to grow to 30,000 personnel by March 2013, the revised deadline for it to assume full responsibilities. Until it reaches full capability, embassies and other diplomatic entities can still use private security firms. The Interior Minister, Gen. Patang, was in charge of building this force prior to his September 2012 ministerial appointment.

The local security experiments to date resemble but technically are not *arbokai*, which are private tribal militias. Some believe that the *arbokai* concept should be revived as a means of securing Afghanistan, as the *arbokai* did during the reign of Zahir Shah and in prior pre-Communist eras. Reports persist that some tribal groupings have formed *arbokai* without specific authorization.

The local security programs discussed above appear to reverse the 2002-2007 efforts to disarm local sources of armed force. And, as noted in the April 2012 DOD report on Afghan stability, there have sometimes been clashes and disputes between ALP and ANSF units, particularly in cases where the units are of different ethnicities. These are the types of problems that prompted the earlier efforts to disarm rather than establish local militia forces, as discussed below.

DDR. 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,

(...continued)

Rights Watch report is entitled “Just Don’t Call It a Militia.” <http://www.hrw.org>, September 12, 2011.

Uzbeks, and Hazaras, enabling DDR to proceed. The major donor for the program was Japan, which contributed about \$140 million. Figures for collected weapons are in and U.S. spending on the programs are in the U.S. aid tables later in the report.

The DDR program was initially expected to demobilize 100,000 fighters, although that figure was later reduced. (Figures for accomplishment of the DDR and DIAG programs are contained in **Table 6.**) 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.⁴⁶ 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.

Despite the earlier demobilization, which affected many of the northern minorities, there are indications that some faction leaders may be seeking to revive disbanded militias. The minorities may fear increased Taliban influence as a result of the Karzai reconciliation efforts, and the minorities want to be sure they could combat any Taliban abuses that might result if the Taliban achieves a share of power.

DIAG. Since June 11, 2005, the disarmament effort has emphasized another program called “DIAG”—Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups. It is run by the Afghan Disarmament and Reintegration Commission, headed by Vice President Khalili. Under the DIAG, no payments are available to fighters, and the program depends on persuasion rather than use of force against the illegal groups. DIAG has not been as well funded as was DDR: it has received \$11 million in operating funds. As an incentive for compliance, Japan and other donors have made available \$35 million for development projects where illegal groups have disbanded. These incentives were intended to accomplish the disarmament of a pool of as many as 150,000 members of 1,800 different “illegal armed groups”: militiamen that were not part of recognized local forces (Afghan Military Forces, AMF) and were never on the rolls of the Defense Ministry. These goals were not met by the December 2007 target date in part because armed groups in the south say they need to remain armed against the Taliban, but UNAMA reports that 100 out of 140 districts planned for DIAG are now considered “DIAG compliant.” (U.N. Secretary General Report, March 9, 2011).

Rule of Law/Criminal Justice Sector

Many experts believe that an effective justice sector is vital to Afghan governance. Some of the criticisms and allegations of corruption at all levels of the Afghan bureaucracy have been discussed throughout this report. U.S. justice sector programs generally focus on promoting rule of law and building capacity of the judicial system, including police training and court construction. The rule of law issue is covered in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman, and CRS Report R41484,

⁴⁶ For an analysis of the DDR program, see Christian Denny. *Disarmament, Demobilization and Rearmament?*, June 6, 2005, <http://www.jca.apc.org/~jann/Documents/Disarmament%20demobilization%20rearmament.pdf>.

Afghanistan: U.S. Rule of Law and Justice Sector Assistance, by Liana Sun Wyler and Kenneth Katzman.

Policy Component: Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)

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, the concept for which was 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 on counter-insurgency. Many of the additional U.S. civilian officials deployed to Afghanistan during 2009 and 2010 have been based at PRTs, which have facilities, vehicles, and security. Some aid agencies say they have felt more secure since the PRT program began,⁴⁷ but several relief groups did not want to associate with military forces because doing so might taint their perceived neutrality.

Virtually all the PRTs, listed in **Table 16**, were placed under the ISAF mission. Each PRT operated by the United States has U.S. forces; DOD 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 report.

The Afghan government and some outside organizations have long argued that the PRTs have hampered Afghan government efforts to acquire the skills and resources to secure and develop Afghanistan on its own. USAID observers say there has been little Afghan input, either into development project decision making or as contractors for facility and other construction. To address some of this criticism, during 2008-2012 some donor countries enhanced the civilian component of the PRTs and tried to change their image from military institutions. The State Department sought to “civilianize” U.S.-run PRTs by assuming a larger role for State Dept. and USAID development and governance experts at the PRTs. In 2006, the PRT in the Panjshir Valley became the first U.S.-led PRT to be State Department led. As noted, in March 2009, the Netherlands converted its PRT to civilian lead, although that alteration ceased after the assumption of U.S. and Australian PRT command in July 2010.

Still, President Karzai criticized the PRTs as holding back Afghan capacity-building and called for their abolition as “parallel governing structures.” The declaration of the May 20-21, 2012, NATO summit in Chicago expresses agreement to phase out the PRTs. Karzai’s July 26, 2012, administrative reforms called on the Afghan government to begin planning to assume their functions and, in July 2012, the first U.S.-PRT closed (Laghman Province). Several have closed since and those remaining—along with local U.S.-led structures such as District Support Teams (which help district officials provide government services)—are to close by the end of 2014.

⁴⁷ Kraul, Chris. “U.S. Aid Effort Wins Over Skeptics in Afghanistan.” *Los Angeles Times*, April 11, 2003.

Cooperation With Allies/Managing the 2014 Exit

Partner forces have been key to the U.S. mission in Afghanistan. Since 2006, the vast bulk of all U.S. troops in Afghanistan have served under the umbrella of the NATO-led “International Security Assistance Force” (ISAF). ISAF consists of all 28 NATO member states plus partner countries—a total of 50 countries including the United States. However, as the transition to Afghan security leadership began in July 2011, U.S. officials have been attempting, with some success, to prevent a “rush to the exits” in which partner forces pull out before their areas of responsibility are ready for transition. U.S. officials want partner drawdowns to occur at roughly the same rate and proportion as the U.S. drawdown occurs—a rate that has been achieved.

Virtually all the European governments have long been under pressure from their publics and parliaments to end or reduce their military involvement in Afghanistan. During 2010 and 2011, the Netherlands and Canada, respectively, ended their combat missions. Canada continues to furnish 950 trainers for the ANSF, and the Netherlands retained 500 trainers after its combat mission ended. Partner forces that continue to bear the brunt of combat in Afghanistan include Britain, Canada, Poland, France, Denmark, Romania, and Australia.

Still, some partner countries have announced withdrawals before the end of 2014.

- President Francois Hollande, inaugurated in May 2012, reiterated in the context of the May 20-21 NATO summit in Chicago that he would fulfill his pledge to pull French combat troops out by the end of 2012, a year earlier than the time frame of former President Sarkozy. France turned over Kapisa Province to Afghan control on July 4, 2012, and it formally ended its combat mission in November 2012. About 1,500 French troops remain into 2013 to repatriate equipment and continue training the ANSF.
- Britain announced in early 2012 that it would withdraw about 500 of its force by the end of 2012, and the remainder of the contingent would remain until the end of 2014. However, in September 2012, British officials and commanders asserted that their mission in Helmand is winding down and they reportedly will remove about 3,800 forces during 2013. Britain has signed a partnership agreement with Afghanistan and it is likely to keep some trainers in Afghanistan after 2014.
- Italy and Germany have indicated a reduction in their involvement in Afghanistan before the end of 2014. Germany said in October 2012 that it will likely cap its troop contribution at 4,400 for 2013 and to 3,300 for 2014. Germany will, on the other hand, augment its combat helicopter force to partially compensate for the declining ground capabilities. Both Germany and Italy have signed bilateral strategic agreements with Afghanistan to continue to train Afghan forces after 2014, although Germany is said to want a U.N. mandate for any international forces in Afghanistan after 2014. Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti visited Afghanistan in early November 2012 and indicated Italy would remain in Afghanistan after 2014, but without stating force levels or missions.
- Denmark said it will withdraw 120 troops by the end of 2012, but will increase development aid and ANSF training contributions.
- Poland said in March 2012 that it would not withdraw forces before the end of 2014.

- Belgium is to remove 300 personnel from Kabul International Airport by the end of 2012.
- Turkey is to redeploy 200-300 personnel from Kabul by the end of 2013.
- Australia plans to end its mission in Afghanistan before the 2014 completion of the transition. In April 2012, it began to hand off its mission in Uruzgan Province to Afghan forces.
- New Zealand said in May 2012 it will withdraw its troops in Bamiyan Province in early 2013. Its PRT will close in April 2013.
- South Korea said in July 2012 that it might pull at least some of its 400 forces out of Parwan Province in early 2013, with the remainder to stay until the end of 2014.
- On the other hand, Georgia said in late November 2012 it had doubled its troops in Afghanistan to about 1,570—a decision likely intended, at least in part, to support its bid to join NATO.

Table 5. Background on NATO/ISAF Formation and U.N. Mandate

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was created by the Bonn Agreement and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 (December 20, 2001, a Chapter 7 resolution),⁴⁸ initially limited to Kabul. In October 2003, after Germany agreed to contribute 450 military personnel to expand ISAF into the city of Konduz, ISAF contributors endorsed expanding its presence to several other cities, contingent on formal U.N. approval—which came on October 14, 2003, in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1510. In August 2003, NATO took over command of ISAF—previously the ISAF command rotated among donor forces including Turkey and Britain.

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

The ISAF mission was renewed (until October 13, 2012) by U.N. Security Council Resolution 2011 (October 12, 2011), which reiterated previous resolutions' support for the Operation Enduring Freedom mission. Resolution 2069 of October 10, 2012, renewed the mandate for another full year. Some countries, such as Germany and Russia (not an ISAF member) want a U.N. mandate to authorize international forces to remain in Afghanistan after 2014. Tables at the end of this report list contributing forces, areas of operations, and their Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

Major Contingent Developments During the U.S. "Surge"

U.S. partners note that they have repeatedly answered U.S. calls to support the mission. In concert with the beginning of the U.S. surge in early 2009, additional pledges came through at the April 3-4, 2009, NATO summit, and other force pledges were announced in conjunction with the

⁴⁸ 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).

January 28, 2010, conference on Afghanistan in London. Among major pledges (troops and major aid funds) that supported the U.S. surge:

- July 2009: South Korea announced it would increase its aid contribution to Afghanistan by about \$20 million, in part to expand the hospital capabilities at Bagram Air Base. In July 2010, it returned about 150 engineers to Afghanistan for development missions, protected by 400 South Korean forces, to Parwan Province.⁴⁹
- November 10, 2009: Ahead of President Obama's visit to Asia, Japan announced a pledge of \$5 billion over the next five years for Afghanistan civilian development, although it suspended its naval refueling mission. Japan has been covering about half of the \$250 million yearly salary costs of the ANP.
- December 2009-January 2010 (London conference): A total of about 9,000 forces were pledged (including retaining 2,000 sent for the August 2009 election who were due to rotate out). Several countries pledged police trainers.

Potential Upside Surprises: Reintegration and Reconciliation With Insurgents⁵⁰

Although many remain pessimistic about Afghan stability after 2014, some believe that there are opportunities for an outcome that might be substantially better than expected. Such a positive outcome could result from a political settlement with the insurgency, either in advance of or shortly after the completion of the transition in 2014. The issues of reintegrating insurgent fighters into society and reconciling with insurgent leaders, have received high-level attention. Both are Afghan-led processes but they have concerned some in the international community and Afghanistan because of the potential for compromises with insurgents that may produce backsliding on human rights. Most insurgents are highly conservative Islamists who agreed with the limitations in women's rights that characterized Taliban rule. Many leaders of ethnic minorities are also skeptical of the effort because they fear that it might further Pashtun political strength within Afghanistan, and enhance the influence of Pakistan in Afghan politics. The United States and the Karzai government agree that any settlement requires that fighters and insurgent leaders agree, as an outcome,⁵¹ to (1) cease fighting, (2) accept the Afghan constitution, and (3) sever any ties to Al Qaeda or other terrorist groups.

⁴⁹ 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. Two were killed during their captivity. The Taliban kidnappers did not get the demanded release of 23 Taliban prisoners held by the Afghan government.

⁵⁰ This issue is discussed in substantial detail in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman

⁵¹ The concept that this stipulations could be an "outcome" of negotiations was advanced by Secretary of State Clinton at the first annual Richard C. Holbrooke Memorial Address. February 18, 2011.

Reintegration

The concept of providing incentives to persuade insurgents to surrender and reenter their communities has received at least some U.S. and Afghan attention since 2002. The elements included in a formal reintegration plan drafted by the Afghan government and adopted by a “peace *loya jirga*” during June 2-4, 2010,⁵² included providing surrendering fighters with jobs, amnesty, protection, and an opportunity to be part of the security architecture for their communities. Later in June 2010, President Karzai issued a decree to implement the plan, which involves outreach by Afghan local leaders to tribes and others who can convince insurgents to lay down their arms. The Afghan plan received formal international backing at the July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference. Britain, Japan, and several other countries, including the United States, have announced a total of about \$235 million in donations to a new fund to support the reintegration process, of which \$134 million has been received.⁵³ The U.S. contribution is about \$100 million (CERP funds), of which \$50 million was formally pledged in April 2011.⁵⁴

The reintegration process has moved forward slowly. As of the end of 2012, about 6,800 fighters are in the reintegration process. However, the pace of reintegration slowed somewhat in 2012, according to the Defense Department. Those reintegrated are still mostly overwhelmingly (about 3,900 of the reintegrees) from the north and west, with perhaps some gradually increasing participation from militants in the more violent south and east. Some observers say there have been cases in which reintegrated fighters have committed Taliban-style human rights abuses against women and others, suggesting that the reintegration process might have unintended consequences.

Previous efforts had marginal success. A “Program for Strengthening Peace and Reconciliation” (referred to in Afghanistan by its Pashto acronym “PTS”) operated during 2003-2008, headed by then *Meshrano Jirga* speaker Sibghatullah Mojadeddi and Vice President Karim Khalili, and overseen by Karzai’s National Security Council. The program persuaded 9,000 Taliban figures and commanders to renounce violence and join the political process, but made little impact on the tenacity or strength of the insurgency.

Reconciliation With Militant Leaders

A related U.S. and Afghan initiative is to reach a conflict-ending settlement with the Taliban. Many in the international community, including within the Obama Administration, initially withheld endorsement of the concept, fearing it might result in the incorporation into the Afghan political system of insurgent leaders who retain ties to Al Qaeda and will roll back freedoms instituted since 2011. The minority communities in the north, women, intellectuals, and others remain skeptical that their freedoms can be preserved if there is a political settlement with the Taliban. These groups fear that the Taliban could be given major ministries, seats in parliament, or even tacit control over territory as part of any deal. Secretary Clinton said in India on July 20, 2011, that any settlement must not result in and undoing of “the progress that has been made [by women and ethnic minorities] in the past decade.” To respond to those fears, Afghan and U.S.

⁵² Afghanistan National Security Council. “Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program.” April 2010.

⁵³ United Nations. Report of the Secretary General: “The Situation in Afghanistan and Its Implications for International Peace and Security.” March 9, 2011.

⁵⁴ The National Defense Authorization Act for FY2010 (P.L. 111-84) authorized the use of CERP funds to win local support, to “reintegrate” Taliban fighters.

officials say that the outcome of a settlement would require the Taliban to drop at least some of its demands that (1) foreign troops leave Afghanistan; (2) a new “Islamic” constitution be adopted; and (3) Islamic law be imposed.

Following the 2010 U.S. shift to supporting a settlement, an “Afghan High Peace Council” intended to oversee the settlement process was established on September 5, 2010. Former President and Northern Alliance political leader Burhanuddin Rabbani was appointed by Karzai to head it as a Karzai effort to bring skeptical Tajiks and other minorities to support reconciliation. These minority figures, as noted above, fear that reconciliation with the Taliban will strengthen Pashtun control of government to the detriment of the non-Pashtun minorities. Among other accomplishments, Rabbani established provincial representative offices of the Council in at least 27 provinces. On September 20, 2011, Rabbani was assassinated by a Taliban infiltrator posing as an intermediary. On April 14, 2012, the High Peace Council members voted Rabbani’s son, Salahuddin, as his replacement.

Prior to the Rabbani killing, U.S., Taliban, and Afghan representatives had proliferated. In May 2011, it was reported that U.S. officials had met at least three times in 2011 with Tayeb Agha, a figure believed close to Mullah Umar. In late June 2011, those meetings were confirmed by then-Secretary of Defense Gates, who said the talks had been led by the State Department and have been facilitated by Germany and Qatar. However, the process stalled after the Rabbani assassination and Pakistan’s boycott of the December 5, 2011, Bonn Conference over a November 26, 2011, security incident in which U.S. forces killed 24 Pakistani border troops.

In December 2011, as tensions over these issues abated, U.S. officials resumed the process, including pursuing the opening of a Taliban political office in Qatar to facilitate talks. The discussion of a Taliban office in Qatar came amid reports that U.S. officials had been meeting Taliban figures more frequently than was previously believed. The Taliban office has not formally opened to date, but some Taliban figures are operating from Qatar informally, as discussed below. The United States also revealed it had discussed “confidence-building measure” in the form of transferring captives from the Guantanamo detention facility to a form of house arrest in Qatar—to be conducted simultaneous with the Taliban release of the one U.S. prisoner of war, it holds, Bowe Bergdahl. The United States also demanded a public Taliban statement severing its ties to Al Qaeda or other terrorist groups, possibly as a prelude to a limited battlefield ceasefire. There were also discussions of transitioning the talks from U.S.-led to Afghan government-led, although the Taliban was reluctant to undertake such talks because doing so would recognize the government’s legitimacy. A release of Taliban captives would require U.S. congressional notification. The Taliban figures to be released to Qatar include some, such as Mullah Mohammad Fazl who were major figures in the Taliban regime (Fazl was deputy defense minister). H.Res. 529 expresses opposition to their release. The confidence-building measures did not take advance, and talks stalled in March 2012 reportedly over Qatar’s failure to fully assure the United States that the detainees would be able to escape custody. Some U.S. officials say that all sides were not close to serious negotiations on the core issues of any political settlement.

Still, the reconciliation issue appears to be alive. Observers say that several Taliban figures are operating in Qatar informally, without a formal “office,” using it as a base to talk with U.S. officials and to attend meetings abroad with Afghan officials. In February 2012, Pakistani leaders, for the first time, publicly encouraged Taliban leaders to negotiate a settlement to the conflict. In late June 2012, Afghan government officials and Taliban representatives held talks at two meetings—one in Paris, and one an academic conference in Kyoto, Japan, on reconciliation issues. At the Kyoto meeting, the Afghan government was represented by Mohammad Stanekzai,

a member of the High Peace Council, and the Taliban was represented by Qari Din Mohammad, a member of the Taliban political council who had traveled from Qatar. The Kyoto meeting appeared to represent an acceptance by the Taliban of direct talks with Afghan government officials. In August 2012, Afghan officials reportedly held talks with high-ranking Taliban figure Mullah Abdul Ghani Bradar,⁵⁵ who was arrested by Pakistan in February 2010, purportedly to halt between Bradar and Afghan intermediaries. A potentially even more significant meeting took place in France during December 20-21, 2012, because talks took place between senior Taliban figures and members of the Northern Alliance faction – considered least amenable to reconciling with the Taliban – and included submission by the Taliban of a political platform that signalled acceptance of some aspects of human rights and women’s rights provisions of the current constitution.

Highly significantly, Pakistan is signaling that it wants to play a more active role in the reconciliation process. More significant steps came in the course of a visit to Pakistan in mid-November 2012, by Salahuddin Rabbani and other High Peace Council members, as well as a subsequent visit by Afghan Foreign Minister Rassoul. As a result of the visits, Pakistan released at least eighteen high ranking Taliban figures who favor reconciliation, and it released another eight in December 2012. Among the released was the son of the late *mujahedin* party leader Yunus Khalis and Noorudin Turabi, the Justice Minister in the Taliban regime. Some Afghan officials express optimism the talks will yield a settlement eventually, particularly if the Afghan government provides assurances of security for Taliban leaders who reconcile. The Pakistani movement has also provided a political boost to the High Peace Council and its leader;

Previous talks have taken place primarily in Saudi Arabia and UAE. Press reports said that Afghan officials, including Karzai’s brother, Qayyum; Arsala Rahmani, a former Taliban official who reconciled but was assassinated in May 2012; and the former Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan, Abdul Salam Zaeef, who purportedly is in touch with Umar’s inner circle. These same Taliban representatives may be involved in the ongoing talks referred to above. The Taliban as a movement was not invited to the June 2-4, 2010, consultative peace *jirga*, but some Taliban sympathizers reportedly were there.

Removing Taliban Figures From U.N. Sanctions Lists. A key Taliban demand in negotiations - and supported by the Karzai government - is the removal of the names of some Taliban figures from U.N. lists of terrorists. These lists were established pursuant to Resolution 1267 and Resolution 1333 (October 15, 1999, and December 19, 2000, both pre-September 11 sanctions against the Taliban and Al Qaeda) and Resolution 1390 (January 16, 2002). Press reports before the July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference said the Afghan government has submitted a list of 50 Taliban figures it wants taken off this list (which includes about 140 Taliban-related persons or entities) as a confidence-building measure. The Conference called on Afghanistan to engage with the U.N. Security Council to provide evidence to justify such de-listings, and U.N., U.S., and other international officials said they would support considering de-listings on a case-by-case basis. On January 26, 2010, Russia, previously a hold-out against such a process, dropped opposition to removing five Taliban-era figures from these sanctions lists, including Taliban-era foreign minister Wakil Mutawwakil, who ran in 2005 parliamentary elections. Also removed was Abdul Hakim Monib, who has served Karzai as governor of Uruzgan, Abdul Hakim Mujahid, who was Taliban representative in the United States, and three others. Mujahid now is one of

⁵⁵ “Afghan Officials Meet Key Taliban Figure in Pakistan.” Reuters.com, August 12, 2012.

three deputy chairs of the High Peace Council. “Mullah Rocketi,” not on the sanctions list, is a former Taliban commander who ran for president in the August 2009 elections.

On June 17, 2011, in concert with U.S. confirmations of talks with Taliban figures, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1988 and 1989. The resolutions drew a separation between the Taliban and Al Qaeda with regard to the sanctions. However, a decision on whether to remove the 50 Taliban figures from the list, as suggested by Afghanistan, was deferred. On July 21, 2011, 14 Taliban figures were removed from the “1267” sanctions list; among them were four members of the High Peace Council (including Arsala Rahmani, mentioned above).

Table 6. Major Security-Related Indicators

Force	Current Level
Total Foreign Forces in Afghanistan	About 103,000: 66,000 U.S. and 37,000 partner forces. (U.S. total was: 25,000 in 2005; 16,000 in 2003; 5,000 in 2002. ISAF totals were: 12,000 in 2005; and 6,000 in 2003.)
U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan	2,044 killed, of which 1,703 by hostile action. Additional 11 U.S. deaths by hostile action in other OEF theaters and 1 DOD civilian killed by hostile action. 150 U.S. killed from October 2001-January 2003. 500+ killed in 2010.
NATO/ISAF Sectors	RC-South: U.K. lead. RC-Southwest: U.S. lead; RC-East: U.S. lead; RC-North: Germany lead; RC-West: Italy lead; RC-Kabul: Turkey and Afghan lead.
Afghan National Army (ANA)	About 195,000, the target size that was planned by November 2012. 5,300 are commando forces, trained by U.S. Special Forces. ANA private paid about \$200 per month; generals about \$750 per month.
Afghan National Police (ANP)	About 157,000, the target size planned by November 2012. 21,000 are Border Police; 3,800+ counter-narcotics police; 14,400 Civil Order Police (ANCOP).
ANSF Salaries	About \$1.6 billion per year, paid by donor countries bilaterally or via trust funds
Number of Al Qaeda	“Less than 100 or so,” according to General Petraeus in April 2011. Also, small numbers of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and other Al Qaeda affiliates.
Number of Taliban fighters	Up to 25,000 (U.S. military and Afghan estimates in mid-2011), although General Allen believes numbers are much lower. Plus about 3,000 Haqqani faction and 1,000 HIG.
Reintegrations	About 6,800 fighters reintegrated since 2010
Afghan casualties	See CRS Report R41084, <i>Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians</i> , by Susan G. Chesser.

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

Regional Dimension

The Obama Administration is promoting Afghanistan’s integration into regional security and economic organizations and patterns, and to deter Afghanistan’s neighbors from meddling there to secure their own interests in a post-2014 Afghanistan. The Administration obtained pledges from Afghanistan’s neighbors to that concept at a region-led international meeting in Istanbul on November 2, 2011 (“Istanbul Declaration”) and again at the December 5, 2011, Bonn Conference on Afghanistan (the 10th anniversary of the Bonn Conference that formed the post-Taliban political and security architecture for Afghanistan). The latter meeting was attended by high-level representatives from 85 countries and 15 international organizations. Although the final declaration of the conference affirmed that vision, Pakistan decided not to send high-level

representation to the conference because of a November 26, 2011, security incident with the United States, reducing the conference's focus on regional integration.

As a follow-up to the Istanbul Declaration, the regional component of Afghan stability post-2014, including possible confidence-building measures to be taken by Afghanistan's neighbors, were discussed at a Kabul ministerial conference on June 14, 2012. At that meeting, also known as the "Heart of Asia" ministerial conference, Afghanistan hosted 14 other countries from the region, as well as 14 supporting countries and 11 regional and international organizations. The assembled nations and organizations agreed to jointly fight terrorism and drug trafficking, and pursue economic development.⁵⁶ The Administration is emphasizing development of a Central Asia-South Asia trading hub—part of a "New Silk Road" (NSR)—in an effort to keep Afghanistan stable and economically vibrant as donors wind down their involvement.

Prior to the recent efforts, Afghanistan has been slowly integrated into regional security and economic organizations. In November 2005, Afghanistan joined the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and, in June 2012, Afghanistan was granted full observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a security coordination body that includes Russia, China, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. There was extensive discussion of greater SCO country involvement in Afghanistan after the 2014 transition during the June 6-7, 2012, meeting of the group in Beijing, which Karzai attended. U.S. officials have also sought to enlist both regional and greater international support for Afghanistan through the still-expanding 50-nation "International Contact Group."

Several regional meeting series have been established involving Afghanistan, including

- Summit meetings between Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Turkey; and between Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. The latest Iran-Afghanistan-Pakistan meeting took place in Islamabad on February 16-17, 2012. The previous such meeting occurred in Tehran on June 25, 2011. The fifth of the Turkey-led meetings occurred on December 24, 2010.
- Turkey and UNAMA co-chair a "Regional Working Group" initiative, which organized the major meeting on Afghanistan in Istanbul on November 2, 2011. UNAMA also leads a "Kabul Silk Road" initiative, to promote regional cooperation on Afghanistan.
- Russia has assembled two "quadrilateral summits," the latest of which was on August 18, 2010, among Pakistan, Russia, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan, and focused on counter-narcotics and anti-smuggling.
- Another effort is the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan, which was launched in 2005. It held its fifth meeting in Tajikistan on March 26-27, 2012.

⁵⁶ Participating were: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, UAE, and Uzbekistan.

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

Facility	Use
Bagram Air Base	50 miles north of Kabul, the operational hub of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and base for CJTF-82. At least 2,000 U.S. military personnel are based there. Handles many of the 150+ U.S. aircraft (including helicopters) in country. Hospital constructed, one of the first permanent structures there. FY2005 supplemental (P.L. 109-13) provided about \$52 million for various projects to upgrade facilities at Bagram, including a control tower and an operations center, and the FY2006 supplemental appropriation (P.L. 109-234) provided \$20 million for military construction there. NATO also using the base and sharing operational costs. Bagram can be accessed directly by U.S. military flights following April 2010 agreement by Kazakhstan to allow overflights of U.S. lethal equipment.
Qandahar Air Field	Just outside Qandahar, the hub of military operations in the south. Turned over from U.S. to NATO/ISAF control in late 2006 in conjunction with NATO assumption of peacekeeping responsibilities. Enhanced (along with other facilities in the south) at cost of \$1.3 billion to accommodate influx of U.S. combat forces in the south.
Shindand Air Base	In Farah province, about 20 miles from Iran border. Used by U.S. forces and combat aircraft since October 2004, after the dismissal of Herat governor Ismail Khan, who controlled it.
Peter Ganci Base: Manas, Kyrgyzstan	Used by 1,200 U.S. military personnel as well as refueling and cargo aircraft for shipments into Afghanistan. Leadership of Kyrgyzstan changed in April 2005 in an uprising against President Askar Akayev and again in April 2010 against Kurmanbek Bakiyev. Previous Kyrgyz governments demanded the U.S. vacate the base but in both cases, (July 2006 and July 2009) agreement to use the base was extended in exchange for large increase in U.S. payments for its use (to \$60 million per year in the latter case). Interim government formed in April 2010 first threatened then retracted eviction of U.S. from the base. Defense Secretary Panetta visited in March 2012 to launch talks on extending U.S. use of the facility beyond 2014.
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.
Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar	Largest air facility used by U.S. in region. Houses central air operations coordination center for U.S. missions in Iraq and Afghanistan; also houses CENTCOM forward headquarters. About 5,000 U.S. personnel in Qatar.
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 5,000 U.S. military personnel there.
Karsi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan	Not used by U.S. since September 2005 following U.S.-Uzbek dispute over May 2005 Uzbek crackdown on unrest in Andijon. Once housed about 1,750 U.S. military personnel (900 Air Force, 400 Army, and 450 civilian) supplying Afghanistan. U.S. relations with Uzbekistan have improved since 2009, but there is still no U.S. use of the air base. Some U.S. shipments began in February 2009 through Navoi airfield in central Uzbekistan, and U.S. signed agreement with Uzbekistan on April 4, 2009, allowing nonlethal supplies for the Afghanistan war. Goods are shipped to Latvia and Georgia, some transits Russia by rail, then to Uzbekistan.
Tajikistan	Some use of air bases and other facilities by coalition partners, including France, and emergency use by U.S. India also uses bases under separate agreement. New supply lines to Afghanistan established in February 2009 (“northern route”) make some use of Tajikistan.
Pakistan	As discussed below, most U.S. supplies have flowed through Pakistan, but progressively increased use is being made through the Northern Distribution Network. Heavy equipment docks in Karachi and is escorted by security contractors to the Khyber Pass crossing.
Russia	Allows non-lethal equipment to transit Russia by rail. In March 2012, expressed willingness to allow use of an airfield to move goods to Afghanistan. Still does not allow lethal aid to transit and may reduce cooperation after 2014 if the U.N. mandate for international forces ends.

Pakistan/Pakistan-Afghanistan Border

The Afghanistan neighbor that is considered most crucial to Afghanistan's future is Pakistan, and Pakistan's policies and actions on the Afghanistan issue are of significant concern to U.S. policymakers. The DOD reports on Afghanistan's stability repeatedly identify Afghan militant safe haven in Pakistan as among the largest threats to Afghan stability after 2014. As a possible explanation for why it does not undertake greater efforts to eliminate this safe haven, particularly for the Haqqani Network, Pakistan may be seeking to retain influence over Afghanistan by cultivating allies within Afghanistan. Pakistan's goal in doing so may be to develop leverage against historic rival India; Pakistan appears insistent that Afghanistan, at the very least, not align with rival India, and, at best, provide Pakistan strategic depth against India. Pakistan says India is using its Embassy and four consulates in Afghanistan (Pakistan says India has nine consulates) to train and recruit anti-Pakistan insurgents, and is using its aid programs to build influence there. Still, Pakistan's releases of major pragmatic Afghan Taliban figures since November 2012 could signal a shift toward promoting stability in Afghanistan after 2014; this could reflect a Pakistani assessment that chaos in Afghanistan will rebound to Pakistan's detriment.

The May 1, 2011, U.S. raid that killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan added to pre-existing strains on U.S.-Pakistan cooperation in Afghanistan – strains mainly over Pakistan's refusal to crack down on the Haqqani network. U.S. concerns about Pakistan's stance on the Haqqanis increased significantly in the wake of the September 13, 2011, attack on U.S. Embassy Kabul, allegedly by the Haqqani Network. Relations worsened further after a November 26, 2011, incident in which a U.S. airstrike killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. Pakistan responded by closing border crossings, suspending participation in the border coordination centers (see below), and boycotting the December 5 Bonn Conference. With the border crossings still not open seven months after the November 26, 2011, incident, NATO ultimately invited Pakistan to the May 20-21, 2012, NATO summit in Chicago but President Obama declined to hold a formal meeting with President Zardari during that summit. Secretary of State Clinton's July 2, 2012, expression of remorse for the 24 Pakistani soldier deaths in November led Pakistan to reopen the border crossings, removing a key point of tension. Perhaps reflecting Pakistan's intent to rebuild the relationship with the United States, Pakistan muted its reaction to the September 9, 2012 U.S. naming of the Haqqani Network as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

The 2011 U.S.-Pakistan recriminations contrast with the first several years after the September 11, 2001, attacks, when Pakistani cooperation against Al Qaeda was considered by U.S. officials to be relatively consistent and effective. Pakistan arrested over 700 Al Qaeda figures after the September 11 attacks.⁵⁷ Pakistan allowed U.S. 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.

In April 2008, in an extension of the work of the Tripartite Commission (Afghanistan, Pakistan, and ISAF, in which military leaders of these entities meet on both sides of the border), the three countries agreed to set up five "border coordination centers" (BCCs) which 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. Four have been

⁵⁷ 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).

established to date, including one near the Torkham Gate at the Khyber Pass, but all four are on the Afghan side of the border. Pakistan has not fulfilled its May 2009 pledge to establish one on the Pakistani side of the border.

Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations

The U.S. mission in Afghanistan also depends on healthy, consistent, and operationally significant cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan. However, Afghanistan-Pakistan relations have tended to fluctuate. Many Afghans fondly remember Pakistan's role as the hub for U.S. backing of the *mujahedin* that forced the Soviet withdrawal in 1988-1989, but, later, most Afghan leaders came to 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.) Anti-Pakistan sentiment is particularly strong among the minority communities of northern and western Afghanistan, particularly the Tajiks.

After the end of the rule of military leader and President Pervez Musharraf in 2008, there was improvement in Afghanistan-Pakistan relations. Karzai attended the September 9, 2008, inauguration of civilian President Asif Zardari. Zardari visited Kabul on January 9, 2009, where he and Karzai signed a joint declaration against terrorism that affects both countries. (A September 2010 meeting between them reaffirmed this declaration.) Afghan and Pakistani ministers jointly visited Washington, DC, during February 23-27, 2009, to participate in the first Obama Administration strategic review, and Karzai and Zardari conducted a joint visit to Washington, DC, in May 2009.

In the aftermath of Afghan recriminations against Pakistan for the presence of Bin Laden, Karzai had productive meetings in Islamabad during June 10-11, 2011, including the announcement of implementation of the new transit trade agreement discussed below. The summit paved the way for a U.S.-Pakistan-Afghanistan meeting on June 28, 2011, attended by then SRAP Grossman, although the meeting was clouded somewhat by Afghan allegations that several hundred rockets had been fired into Afghanistan from Pakistan in prior days. The September 2011 attacks on the U.S. Embassy and the killing of former President Rabbani worsened relations significantly. Pakistan's worst fears about Indian influence in Afghanistan were inflamed when Karzai, on October 5, 2011, and perhaps as a reaction to the Haqqani attacks in Kabul, flew to India to sign a significant trade and security pact (see below). Relations have improved somewhat in late 2012 after Pakistan released several Afghan Taliban figures who reputedly seek reconciliation between the Taliban and the Afghan government, as discussed above in the section on reconciliation.

Regarding the long-term relationship, Pakistan wants the government of Afghanistan to pledge to abide by the "Durand Line," a border agreement reached between Britain (signed by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand) and then Afghan leader Amir Abdul Rahman Khan in 1893, separating Afghanistan from what was then British-controlled India (later Pakistan after the 1947 partition). The border is recognized by the United Nations, but Afghanistan continues to indicate that the border was drawn unfairly to separate Pashtun tribes and should be renegotiated. Afghan leaders bridled at October 21, 2012 comments by then SRAP Grossman that U.S. "policy is that border is the international border," even though that comment reflected a longstanding U.S. position. 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.

Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA)

Pakistan has also sought to control Afghanistan's trade, particularly with India, leading to U.S. efforts to persuade Pakistan to forge a "transit trade" agreement with Afghanistan. That effort bore success with the signature of a trade agreement between the two on July 18, 2010, allowing for an easier flow of Afghan products, which are mostly agricultural products that depend on rapid transit. On June 12, 2011, in the context of a Karzai visit to Islamabad, both countries began full implementation of the agreement. It is expected to greatly expand the \$2 billion in trade per year the two countries were doing prior to the agreement. The agreement represented a success for the Canada-sponsored "Dubai Process" of talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan on modernizing border crossings, new roads, and a comprehensive border management strategy to meet IMF benchmarks. A drawback to the agreement is that Afghan trucks, under the agreement, are not permitted to take back cargo from India after dropping off goods there. The Afghanistan-Pakistan trade agreement followed agreements to send more Afghan graduate students to study in Pakistan, and a June 2010 Afghan agreement to send small numbers of ANA officers to undergo training in Pakistan.⁵⁸

Iran

As an immediate goal, Iran seeks to deny the United States the use of Afghanistan as a base from which to pressure or attack Iran. To that end, Iran publicly opposed the May 1, 2012, U.S.-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Agreement. As a longer term objective, Iran seeks to exert its traditional influence over western Afghanistan, which Iran borders and was once part of the Persian empire, to protect Afghanistan's Shiite and other Persian-speaking minorities. There are mixed views on how influential Iran is in Afghanistan; most experts appear to see Iran as a relatively marginal player, particularly compared to Pakistan, while others believe Tehran is able to mobilize large numbers of Afghans, particularly in the west, to support its policies. The United States will attempt to better gauge Tehran's influence in Afghanistan through the State Department establishment of in early 2013 of an "Iran watch" diplomatic position at the U.S. consulate in Herat.

The Obama Administration initially saw Iran as potentially helpful to its strategy for Afghanistan; the late SRAP Holbrooke was an advocate of cooperation with Iran on Afghanistan issues. Iran was invited to the U.N.-led meeting on Afghanistan at the Hague on March 31, 2009. At the meeting, Holbrooke briefly met the Iranian leader of his delegation and handed him a letter on several outstanding human rights cases involving Iranian-Americans. At the meeting, Iran pledged cooperation on combating Afghan narcotics and in helping economic development in Afghanistan—both policies Iran is pursuing to a large degree.

Suggesting that the concept of cooperation with Iran on Afghanistan still resonates with some U.S. officials and outside experts, Iran's attendance of the October 18, 2010, International Contact Group meeting in Rome, including a briefing by then top commander in Afghanistan General Petraeus. Earlier, the United States and Iran took similar positions at a U.N. meeting in Geneva in February 2010 that discussed drug trafficking across the Afghan border. Iran did not attend the January 28, 2010, international meeting in London, but it did attend the July 28, 2010, international meeting in Kabul (both discussed above). As a member of the OIC, an Iranian

⁵⁸ Partlow, Joshua. "Afghans Build Up Ties With Pakistan." *Washington Post*, July 21, 2010.

representative attended the March 3, 2011, Contact Group meeting at OIC headquarters in Jeddah. Iran attended the region-led international meeting in Istanbul on November 2, 2011, the December 5, 2011, Bonn Conference, and the Tokyo donors' conference on July 8, 2012.

Iran's Development Aid for Afghanistan

Iran's economic aid to Afghanistan supports international efforts to develop Afghanistan. Iran has pledged about \$1 billion in aid to Afghanistan, of which about \$500 million has been provided to date. The funds have been used mostly to build roads and bridges in western Afghanistan. In cooperation with India, Iran has been building roads that would connect western Afghanistan to Iran's port of Chahbahar, and provide Afghan and other goods an easier outlet to the Persian Gulf. Iran also has provided credits to the Afghan private sector and helped develop power transmission lines in the provinces bordering Iran. Some of the funds reportedly are funneled through the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, which provides charity in Iran and worldwide.

Iranian Assistance to Afghan Militants and to Pro-Iranian Groups and Regions

Even though Iran aids Afghanistan's development, it also is allegedly arming militants there. Iran may be arming groups in Afghanistan to try to pressure U.S. forces that use Afghanistan's Shindand air base,⁵⁹ which Iran fears the United States might use to attack or conduct surveillance against Iran. Or, Iran's policy might be to gain broader leverage against the United States by demonstrating that Iran is in position to cause U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan.

The State Department report on international terrorism for 2011, released July 31, 2012, repeated language in prior reports that, since 2006, the Qods Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Iran has provided training to the Taliban on small unit tactics, small arms, explosives, and indirect weapons fire, and that it ships arms to militants in Qandahar. This phrasing implies that Iran is arming Pashtun Taliban militants in the core of the combat zone in Afghanistan. Weapons provided, according to the State Department report, include mortars, 107mm rockets, rocket-propelled grenades, and plastic explosives. On March 9, 2011, NATO said it had seized 48 Iranian-made rockets in Nimruz Province, bound for Afghan militants; the 122mm rockets, have a range (13 miles) greater than those previously provided by Iran. On August 3, 2010, the Treasury Department, acting under Executive Order 13224, named two Qods Force officers as terrorism supporting entities (freezing assets in the United States, if any). They are Hossein Musavi, Commander of the Qods Force Ansar Corps, which is the key Qods unit involved in Afghanistan; and Hasan Mortezaei, who is a Qods officer responsible for providing funds and materiel to the Taliban, according to the Treasury Department.⁶⁰

Iran reportedly has allowed a Taliban office to open in Iran.⁶¹ While some see that as a move to support the insurgency, others might see it as an effort to exert some influence over reconciliation efforts. Iran previously allowed Taliban figures to attend conferences in Iran that were attended by Afghan figures, including the late High Peace Council head Burhanuddin Rabbani.

⁵⁹ Rashid, Ahmed. "Afghan Neighbors Show Signs of Aiding in Nation's Stability." *Wall Street Journal*, October 18, 2004.

⁶⁰ Treasury Department. Fact Sheet: U.S. Treasury Department Targets Iran's Support for Terrorism. August 3, 2010.

⁶¹ Maria Abi-Habib. "Iranians Build Up Afghan Clout." *Wall Street Journal*, October 26, 2012.

Assistance to Ethnic and Religious Factions in Afghanistan

Others are puzzled by Iran's support of Taliban fighters who are Pashtun, because Iran has traditionally supported Persian-speaking or Shiite factions in Afghanistan, many of whom have been oppressed by the Pashtuns. Some of Iran's funding has been intended to support pro-Iranian groups in the west as well as Hazara Shiites in Kabul and in the Hazara heartland of Bamiyan, Ghazni, and Dai Kundi, in part by providing scholarships and funding for technical institutes. Iran has used some of its funds to construct mosques in Herat, pro-Iranian theological seminaries in Shiite districts of Kabul, and Shiite institutions in Hazara-dominated areas. Iran also offers scholarships to Afghans to study in Iranian universities, and there are consistent allegations that Iran has funded Afghan provincial council and parliamentary candidates who are perceived as pro-Tehran.⁶² These efforts have helped Iran retain close ties with Afghanistan's leading Shiite cleric, Ayatollah Mohammad Mohseni, as well as a Hazara political leader Mohammad Mohaqiq.

Bilateral Government-to-Government Relations

Iran's interest in a broad relationship with Karzai has not, to date, been affected by Iran's continued support for Taliban and other militants in Afghanistan. Karzai has, at times, called Iran a "friend" of Afghanistan; in March 2010 he met with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on two occasions. One of the meetings was just after the departure of visiting Defense Secretary Gates. Previously, Karzai received Ahmadinejad in Kabul in August 2007, and he visited Tehran at the end of May 2009 as part of the tripartite diplomatic process between Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Karzai has repeatedly said that Afghanistan must not become an arena for the broader competition and disputes between the United States and Iran.⁶³ In June 2011, Iran's Defense Minister, Ahmad Vahidi, visited Kabul to sign a bilateral border security agreement.

A controversy arose in late October 2010 when Karzai acknowledged accepting about \$2 million per year in cash payments from Iran, via his then Chief of Staff Mohammad Daudzai. On the other hand, in December 2010, Iran suddenly ceased shipping fuel into Afghanistan, causing some spot dislocations in Afghanistan, including in Kabul.

Many Afghans look fondly on Iran for helping them try to oust the Taliban regime when it was in power. Iran saw the Taliban regime, which ruled during 1996-2001, as a threat to its interests in Afghanistan, especially after Taliban forces captured Herat 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.⁶⁴ In September 1998, Iranian and Taliban forces nearly came into direct conflict when Iran discovered that nine of its diplomats were killed in the course of the Taliban's offensive in northern Afghanistan. Iran massed forces at the border and threatened military action, but the crisis cooled without a major clash, possibly out of fear that Pakistan would intervene on behalf of the Taliban. Iran offered search and rescue assistance in Afghanistan during the U.S.-led war to topple the Taliban, and it also allowed U.S. humanitarian aid to the Afghan people to transit Iran. Iran helped construct Afghanistan's first post-Taliban government, in cooperation with the United States—at the December 2001 "Bonn Conference." In February 2002, Iran expelled Karzai-opponent Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, but it did not arrest him.

⁶² King, Laura. "In Western Afghan City, Iran Makes Itself Felt." *Los Angeles Times*, November 14, 2010.

⁶³ Comments by President Karzai at the Brookings Institution. May 5, 2009.

⁶⁴ Steele, Jonathon. "America Includes Iran in Talks on Ending War in Afghanistan." *Washington Times*, December 15, 1997.

At other times, Afghanistan and Iran have had disputes over Iran's efforts to expel Afghan refugees. There are 1 million registered Afghan refugees in Iran, and about 1.4 million Afghan migrants (non-refugees) living there. 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 the inverse of those of Pakistan: India's goals are to deny Pakistan "strategic depth" in Afghanistan, to deny Pakistan the ability to block India from trade and other connections to Central Asia and beyond, and to prevent militants in Afghanistan from attacking Indian targets in Afghanistan. India saw the Afghan Taliban's hosting of Al Qaeda during 1996-2001 as a major threat to India itself because of Al Qaeda's association with radical Islamic organizations in Pakistan, such as LET (Laskhar-e-Tayyiba, or Army of the Righteous), one of the groups that was formed in Pakistan to challenge India's control of part of the disputed territories of Jammu and Kashmir. Some of these groups have committed major acts of terrorism in India, including the terrorist attacks in Mumbai in November 2008 and in July 2011. Pakistan accuses India of using nine consulates in Afghanistan to spread Indian influence in Afghanistan. According to Afghan officials, India has four consulates (in the major cities of Qandahar, Jalalabad, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Herat) and no security presence in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has sought close ties to India but without alarming Pakistan—a delicate balancing act backed by the United States. During a May 2011 visit to Afghanistan by India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, India and Afghanistan announced a "Strategic Partnership," which demonstrated India's support for U.S. efforts to better integrate Afghanistan into regional political, economic, and security structures. On October 5, 2011, shortly after the Rabbani assassination and related Afghan recriminations against Pakistan, Karzai visited Delhi to sign the pact. The pact affirmed Pakistan's worst fears because it gave India, for the first time, a formal role as one of the guarantors of Afghan stability, and it provided for expanded India-Afghanistan political and cultural ties. Indian experts noted that no Indian troops or security forces would deploy to Afghanistan as a consequence of the pact, but it did lead to a late 2011 agreement for India to train some ANSF personnel in India. As an outgrowth of a four-day Karzai follow-up visit to India in November 2012, India reportedly agreed to train up to 600 ANSF per year at the Indian Army's jungle warfare school.

Still, India reportedly does not want to be saddled with the burden of helping secure Afghanistan as U.S.-led forces depart. Nor does it seek to inflame Pakistan's sentiments by playing a large security role in Afghanistan. India has stressed its economic aid activities there, showcased by its hosting of a June 28, 2012, meeting in Delhi to discuss investment and economic development in Afghanistan.

Some believe India has been concerned that any negotiated settlement of the Afghanistan conflict will give Pakistan preponderant influence in Afghanistan. India, which supported the Northern Alliance against the Taliban in the mid-1990s, has been stepping up its contacts with those factions to discuss possible contingencies in the event of an Afghan settlement deal. Many Northern Alliance figures have lived in India at one time or another, although Indian diplomats stress they have long also had close connections to Afghanistan's Pashtuns. As noted above, Karzai studied there. Still, possibly at U.S. urging, during the May 2011 Singh visit discussed above, India publicly expressed support for the reconciliation process. In addition, Tajikistan,

which also supported the mostly Tajik Northern Alliance against the Taliban when it was in power, allows India to use one of its air bases.

India's Development Activities in Afghanistan

India is the fifth-largest single country donor to Afghan reconstruction, funding projects worth over \$1.5 billion, with an additional \$500 million announced during the Singh visit to Kabul in May 2011. 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 \$67 million renovation of Darulaman Palace as the permanent house for Afghanistan's parliament. India and Afghanistan finalized the construction plans for that building in early 2012. At a cost of about \$85 million, India financed the construction of a road to the Iranian border in remote Nimruz province, linking landlocked Afghanistan to Iran's Chahbahar port on the Arabian Sea. India is currently constructing the 42 megawatt hydroelectric Selwa Dam in Herat Province at a cost of about \$77 million, expected to be completed in late 2012. This will increase electricity availability in the province. In December 2011, an Indian firm, the Steel Authority of India, Ltd. (SAIL) was declared winning bidder on three of four blocs of the Hajji Gak iron ore project in Bamiyan Province. This led to assessments that India is also an economic beneficiary of international intervention in Afghanistan, without taking the risk of involving India militarily there.

India is also helping Afghanistan's Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) with its efforts to build local governance organizations, and it provides 1,000 scholarships per year for Afghans to undergo higher education in India. Some Afghans want to enlist even more Indian assistance in training Afghan bureaucrats in accounting, forensic accounting, oversight, and other disciplines that will promote transparency in Afghan governance.

Russia, Central Asian States, and China

Some neighboring and nearby states take an active interest not only in Afghan stability, but in the U.S. military posture that supports U.S. operations in Afghanistan. The region to the north of Afghanistan is a growing factor in U.S. efforts to rely less on supply routes through Pakistan, particularly as U.S. relations with Pakistan have remained strained.

Russia/Northern Distribution Network

Russia wants to reemerge as a great power and to contain U.S. power in Central Asia, including Afghanistan. At the same time, by supporting the "Northern Distribution Network" supply route for NATO forces in Afghanistan, Russia supports U.S. and NATO efforts to combat militants in the region who have sometimes posed a threat to Russia itself. Its hosting of the "quadrilateral summits" mentioned above, could represent stepped up efforts by Russia to exert influence on the Afghanistan issue. Previously, Russia had kept a low profile in the country because it still feels humiliated by its withdrawal in 1989 and senses some Afghan resentment of the Soviet occupation. Since 2002, Russia has only been providing small amounts of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

In line with Russian official comments in June 2010 that more economic and social assistance is needed for Afghanistan, Russia is investing \$1 billion in Afghanistan to develop its electricity capacity and build out other infrastructure. Included in those investments are implementation of an agreement, reached during a Karzai visit to Moscow on January 22, 2011, for Russia to resume long dormant Soviet occupation-era projects such as expanding the Salang Tunnel connecting the Panjshir Valley to Kabul, hydroelectric facilities in Kabul and Baghlan provinces, a customs terminal, and a university in Kabul.

During the 1990s, after its 1989 withdrawal and the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia supported the Northern Alliance against the Taliban with some military equipment and technical assistance in order to blunt Islamic militancy emanating from Afghanistan.⁶⁵ 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.

Northern Distribution Network and Other Aid to Afghan Security

Russian cooperation is crucial to the U.S. effort in Afghanistan. In February 2009, Russia paved the way for the expansion of the Northern Distribution Network supply route into Afghanistan by allowing the resumption of shipment of non-lethal equipment into Afghanistan through Russia (following a suspension in 2008 caused by differences over the Russia-Georgia conflict). There are discussions with Russia over possibly allowing some lethal equipment to transit as well and for use of a Russian air base as a hub in the supply chain. About half of all ground cargo for U.S. forces in Afghanistan now flow through the Northern Distribution Network, and the United States is emphasizing this network as relations with Pakistan remain strained, although the costs to ship goods through the route are far greater than the Pakistan route. Still, Russia insists that it will continue to cooperate with this supply route after 2014 only if a U.N. mandate for an international force in Afghanistan continues after that time.

Russia has also responded to NATO requests to provide helicopters and spare parts to the Afghan forces (which still make heavy use of Russian-made Hind helicopters) as well as fuel. In April 2011, there was agreement to establish a “Helicopter Maintenance Trust Fund.” Russia has also delivered 24 helicopters to Afghan forces, financed by the United States. Russia reportedly has pledged to train Afghan security forces.

In November 2010, in its most significant intervention in Afghanistan since its occupation, Russian officers reportedly joined U.S. and Afghan forces attempting to interdict narcotics trafficking in Afghanistan. However, the move prompted a complaint by President Karzai because he was not consulted about the inclusion of the Russians.

⁶⁵ Risen, James. “Russians Are Back in Afghanistan, Aiding Rebels.” *New York Times*, July 27, 1998.

Central Asian States

These states are crucial to the U.S. transition in Afghanistan, as discussed in a Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff report released December 19, 2011, entitled “Central Asia and the Transition in Afghanistan.” As shown in **Table 7**, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan are pivotal actors in U.S. efforts to expand the Northern Distribution Network supply route. Kyrgyzstan is key to the U.S. ability to fly troops and supplies in and out of Afghanistan. These states are also becoming crucial to the New Silk Road (NSR) strategy that seeks to help Afghanistan become a trade crossroads between South and Central Asia—a strategy that could net Kabul substantial customs duties and other economic benefits. An increasing amount of trade is flowing from Afghanistan to and through the Central Asian states. As noted below, railway lines are being built to Uzbekistan. The Panj bridge, built largely with U.S. funds, has become a major thoroughfare for goods to move between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Kazakhstan is funding a \$50 million program to develop Afghan professionals. The revival of a long-standing plan to establish Afghanistan as a transit hub for Central Asian natural gas (*TAPI* pipeline) is discussed later in this report under “Development in Key Sectors.”

The Central Asian countries have long had an interest in seeing Afghanistan stabilized and moderate. In 1996, several of the Central Asian states banded together with Russia and China into the SCO because of the perceived Taliban threat.

Tajikistan

On security cooperation, Tajikistan allows access primarily to French combat aircraft, and Kazakhstan has allowed use of facilities in case of emergency. In May 2011, Kazakhstan became the first Central Asian state to pledge forces to Afghanistan (four non-combat troops). Earlier, in April 2010, Kazakhstan agreed to allow U.S. over flights of lethal military equipment to Afghanistan, allowing the United States to use polar routes to fly materiel directly from the United States to Bagram Airfield.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan, a sponsor of Afghan faction leader Abdul Rashid Dostam, an ethnic Uzbek, 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. Uzbekistan’s March 2008 agreement with Germany for it to use Karshi-Khanabad air base temporarily, for the first time since the rift with the United States, suggested potential for resumed U.S.-Uzbek cooperation on Afghanistan. Renewed U.S. discussions with Uzbekistan apparently bore 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. As a rift with Pakistan widened in September 2011, the United States launched new overtures to Uzbekistan, including a call from President Obama to Uzbek President Islam Karimov congratulating him on 20 years of independence from Russia/Soviet Union. Subsequently, the Administration opened formal negotiations with Uzbekistan to enlist its cooperation with further expansion of the Northern Distribution Network. However, in late August, 2012, Uzbekistan’s parliament advanced legislation that would ban foreign military bases on Uzbekistan territory—a move widely interpreted as reluctance to resume permission for U.S. forces to expand operations in Uzbekistan.

During Taliban rule, Russian and Central Asian leaders were alarmed that radical Islamic movements were receiving safe haven in Afghanistan. Uzbekistan, in particular, has long asserted that the group Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), allegedly responsible for four simultaneous February 1999 bombings in Tashkent that nearly killed President Islam Karimov, is linked to Al Qaeda.⁶⁶ 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.

Turkmenistan

Currently, perhaps to avoid offending Pakistan or other actors, Turkmenistan takes a position of “positive neutrality” on Afghanistan. It does not allow its territory to be part of the Northern Distribution Network. No U.S. forces have been based in Turkmenistan.

This neutrality essentially continues the policy Turkmenistan had when the Taliban was in power. During that time, Turkmenistan was the only Central Asian state to actively engage the Taliban leadership, 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 the TAPI natural gas pipeline, discussed above, that was under consideration during Taliban rule and discussion of which has been revived in recent years. 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.

*China*⁶⁷

China’s involvement in Afghanistan policy appears to be growing, primarily to secure access to Afghan minerals and resources but perhaps also to help its ally, Pakistan, avoid encirclement by India. That was exemplified on September 23, 2012 when a senior Chinese official made a rare visit to Afghanistan to sign security and economic agreements with Afghanistan, including a pledge to help train, fund, and equip the ANP. Like Pakistan, China has been a rival of India. China also is concerned about the potential for Islamic militancy in Afghanistan to inflame Islamist sentiment among China’s Uighur community in China. A major organizer of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, China has a small border with a sparsely inhabited sliver of Afghanistan known as the “Wakhan Corridor,” and it is building border access routes and supply depots to facilitate China’s access to Afghanistan through the corridor.

Chinese delegations continue to assess the potential for new investments in such sectors as mining and energy,⁶⁸ and the cornerstone is the development of the Aynak copper mine south of Kabul. In early 2012, China National Petroleum Co. was awarded the rights to develop oil deposits in the Amu Darya basin (see below). Since 2002, China has pledged about \$255 million in economic aid to Afghanistan, about 75% of which has been provided to date.

⁶⁶ The IMU was named a foreign terrorist organization by the State Department in September 2000.

⁶⁷ For more information, see CRS Report RL33001, *U.S.-China Counterterrorism Cooperation: Issues for U.S. Policy*, by Shirley A. Kan.

⁶⁸ CRS conversations with Chinese officials in Beijing. August 2007.

Prior to the September 2012 agreements discussed above, China had taken only a small role in securing Afghanistan. No Chinese forces have deployed to Afghanistan, and it trained small numbers of ANP at a People's Armed Police facility in China since 2006, with a focus on counter-narcotics. It also has offered training for ANSF officers at People's Liberation Army training colleges and universities. On the sidelines of the SCO meeting during June 7-8, 2012, China agreed on a strategic partnership with Afghanistan that includes security cooperation.

During the Taliban era, in December 2000, sensing China's increasing concern about Taliban policies, a Chinese official delegation met with Mullah Umar. However, China did not enthusiastically support U.S. military action against the Taliban, possibly because China was wary of a U.S. military buildup nearby.

Persian Gulf States

The Gulf states are considered a key part of the effort to stabilize Afghanistan. As noted, the late Ambassador Holbrooke focused substantial U.S. attention—and formed a multilateral task force—to try to curb continuing Gulf resident donations to the Taliban in Afghanistan. He maintained that these donations are a larger source of Taliban funding than is the narcotics trade. The Gulf states have also been a source of development funds and for influence with some Afghan clerics and factions.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has a role to play in Afghanistan in part because, during the Soviet occupation, Saudi Arabia channeled hundreds of millions of dollars to the Afghan *mujahedin*, primarily the Islamist factions. In so doing, Saudi Arabia developed extensive intelligence ties to these factions as well as to the Taliban. A majority of Saudi citizens practice the strict Wahhabi brand of Islam similar to that of the Taliban, and Saudi Arabia was one of three countries to formally recognize the Taliban government. 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.

Saudi Arabia has played a role as a go-between for negotiations between the Karzai government and “moderate” Taliban figures. This role was recognized at the London conference on January 28, 2010, in which President Karzai stated in his opening speech that he sees a role for Saudi Arabia in helping stabilize Afghanistan. As noted, some reports say that a political settlement might involve Mullah Umar going into exile in Saudi Arabia. This may explain why Karzai has preferred to hold any talks with the Taliban in Saudi Arabia rather than Qatar. The Afghan government also sees Saudi Arabia as a potential new source of investment; in early November 2012 it was reported that the Saudis will fund a \$100 million mosque and education center in Kabul. Some see the investment as a Saudi effort to enhance its influence in Afghanistan as international involvement there wanes.

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.

UAE

The United Arab Emirates, the third country that recognized the Taliban regime, is emerging as another major donor to Afghanistan. It contributes about 300 troops to OEF and ISAF security missions in southern Afghanistan, including Helmand province. Some are military medical personnel who run small clinics and health programs for Afghans in the provinces where they operate.

The UAE has donated at least \$135 million to Afghanistan since 2002, according to the Afghan Finance Ministry. Projects funded include housing in Qandahar, roads in Kabul, a hospital in Zabol province, and a university in Khost. At the same time, the UAE property market has been an outlet for investment by Afghan leaders who may have acquired their funds through soft loans from the scandal-plagued Kabul Bank or through corruption connected to donor contracts or other businesses.

Qatar

Until 2011, Qatar was not regarded as a significant player on the Afghanistan issue. It had not recognized the Taliban regime when it was in power, and was said to have little influence with Taliban figures interested in reconciliation. However, since late 2011, Qatar has increased its profile as host of some Taliban negotiators there. The United States views Qatar as less influenced by Pakistan than is Saudi Arabia, and this might explain why the United States has pushed for Qatar to be the accepted host of a Taliban presence.

Keys to Afghanistan's Post-War Future: U.S. and International Aid and Economic Development

Experts have long believed that accelerating economic development would contribute greatly to improve the security situation. Economic development is widely considered pivotal to Afghanistan's ability to shape its future after 2104, at which time donors presumably wind down their financial along with their military involvement. Donor aid currently accounts for more than 95% of Afghanistan's GDP, and replacements for donated funds of that magnitude are hard to identify. The crucial role of economic factors in the success of the transition and in post-2014 Afghanistan is discussed in an Administration report released in December 2011, called the "U.S. Economic Strategy for Afghanistan."⁶⁹

Adding to the complexity of strategy development is the analysis that some economic sectors in Afghanistan have been developed largely with private investment, including by wealthy or well-connected Afghans who have founded companies. Therefore, it is often difficult to determine the effects on Afghanistan's economy of aid, as compared to the effects of investment, trade, and other variables. As noted above, as part of the U.S. strategy, in July 2011 Secretary of State Clinton and other U.S. officials articulated a post-transition vision of greater Afghan economic

⁶⁹ The report, produced by the National Security Staff, was released December 2, 2011. It was mandated by the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2011 (Section 1535 of P.L. 111-383).

integration in the region and its role in a “New Silk Road” trading system which would presumably accelerate Afghan private sector growth and customs revenue receipts.

Hindering Afghanistan is that its 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. As discussed, the literacy rate is very low and Afghanistan has a small, although growing, pool of skilled labor, middle managers, accountants, and information professionals.

There are debates over virtually all aspects of international aid to Afghanistan, including amounts, mechanisms for providing it, the lack of coordination among donors, and how aid is distributed within Afghanistan. For example, some of the more stable provinces, such as Bamiyan and Balkh, complain that most of the U.S. and international aid—an estimated 80%—is flowing mostly to the restive provinces in an effort to quiet them, and ignoring the needs of poor Afghans in peaceful areas. Later in this report are tables showing U.S. appropriations of assistance to Afghanistan, and **Table 14** lists U.S. spending on all sectors for FY2001-FY2010.

U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan

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

For all of FY2002-FY2012, the United States provided about \$83 billion in assistance, including military “train and equip” for the ANA and ANP (which is about \$51 billion of these funds). The figures in the tables, which include aid costs for FY2012 and the request for FY2013, do not include costs for U.S. combat operations. Those costs amount are/estimated to be about \$90 billion in FY2010, \$104 billion for FY2011, \$93 billion for FY2012, and \$82 billion for FY2013. When those costs are included, the United States has spent about \$557 billion on the Afghanistan effort during FY2002-2012. 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.

Aid Oversight

Still heavily dependent on donors, Karzai has sought to reassure the international donor community by establishing a transparent budget and planning process. Some in Congress want to increase independent oversight of U.S. aid to Afghanistan; the conference report on the FY2008 defense authorization bill (P.L. 110-181) established a “special inspector general” for Afghanistan reconstruction, (SIGAR) modeled on a similar outside auditor for Iraq. Funds provided for the SIGAR are in the tables below. The SIGAR issues audit reports on numerous aspects of Afghan governance and security, with particular attention to how U.S.-provided funds have been used. The SIGAR, as of July 2012, is John Sopko.

Aid Authorization: Afghanistan Freedom Support Act

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

- \$60 million in total counter-narcotics assistance (\$15 million per year for FY2003-FY2006);
- \$30 million in assistance for political development, including national, regional, and local elections (\$10 million per year for FY2003-FY2005);
- \$80 million total to benefit women and for Afghan human rights oversight (\$15 million per year for FY2003-FY2006 for the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs, and \$5 million per year for FY2003-FY2006 to the Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan);
- \$1.7 billion in humanitarian and development aid (\$425 million per year for FY2003-FY2006);
- \$300 million for an Enterprise Fund;
- \$550 million in drawdowns of defense articles and services for Afghanistan and regional militaries. (The original law provided for \$300 million in drawdowns. That was increased by subsequent appropriations laws.)

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

Afghan Freedom Support Act Reauthorization

In the 110th Congress, H.R. 2446, passed by the House on June 6, 2007 (406-10), would have reauthorized AFSA through FY2010, and have authorized about \$1.7 billion in U.S. economic aid and \$320 in military aid (including drawdowns of equipment) per fiscal year for that period. A Senate version (S. 3531), with fewer provisions than the House bill, was not taken up by the full Senate. H.R. 2446 would also have authorized a pilot program of crop substitution to encourage legitimate alternatives to poppy cultivation and a cut off of U.S. aid to any Afghan province in which the Administration reports that the leadership of the province is complicit in narcotics trafficking. AFSA reauthorization was not reintroduced subsequently.

Direct Support to the Afghan Government

Because of the paucity of funds taken in by the Afghan government—about \$2 billion expected for all of 2012, about 90% of total Afghan government expenditures (operating budget and

development budget) is provided by international donors. Of that amount, the United States provide 62% and other donors provided 28% of total expenditures.⁷⁰ Afghan officials stated in material circulated at the December 5, 2011, Bonn Conference that it will need at least \$10 billion in donated funds per year from 2014 (the end of the security transition) until 2025, at which time Afghanistan is to be financially self-sufficient.

Currently, the United States disburses more than 40% of its donated aid funds through the Afghan government. The Kabul Conference (July 20, 2010) communiqué endorsed a goal of increasing that to about 50% and for 80% of all funds to align with Afghan government priorities.

Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF)

Some U.S. funds are provided both directly and through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), discussed above, run by the World Bank. As of June 2012, donors have pledged \$6.1 billion to the ARTF, with about \$5.7 billion paid. The funds are about equally split between funding Afghan salaries and priority development investments. Of those funds, the United States has paid in \$1.74 billion. Donors, including the United States, resumed contributing to the ARTF in November 2011, when the IMF restored its credit program for Afghanistan, which had been suspended for more than a year because of the Kabul Bank scandal.

National Solidarity Program

Through the ARTF, the United States supports an Afghan government program that promotes local decision making on development—the “National Solidarity Program” (NSP). The program provides block grants of about \$60,000 per project to local councils to implement their priority projects, most of which are water projects. The Afghan implementer is the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. It is widely hailed by many institutions as a highly successful, Afghan-run program, although its contributions to improving local governance are unclear. Still, it is being implemented in almost every district of Afghanistan. Donors have provided the program with over \$600 million, about 90% of which has been U.S. funding. U.S. funds for the program are drawn from a broad category of ESF for “good governance.” P.L. 111-32, the FY2009 supplemental discussed above, earmarked \$70 million to defray a large part of a shortfall in that program. The FY2010 consolidated appropriation (P.L. 111-117) earmarked another \$175 million in ESF for the program.

⁷⁰ Government Accountability Office. “Afghanistan’s Donor Dependence.” September 20, 2011.

Table 8. Major Reporting Requirements

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

- P.L. 108-458, The Afghanistan Freedom Support Act Amendments required, through the end of FY2010, an overarching annual report on U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. Other reporting requirements expired, including required reports (1) on long-term U.S. strategy and progress of reconstruction; (2) on how U.S. assistance is being used; (3) on U.S. efforts to persuade other countries to participate in Afghan peacekeeping; and (4) a joint State and DOD report on U.S. counter-narcotics efforts in Afghanistan.
- P.L. 110-181 (Section 1230), FY2008 Defense Authorization Act requires a quarterly DOD report on the security situation in Afghanistan; the first was submitted in June 2008. It was required by that law through FY2011. Section 1231 required a report on the Afghan National Security Forces through the end of FY2010. Both reports have been extended until the end of FY2014 by the FY2012 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 1540, P.L. 112-81).
- Section 1229 of the same law requires the quarterly report of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR).
- P.L. 111-8 (Omnibus Appropriation, explanatory statement) required a State Department report on the use of funds to address the needs of Afghan women and girls (submitted by September 30, 2009).
- P.L. 111-32, FY2009 Supplemental Appropriation (Section 1116), required a White House report, by the time of the FY2011 budget submission, on whether Afghanistan and Pakistan are cooperating with U.S. policy sufficiently to warrant a continuation of Administration policy toward both countries, as well as efforts by these governments to curb corruption, their efforts to develop a counter-insurgency strategy, the level of political consensus in the two countries to confront security challenges, and U.S. government efforts to achieve these objectives. The report was released with a date of September 30, 2010.
- The same law (Section 1117) required a report, by September 23, 2009, on metrics to be used to assess progress on Afghanistan and Pakistan strategy. A progress report measured against those metrics is to be submitted by March 30, 2010, and every six months thereafter, until the end of FY2011.
- Section 1228 of the FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-84) required a report, within 120 days, on the Afghan Provincial Protection Program and other local security initiatives. Section 1235 authorized a DOD-funded study of U.S. force levels needed for eastern and southern Afghanistan, and Section 1226 required a Comptroller General report on the U.S. “campaign plan” for the Afghanistan (and Iraq) effort.
- Sections 1212-1226 of the FY2013 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4310, signed by President Obama on January 2, 2013) contains several reporting or congressional notification requirements on Afghanistan, on issues such as women’s rights, an independent assessment of the performance of the ANSF, negotiations on the bilateral security agreement, the political reconciliation and insurgent reintegration process, the U.S. campaign plan, insider attacks, any changes to U.S. troop levels, and other issues. These sections also contain authorities on use of some DoD funds in Afghanistan, such as CERP and funding for the reintegration process.

Sustaining Aid Beyond the Transition

U.S. and Afghan policymakers are concerned that international assistance will wane after the end of the transition in 2014. As shown in **Table 10**, non-U.S. donors, including such institutions as the EU and the Asian Development Bank, have provided over \$29 billion in assistance to Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban. When combined with U.S. aid, this by far exceeds the \$27.5 billion for reconstruction identified by the IMF as required for 2002-2010. Major pledges have been made primarily at donor conferences such as Tokyo (2002), Berlin (April 2004), Kabul (April 2005), London (February 2006), Paris (June 2008), and London (January 2010).

The December 5, 2011, Bonn Conference was not, according to U.S. officials, intended as a “pledging conference.” However, in advance of that conference the World Bank released a report warning that an abrupt aid cutoff could lead to fiscal implosion, loss of control over the security

sector, the collapse of political authority, and the possibility of civil war. At the Bonn Conference, Afghan officials stated that Afghanistan would be dependent on about \$10 billion per year of international economic aid until 2025.

Among multilateral lending institutions, the World Bank is expected to be key to sustaining Afghanistan long term. 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, including in financing railway construction. Another of its projects in Afghanistan was funding the paving of a road from Qandahar to the border with Pakistan, and as noted above, it is contributing to a project to bring electricity from Central Asia to Afghanistan. On the eve of the London conference on January 28, 2010, the IMF and World Bank announced \$1.6 billion in Afghanistan debt relief.

*July 8, 2012, Tokyo Conference*⁷¹

Identifying sources of post-2014 assistance (2012-2022 is termed the “transformation decade”) was the focus of an international conference on Afghanistan in Tokyo on July 8, 2012. At the conference, the United States and its partners pledged a total of \$16 billion in aid to Afghanistan through 2015 (\$4 billion per year for 2012-2015) and agreed to sustain support through 2017 at levels at or near the past decade. As part of that overall pledge, at the conference, Secretary Clinton said the Administration would ask Congress to sustain U.S. aid to Afghanistan at roughly the levels it has been through 2017. Among other major pledges, Japan pledged \$5 billion over five years (2012-2017), and Germany pledged \$550 million over four years (2014-2016).

The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework issued in concert with the final conference declaration lays out requirements of the Afghan government in good governance, anti-corruption, holding free and fair elections, and human rights. As an incentive, if Afghanistan meets the benchmarks, the Framework will increase (to 10% by 2014 and to 20% by 2024) the percentage of aid provided through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and other incentive mechanisms. The ARTF gives Kabul the maximum discretion in use of the donated funds.

Development in Key Sectors

Efforts to build the legitimate economy are showing some results, by accounts of senior U.S. officials. Some sectors, discussed below, are being developed primarily (although not exclusively) with private investment funding. There has been substantial new construction, particularly in Kabul, including luxury hotels; a \$25 million Coca Cola bottling factory (opened in September 2006); apartment and office buildings; and marriage halls and other structures. The bottling factory is located near the Bagrami office park (another private initiative), which includes several other factories. The Serena luxury hotel was built by the Agha Khan foundation, a major investor in Afghanistan. On the other hand, press reports in March 2012 said that uncertainty about the post-2014 political and security situation is causing some Afghan businessmen to relocate outside the country, or to develop external components of their business in case the

⁷¹ <http://www.embassyofafghanistan.org/article/the-tokyo-declaration-partnership-for-self-reliance-in-afghanistan-from-transition-to-transf>

situation in Afghanistan deteriorates. Others say that private investment could have been healthier if not for the influence exercised over it by various faction leaders and Karzai relatives.

An arm of DOD, called the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations, formerly headed by Deputy Under Secretary Paul Brinkley, facilitated some of the investment. The FY2011 Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-383) required the Task Force be folded into State/USAID-led assistance structures by the end of FY2011. The following are some key sectors and what has been accomplished with U.S. and international donor funds, as well as with private investment.

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. In addition, Afghanistan's university system is said to be woefully underfunded, in part because Afghans are entitled to free higher education (to the B.A. level) by the Constitution, which means that demand for the higher education far outstrips Afghan resources. The shortfall is impeding the development of a large enough pool of skilled workers for the Afghan government. Afghanistan requires about \$35 million to operate its universities and institutes for one year; USAID plans to spend about \$20 million to help fund those activities in FY2012.⁷²

Health

The health care sector, as noted by Afghan observers, has made considerable gains in reducing infant mortality and giving about 65% of the population at least some access to health professionals. In addition to U.S. assistance to develop the health sector's capacity, Egypt operates a 65-person field hospital at Bagram Air Base that instructs Afghan physicians. Jordan operates a similar facility in Mazar-e-Sharif.

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 General Eikenberry (later Ambassador) said "where the roads end, the Taliban begin." The major road, the Ring Road, is nearly all repaved, and the 150 miles in the northwest remaining to be repaved is being funded by a \$350 million Asian Development Bank donation. Among other major projects completed are a road from Qandahar to Tarin Kowt, (Uruzgan province) built by U.S. military personnel, inaugurated in 2005; and a road linking the Panjshir Valley to Kabul. In several of the most restive provinces, U.S. funds (sometimes CERP funds) are being used to build roads that link up farming communities to the market for their products. Other key priorities are completing a Khost-Gardez road, under way currently, but slowed by security concerns, and a Salang Bypass Road through Bamiyan province.

The Afghan government has committed to developing an East-West road across Afghanistan, from Herat to Kabul. However, funding only for a few segments (Herat to Chest-e-Sharif, and

⁷² Boak, Josh. "Afghan Universities Struggling for Funding." *Washington Post*, February 13, 2011.

Maidany Shar to Bamiyan, and Bamiyan City to Yakowlang in that same province) have been identified, from Italy and Japan.

Bridges

Afghan officials are said to be optimistic about increased trade with Central Asia now that a new bridge has opened (October 2007) over the Panj River, connecting Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The bridge was built with \$33 million in (FY2005) U.S. assistance. The bridge is helping what press reports say is robust reconstruction and economic development in the relatively peaceful and ethnically homogenous province of Panjshir, the political base of the Northern Alliance.

Railways

Afghanistan is beginning to develop functioning railways—a sector it lacked as a legacy of security policy during the late 19th century that saw railroads as facilitating invasion of Afghanistan. Rail is considered increasingly crucial to Afghanistan's ability to develop its mineral wealth because it is the means by which minerals can be exported to neighboring countries. Three railway projects are under way. One, a 45 mile line from Mazar-i-Sharif to Hairaton, on the border with Uzbekistan, was completed in March 2011 with \$165 million from the Asian Development Bank. It began operations in early 2012 and shortly thereafter began carrying its peak capacity of 4,000 tons of cargo per month.

On the other hand, some other rail lines might not get built if foreign investors believe they will not yield a significant payoff for their projects in the mining sector. In particular, China has committed to building a line from its Aynak copper mine project to the northern border. A spur to the Hajji Gak iron mine would be funded by India (about \$1 billion) as part of its project there. However, there are indications India and China might opt not to build these lines and to instead truck their minerals out, a process that would slow full exploitation of these mines. There are also plans to build a line from Herat and Kabul to Qandahar, and then on to the border with Pakistan. The planned railways will link Afghanistan to the former Soviet railway system in Central Asia, and to Pakistan's railway system, increasing Afghanistan's economic integration in the region.

Electricity

At least 10% of USAID funds for Afghanistan have been spent on power projects. The Afghan government set a goal for electricity to reach 65% of households in urban areas and 25% in rural areas by 2010, a goal that was not met. However, severe power shortages in Kabul, caused in part by the swelling of Kabul's population to about 3 million are fewer now than two years ago. Power to the capital has grown due to the Afghan government's agreements with several Central Asian neighbors to import electricity, as well as construction of new substations. Many shops in Kabul are now lit up at night, as observed by numerous visitors over the past few years, including CRS. As noted above, in January 2011, Russia pledged to resume work on some long dormant hydroelectric projects in Afghanistan that were suspended when Soviet troops withdrew in 1989.

Much of the USAID and DOD effort electricity capacity effort has been focused on southern Afghanistan. There has been some criticism of a 105 Megawatt power generating plants built by USAID at Tarakhil, in north Kabul at a cost of about \$300 million because of the high costs of fuel, the questionable need for the plant given alternative plants built recently, and the possible inability of the Afghan authorities to maintain them. USAID has a \$35 million program under

way to help the national electric utility—Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkas (DABS)—operate and maintain the Tarakhil plant.

Regarding power capacity in southern Afghanistan, the key long-term project is to expand the capacity of the Kajaki Dam, located in Helmand Province. Currently, two turbines are operating—one was always working, and the second was repaired by USAID contractors. This has doubled electricity production in the south and caused small factories and other businesses to come to flourish. USAID plans to further expand capacity of the dam by installing a third turbine (which there is a berth for but which never had a turbine installed.) In an operation involving 4,000 NATO troops (Operation Ogap Tsuka), components of the third turbine were successfully delivered to the dam in September 2008. It was expected to be operational in mid-late 2009 but technical and security problems, such as inability to secure and build roads leading to the dam, have delayed the project.

During 2004-January 2012, USAID spent \$72 million on the dam, and it intends to spend \$85 million more. Those USAID funds—coupled with DOD funds from the Infrastructure Fund (see aid tables at the end of this paper)—are being used to fund a \$266 million contract to Black and Veatch in December 2010 to complete the installation of the third turbine. Another \$205 million will be spent by the Army Corps of Engineers to improve power lines and substations fed by the dam.⁷³ Work on the third turbine installation did not begin as planned in April 2012, partly because supply routes from Pakistan remained closed, and there still is no public estimate as to when the third turbine will be completed.

In the interim, and to the consternation of some who want long-term, sustainable solutions for Afghanistan rather than short-term palliatives, the U.S. military and USAID began in February 2011 to implement a plan (“Qandahar Bridging Solution”) to build smaller substations and generator projects that can bring more electricity to Qandahar and other places in the south quickly. The initiative was pursued in order to facilitate the U.S.-military led counter-insurgency strategy in Qandahar. Some of the power provided by additional diesel generators is being used to supply the Qandahar Industrial Park. However, the SIGAR reported in July 2012 that 5 of the 7 projects of the Bridging Solution are 6-15 months behind schedule. The SIGAR also recommends that some focus be shifted to building up northern power distribution routes (North East Power System) rather than an exclusive focus on the South East Power System network. Other criticism centers on the cost of fuel for the diesel generators, for which the Afghans are dependent on continued U.S. funding. For these and other power projects, the Administration requested legislative authority for an “Infrastructure Fund” to be funded by DOD. That authority was provided in the FY2011 DOD authorization bill (P.L. 111-383). Actual funding is depicted in the aid tables below. President Karzai said in a CNN interview on June 26, 2011, that the Afghan government favored emphasizing the longer-term Kajaki Dam project rather than the interim generator project.

Solar Power

There is also an apparent increasing emphasis on providing electricity to individual homes and villages through small solar power installations. A contractor to USAID, IRG, is providing small solar powered-electricity generators to homes in several districts of Afghanistan, alleviating the need to connect such homes to the national power grid. However, there are technical drawbacks,

⁷³ Michael Phillips. “Afghan Dam Saga Reflects U.S. Travails.” *Wall Street Journal*, May 29, 2012.

including weather-related inconsistency of power supply and the difficulty of powering appliances that require substantial power. The U.S. broadcasting service to Afghanistan, Radio Azadi, run by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, has given out 20,000 solar-powered radios throughout Afghanistan, according to RFE/RL in December 2010.

Agriculture

With about 80% of Afghans living in rural areas, the agriculture sector has always been key to Afghanistan's economy and stability. The late Ambassador Holbrooke, including in his January 2010 strategy document, outlined U.S. policy to boost Afghanistan's agriculture sector not only to reduce drug production but also as an engine of economic growth. Prior to the turmoil that engulfed Afghanistan in the late 1970s, Afghanistan was a major exporter of agricultural products.

USAID has spent about 15% of its Afghanistan funds on agriculture (and "alternative livelihoods" to poppy cultivation), and this has helped Afghanistan double its legitimate agricultural output over the past five years. One emerging "success story" is growing Afghan exports of high-quality pomegranate juice called Anar. Other countries are promoting not only pomegranates but also saffron rice and other crops that draw buyers outside Afghanistan. Another emerging success story is Afghanistan's November 2010 start of exports of raisins to Britain.⁷⁴ Wheat production was robust in 2009 because of healthy prices for that crop, and Afghanistan is again self-sufficient in wheat production. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has about 110 personnel in Afghanistan on long-term and priority projects; there are also at least 25 agriculture experts from USAID in Afghanistan. Their efforts include providing new funds to buy seeds and agricultural equipment, and to encourage agri-business. In addition, the National Guard from several states is deploying nine (as of March 2011) "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.

U.S. strategy has addressed not only crop choice but also trying to construct the entirety of the infrastructure needed for a healthy legitimate agriculture sector, including road building, security of the routes to agriculture markets, refrigeration, storage, transit through Pakistan and other transportation of produce, building legitimate sources of financing, and other aspects of the industry. U.S. officials in Kabul say that Pakistan's restrictions on trade between Afghanistan and India had prevented a rapid expansion of Afghan pomegranate exports to that market, but the transit trade agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan, discussed above, is expected to alleviate some of these bottlenecks. Dubai is another customer for Afghan pomegranate exports.

There is a vibrant timber industry in the northeast provinces. However, the exports are illegal. Deforestation has been outlawed because of the potential for soil erosion and other economic and environmental effects.

In terms of specific programming, USAID has a \$150 million program for the relatively safe areas of Afghanistan to continue to develop licit crops. The Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East, and West (IDEA-NEW) program is planned to run through FY2014. In southern and eastern areas of the country where counterinsurgency operations are ongoing, USAID's \$474 million Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Production in Agriculture

⁷⁴ Lemmon, Gayle Tzemach. "New Hope for Afghan Raisin Farmers." *New York Times*, October 9, 2010.

(AVIPA-Plus) program ran through FY2011 and includes initiatives coordinated with U.S. counterinsurgency operations in Helmand and Qandahar provinces. The program provides vouchers for wheat seed, fertilizer, and tools, in addition to supporting cash for work programs and small grants to local cooperatives.

Telecommunications

Several Afghan telecommunications firms have been formed. With startup funds from the Agha Khan Foundation (the Agha Khan is leader of the Isma'ili community, which is prevalent in northern Afghanistan), the highly successful Roshan cellphone company was founded. Another Afghan cellphone firm is Afghan Wireless. The most significant post-Taliban media network is Tolo Television, owned by Moby Media. U.S. funds are being used to supplement the private investment; a \$4 million U.S. grant, in partnership with the Asia Consultancy Group, is being used to construct communication towers in Bamiyan and Ghor provinces. The Afghan government plans to link all major cities by fiber optic cable by mid-2012.

Airlines

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. However, there are new privately run airlines, such as Safi Air (run by the Safi Group, which has built a modern mall in Kabul), and Kam Air. Another, Pamir, was ordered closed in 2010 due to safety concerns.

Mining and Gems

Afghanistan's mining sector has been largely dormant since the Soviet invasion. Some Afghan leaders complain that not enough has been done to revive such potentially lucrative industries as minerals mining, such as of copper and lapis lazuli (a stone used in jewelry). The issue became more urgent in June 2010 when a DOD development team announced, based on surveys, that Afghanistan may have untapped minerals worth over \$1 trillion.⁷⁵ Although copper and iron are the largest categories by value, there are believed to also be significant reserves of such minerals as lithium in western Afghanistan—lithium is crucial to the new batteries being used to power electric automobiles. However, as noted above, some of the expected revenue from this sector might not materialize if investors decide not to build rail lines needed to export the minerals from Afghanistan in large volumes.

Mes Aynak Copper Field. A major project, signed in November 2007, is with China Metallurgical Group for the company to invest \$3.0 billion to develop Afghanistan's Mes Aynak copper field in Lowgar Province. The agreement, viewed as generous to the point where it might not be commercially profitable for China Metallurgical Group, includes construction of two coal-fired electric power plants (one of which will supply more electricity to Kabul city); a segment of railway (discussed above); and a road from the project to Kabul. Work on the mine reportedly has been slowed by various factors, including the need to clear mines in the area and to excavate ancient Buddhist artifacts that local activists insist be preserved. Actual digging at the mine was expected to begin in mid-2012, but it is not clear if this has occurred to date. U.S. forces do not

⁷⁵ Risen, James. "U.S. Identifies Mineral Riches in Afghanistan." *New York Times*, June 14, 2010.

directly protect the project, but U.S. forces have set up small bases on some of the roads leading to the mine project to provide general stability there.

Hajji Gak Iron Ore Project. In September 2011 seven bids were submitted for another large mining project, the Hajji Gak iron ore mine (which may contain 60 billion tons of iron ore) in Bamiyan Province. The bids—from Chinese, Indian, and other firms—were evaluated and, in late 2011, the Steel Authority for India Ltd. (SAIL) was awarded the largest share of the project. One of the four blocs of the project was awarded to Kilo Gold of Canada. The project is expected to generate \$200 million in annual government revenues when fully operational – expected by 2017 - although this level might not be reached unless the associated rail lines are built to allow export in high volumes.

On December 14, 2010, with involvement of the DOD Task Force for Business and Stability Operations, 10 outside investors announced \$50 million in investment in a gold mine in Baghlan Province. There is another gold mine operating in neighboring Takhar Province.

On December 7, 2011, the Ministry of Mines began accepting bids to develop copper and gold deposits in large parts of the north, northeast, west, and central Afghanistan. Other tenders have gone out to develop the Namak Sar lithium deposit in Herat Province.

Oil, Gas, and Related Pipelines

Years of war have stunted developed of a hydrocarbons energy sector in Afghanistan. The country has no hydrocarbons export industry and a small refining sector that provides some of Afghanistan’s needs for gasoline or other fuels. Most of Afghanistan’s fuel comes from neighboring states. However, Afghanistan’s prospects in this sector appeared to brighten by the announcement in March 2006 of an estimated 3.6 billion barrels of oil and 36.5 trillion cubic feet of gas reserves, amounts that could make Afghanistan self-sufficient in energy or even able to export. In a major development, on December 15, 2010, the Afghan government let a six-month contract to a local firm, Ghazanfar Neft Gas, to collect and market crude oil from the Angot field in northern Afghanistan (part of a field that may contain 80 million barrels of oil), initially producing at the low rate of 800 barrels per day.

The energy sector took a major step forward with the awarding in early 2012 of development rights to the Amu Darya basin (northern Afghanistan) oil fields to China National Petroleum Co. The field is expected to start producing 5,000 barrels per day by early 2013, with a longer-term potential of 145,000 barrels per day. The \$3 billion development has a local partner, the Watan Group, owned by Karzai relatives Rashid and Rateb Popal.

A tender will be offered later in 2012 or in early 2012 to develop a larger oil field in Balkh Province (Kasha Kari bloc), estimated to hold 1.8 billion barrels of oil. Exxon-Mobil is reportedly weighting a bid on the project—an action that Afghan officials say would instill substantial confidence in the investment climate in Afghanistan.⁷⁶

USAID has funded test projects to develop gas resources in northern Afghanistan. Building on that aid, there is increasing optimism that private investors will fund at least 25% of a \$300

⁷⁶ Matthew Rosenberg. “As Exxon Mobil Weights Oil Bid, Afghans Move Closer to a Foreign Investment Goal.” *New York Times*, July 6, 2012.

million needed investment for a 200 megawatt gas-fired thermal plant in northern Afghanistan. The plant would be part of a plan to link Afghanistan's natural gas field in Shehbergan to the population center in Mazar-e-Sharif. Another pilot project, funded by the Defense Department's Task Force for Business and Stability Operations, is to develop filling stations and convert cars to use compressed natural gas (CNG), which is produced in the gas field in Shehbergan and could provide an inexpensive source of fuel in the future.

TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) Gas Pipeline Project.

Another long-stalled major energy project appears to be gaining momentum. 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 \$7.5 billion Central Asia Gas Pipeline that would originate in southern Turkmenistan and pass through Afghanistan to Pakistan, with possible extensions into India.⁷⁷ The deterioration in U.S.-Taliban relations after 1998 suspended hopes for the pipeline projects. At a summit meeting in late May 2002, the leaders of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan agreed to revive the project. Sponsors held an inaugural meeting on July 9, 2002, in Turkmenistan, signing a series of preliminary agreements. On December 12, 2010, in the Turkmenistan capital Ashkabad, the relevant leaders reaffirmed their intent to complete the project. In late 2011, the Asian Development Bank has agreed to finance the project, removing what had been a major hurdle. U.S. officials view this project as a superior alternative to a proposed gas pipeline from Iran to India, transiting Pakistan.

Trade Promotion/Reconstruction Opportunity Zones

The key to U.S. economic strategy, as exemplified by the New Silk Road strategy, is to encourage Afghanistan's trade relationships. The United States is doing so by promoting regional economic integration, discussed above, as well as through bilateral economic agreements with Afghanistan. A key to the strategy was accomplished in 2011 when Afghanistan and Pakistan finalized provisions to implement their 2010 transit trade agreement. To facilitate Afghanistan's ability to increase trade, USAID is funding a five year project (\$63 million total during 2010-2014) to simplify the customs clearance process. This includes new import procedures that have reduced the time needed for imports to clear customs by 45%. On December 13, 2004, the 148 countries of the World Trade Organization voted to start membership talks with Afghanistan.

Earlier, in September 2004, the United States and Afghanistan signed a bilateral trade and investment framework agreement (TIFA), and most of Afghanistan's exports are eligible for duty free treatment under the enhanced Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program. The Administration economic strategy report of December 2011 says the Administration is reaching out to Afghan exporters and U.S. importers of Afghan products to make increased use of the GSP program. The TIFA is seen as a prelude to a broader and more complex bilateral free trade agreement, but negotiations on an FTA have not yet begun.

⁷⁷ 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.

Another initiative supported by the United States is the establishment of joint Afghan-Pakistani “Reconstruction Opportunity Zones” (ROZs) 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. Bills in the 110th Congress, S. 2776 and H.R. 6387, would have authorized the President to proclaim duty-free treatment for imports from ROZs 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 major Pakistan aid appropriation that passed by the House on June 11, 2009, and was then appended to H.R. 2410. However, the version of the major Pakistan aid bill that became law (S. 1707, P.L. 111-73) did not authorize ROZs.

Table 9. Comparative Social and Economic Statistics

Population	28 million +. Kabul population is 3 million, up from 500,000 in Taliban era.
Ethnicities/Religions	Pashtun 42%; Tajik 27%; Uzbek 9%; Hazara 9%; Aimak 4%; Turkmen 3%; Baluch 2%.
Size of Religious Minorities	Religions: Sunni (Hanafi school) 80%; Shiite (Hazaras, Qizilbash, and Isma'ilis) 19%; other 1% Christians-estimated 500-8,000 persons; Sikh and Hindu-3,000 persons; Bahai's-400 (declared blasphemous in May 2007); Jews-1 person; Buddhist- small numbers. 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, and GDP Growth and Unemployment Rates	\$29.8 billion purchasing power parity (PPP). 109 th in the world. Per capita: \$1,000 purchasing power parity. 212 th in the world. Growth: about 9% for 2010; 8% expected for 2011; and 7% for 2012. GDP was about \$10 billion (PPP) during last year of Taliban rule. Unemployment rate is about 8%, but underemployment rate may be nearly 50%.
Children in School/Schools Built since 2002	7.1 million, of which 40% are girls. Up from 900,000 boys in school during Taliban era. 4,000 schools built (all donors) and 140,000 teachers hired since Taliban era. 17 universities, up from 2 in 2002. 75,000 Afghans in universities in Afghanistan (35% female); 5,000 when Taliban was in power.
Afghans With Access to Health Coverage	65% with basic health services access-compared to 8% during Taliban era. Infant mortality down 22% 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	Over 1,000 judges (incl. 200 women) trained since fall of Taliban.
Banks Operating	17, including branches in some rural areas, but about 90% of the population still use <i>hawalas</i> (informal money transfer services). No banks existed during Taliban era. Some limited credit card use. Some Afghan police now paid by cell phone (E-Paisa).
Access to Electricity	15%-20% of the population. Much of its electricity imported from neighboring states.
Government Revenues (excl. donor funds)	About \$1.7 billion in 2010; more than double the \$720 million 2007. Total Afghan budget is about \$4.5 billion (including development funds)—shortfall covered by foreign donors, including through Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund.
Financial Reserves/Debt	About \$4.4 billion, up from \$180 million in 2002. Includes amounts due Central Bank. \$8 billion bilateral debt, plus \$500 million multilateral. U.S. forgave \$108 million in debt in 2004, and \$1.6 billion forgiven by other creditors in March 2010.
Foreign/Private Investment	About \$500 million to \$1 billion per year. Four Afghan airlines: Ariana (national) plus at least two privately owned: Safi and Kam. Turkish Air and India Air fly to Kabul.
Mining/Minerals	Vast untapped minerals affirmed by U.S. experts (June 2010). Chinese firm mining copper in Lowgar Province, and contracts to mine iron ore and produce oil in in various stages of consideration and implementation.
Legal Exports/Agriculture	80% of the population is involved in agriculture. Self-sufficiency in wheat production as of May 2009 (first time in 30 years). Exports: \$400 million+ (2011): fruits, raisins, melons, pomegranate juice (Anar), nuts, carpets, lapis lazuli gems, marble tile, timber products (Kunar, Nuristan provinces). July 2010 Afghanistan-Pakistan

	trade agreement.
Imports	Imports: \$3.4 billion (2009): food, energy, capital goods, textiles, autos. Top five trading partners (in descending order): Pakistan, Russia, Iran, India, United States.
Oil Proven Reserves	3.6 billion barrels of oil, 36.5 trillion cubic feet of gas. Current oil production negligible, but USAID funding project to revive oil and gas facilities in the north.
Cellphones/Tourism	About 6.5 million cellphone subscribers, up from negligible amounts during Taliban era. Tourism: National park opened in Bamiyan June 2009. Increasing tourist visits.

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

Table 10. Major Non-U.S. Pledges for Afghanistan 2002-2012

(\$ in millions)

Japan	13,150
European Union	2,880
Germany	2,680
Asian Development Bank	2,270
Britain	2,220
World Bank	2,140
India	1,515
Canada	1,255
Iran	1,000
Netherlands	775
Norway	745
Australia	645
Italy	645
Sweden	635
United Nations	445
Denmark	435
France	320
China	255
Spain	220
Turkey	210
Finland	160
Russia	150
Saudi Arabia	140
UAE	135
Switzerland	120
South Korea	115
Czech Republic	105
Total	\$24,900
(includes donors of under \$100 million, not listed)	(of which \$19,700 disbursed—about 80%)

Source: Afghanistan Ministry of Finance: Development Cooperation Report, 2010; various U.S. government reports, including Defense Department reports on Afghanistan stability. Figure for Japan includes \$5 billion pledged in 2008 (over five years) to fund Afghan National Police salaries, and funds pledged at July 8, 2012, Tokyo donors conference. Figures for Germany included \$550 million pledged (over four years) at that meeting.

Note: Table includes donors of over \$100 million only.

Table II. 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	30	20.1	—	—	80.1
1992	25.0	25.0	31.4	—	—	81.4
1993	10	10	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 12. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY1999-FY2001

(\$ in millions)

	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001
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))
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
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
State Department/HDP (Humanitarian Demining Program)	2.615	3.0	2.8
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
USAID/Office of Transition Initiatives			0.45 (Afghan women in Pakistan)
DOD			
Foreign Military Financing			
Anti-Terrorism			
Economic Support Funds (E.S.F)			
Peacekeeping			
Totals	76.6	113.2	182.6

Source: CRS.

Table 13. Post-Taliban U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan

(appropriations/allocations in \$ millions)

Fiscal Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2002-2012 Total	2013 Req
ESF	117	239.3	895	1,280	473	1,211	1,400	2,048	3,346	2,066	1,837	14,953	1,850
DA	18.3	42.5	153	170	185	167	149	.4	.3	0	0	884	0
GHCS	7.5	49.7	33.4	38	41.5	101	63	58.	92	70	0	554	0
Refugee Accounts	160	61.5	63.3	47	36	54	44	77	82	65	84	780	65
Food Aid	206	74.5	99	97	108	70	231	87	32	19	.6	1,023	0
IDA	197	85.8	11.2	4.2	0	0	17	27	30	67	49	488	0
INCLE	60	0	220	709	233	252	308	484	589	400	324	3,562	600
NADR	44	34.7	67	38.	18.2	37	27	49	58	69	65	506	54
IMET	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.8	.8	1.1	1.7	1.4	1.8	1.6	2	13	1.5
FMF	57	191	414	397	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,059	0
Other	32	23.1	36	18	0.2	0.1	21	5	3.8	7.4	8	156	0
DOD—ASSF	0	0	0	995	1,908	7,406	2,750	5,607	9,163	1,1619	11200	50,648	5,749
DOD—CERP	0	0	40	136	215	209	488	551	1000	400	400	3,439	400
Infrastructure Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	400	800	400
Business Task Force	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	59	239	258	571	179
DOD—Counter narc	0	0	72	224.5	108	291	193	230	392	376	425	2,312	405
DOD—Other	7.5	165	285	540	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	998	0
DEA Counter narc	0.6	2.9	3.7	17	23.7	20	41	19	0	0	0	128	0
Total U.S. Assistance	908	970	2393	4,711	3,351	9,818	5,732	9,299	14,848	15,801	15,051	82,872	9,703

Sources and Notes: Prepared by Curt Tarnoff, Specialist in Foreign Assistance, August 2012. Department of State annual budget presentation documents; SIGAR Report July 30, 2012; and CRS calculations. Does not include SIGAR or State/USAID operational expenses (over \$5 billion since 2002). Food aid includes P.L.480 Title II, Food for Education, Food for Progress, 416b Food Aid, Emerson Trust, and USAID CCC. "Other" = USAID Other, Office of Transition Initiatives, Treasury Technical Assistance, and Peacekeeping accounts. ESF = Economic Support Funds; DA = Development Assistance; GHCS = Global Health/Child Survival; FMF = Foreign Military Financing; NADR = Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, De-Mining, and Related; IMET = International Military Education and Training; INCLE = International Narcotics and Law Enforcement; ASSF = Afghan Security Forces Funding; IDA = International Disaster Assistance.

Table I4. Total Obligations for Major Programs: FY2001-FY2011

(\$ in millions. Source: USAID and CRS calculations)

Security Related Programs (mostly DOD funds)	
Afghan National Security Forces (incl. FMF, and DOD ANSFF)	40,506
Commander Emergency Response Program (CERP)	3,039
Karzai Protection (NADR funds)	440
Counter-Narcotics (INCLE, DOD, DEA)	5,146
Other, incl de-mining operations (Halo Trust, other contractors)	155
International Military Education and Training Funds (IMET)	10.2
Defense article drawdown/DOD Infrastructure Fund/Business Task Force	1,711
Humanitarian-Related Programs	
Food Aid (USDA and USAID: P.L. 480 Title I and II; Food for Progress, 416(b), Food for Education)	1,096
Migration and Refugee aid (including emergency)	690
Debt Relief for Afghan government	11
Disaster Relief (IDA)	438
USAID Development Funding: Economic Support Funds (ESF) and Development Assistance (DA)	Total: 13,847
Afghan government budget support	255
Democracy (Including election support)	1,400
Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (for National Solidarity Program, etc)	1,690
	(about 500 for NSP)
Rule of Law and Human Rights (not incl. some INCLE funds)	187
Roads	2,148
Power/Electricity	1,921
Education	795
Health Sector	930
Water	120
Agriculture	1,025
PRT projects (development and local governance)	1,234
Private Sector Development/Econ. Growth (incl cash-for-work)	1,122
Alternative Development/Livelihoods	1,020
Other Aid:	
Child Survival and Health	554
Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC)	26
Treasury Technical Assistance	3.5
Total (including minor amounts not included in table)	67,672

Table 15. NATO/ISAF Contributing Nations
(approximate as of December 2012)

NATO Countries		Non-NATO Partners	
Belgium	283	Albania	212
Bulgaria	572	Armenia	126
Canada	950*	Austria	3
Czech Republic	422	Australia	1550
Denmark	613	Azerbaijan	94
Estonia	155	Bosnia-Herzegovina	54
France	1500	Croatia	260
Germany	4737	Finland	136
Greece	12	Georgia	1570
Hungary	555	Ireland	6
Iceland	3	Jordan	0
Italy	4000	Macedonia	168
Latvia	40	Malaysia	46
Lithuania	221	Mongolia	88
Luxemburg	10	Montenegro	41
Netherlands	500	New Zealand	155
Norway	145	Singapore	39
Poland	1800	South Korea	350
Portugal	141	Sweden	506
Romania	1762	Ukraine	25
Slovakia	343	United Arab Emirates	35
Slovenia	77	Tonga	55
Spain	1450		
Turkey	1328		
United Kingdom	9500		
United States	68000		
Total Listed ISAF: 105,000 (approximate)			

Source: ISAF “Placemat”—October 8, 2012 and country announcements. Figure for Georgia reflects announcement by that country of force increase, and figure for France reflects end of combat mission in November 2012.

Note: *ISAF figures reflect Canada combat troop pullout in July-August 2011; numbers listed are to train the ANSF.

Table 16. Provincial Reconstruction Teams

Location (City)		Province/Command
U.S.-Lead (all under ISAF banner)		
1. Gardez		Paktia Province (RC-East, E) (closed September 2012)
2. Ghazni		Ghazni (RC-E). Now mostly run by Poland.
3. Jalalabad		Nangarhar (RC-E)
4. Khost		Khost (RC-E)(closed September 2012)
5. Qalat		Zabol (RC-South, S). with Romania.
6. Asadabad		Kunar (RC-E) (closed September 2012)
7. Sharana		Paktika (RC-E)
8. Mehtarlam		Laghman (RC-E)(closed September 2012)
9. Jabal o-Saraj	Panjshir Province (RC-E), State Department lead Z	(closed September 2012)
10. Qala Gush		Nuristan (RC-E)
11. Farah		Farah (RC-SW)
Partner Lead (most under ISAF banner)		
PRT Location	Province	Lead Force/Other forces
12. Qandahar	Qandahar (RC-S)	Canada (seat of RC-S)
13. Lashkar Gah	Helmand (RC-S)	Britain. with U.S., Denmark, and Estonia
14. Tarin Kowt	Uruzgan (RC-S)	Australia (and U.S.) (Replaced Netherlands in August 2010)
15. Herat	Herat (RC-W)	Italy (seat of RC-W)
16. Qalah-ye Now	Badghis (RC-W)	Spain
17. Mazar-e-Sharif	Balkh (RC-N)	Sweden
18. Konduz	Konduz (RC-N)	Germany (seat of RC-N)
19. Faizabad	Badakhshan (RC-N)	Germany. with Denmark, Czech Rep. (closed in September 2012)
20. Meymaneh	Faryab (RC-N)	Norway. with Sweden. (closed in September 2012)
21. Chaghcharan	Ghowr (RC-W)	Lithuania. with Denmark, U.S., Iceland (closed in September 2012)
22. Pol-e-Khomri	Baghlan (RC-N)	Hungary (closed in September 2012)
23. Bamiyan	Bamiyan (RC-E)	U.S. and New Zealand (not NATO/ISAF). Will close in April 2013
24. Maidan Shahr	Wardak (RC-C)	U.S. and Turkey
25. Pul-i-Alam	Lowgar (RC-E)	U.S. and Czech Republic
26. Shebergan	Jowzjan (RC-N)	Turkey (closed in September 2012)
27. Charikar	Parwan (RC-E)	South Korea (Bagram, in Parwan Province, is the base of RC-E)
28. Mahmud-i-Raqi	Kapisa (RC-E)	France

Note: RC = Regional Command.

Table 17. Major Factions/Leaders in Afghanistan

Party/ Leader	Leader	Ideology/ Ethnicity	Regional Base
Taliban	Mullah (Islamic cleric) Muhammad Umar (still at large possibly in Afghanistan. Umar, born in Tarin Kowt, Uruzgan province, is about 65 years old.	Ultra-orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Throughout south and east. Small numbers elsewhere.
Haqqani Network	Jalaludin Haqqani. Allied with Taliban and Al Qaeda. Said to be supported, or at least tolerated, by Pakistani ISI.	Same as above	Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Kabul
Islamic Society (leader of “Northern Alliance”)	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. Former party head, Burhanuddin Rabbani, assassinated by Taliban in September 2011.	Moderate Islamic, mostly Tajik	Much of northern and western Afghanistan, including Kabul
National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan	Abdul Rashid Dostam. Was Karzai rival in October 2004 presidential election, then his top “security adviser.” As of October 2011, reportedly has joined new opposition movement called “Truth and Justice Party.”	Secular, left-leaning, Uzbek	Jowzjan, Balkh, Faryab, Sar-i-Pol, and Samangan provinces.
Hizb-e-Wahdat	Composed of Shiite Hazara tribes from central Afghanistan. Former members Karim Khalili is vice president, but Mohammad Mohaqiq is Karzai rival. Generally pro-Iranian. Was part of Rabbani 1992-1996 government, and fought unsuccessfully with Taliban over Bamiyan. Still revered by Hazaras is the former leader of the group, Abdul Ali Mazari, who was captured and killed by the Taliban in March 1995.	Shiite, Hazara tribes	Bamiyan, Ghazni, Dai Kundi province
Pashtun tribal/regional 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 active in operations east of Kabul, but open to ending militant activity. Leader of a rival Hizb-e-Islam faction, Yunus Khalis, the mentor of Mullah Umar, died July 2006.	Orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Small groups in Nangarhar, Nuristan, and Kunar provinces
Islamic Union	Abd-I-Rab Rasul Sayyaf. Islamic conservative, leads a pro-Karzai faction in parliament. Lived many years in and politically close to Saudi Arabia, which shares his “Wahhabi” ideology. During anti-Soviet war, Sayyaf’s faction, with Hikmatyar, was a principal recipient of U.S. weaponry. Criticized the U.S.-led war against Saddam Hussein after Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait.	orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Paghman (west of Kabul)

Source: CRS.

Residual Issues from Past Conflicts

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

Stinger Retrieval

Beginning in late 1985 following internal debate, the Reagan Administration provided about 2,000 man-portable "Stinger" anti-aircraft missiles to the *mujahedin* for use against Soviet aircraft. Prior to the ouster of the Taliban, common estimates suggested that 200-300 Stingers remained at large, although more recent estimates put the number below 100.⁷⁸ 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. No hits were reported. The danger of these weapons has become apparent on several past occasions. Iran bought 16 of the missiles in 1987 and fired one against U.S. helicopters in the Persian Gulf. India claimed that it was a Stinger supplied to Islamic rebels in Kashmir by sympathizers in Afghanistan, that shot down an Indian helicopter over Kashmir in May 1999.⁷⁹ Soviet-made SA-7 "Strella" man-portable launchers, which allegedly have been used in the past by Al Qaeda, including against an Israeli passenger jet in Kenya on November 30, 2002, were discovered in Afghanistan by U.S. forces in December 2002.

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 effort. On March 7, 1994, the *Washington Post* reported that the CIA had recovered only about 50 or 100 at-large Stingers. In February 2002, the Afghan government found and turned over to the United States "dozens" of Stingers.⁸⁰ In January 2005, Afghan intelligence began buying Stingers back, at a reported cost of \$150,000 each.⁸¹ Any Stingers that remain in Afghanistan likely pose little threat, in part because of deteriorating components. No recent uses are reported.

Mine Eradication

Land mines laid during the Soviet occupation constitute one of the principal dangers to the Afghan people. The United Nations estimates that 5 million to 7 million mines remain scattered throughout the country, although some estimates are lower. U.N. teams have destroyed 1 million mines and are now focusing on de-mining priority-use, residential and commercial property, including lands around Kabul. Amounts contributed by the United States to the de-mining effort are shown in the tables above. 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%.

⁷⁸ Saleem, Farrukh. "Where Are the Missing Stinger Missiles? Pakistan," *Friday Times*. August 17-23, 2001.

⁷⁹ "U.S.-Made Stinger Missiles—Mobile and Lethal." *Reuters*, May 28, 1999.

⁸⁰ Fullerton, John. "Afghan Authorities Hand in Stinger Missiles to U.S." *Reuters*, February 4, 2002.

⁸¹ "Afghanistan Report," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. February 4, 2005.

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

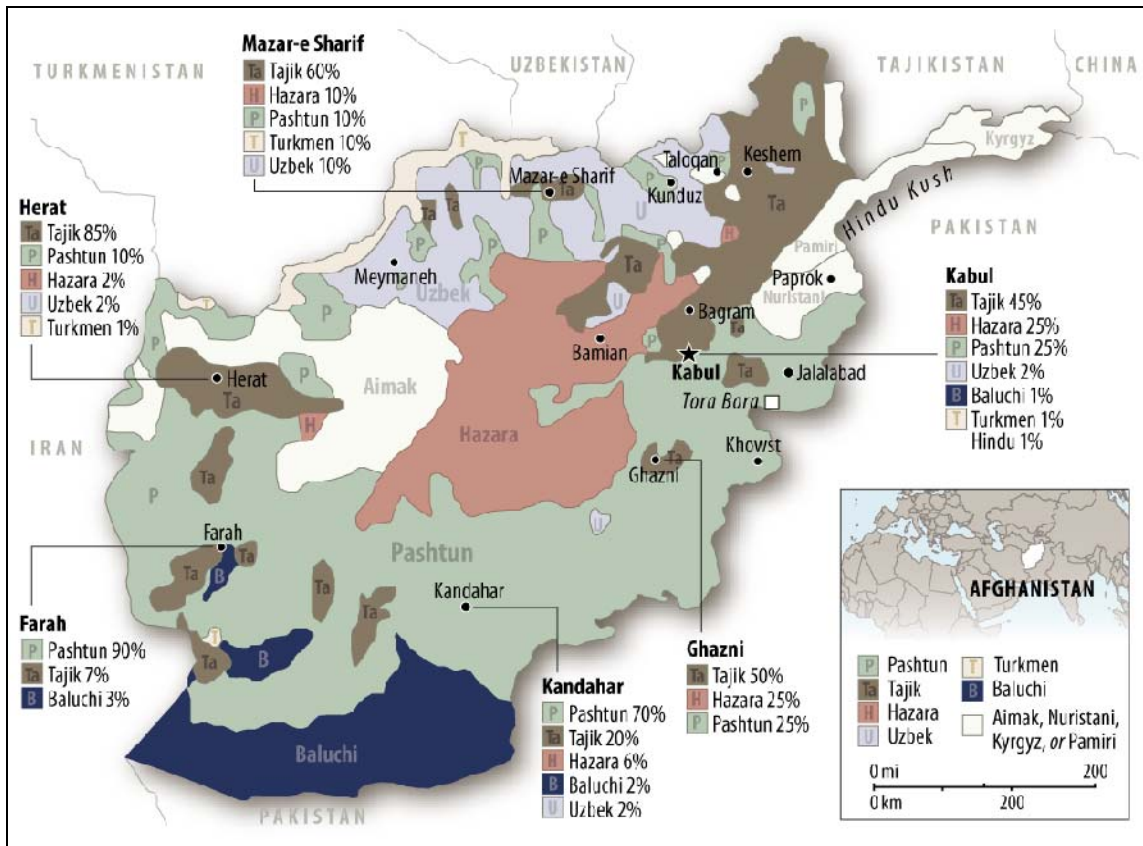
- curtailment of air transportation with the United States. Waivers were also granted in 1994 and, after the fall of the Taliban, by President Bush.
- On May 3, 2002, President Bush restored normal trade treatment to the products of Afghanistan, reversing the February 18, 1986, proclamation by President 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-I. Map of Afghanistan



Source: Map Resources. Adapted by CRS.

Figure A-2. Map of Afghan Ethnicities



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

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

Author Contact Information

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