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

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Summary

U.S. and outside assessments of the effort to stabilize Afghanistan are increasingly negative, to the point where some senior U.S. officials say they are not sure the effort is "winning." These assessments emphasize an expanding militant presence in some areas previously considered secure, and increased numbers of civilian and military deaths. Both the official U.S. as well as outside assessments increasingly point to Pakistan's failure to prevent Taliban and other militant infiltration into Afghanistan as a cause of the security deterioration. The Bush Administration has concluded several recent reviews of U.S. strategy, and has made actionable recommendations to the incoming Obama Administration, which is expected to favor greater emphasis on Afghanistan and to revamp U.S. strategy. There appears to be little clear consensus on a new strategy, although most U.S. officials and commanders agree that U.S. strategy must go beyond adding U.S. troops to include enhancing non-military steps such as economic development and improved coordination among international donors, building local governing structures, and reform of the Afghan central government. The Bush Administration also increased direct U.S. action against militant concentrations inside Pakistan.

A growing component of U.S. strategy is to try to compel the Afghan government to redress its widely acknowledged corruption and lack of capacity, which is causing popular disillusionment. However, some experts believe there is substantial progress to build on, including completion of the post-Taliban political transition with the convening of a parliament following parliamentary elections in September 2005, presidential elections in October 2004, and adoption of a new constitution in January 2004. The parliament has become an arena for formerly armed factions to resolve differences, as well as a center of political pressure on President Hamid Karzai. Afghan citizens, including women, are enjoying personal freedoms forbidden by the Taliban. With international and Afghan criticism of Karzai's leadership growing, he will be tested politically in the presidential and provincial elections planned for the fall of 2009, and parliamentary and district elections are to follow one year later, although possibly subject to security conditions.

The United States and partner countries now deploy a 51,000 troop NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) that commands peacekeeping throughout Afghanistan. Of those, about 22,000 of the 36,000 U.S. forces in Afghanistan are part of ISAF; the remainder (about 14,000) are under Operation Enduring Freedom. U.S. and partner forces also run 26 regional enclaves to secure reconstruction (Provincial Reconstruction Teams, PRTs), and are building an Afghan National Army and National Police now totaling about 150,000. The United States has given Afghanistan nearly $32 billion (including FY2009) since the fall of the Taliban, of which about $15 billion was to equip and train the security forces. Breakdowns are shown in the tables at the end.

This paper will be updated as warranted by major developments. CRS Report RL33627, *NATO in Afghanistan: A Test of the Transatlantic Alliance*, by Vincent Morelli and Paul Gallis; and CRS Report RL32686, *Afghanistan: Narcotics and U.S. Policy*, by Christopher M. Blanchard.

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Background to Recent Developments

Prior to the founding of a monarchy in 1747 by Ahmad Shah Durrani, Afghanistan was territory inhabited by tribes and tribal confederations linked to neighboring nations, not a distinct entity. King Amanullah Khan (1919-1929) launched attacks on British forces in Afghanistan shortly after taking power and won complete independence from Britain as recognized in the Treaty of Rawalpindi (August 8, 1919). He was considered a secular modernizer 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 freeing them from covering their face and hair. However, possibly believing that he could limit Soviet support for Communist factions in Afghanistan, Zahir Shah also entered into a significant political and arms purchase relationship with the Soviet Union.

Afghanistan's slide into instability began in the 1970s when the diametrically opposed Communist Party and Islamic movements grew in strength. While receiving medical treatment in Italy, Zahir Shah was overthrown by his cousin, Mohammad Daoud, a military leader who established a dictatorship with strong state involvement in the economy. Daoud was overthrown and killed[1] in 1978 by Communist military officers led by Nur Mohammad Taraki. He was displaced a year later by Hafizullah Amin, leader of a rival Communist faction. 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. Thsi attempt at rapid modernization sparked rebellion by Islamic parties opposed to such moves. The Soviet Union sent troops into Afghanistan on December 27, 1979, to prevent a seizure of power by the Islamic militias, known as the *mujahedin* (Islamic fighters). Upon their invasion, the Soviets replaced Hafizullah Amin with an ally perceived as pliable, Babrak Karmal.

Soviet occupation forces, which numbered about 120,000, were never able to pacify the outlying areas of the country. The *mujahedin* benefited from U.S. weapons and assistance, provided through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in cooperation with Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence directorate (ISI). That weaponry included portable shoulder-fired anti-aircraft systems called "Stingers," which proved highly effective against Soviet aircraft. The *mujahedin* also hid and stored weaponry in a large network of natural and manmade tunnels and caves throughout Afghanistan. The Soviet Union's losses mounted, and Soviet domestic opinion turned anti-war. In 1986, after the reformist Mikhail Gorbachev became leader, the Soviets replaced Karmal with the director of Afghan intelligence, Najibullah Ahmedzai (known by his first name).

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.

[1] Daoud's grave was discovered outside Kabul in early 2008.

The State Department has said that a total of about $3 billion in economic and covert military assistance was provided by the U.S. to the Afghan *mujahedin* from 1980 until the end of the Soviet occupation in 1989. Press reports say the covert aid program grew from about $20 million per year in FY1980 to about $300 million per year during FY1986-FY1990. The Soviet pullout decreased the perceived strategic value of Afghanistan, causing a reduction in subsequent covert funding.[2] As indicated below in **Table 5**, U.S. assistance to Afghanistan remained at relatively low levels from the time of the Soviet withdrawal, validating the views of many that the United States largely considered its role in Afghanistan "completed" when Soviets troops left, and there was little support for a major U.S. effort to rebuild the country. The United States closed its embassy in Kabul in January 1989, as the Soviet Union was completing its pullout, and it remained so until the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

With Soviet backing withdrawn, on March 18, 1992, Najibullah publicly agreed to step down once an interim government was formed. That announcement set off a wave of rebellions primarily by Uzbek and Tajik militia commanders in northern Afghanistan, who joined prominent *mujahedin* commander Ahmad Shah Masud of the Islamic Society, a largely Tajik party headed by Burhannudin Rabbani. Masud had earned a reputation as a brilliant strategist by preventing the Soviets from occupying his power base in the Panjshir Valley of northeastern Afghanistan. Najibullah fell, and the *mujahedin* regime began April 18, 1992.[3]

[2] For FY1991, Congress reportedly cut covert aid appropriations to the *mujahedin* from $300 million the previous year to $250 million, with half the aid withheld until the second half of the fiscal year. See "Country Fact Sheet: Afghanistan," in *U.S. Department of State Dispatch*, vol. 5, no. 23 (June 6, 1994), p. 377.

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

Table 1. Afghanistan Social and Economic Statistics

Population:	31 million
Ethnic Groups:	Pashtun 42%; Tajik 27%; Uzbek 9%; Hazara 9%; Aimak 4%; Turkmen 3%; Baluch 2%; other 4%
Religions:	Sunni Muslim (Hanafi school) 80%; Shiite Muslim (Hazaras, Qizilbash, and Isma'ilis) 19%; other 1%
Size of Religious Minorities	Christians-estimated 500-8,000 persons; Sikh and Hindu-3,000 persons; Bahai's-400 (declared blasphemous in May 2007); Jews-1 person; Buddhist-unknown, but small numbers, mostly foreigners. No Christian or Jewish schools. One church, open only to expatriates.
Literacy Rate:	28% of population over 15 years of age
GDP:	$10.2 billion est. for 2008. $7.5 billion in 2007. Value of opium production in 2008 est. $732 million (7% of GDP), down from 13% of GDP for 2007. (Aug. 2008 UNODC report.)
GDP Per Capita:	$300/yr; ($800 purchasing power parity). Up from $150 year per capita when Taliban was in power
GDP Real Growth:	12% (2007)
Unemployment Rate:	40%
Children in School/Schools Built	5.7 million, of which 35% are girls. Up from 900,000 in school during Taliban era. 8,000 schools built; 140,000 teachers hired since Taliban era.
Afghans With Access to Health Coverage	85% with basic health services access-compared to 8% during Taliban era, although access is more limited in restive areas. Infant mortality has dropped 18% since Taliban to 135 per 1,000 live births. 680 clinics built with U.S. funds since Taliban.
Roads Built	About 5,000 miles post-Taliban, including ring road around the country. Now possible to drive from Kabul to western border in one day.
Judges Trained	950 since fall of Taliban
Access to Electricity	15%-20% of the population.
Revenues:	About $1 billion in 2008; $715 million in 2007; $550 million 2006
Expenditures	About $1.5 billion in 2008; $1.2 billion in 2007; 900 million in 2006. Afghan government to contribute $6.8 billion during 2008-2013 for $50 billion Afghan National Development Strategy; the remainder to come from international donors.
External Debt:	$8 billion bilateral, plus $500 million multilateral. U.S. forgave $108 million in debt to U.S. in 2006
Foreign Exchange:	$3 billion (Karzai interview September 2008).
Foreign Investment	$500 billion est. for 2007; about $1 billion for 2006
Major Legal Exports:	fruits, raisins, pomegranate juice (Anar), nuts, carpets, semi-precious gems, hides
Oil Production:	negligible
Oil Proven Reserves:	3.6 billion barrels of oil, 36.5 trillion cubic feet of gas, according to Afghan government on March 15, 2006
Major Imports:	food, petroleum, capital goods, textiles
Import Partners:	Pakistan 38.6%; U.S. 9.5%; Germany 5.5%; India 5.2%; Turkey 4.1%; Turkmenistan 4.1%
Number of Cellphones	5.3 million

Source: CIA World Factbook, January 2008, Embassy of Afghanistan in Washington, DC; President Bush speech on February 15, 2007; International Religious Freedom Report, September 19, 2008; Afghan National Development Strategy.

The *Mujahedin* Government and Rise of the Taliban

The fall of Najibullah exposed the differences among the *mujahedin* parties. The leader of one of the smaller parties (Afghan National Liberation Front), Islamic scholar Sibghatullah Mojadeddi, was president during April-May 1992. Under an agreement among the major parties, Rabbani became President in June 1992 with agreement that he would serve until December 1994. He refused to step down at that time, saying that political authority would disintegrate without a clear successor. Kabul was subsequently shelled by other *mujahedin* factions, particularly that of nominal "Prime Minister" Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, a Pashtun, who accused Rabbani of monopolizing power. Hikmatyar's radical Islamist Hizb-e-Islami (Islamic Party) had received a large proportion of the U.S. aid during the anti-Soviet war.

In 1993-1994, Afghan Islamic clerics and students, mostly of rural, Pashtun origin, formed the Taliban movement. Many were former *mujahedin* who had become disillusioned with conflict among *mujahedin* parties and had moved into Pakistan to study in Islamic seminaries ("madrassas"). They practiced an orthodox Sunni Islam called "Wahhabism," also practiced in Saudi Arabia, and consonant with conservative Pashtun tribal traditions. They viewed the Rabbani government as corrupt, anti-Pashtun, and responsible for civil war. The four years of civil war (1992-1996) created popular support for the Taliban as a movement that could deliver Afghanistan from the warfare. With the help of defections, the Taliban seized control of the southeastern city of Qandahar in November 1994; by February 1995, it had reached the gates of Kabul, after which an 18-month stalemate around the capital ensued. In September 1995, the Taliban captured Herat province, bordering Iran, and imprisoned its governor, Ismail Khan, ally of Rabbani and Masud, who later escaped and took refuge in Iran. In September 1996, Taliban victories near Kabul led to the withdrawal of Rabbani and Masud to the Panjshir Valley north of Kabul with most of their heavy weapons; the Taliban took control of Kabul on September 27, 1996. Taliban gunmen subsequently entered a U.N. facility in Kabul to seize Najibullah, his brother, and aides, and then hanged them.

Taliban Rule

The Taliban regime was led by Mullah Muhammad Umar, who lost an eye in the anti-Soviet war while fighting under the banner of the Hizb-e-Islam (Islamic Party) of Yunis Khalis. Umar held the title of Head of State and "Commander of the Faithful," but he remained in the Taliban power base in Qandahar, almost never appearing in public. Umar forged a close bond with bin Laden and refused U.S. demands to extradite him.

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

The Clinton Administration held talks with the Taliban before and after it took power, but was unable to moderate its policies. The United States withheld recognition of Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, formally recognizing no faction as the government. The

United Nations continued to seat representatives of the Rabbani government, not the Taliban. The State Department ordered the Afghan embassy in Washington, DC, closed in August 1997. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1193 (August 28, 1998) and 1214 (December 8, 1998) urged the Taliban to end discrimination against women. Some women's rights groups urged the Clinton Administration not to recognize the Taliban government. In May 1999, the Senate passed S.Res. 68 calling on the President not to recognize an Afghan government that discriminates against 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 visited Afghanistan but the Taliban refused to hand over bin Laden. After the August 7, 1998, Al Qaeda bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the Clinton Administration progressively pressured the Taliban, imposing U.S. sanctions and achieving adoption of some U.N. sanctions as well. On August 20, 1998, the United States fired cruise missiles at alleged Al Qaeda training camps in eastern Afghanistan, but bin Laden was not hit. 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. Some observers assert that the Administration missed several other opportunities to strike him, including following a purported sighting of him by an unarmed Predator drone at his Karnak Farms camp in Afghanistan in mid-2000. Clinton Administration officials say they did not try to oust the Taliban militarily because domestic and international support for doing so was lacking.

The "Northern Alliance" Congeals

The Taliban's policies caused different Afghan factions to ally with the ousted President Rabbani and Masud and their ally in the Herat area, Ismail Khan—the Tajik core of the anti-Taliban opposition—into a broader "Northern Alliance." In the Alliance were Uzbek, Hazara Shiite, and even some Pashtun Islamist factions discussed in **Table 17**.

- **Uzbeks/General Dostam**. One major Alliance 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 tried to oust Rabbani during his 1992-96 presidency, but then joined him against the Taliban.
- **Hazara Shiites**. Members of Hazara tribes, mostly Shiite Muslims, are prominent in Bamiyan Province (central Afghanistan) and are always wary of repression by Pashtuns and other larger ethnic factions. During the various Afghan wars, the main Hazara Shiite militia was Hizb-e-Wahdat (Unity Party, composed of eight different groups).
- **Pashtun Islamists/Sayyaf**. Abd-I-Rab Rasul Sayyaf, who is now a parliament committee chairman, headed a Pashtun-dominated *mujahedin* faction called the Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan. Even though his ideology is similar to that of the Taliban, Sayyaf joined the Northern Alliance.

Bush Administration Policy Pre-September 11, 2001

Prior to the September 11 attacks, Bush Administration policy differed little from Clinton Administration policy—applying economic and political pressure while retaining dialogue with the Taliban, and refraining from militarily assisting the Northern Alliance. The September 11 Commission report said that, in the months prior to the September 11 attacks, Administration officials leaned toward such a step and that some officials wanted to assist anti-Taliban Pashtun forces. Other covert options were under consideration as well.[4] In a departure from Clinton Administration policy, the Bush Administration stepped up engagement with Pakistan to try to end its support for the Taliban. In accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1333, in February 2001 the State Department ordered the Taliban representative office in New York closed, although the Taliban representative continued to operate informally. In March 2001, Administration officials received a Taliban envoy to discuss bilateral issues.

Fighting with some Iranian, Russian, and Indian financial and military support, the Northern Alliance nonetheless continued to lose ground to the Taliban after it lost Kabul in 1996. By the time of the September 11 attacks, the Taliban controlled at least 75% of the country, including almost all provincial capitals. The Alliance suffered a major setback on September 9, 2001, two days before the September 11 attacks, when Ahmad Shah Masud was assassinated by alleged Al Qaeda suicide bombers posing as journalists. He was succeeded by his intelligence chief, Muhammad Fahim, a veteran figure but who lacked Masud's undisputed authority.

September 11 Attacks and Operation Enduring Freedom

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

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

However, this Resolution did not explicitly authorize Operation Enduring Freedom or any U.S. or other military operation in Afghanistan.

In Congress, S.J.Res. 23 (passed 98-0 in the Senate and with no objections in the House, P.L. 107-40), was somewhat more explicit than the U.N. Resolution, authorizing:[5]

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

Major combat in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom, OEF) began on October 7, 2001. It consisted primarily of U.S. air-strikes on Taliban and Al Qaeda forces, facilitated by the cooperation between small numbers (about 1,000) of U.S. special operations forces and the

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

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

Northern Alliance and Pashtun anti-Taliban forces. Some U.S. ground units (about 1,300 Marines) moved into Afghanistan to pressure the Taliban around Qandahar at the height of the fighting (October-December 2001), but there were few pitched battles between U.S. and Taliban soldiers; most of the ground combat was between Taliban and its Afghan opponents. Some critics believe that U.S. dependence on local Afghan militia forces in the war strengthened them for the post-war period, setting back post-war democracy building efforts.

The Taliban regime unraveled rapidly after it lost Mazar-e-Sharif on November 9, 2001, to forces loyal to Dostam. Other, mainly Tajik, Northern Alliance forces—the commanders of which had initially promised U.S. officials they would not enter Kabul—entered the capital on November 12, 2001, to popular jubilation. The Taliban subsequently lost the south and east to pro-U.S. Pashtun leaders, such as Hamid Karzai. The end of the Taliban regime is generally dated as December 9, 2001, when the Taliban surrendered Qandahar and Mullah Umar fled the city, leaving it under tribal law administered by Pashtun leaders such as the Noorzai clan. In December 2001, U.S. Special Operations Forces and CIA officers reportedly narrowed Osama bin Laden's location to the Tora Bora mountains in Nangarhar Province (30 miles west of the Khyber Pass), but the Afghan militia fighters who were the bulk of the fighting force did not prevent his escape. Some U.S. military and intelligence officers (such as Gary Berntsen and "Dalton Fury, who have written books on the battle) have questioned the U.S. decision to rely mainly on Afghan forces in this engagement. Subsequently, U.S. and Afghan forces conducted "Operation Anaconda" in the Shah-i-Kot Valley south of Gardez (Paktia Province) during March 2-19, 2002, against 800 Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters. In March 2003, about 1,000 U.S. troops raided suspected Taliban or Al Qaeda fighters in villages around Qandahar (Operation Valiant Strike). On May 1, 2003, then Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld announced an end to "major combat."

Post-War Nation Building[6]

With Afghanistan in devastation after more than 20 years of warfare, the fall of the Taliban paved the way for the success of a long-stalled U.N. effort to form a broad-based Afghan government and for a U.S.-led coalition to begin building legitimate governing institutions. There are clear signs of progress in building institutions, but the task has proved more difficult than anticipated because of the effects of the years of war, the low literacy rate of the population, the difficult terrain and geography, and the relative lack of trained government bureaucrats.

Political Transition

In the formation of a transition government, the United Nations was viewed as a credible mediator by all sides largely because of its role in ending the Soviet occupation. During the 1990s, proposals from a succession of U.N. mediators incorporated many of former King Zahir Shah's proposals for a government to be selected by a traditional assembly, or *loya jirga*. However, U.N.-mediated cease-fires between warring factions always broke down. Non-U.N. initiatives made little progress, particularly the "Six Plus Two" multilateral contact group, which began meeting in 1997 (the United States, Russia, and the six states bordering Afghanistan: Iran,

[6] More information on some of the issues in this section can be found in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Government Formation and Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman**.** Some of the information in this section is derived from author participation on a congressional delegation to Afghanistan in March 2008.

China, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan). Other failed efforts included a "Geneva group" (Italy, Germany, Iran, and the United States) formed in 2000; an Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) contact group; and Afghan exile efforts, including discussion groups launched by Hamid Karzai's clan and Zahir Shah ("Rome process).

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

Bonn Agreement

On December 5, 2001, the factions signed the "Bonn Agreement."[7] It was endorsed by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1385 (December 6, 2001). The agreement, reportedly forged with substantial Iranian diplomatic help because of Iran's support for the Northern Alliance faction:

- formed the interim administration headed by Hamid Karzai.
- authorized an international peace keeping force to maintain security in Kabul, and Northern Alliance forces were directed to withdraw from the capital. Security Council Resolution 1386 (December 20, 2001) gave formal Security Council authorization for the international peacekeeping force.
- referred to the need to cooperate with the international community on counter narcotics, crime, and terrorism.
- applied the constitution of 1964 until a permanent constitution could be drafted.[8]

Permanent Constitution

A June 2002 "emergency" *loya jirga* put a representative imprimatur on the transition; it was attended by 1,550 delegates (including about 200 women) from Afghanistan's 364 districts. Subsequently, a 35-member constitutional commission drafted the permanent constitution, and unveiled in November 2003. It was debated by 502 delegates, selected in U.N-run caucuses, at a "*constitutional loya jirga* (CLJ)" during December 13, 2003-January 4, 2004. The CLJ, chaired by Mojadeddi (mentioned above), ended with approval of the constitution with only minor changes. The Northern Alliance faction failed in its effort to set up a prime minister-ship, but they did achieve a fallback objective of checking presidential powers by assigning major authorities to the elected parliament, such as the power to veto senior official nominees and to impeach a president. The constitution made former King Zahir Shah honorary "Father of the Nation"-a title that is not heritable. Zahir Shah died on July 23, 2007.[9] The constitution also set out timetables

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

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

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

for presidential, provincial, and district elections (by June 2004) and stipulated that, if possible, they should be held simultaneously.

Hamid Karzai

Hamid Karzai, about 51, was selected to lead Afghanistan because he was a credible Pashtun leader who seeks factional compromise rather than intimidation through armed force. However, some observers consider his compromises a sign of weakness, and criticize what they allege is his toleration of corruption. Others say he seeks to maintain Pashtun predominance in his government. From Karz village in Qandahar Province, Hamid Karzai has led the powerful Popolzai tribe of Durrani Pashtuns since 1999, when his father was assassinated, allegedly by Taliban agents, in Quetta, Pakistan. Karzai attended university in India. He was deputy foreign minister in Rabbani's government during 1992-1995, but he left the government and supported the Taliban as a Pashtun alternative to Rabbani. He broke with the Taliban as its excesses unfolded and forged alliances with other anti-Taliban factions, including the Northern Alliance. Karzai entered Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks to organize Pashtun resistance to the Taliban, supported by U.S. special forces. He became central to U.S. efforts after Pashtun commander Abdul Haq entered Afghanistan in October 2001 without U.S. support and was captured and hung by the Taliban. Karzai was slightly injured by an errant U.S. bomb during the major combat of Operation Enduring Freedom. Some of his several brothers have lived in the United States, including Qayyum Karzai, who won a parliament seat in the September 2005 election but resigned his seat in October 2008 due to health reasons. Another brother, Ahmad Wali Karzai, is chair of the provincial council of Qandahar, but was accused in a New York Times story (October 5, 2008) of involvement in narcotics trafficking. With heavy protection, President Karzai has survived several assassination attempts since taking office, including rocket fire or gunfire at or near his appearances. His wife, Dr. Zenat Karzai, is a gynecologist by profession. They have several children, including one (Mirwais) born in 2008.

First Post-Taliban Elections

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

For the parliamentary election, voting was conducted for individuals running in each province, not as party slates. (There are now 90 registered political parties in Afghanistan, but parties remain unpopular because of their linkages to outside countries during the anti-Soviet war.) When parliament first convened on December 18, 2005, the Northern Alliance bloc achieved selection of one of its own—who was Karzai's main competitor in the presidential election—Yunus Qanooni, for speaker of the lower house. In April 2007, Qanooni and Northern Alliance political leader Rabbani organized this opposition bloc, along with ex-Communists and some royal family members, into a party called the "United Front" (UF) that wants increased parliamentary powers and direct elections for the provincial governors. The 102-seat upper house, selected by the provincial councils and Karzai, consists mainly of older, well known figures, as well as 17 females (half of Karzai's 34 appointments, as provided for in the constitution). The leader of that body is Sibghatullah Mojadeddi, a pro-Karzai elder statesman.

2009 and 2010 Elections and Candidates

Presidential and provincial elections are scheduled for summer-fall 2009 (no exact date set). The National Front, perhaps sensing electoral weakness for Karzai, wanted the elections to be held in June 2009, close to the constitutionally mandated timeframe of May 2009, but Karzai, apparently with the backing of the Independent Electoral Commission that will run the elections, has pressed for an early fall time frame. Parliamentary, district, and municipal elections are expected to follow in 2010. Elections for village-level community development councils (CDC's) are held on a constant basis-if all these positions are counted, there are 300,000 elected positions at all levels of Afghan governance.

Security conditions are expected to complicate the national elections in 2009, if not derail them outright, but voter registration (updating of 2004 voter roles) has been somewhat heavier than expected, with over 2 million voters updating their registration as of December 2008. U.S. commanders reported good progress in Kunar and Nuristan provinces, where violence is regular, and registration updating – targeted for completion by March 2009 -- is beginning in restive southern Afghanistan. Thus far, a disproportionate number of registrants are women, partly because of some reports of improper registration by men of long lists of women who do not show up at registration centers in person. If security conditions preclude the elections – and some Pashtuns say their areas are too unsafe to hold a fair election that represents them proportionately -- the constitution provides for a special presidential selection process by *loya jirga*.

Karzai has said clearly since August 2008 that he will seek re-election; the two-round election virtually assures victory by a Pashtun. Anti-Karzai Pashtuns are trying to coalesce around one challenger; possibly former Interior Minister Ali Jalali who resigned in 2005 in opposition to Karzai compromises with faction leaders, or former Finance Minister Ashraf Ghani. Ghani, who has criticized Karzai's government for tolerating excessive corruption, arrived in Kabul on December 20, 2008, to a nomination for President by "32 political parties and 342 people's councils." Some observers say there is an alternate election strategy under discussion in which a Pashtun, such as Jalali, might head a United Front ticket, possibly with former Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah (Tajik) running as a first vice presidential ticket-mate. However, senior UF leader Rabbani is said to be unwilling to step aside as senior leader of the UF and wants to run himself at the head of this ticket. Others in the UF, Qanooni and Rabbani, reportedly are leaning against a run. Other possible candidates include Hazara leader Mohammad Mohaqqeq; Ramazan Bashardost (another Hazara); Sabit (Pashtun, mentioned above); and Pashtun monarchist figures Pir Gaylani and Hedayat Arsala Amin. Rumors have abated that U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Afghan-born Zalmay Khalilzad, might himself run, although some say this issue is still open. Some U.S. observers are said to believe that, despite the maneuvering and the decline in his popularity during 2007-2008, Karzai is still the favorite in the election. However, some observers believe that President-elect Obama might prefer new leadership in Kabul; that perception might have been reinforced by the January 2009 visit to Afghanistan of Vice President-elect Joseph Biden at which he reportedly was forthright with Karzai about the shortcomings of the Afghan central government. Elections cost about $100 million.

Good Governance Issues

Since its formation in late 2001, Karzai's government has grown in capabilities and size, although slowly. At the same time, it has come to be progressively dominated by ethnic Pashtuns, who have traditionally governed Afghanistan. Among the key security bodies, only the Intelligence Directorate continues to be headed by a non-Pashtun (Amrollah Saleh, a Tajik), and, adhering to a

tacit consensus, the other security ministries (Defense, Interior) tend to have Pashtun leadership but with non-Pashtuns in key deputy or subordinate positions. One prominent example is the defense ministry, in which the chief of staff is a Tajik (Bismillah Khan), who reports to a Pashtun Defense Minister (Abd al Rahim Wardak).

The parliament has emerged, unexpectedly to some, as a relatively vibrant body that does create some accountability. It has asserted itself on several occasions, for example in the process of confirming a post-election cabinet and in forcing Karzai to oust several major conservatives from the Supreme Court in favor of those with more experience in modern jurisprudence. In mid-2007, parliament enacted a law granting amnesty to commanders who fought in the various Afghan wars since the Soviet invasion—some of whom are now members of parliament—in an attempt to put past schisms to rest in building a new Afghanistan. The law was rewritten to give victims the ability to bring accusations of past abuses forward; its status is unclear because Karzai did not veto it but he did not sign it either.

In a sign of tension between Karzai and parliamentary opposition, in May 2007, the National Front bloc engineered a vote of no confidence against Foreign Minister Rangeen Spanta for failing to prevent Iran from expelling 50,000 Afghan refugees over a one-month period. Karzai opposed Spanta's dismissal on the grounds that refugee affairs are not his ministry's prime jurisdiction. The Afghan Supreme Court has sided with Karzai and Spanta remains in position.

On the other hand, on some less contentious issues, the executive and the legislature appear to be working well. Since the end of 2007, the Wolesi Jirga has passed and forwarded to the Meshrano Jirga several laws, including a labor law, a mines law, a law on economic cooperatives, and a convention on tobacco control. The Wolesi Jirga also has confirmed Karzai nominees in several cabinet shifts in 2008, as well as for the one remaining justice to fill out the Supreme Court. Still, the parliament has had difficulty obtaining a quorum because some parliamentarians have difficulty traveling to and from their home provinces.

U.N. Involvement

The international community is extensively involved in Afghan governance and national building, primarily in factional conflict resolution and coordination of development assistance. The coordinator of U.N. efforts is the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), headed as of March 2008 by Norwegian diplomat Kai Eide. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1806 of March 20, 2008, extends UNAMA's mandate for another year and expands its authority to coordinating the work of international donors and strengthening cooperation between the international peacekeeping force (ISAF, see below) and the Afghan government. UNAMA also is co-chair of the joint Afghan-international community coordination body called the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB). UNAMA often has been involved in local dispute resolution among factions, and it is helping organize the coming elections.

UNAMA is helping implement the five-year development strategy outlined in a "London Compact," (now called the Afghanistan Compact) adopted at the January 31-February 1, 2006, London conference on Afghanistan. The priorities developed in that document comport with Afghanistan's own "National Strategy for Development," presented on June 12, 2008, in Paris, as discussed further below under "assistance." In Washington, D.C., in April 2008 and since, Eide has said that additional capacity-building resources are needed, and that some efforts by international donors are redundant or tied to purchases by Western countries. In several

statements and press conferences, Eide has continued to note security deterioration but also progress in governance.

The difficulties in coordinating U.N. with U.S. and NATO efforts were belied in a 2007 proposal to create a new position of "super envoy" that would represent the United Nations, the European Union, and NATO in Afghanistan. The concept advanced and in January 2008, with U.S. support, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon tentatively appointed British diplomat Paddy Ashdown as the "super envoy." However, Karzai rejected the appointment reportedly over concerns about the scope of authority of such an envoy, including the potential to dilute the U.S. role. Karzai might have also sought to show independence from the international community. Ashdown withdrew his name on January 28, 2008.

Expanding and Reforming Central Government/Corruption

With a permanent national government fully assembled, U.S. policy has been to attempt to expand governance throughout the country. In testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee on February 28, 2008, Director of National Intelligence Mike McConnell said that the Karzai government controls only 30% of the country, while the Taliban controls 10%, and tribes and local groups control the remainder; U.S. and NATO officials in Kabul told CRS in March 2008 they consider that assessment too pessimistic. U.S. commanders and officials assert that Taliban militants are able to infiltrate "un-governed space," contributing to the persistence and in some areas the expansion of the Taliban insurgency. Because building the central government has gone slowly, there has been some U.S. shift during 2008 away from reliance only on strengthening central government, and instead promoting more local solutions to security and governance. Some argue that Afghans have always sought substantial regional autonomy.

Others say that corruption in the central government and at the local level is causing Afghans to turn to supporting Taliban insurgents. In response to some of the criticism, there appears to be a shift in U.S. thinking toward pressing for greater transparency and steps to eliminate corruption.

Marginalization of Regional Strongmen

A key to U.S. strategy to strengthen the central government has been to support Karzai's efforts to curb key regional strongmen and local militias—who some refer to as "warlords." Karzai has cited these actors as a major threat to Afghan stability because of their arbitrary administration of justice and generation of popular resentment through their demands for bribes and other favors. Some say that easily purchased arms and manpower, funded by narcotics trafficking, sustains local militias as well as the Taliban insurgency. Some observers believe that, conceptually, the new local governance and local security initiatives being pursued in 2008, discussed further below, appear to directly conflict with the past and still ongoing militia disarmament efforts. Karzai has, to some extent, succeeded in marginalizing the largest regional leaders.

- Ismail Khan was removed as Herat governor in September 2004 and later appointed Minister of Water and Energy. On the other hand, Khan was tapped by Karzai to help calm Herat after Sunni-Shiite clashes there in February 2006, clashes that some believe were stoked by Khan to demonstrate his continued influence in Herat.
- In April 2005, Dostam was appointed Karzai's top military advisor, and in April 2005 he "resigned" as head of his Junbush Melli faction. However, in May 2007

his followers in the north conducted large demonstrations in attempting to force out the anti-Dostam governor of Jowzjan Province. In February 2008, Afghan police surrounded Dostam's home in Kabul, but did not arrest him, in connection with the alleged beating of a political opponent by Dostam supporters. Some outside observers have cited Karzai's refusal to order an arrest as a sign of weakness of his leadership. However, in December 2008, Karzai reportedly agreed to drop the charges in exchange for stripping Dostam of his chief of staff title and his going into exile in Turkey.

- Another key figure, former Defense Minister Fahim (Northern Alliance) was appointed by Karzai to the upper house of parliament, although he remained in that body only a few months. The appointment was intended to give him a stake in the political process and reduce his potential to activate Northern Alliance militia loyalists. Fahim 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.
- In July 2004, Karzai moved charismatic Northern Alliance figure Atta Mohammad Noor from control of a militia in the Mazar-e-Sharif area to governor of Balkh province, although he reportedly remains resistant to central government control. Still, his province is now "cultivation free" of opium, according to the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports since August 2007. Two other large militia leaders, Hazrat Ali (Jalalabad area) and Khan Mohammad (Qandahar area) were placed in civilian police chief posts in 2005; Hazrat Ali was subsequently elected to parliament.

Militia Disarmament: DDR and DIAG Programs

A cornerstone of the effort to strengthen the central government was a program, run by UNAMA to dismantle identified and illegal militias that were empowered by Afghanistan's 25 years of warfare. The program, which formally concluded on June 30, 2006, was the "DDR" program: Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration. The program got off to a slow start because the Afghan Defense Ministry did not reduce the percentage of Tajiks in senior positions by a July 1, 2003, target date, dampening Pashtun recruitment. In September 2003, Karzai replaced 22 senior Tajiks in the Defense Ministry officials with Pashtuns, Uzbeks, and Hazaras, enabling DDR to proceed.

The DDR program was initially been expected to demobilize 100,000 fighters, although that figure was later reduced. Figures for accomplishment of the DDR and DIAG programs are contained in the "security indicators table" below. Of those demobilized, 55,800 former fighters have exercised reintegration options provided by the program: starting small businesses, farming, and other options. U.N. officials say at least 25% of these found long-term, sustainable jobs. Some studies criticized the DDR program for failing to prevent a certain amount of rearmament of militiamen or stockpiling of weapons and for the rehiring of some militiamen in programs run by the United States and its partners.[10] Part of the DDR program was the collection and cantonment of militia weapons. However, some accounts say that only poor quality weapons were

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

collected. UNAMA officials say that vast quantities of weapons are still kept by the Northern Alliance faction in the Panjshir Valley, although the faction is giving up some weapons to UNAMA, in small weekly shipments. The United States spent $20 million on the program, although the major donor was Japan, which contributed about $140 million. Figures for collected weapons are contained in the table.

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

Anti-Corruption Efforts

An accelerating trend in U.S. policy – and expected to be emphasized by the Obama Administration -- is to press Karzai to weed out official corruption. Some (for example, former Coordinator for Counter-Narcotics and Justice Reform Thomas Schweich, in a July 27, 2008, *New York Times* article) have gone so far as to assert Karzai is deliberately trying to curry political support from officials in his government whom he knows to be corrupt and involved in the narcotics trade. It is widely believed that Karzai has shielded his brother, Ahmad Wali Karzai, from prosecution for alleged involvement in drug trafficking. Another move that disappointed some outside observers was Karzai's firing of Attorney General Abd al Jabbar Sabit on July 16, 2008, after he declared his intention to run against Karzai in 2009 presidential elections. Sabit had been appointed in 2007 to crack down on governmental corruption, and some say he was performing that task effectively. Other observers say Sabit was himself involved in corruption and the firing demonstrates that Karzai is cracking down on illicit activity at senior levels.

The U.S. policy may be starting to yield results. In August 2008, reportedly at U.S. prodding, Karzai formed a "High Office of Oversight for the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Strategy" with wide powers to investigate civilian and security officials. Karzai attends weekly meetings of the officials of this body. In October 2008, Karzai shuffled his cabinet, appointing former Communist era official Muhammad Hanif Atmar—avowedly committed to reducing police corruption -- as Interior Minister, and placing a widely praised official, Gulam Wardak, as new Education Minister. Muhammad Asif Rahimi took over as Agriculture Minister, but the widely criticized former Qandahar governor Asadullah Khalid was made minister of parliamentary affairs. The Minister of Commerce, Amin Farhang, was voted out of office by the parliament in December 2008 for alleged misfeasance.

On the other hand, the Bush Administration supported Karzai publicly, despite private reservations. The Bush Administration bolstered him through repeated statements of support and top level exchanges, including several visits there by President Bush (March 1, 2006 and December 2008), Vice President Cheney, and First Lady Laura Bush.

Enhancing Local Governance

Since the beginning of 2008, there has been a major U.S.-Afghan push to build up local governance, reflecting a shift from the 2001-2007 approach of building only the central government. The approach represents an attempt to rebuild some of the tribal and other local structures, such as "*shuras*"—traditional local councils—that were destroyed in the course of constant warfare over several decades. The leader in this initiative has been the "Independent Directorate of Local Governance" (IDLG), formed in August 2007 and headed by Jelani Popal. It reports to Karzai's office. This represented, first and foremost, an attempt to institute a systematic process for selecting capable governors and district leaders by taking the screening function away from the Interior Ministry. The directorate is also selecting police chiefs and other local office holders, and in many cases has already begun removing allegedly corrupt local officials.

Part of its mission is to empower localities to decide on development projects by empowering local "Development Councils." The IDLG also has an ambitious plan of local elections from 2008 through the next several years.

In 2008, with the support of the Bush Administration, the IDLG launched the government's "Social Outreach Program," intended to draw closer connections between tribes and localities to the central government. The program includes small payments to tribal leaders and participants, in part to keep them on the side of the government and to inform on Taliban insurgent movements. Since its formation, the United States has provided over $103 million to the IDLG for its strategic work plan and its operations and outreach (as of September 25, 2008). Of that, about $8.5 million in FY2009 funds will assist the Social Outreach Program and related "Governor's Performance Fund." The Social Outreach program's security dimensions – primarily the constitution of local security groupings and termed the "Community Guard Program" -- are discussed later in this report.

Among the notable successes of the new emphasis of the gubernatorial appointments is the March 2008 replacement of the ineffective Helmand governor Asadullah Wafa with Gulab Mangal. Mangal is considered a competent administrator, but he is from Laghman province, not Helmand, somewhat to the consternation of Helmand residents. U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other officials say Mangal is taking effective action against poppy cultivation in the province, but that he might not be receiving the needed help from the central government or international donors that is needed. Some observers speculate that it is only British opposition that is preventing Karzai from replacing Mangal with the former governor, Sher Muhammad Akunzadeh (governor until 2005), who purportedly committed numerous human rights abuses in the course of fighting the Taliban in the province and apparently remains powerful informally there.

The UNODC report on narcotics in August 2008 also credited the strong leadership of Ghul Agha Shirzai, Nangarhar's governor, for moving that province into the "poppy free" column in 2008. The governor of Qandahar was changed (to former General Rahmatullah Raufi, replacing Asadullah Khalid) after the August 7, 2008, Taliban assault on the Qandahar prison (Sarposa) that led to the freeing of several hundred Taliban fighters incarcerated there. However, reflecting continued political infighting over how best to stabilize Qandahar, Raufi was replaced in December 2008 by Afghan-Canadian academic Tooryalai Wesa. Other governors said to successful in helping stabilize and develop their provinces include Khost governor Arsala Jamal, and Kabul province governor Hajji Din Mohammad, son of the slain "Jalalabad Shura" leader Hajji Abd al-Qadir. At least four other governors are slated for replacement.

U.S. Embassy/Budgetary Support to Afghan Government

A component of U.S. efforts to strengthen governance has been maintaining a large and active diplomatic presence. Zalmay Khalilzad, an American of Afghan origin, was ambassador during December 2003-August 2005; he reportedly had significant influence on Afghan government decisions.[11] The current ambassador is William Wood, who previously was U.S. Ambassador to Colombia and who has focused on the counter-narcotics issue. As part of a 2003 U.S. push on reconstruction, the Bush Administration formed a 15-person Afghan Reconstruction Group (ARG), placed within the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, to serve as advisors to the Afghan government. The group is now mostly focused on helping Afghanistan attract private investment and develop private industries. The U.S. embassy, now in newly constructed buildings, has progressively expanded its personnel and facilities to several hundred. The tables at the end of this paper discuss U.S. funding for State Department and USAID operations.

Although the Afghan government has increased its revenue and is covering a growing proportion of its budget, USAID provides funding to help the Afghan government meet gaps in its budget—both directly and through a U.N.-run multi-donor Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) account. Those aid figures, for FY2002-FY2008, are in **Table 14** at the end of the paper.

Human Rights and Democracy

The Administration and Afghan government claim progress in building a democratic Afghanistan that adheres to international standards of human rights practices and presumably is able to earn the support of the Afghan people. The State Department report on human rights practices for 2007 (released March 11, 2008)[12] said that Afghanistan's human rights record remained "poor," but attributed this primarily to weak governance, corruption, drug trafficking, and the legacy of decades of conflict. Virtually all observers agree that Afghans are freer than they were under the Taliban. However, some recent restrictions appear to reflect the government's sensitivity to Afghanistan's conservative nature rather than politically-motivated action.

The press is relatively free and Afghan political groupings and parties are able to meet and organize freely, but there are also abuses based on ethnicity or political factionalism and arbitrary implementation of justice by local leaders. In debate over a new press law, both houses of parliament approved a joint version, but Karzai has vetoed it on the grounds that it gives the government too much control over private media. Even in the absence of the law, media policy remains highly conservative; in April 2008 the Ministry of Information and Culture banned five Indian-produced soap operas on the grounds that they are too risque. The ban was later overturned when the broadcasters agreed to also run Islamist-oriented programming from Turkey. That came amid a move by conservative parliamentarians to pass legislation to ban loud music, men and women mingling in public, video games, and other behavior common in the West. Since the Taliban era, more than 40 private radio stations, seven television networks, and 350 independent newspapers have opened. At the same time, press reports and the State Department say that there are growing numbers of arrests or intimidation of journalists who criticize the central government or local leaders.

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

[12] For text, see http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100611.htm.

Religious Freedom

On religious freedom, some note that the government has reimposed some Islamic restrictions that characterized Taliban rule, including the code of criminal punishments stipulated in Islamic law. The death penalty has been re-instituted, reversing a 2004 moratorium declared by Karzai. Fifteen convicts were executed at once on October 7, 2007. In January 2008, Afghanistan's "Islamic council," composed of senior clerics, backed public executions for convicted murderers and urged Karzai to end the activities of foreign organizations that are converting Afghans to Christianity.

The State Department International Religious Freedom report for 2008 (released September 19, 2008) reported continued discrimination against the Shiite (Hazara) minority and some other minorities such as Sikhs and Hindus, but that "Government and political leaders aspire to a national environment that respects the right to religious freedom." A Washington Post report of January 4, 2009 highlighted the freedom Afghan Shiites now have to celebrate their holy days openly. The Minister of Justice is a Shiite, a development many observers did not expect at any time in Afghanistan. However, in May 2007, a directorate under the Supreme Court declared the Baha'i faith to be a form of blasphemy. Recent indications of Afghanistan's conservatism are the demonstrations in March 2008 in several Afghan cities against Denmark and the Netherlands for Danish cartoons and a Dutch film apparently criticizing aspects of Islam and its key symbols. Other accounts say that alcohol is increasingly difficult to obtain in restaurants and stores.

On January 25, 2008, in a case that has implications for both religious and journalistic freedom, a young reporter, Sayed Pervez Kambaksh, was sentenced in a quick trial to death for distributing a website report to student peers questioning some precepts of Islam. On October 21, 2008, a Kabul appeals court reduced his sentence to 20 years, but he continues to appeal. A previous religious freedom case earned congressional attention in March 2006. An Afghan man, Abd al-Rahman, who had converted to Christianity 16 years ago while working for a Christian aid group in Pakistan, was imprisoned and faced a potential death penalty trial for apostasy—his refusal to convert back to Islam. Facing international pressure, Karzai prevailed on Kabul court authorities to release him on March 29, 2006. His release came the same day the House passed H.Res. 736 calling on the Afghan government to protect Afghan converts from prosecution.

Human Trafficking

Afghanistan was again placed in Tier 2 in the State Department report on human trafficking issued in June 2008 (Trafficking in Persons Report for 2008). The government is assessed as not complying with minimum standards for eliminating trafficking, but making significant efforts to do so. The says that women (reportedly from China and Central Asia) are being trafficked into Afghanistan for sexual exploitation. Other reports say some are brought to work in night clubs purportedly frequented by members of many international NGOs. In an effort to also increase protections for Afghan women, in August 2008 the Interior Ministry announced a crackdown on sexual assault—an effort to publicly air a taboo subject. The United States has spent $500,000 to eliminate human trafficking in Afghanistan since FY2001.

An Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) was formed in 2002 to monitor government performance and has been credited in State Department reports with successful interventions to curb abuses. Headed by former Women's Affairs minister Sima Samar, it also conducts surveys of how Afghans view governance and reconstruction efforts. The House-passed

Afghan Freedom Support Act (AFSA) re-authorization bill (H.R. 2446) would authorize $10 million per year for this Commission until FY2010.

Advancement of Women

According to State Department human rights reports, the Afghan government is promoting the advancement of women, but numerous abuses, such as denial of educational and employment opportunities, continue primarily because of Afghanistan's conservative traditions. A major development in post-Taliban Afghanistan was the formation of a Ministry of Women's Affairs dedicated to improving women's rights, although numerous accounts say the ministry's influence is limited and it is now headed by a male, (the deputy minister is female). Among other activities, it promotes the involvement of women in business ventures.

Three female ministers were in the 2004-2006 cabinet: former presidential candidate Masooda Jalal (Ministry of Women's Affairs), Sediqa Balkhi (Minister for Martyrs and the Disabled), and Amina Afzali (Minister of Youth). However, Karzai nominated only one (Minister of Women's Affairs Soraya Sobhrang) in the cabinet that followed the parliamentary elections, and she was voted down by Islamist conservatives in parliament, leaving no women in the cabinet. (The deputy minister is a female.) In March 2005, Karzai appointed a former Minister of Women's Affairs, Habiba Sohrabi, as governor of Bamiyan province, inhabited mostly by Hazaras. (She hosted visiting First Lady Laura Bush during her visit to Bamiyan in June 2008.) The constitution reserves for women at least 17 of the 102 seats in the upper house and 68 of the 249 seats in the lower house of parliament. Some women were elected even without the set-asides, and there are 23 serving in the upper house. There are also 121 women holding seats in the 420 provincial council seats nationwide. However, some NGOs and other groups believe that the women elected by the quota system are not viewed as equally legitimate parliamentarians.

More generally, women are performing jobs that were rarely held by women even before the Taliban came to power in 1996, including in the new police force. There are now 67 female judges and 447 female journalists working nationwide. The most senior Afghan woman in the police force was assassinated in Qandahar in September 2008. Press reports say Afghan women are increasingly learning how to drive. Under the new government, the wearing of the full body covering called the *burqa* is no longer obligatory, and fewer women are wearing it than was the case a few years ago. On the other hand, women's advancement has made women a target of Taliban attacks. Attacks on girls' schools and athletic facilities have increased in the most restive areas. On November 12, 2008, suspected Taliban sprayed acid on the faces of several schoolgirls in Qandahar.

U.S. officials have had some influence in persuading the government to codify women's rights. After the Karzai government took office, the United States and the new Afghan government set up a U.S.-Afghan Women's Council to coordinate the allocation of resources to Afghan women. According to the State Department, the United States has implemented over 175 projects directly in support of Afghan women, including women's empowerment, maternal and child health and nutrition, funding the Ministry of Women's Affairs, micro-finance projects, and like programs.

The Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002 (AFSA, P.L. 107-327) authorized $15 million per year (FY2003-FY2006) for the Ministry of Women's Affairs. The House-passed AFSA reauthorization (H.R. 2446) would authorize $5 million per year for this Ministry. Appropriations for programs for women and girls are contained in the tables at the end of this report.

Overall Governance Funding Issues

Since FY2001, USAID has spent $1.9 billion on governance, democracy, and rule of law programs, including: support for elections, civil society programs, political party strengthening, media freedom, and local governance. Another $248 million for these functions was requested for FY2009.

Combating Narcotics Trafficking [13]

Narcotics trafficking is regarded by some as one of the most significant problems facing Afghanistan, generating what U.S. commanders estimate to be about $100 million per year for the Taliban. Afghanistan is the source of about 93% of the world's illicit opium supply, and according to UNODC, "... leaving aside 19th Century China, no country in the world has ever produced narcotics on such a deadly scale."

Some tentative signs of progress have begun to emerge, although it is not certain whether the progress will be sustained. The UNODC report of November 2008 was the most positive such report since at least 2005, saying: "The opium flood waters in Afghanistan have started to recede." The estimate is based on a drop in area under opium cultivation of 19%, an overall opium production drop of 6%, and a large increase in the number of "poppy free provinces" from 13 in the 2007 report to 18 (out of 34 total provinces) now. The UNODC report attributed the progress to strong leadership by some governors (Atta Mohammad of Balkh, Ghul Agha Shirzai of Nangarhar, and Monshi Abdul Majid of Badakhshan, in particular); as well as to drought that contributed to crop failure in some areas. Still, there is poppy cultivation growth in Helmand Province (which now produces about 65% of Afghanistan's total poppy crop) and other southern provinces where the Taliban insurgency is highly active. There is also a trend indicating that some poppy growers are turning to marijuana cultivation and trafficking, perhaps sensing less pressure on that activity. On June 11, 2008, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1817, called for greater international cooperation to stop the movement of chemical precursors used to process opium into Afghanistan.

In March 2007 the Administration created a post of Coordinator for Counter-Narcotics and Justice Reform in Afghanistan, naming Thomas Schweich of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) to that post. The U.S. strategy still follows Schweich's August 9, 2007, announced program that seeks to better integrate counter-narcotics and counter-insurgency, and to enhance alternative livelihoods.[14] Schwiech departed that post in June 2008 and, as noted above, has written opinion pieces critical of U.S. and Afghan counter-narcotics strategy in Afghanistan. Encouraging alternative livelihoods is the preferred emphasis of the Afghan government, and the Afghan side maintains that narcotics flourish in areas where there is no security, and not the other way around. The United States has provided (in 2008) $38 million in "Good Performers" funds to provinces that have eliminated poppy cultivation.

U.S. officials emphasize eradication. In concert with interdiction and building up alternative livelihoods, U.S.-trained Afghanistan counter-narcotics police eradicate poppy fields by cutting down the crop manually on the ground. However, there has been debate between some in the U.S.

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

[14] Text of the strategy, see http://www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/rpt/90561.htm#section1.

government, including Ambassador to Afghanistan William Wood, and Karzai over whether to conduct spraying of fields, particularly by air. President Karzai strongly opposed aerial spraying, arguing that doing so would cause a backlash among Afghan farmers; he appears to have won this argument. On June 12, 2008, Afghan officials announced seizing 260 tons of hashish in Qandahar Province, perhaps the world's largest drug bust.

Using U.S. and NATO forces to combat narcotics is another facet under debate. Some NATO contributors, such as Britain, have focused on interdicting traffickers and raiding drug labs. At a NATO meeting on October 10, 2008, NATO accepted a policy of using force against narcotics traffickers. Under the agreement, each country can choose to keep their forces out of such missions, and press reports say that several NATO nations have done just that, hampering implementation of the October 2008 agreement. U.S. troops deploying to Helmand in 2008 have not specifically acted against poppy fields, deliberately to avoid angering the local population on which the success of U.S. operations depend. Congress has to date sided with Karzai's view; the FY2008 Consolidated Appropriation (P.L. 110-161) prohibits U.S. counter-narcotics funding from being used for aerial spraying on Afghanistan poppy fields.

The U.S. military, in support of the effort after initial reluctance, is flying Afghan and U.S. counter-narcotics agents (Drug Enforcement Agency, DEA) on missions and identifying targets; it also evacuates casualties from counter-drug operations. The Department of Defense is also playing the major role in training and equipping specialized Afghan counter-narcotics police, in developing an Afghan intelligence fusion cell, and training Afghan border police, as well as assisting an Afghan helicopter squadron to move Afghan counter-narcotics forces around the country. The Bush Administration has taken some legal steps against suspected Afghan drug traffickers;[15] in April 2005, a DEA operation successfully caught the alleged leading Afghan narcotics trafficker, Haji Bashir Noorzai, arresting him after a flight to New York. The United States is funding a new Counternarcotics Justice Center (estimated cost, $8 million) in Kabul to prosecute and incarcerate suspected traffickers.[16]

The Bush Administration has repeatedly named Afghanistan (and again in the February 2008 State Department INCSR report discussed above) as a major illicit drug producer and drug transit country, but has not included Afghanistan on a smaller list of countries that have "failed demonstrably to make substantial efforts" to adhere to international counter-narcotics agreements and take certain counter-narcotics measures set forth in U.S. law.[17] The Administration has exercised waiver provisions (the last was published in the *Federal Register* in May 2006) to a required certification of full Afghan cooperation that was needed to provide more than $225 million in recent U.S. economic assistance appropriations for Afghanistan. A similar certification requirement (to provide amounts over $300 million) is contained in the House version of the FY2008 appropriation (P.L. 110-161). Other provisions on counter-narcotics, such as recommending a pilot crop substitution program and cutting U.S. aid to any Afghan province whose officials are determined complicit in drug trafficking, are contained in H.R. 2446 (AFSA reauthorization). Narcotics trafficking control was perhaps the one issue on which the Taliban regime satisfied much of the international community; the Taliban enforced a July 2000 ban on

[15] Cameron-Moore, Simon. "U.S. to Seek Indictment of Afghan Drug Barons." Reuters, November 2, 2004.

[16] Risen, James. "Poppy Fields Are Now a Front Line in Afghanistan War." *New York Times*, May 16, 2007.

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

poppy cultivation, which purportedly dramatically decreased cultivation.[18] The Northern Alliance did not issue a similar ban in areas it controlled.

Post-War Security Operations and Force Capacity Building

The top security priority of the United States has been to prevent the Taliban and its allies from challenging the Afghan government as that government builds capacity to defend itself. The security efforts are part of the "nation-building" priorities discussed in previous sections, intended to weaken popular support for the Taliban by promoting economic and political development and eliminating the sources of funding for the insurgency. The pillars of U.S. security strategy are (1) continuing combat operations by U.S. forces and a NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF); (2) U.S. and NATO operation of "provincial reconstruction teams" (PRTs) that promote economic development; (3) the equipping and training of an Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) force; and (4) more recently, efforts to promote local approaches to security and to try to engage Taliban commanders who might want to end their armed struggle.

Taliban Command, Al Qaeda, and Related Insurgent Groups

Security is being challenged by a confluence of related armed groups—not only the ousted Taliban still centered around Mullah Umar. Mullah Umar and many of his top advisers remain at large, believed in Pakistan in and around the city of Quetta, according to Afghan officials ("Quetta Shura"). One of his Umar's top deputies still at large is Mullah Bradar. Umar continues to run a so-called "shadow government" from his safehaven, and the Taliban has several official spokespersons, including Qari Yusuf Ahmadi and Zabiullah Mujahid, and it operates a clandestine radio station, "Voice of Shariat," and publishes videos.

The Taliban is allied with Al Qaeda, other Afghan insurgent groups, and, increasingly, Pakistani militants such as Beitullah Mehsud. U.S. commanders say that, with increased freedom of action in Pakistan, Al Qaeda militants are increasingly facilitating, through financing and recruiting, militant incursions in Afghanistan. As of mid-2008, according to U.S. commanders, an increasing number of foreign fighters are being captured or killed in battles in Afghanistan, although Afghan nationals still constitute the overwhelming majority of insurgents there.

Al Qaeda

The two most notable Al Qaeda leaders at large, and believed in Pakistan, are Osama bin Laden himself and his close ally, Ayman al-Zawahiri. A purported U.S.-led strike reportedly missed Zawahiri by a few hours in the village of Damadola, Pakistan, in January 2006, suggesting that the United States and Pakistan have some intelligence on his movements.[19] A strike in late

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

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

January 2008, in an area near Damadola, killed Abu Laith al-Libi, a reported senior Al Qaeda figure who purportedly masterminded, among other operations, the bombing at Bagram Air Base in February 2007 when Vice President Cheney was visiting. In August 2008, an airstrike was confirmed to have killed Al Qaeda chemical weapons expert Abu Khabab al-Masri, and two senior operatives allegedly involved in the 1998 embassy bombings in Africa reportedly were killed by a Predator strike in January 2009. However, there have been no recent public indications that U.S. or allied forces have learned or are close to learning bin Laden's location.

Hekmatyar Faction

Another "high value target" identified by U.S. commanders is the Hikmatyar faction (Hizb-e-Islami Gulbuddin, HIG) allied with Al Qaeda and Taliban insurgents. His fighters are operating in Kunar, Nuristan, and Nangarhar provinces, east of Kabul. On February 19, 2003, the U.S. government formally designated Hikmatyar as a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist," under the authority of Executive Order 13224, subjecting it to financial and other U.S. sanctions. (It is not formally designated as a "Foreign Terrorist Organization.") On July 19, 2007, Hikmatyar expressed a willingness to discuss a cease-fire with the Karzai government, although no firm reconciliation talks were held. In 2008, he has again discussed possible reconciliation, only later to issued statements suggesting he will continue his fight.

Haqqani Faction

Yet another militant faction is led by Jalaludin Haqqani and his eldest son, Siraj. Haqqani, who served as Minister of Tribal Affairs in the Taliban regime of 1996-2001, is believed closer to Al Qaeda than to the ousted Taliban leadership in part because one of his wives is purportedly Arab. The group is active around Khost Province. Haqqani property inside Pakistan has been repeatedly targeted since September 2008 by U.S. strikes.

The Taliban "Resurgence" and Causes

In the four years after the fall of the Taliban, U.S. forces and Afghan troops fought relatively low levels of Taliban insurgent violence. The United States and Afghanistan conducted "Operation Mountain Viper" (August 2003); "Operation Avalanche" (December 2003); "Operation Mountain Storm" (March-July 2004) against Taliban remnants in and around Uruzgan province, home province of Mullah Umar; "Operation Lightning Freedom" (December 2004-February 2005); and "Operation Pil (Elephant)" in Kunar Province in the east (October 2005). By late 2005, U.S. and partner commanders had believed that the combat, coupled with overall political and economic reconstruction, had virtually ended any insurgency.

An increase in violence beginning in mid-2006 took some U.S. commanders by surprise, and Taliban insurgents have increasingly adapting suicide and roadside bombing characteristic of the Iraq insurgency. There is no agreement on the causes of the deterioration—reasons advanced include Afghan government corruption; the absence of governance in many rural areas; safehaven enjoyed by militants in Pakistan; the reticence of some NATO contributors to actively combat insurgents; and the slow pace of economic development.

The main theater of combat—where all of these factors converge—is southern Afghanistan: particularly, Uruzgan, Helmand, and Qandahar provinces—areas that NATO/ISAF assumed primary responsibility for on July 31, 2006. NATO counter-offensives in 2006 were only

temporary successes, including such operations as Operation Mountain Lion, Operation Mountain Thrust, and Operation Medusa (August-September 2006). The latter ousted Taliban fighters from the Panjwai district near Qandahar. In the aftermath of Medusa, British forces—who believe in working more with tribal leaders as part of negotiated local solutions—entered into an agreement with tribal elders in the Musa Qala district of Helmand Province, under which they would secure the main town of the district without an active NATO presence. That strategy failed when the Taliban took over Musa Qala town in February 2007. A NATO offensive in December 2007 retook it, although there continue to be recriminations between the Britain, on the one side, and the United States and Karzai, on the other, over the wisdom of the original British deal. Some Taliban activity continues on the outskirts of the district.

Coalition Responses

Since the Taliban "resurgence," NATO has been trying to implemented a more integrated strategy involving pre-emptive combat, increased development work, and a more unified command structure. U.S. and partner country troop levels have been increasing significantly. NATO/ISAF has led peacekeeping operations nationwide since October 5, 2006, and more than half of the U.S. troops in Afghanistan (numbers are in the security indicators table below) are under NATO command. The remainder are part of the original post-September 11 anti-terrorism mission Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).

The NATO/ISAF force is headed by U.S. Gen. David McKiernan. As of October 2008, he also commands all U.S. troops in Afghanistan—those in OEF as well as those in NATO/ISAF—commander of "U.S. Forces Afghanistan." McKiernan took over the NATO/ISAF command on June 3, 2008, from U.S. Gen. Dan McNeill. (McNeill had taken over in February 2007 from U.K. General David Richards.) "U.S. Forces Afghanistan" was created to improve flexibility of deployment of U.S. forces throughout the battlefield. Gen. McKiernan and his successors also report to U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM, headed as of October 31, 2008, by General David Petraeus, formerly top U.S. commander in Iraq) not only to NATO headquarters. The command restructuring implies that NATO/ISAF will be led by an American commander for the foreseeable future, but U.S. officials say that the OEF and NATO/ISAF missions will not formally merge. Whether under NATO or OEF, most U.S. forces in Afghanistan are in eastern Afghanistan and are under the operational command of Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Schloesser as head of Combined Joint Task Force 101 (CJTF-101, named for the 101st Airborne Division, headquartered at Bagram Air Base north of Kabul).

Incremental costs of U.S. operations in Afghanistan appear to be running about $2.5 to 3 billion per month. The FY2008 Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 110-181, Section 1229) requires a quarterly DOD report on the security situation in Afghanistan; the first was submitted in June 2008. For further information, see CRS Report RL33110, *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11*, by Amy Belasco.

OEF Partners

Prior to NATO assumption of command, 19 coalition countries—primarily Britain, France, Canada, and Italy—were contributing approximately 4,000 combat troops to OEF. With the exception of a few foreign contingents, composed mainly of special operations forces, including a small unit from the UAE, almost all foreign partners that were part of OEF have now been "re-badged" to the NATO-led ISAF mission. Until December 2007, 200 South Korean forces at

Bagram Air Base (mainly combat engineers) were part of OEF; they left in December 2007 in fulfillment of an August 2007, agreement under which Taliban militants released 21 kidnapped South Korean church group visitors.[20]

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. In July 2008, Japan decided against expanding the mission of its Self Defense Forces to include some reconstruction activities in Afghanistan. Japan is already the third largest individual country donor to Afghanistan, providing about $1.9 billion in civilian reconstruction aid since the fall of the Taliban. It has been requested to be a major financial donor of an Afghan army expansion, discussed below. As part of OEF, 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.

2008 Deterioration

During 2007, U.S. and NATO forces, bolstered by the infusion of 3,200 U.S. troops and 3,800 partner forces, pre-empted an anticipated Taliban "spring offensive" with "Operation Achilles" (March 2007) in the Sangin district of northern Helmand Province, around the Kajaki dam. The Taliban offensive did not materialize at the levels expected. The operations (including Operation Silicon) had a major success on May 12, 2007, when the purportedly ruthless leader of the Taliban insurgency in the south, Mullah Dadullah, was killed in Helmand Province. His brother, Mansoor, replaced him as leader of that faction but was arrested crossing into Pakistan in February 2008. On the other hand, in 2007, the United States also found worrisome the Taliban's first use (unsuccessful) of a surface-to-air missile (SAM-7, shoulder held) against a U.S. C-130 transport aircraft.

Despite the stepped-up coalition military activity, in 2008, a perception of increasing concern took hold within the U.S. command structure. This was reflected in such statements as one in September 2008 by Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Admiral Mike Mullen that "I'm not sure we're winning" in Afghanistan, as well as one by him on October 10, 2008, that "I anticipate next year [2009] would be a tougher year." Other assessments, such as an assessment by a top British commander as reported in a purported French diplomatic cable October 2008, were even more pessimistic, indicating the war was being lost. A reported draft U.S. intelligence estimate on Afghanistan, according to the *New York Times* (October 9, 2008), described Afghanistan as in a "downward spiral"—language used also by new Commander of U.S. Central Command General David Petraeus (who took over CENTCOM on October 31). However, in a November 18, 2008, appearance at the Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C., Gen. McKiernan said he does not subscribe to that characterization. Gen. McKiernan acknowledges setbacks but says there are also positive indicators in many parts of Afghanistan.

The indicators that feed the pessimistic assessments include (1) 2007 recording the most U.S. combat casualties, of the war so far; (2) numbers of suicide bombings at a post-Taliban high; (3)

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

number of roadside bombings (2,000 in 2008) also at a post-Taliban high; (4) expanding Taliban operations in provinces where it had not previously been active, including Lowgar, Wardak, and Kapisa, close to Kabul; (5) high profile attacks in Kabul against targets that are either well defended or in highly populated centers, such as the January 14, 2008, attack on the Serena Hotel in Kabul and the July 7, 2008, suicide bombing at the gates of the Indian Embassy in Kabul, killing more than 50; (6) the April 27, 2008, assassination attempt on Karzai during a military parade celebrating the ouster of the Soviet Union; (7) a June 12, 2008, Sarposa prison break in Qandahar (several hundred Taliban captives were freed, as part of an emptying of the 1,200 inmates there); (8) a reported 40% rise in attacks (over 2007 figures) in the U.S.-led eastern sector; (9) the July 13, 2008, on a U.S. outpost in Nuristan Province that killed nine U.S. soldiers; and (10) a August 18, 2008, attack that killed ten French soldiers near Sarobi, 30 miles northeast of Kabul. Contributing to the sense of deterioration have been reports that the Taliban, in some areas under their control, are setting up courts and other "shadow government" structures.

The attack on Sarposa prison particularly shook confidence in U.S. and NATO policy because, subsequently, some of the freed militants fanned out north of Qandahar and took over up to nine villages in nearby Arghandhab district, prompting a NATO-Afghan counterattack. The counter-offensive was declared successful by June 21. In October 2008, Taliban militants massed near the capital of Helmand, Lashkar Gah, but were defeated by NATO forces before launching an actual assault.

The upsurge in attacks in the eastern sector has caused particular consternation because, throughout 2007, U.S. commanders were heralding substantial progress in reducing Taliban attacks in that sector. The progress was attributed to the fact that U.S. troops—those of which are under NATO/ISAF and those under OEF are mostly in the eastern sector—were able to achieve significant coverage of the area to be able to hold territory and accomplish construction and governance expansion. U.S. and NATO forces plan to expand civilian development efforts during the winter of 2008-2009, as well as to continue combat through the winter, to try to blunt militant activity in spring of 2009. Some U.S. commanders say the sector already has calmed considerably since November 2008, although some of this trend could be caused by the colder weather. Amid the setbacks, U.S. commanders say that the violence needs to be placed in perspective: 70% of the violence in Afghanistan occurs in 10% of Afghanistan's 364 districts, an area including about 6% of the Afghan population. U.S. commanders say that militants crossing the border account for about 30% of all attacks in Afghanistan.

Some believe that the Taliban are benefitting not only from Karzai governmental corruption, but from Afghan civilian casualties caused by U.S. or NATO airstrikes. One such disputed incident occurred near Herat on August 22, 2008, that UNAMA said killed 90 civilians but U.S. investigators say killed only 30 non-combatants. Another incident occurred in early November 2008 in which an alleged 37 Afghan civilians at a wedding party were killed. In public statements, Karzai has been increasingly critical of errant strikes that cause collateral damage. NATO is reportedly examining using smaller air force munitions to limit collateral damage from air strikes, but commanders say that a key is to add ground troops and lessen dependence on ground forces.

U.S. Strategy Reviews

To address the widespread perception of deterioration, the Bush Administration concluded in early 2008 that the United States needed to focus attention and provide additional resources than it had previously. Joint Chiefs Chairman Mullen largely confirmed the perception that the Afghan

battlefield was "under-resourced" in December 11, 2007, congressional testimony. Similar findings were emphasized in outside assessments of Afghanistan policy, including a report in November 2007 by the Senlis Council;[21] a January 2008 study by the Atlantic Council ("Saving Afghanistan: An Appeal and Plan for Urgent Action") and a January 30, 2008, study by the Center for the Study of the Presidency ("Afghanistan Study Group Report"), as well as several congressional hearings. These assessments contributed to a decision by Secretary of Defense Gates, in January 2008, to deploy an additional 3,200 Marines to southern Afghanistan (for seven months, later extended through November 2008), of which about 1,000 train Afghan security forces. Upon deploying, the Marines cleared Taliban militants from the Garmar district of Helmand Province

As the perception of deterioration continued, it was reported in September 2008 that both the U.S. military and NATO were conducting a number of different strategy reviews. The reviews were, in part, intended to prevent an unraveling of the effort from the time of the U.S. election until President-elect Obama takes over. Another intention was to try to help the incoming Obama Administration formulate its strategy. Many experts appear to agree that there is a need to better integrate military approaches with enhanced efforts to build Afghan government capacity and accomplish economic development in a classic counter-insurgency strategy that secures and wins support of the Afghan population. Others believe that the complexities of Afghanistan limit what can be achieved, and that the United States can achieve the quickest gains by focusing on how to prevent the movement of militants across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

One review, reported by the *Washington Post* (October 9, 2008), is headed by Lt. Gen. Douglas Lute, the Administration's senior adviser on Iraq and Afghanistan; others have been under way at the Department of Defense, at CENTCOM, at NATO, and at the State Department. The Lute review and possibly some of the others have been completed and briefed to Secretary of Defense Gates and to the Obama transition team. The President-elect has indicated he wants to place greater emphasis on Afghanistan relative to Iraq than was the case during the Bush Administration, but press reports say there is disagreement over what aspects of strategy should be emphasized.

No matter what strategy is decided, it is clear that U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan will increase. It was announced in September 2008 by President Bush that about 5,000 more U.S. forces would be sent to Afghanistan by early 2009; the deployment of an army aviation brigade (3,000) was approved in late December 2008—days after President Bush's December 15, 2008 visit to Afghanistan (his second as President). Those forces have arrived and begun to deploy in Lowgar and Wardak provinces, south of Kabul, where there has been significant Taliban infiltration in 2008.

General McKiernan has requested another 20,000-25,000 troops beyond that, including support forces and any foreign partners additions that might be contributed. Secretary of Defense Gates said in late November 2008 that these forces will be sent, at least in part to help secure the 2009 Afghan elections. Many of these extra U.S. forces will likely be deployed to Helmand and other parts of the southern sector. Some of the forces will also train and mentor the Afghan security forces; and others will likely be sent to try to shore up the eastern sector and prevent militant infiltration from Pakistan. Some equate the planned buildup to the Afghanistan equivalent of the

[21] Text of the report is at http://www.senliscouncil.net/modules/publications/Afghanistan_on_the_brink/documents/Afghanistan_on_the_brink.

U.S. "troop surge" that is credited with greatly reducing violence in Iraq. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates solicited more force contributions at meetings in Europe in October 2008, and, based on some of their responses, it is likely that any new buildups will consist mostly of American forces, although Britain might send 3,000 (to Helmand). That would adding to the 300 more British forces whose deployment was announced in December 2008. The timing of U.S. additions might depend on the rate of drawdown of U.S. troops from Iraq.

Beyond the addition of troops, there is a growing question of equipment. Some experts say that the United States is too reliant on armor in Afghanistan which is not suited for Afghanistan's poor roads and steep mountain passes. Others say there should be more emphasis on mobility provided by more helicopters and on greater availability of aerial surveillance assets. In July 2008, the Defense Department deployed an additional aircraft carrier to the Afghanistan theater to provide additional air strike capability, and there are reported plans to add AWACs surveillance aircraft to the Afghan theater.

New Strategy Initiatives

Others—including President Karzai and Defense Secretary Gates (who will be staying under under Obama)—question whether adding more troops will produce major security gains, believe that Afghanistan's difficulties are complex. Secretary Gates has said that adding too many troops could create among the Afghan people a sense of "occupation" that could prove counter-productive. Some believe that a wholesale strategy change should be considered that focuses far more on development work and eliminating corruption in the Afghan government. Some commanders say there needs to be a greater emphasis on regional solutions. In a January 9, 2009 speech in Washington, D.C., Gen. Petraeus raised the issue of engaging Iran on such issues of mutual interest in Afghanistan as stopping narcotics trafficking.

On the other hand, those advocating more troops say that permissive security conditions need to be created in order to then carry out reform and development. U.S. officials also want to use Taliban abuses to discredit it in the eyes of Afghans. This strategy could be furthered by the popular protests against the Taliban in some cities unleashed by the Taliban's killing of 27 Afghans riding in a bus in southern Afghanistan (October 20, 2008). Other adjustments under way include the training of tribal militias who want to secure their communities (see below) as part of the Social Outreach Program discussed above.

Other parts of the enhanced U.S. strategy are to conduct and fund a major expansion of the Afghan National Army, and to probably take over the command of Regional Command-South in November 2010, after rotations by the Netherlands (2008-2009) and Britain (2009-2010). In the interim, as of the fall of 2008, a one-star U.S. general, John Nicholson, became deputy commander of Regional Command South to give the U.S. force added weight at that headquarters. Negotiations With the Taliban

There is growing U.S. support for new Afghan efforts to bring Taliban fighters off the battlefield and into the political process. President Karzai has consistently advocated talks with Taliban militants who want to consider ending their fight. Noted above is the "Program for Strengthening Peace and Reconciliation" (referred to in Afghanistan by its Pashto acronym "PTS") headed by Meshrano Jirga speaker Sibghatullah Mojadeddi and overseen by Karzai's National Security Council. The program is credited with persuading 5,000 Taliban figures and commanders to renounce violence and joint the political process. Several Taliban figures, including its foreign minister Wakil Mutawwakil, ran in the parliamentary elections. The Taliban official who was

governor of Bamiyan Province when the Buddha statues there were blown up, Mohammad Islam Mohammedi—and who was later elected to the post-Taliban parliament from Samangan Province—was assassinated in Kabul in January 2007. In September 2007, Karzai offered to meet with Mullah Umar himself, appearing thereby to backtrack on earlier statements that about 100-150 of the top Taliban leadership would not be eligible for amnesty. The Taliban rejected the offer, saying they would not consider reconciling until (1) all foreign troops leave Afghanistan; (2) a new "Islamic" constitution is adopted; and (3) Islamic law is imposed.

The issue gained momentum in October 2008 with press reports that Afghan officials and Taliban members had met each other in Ramadan-related gatherings in Saudi Arabia in September 2008. However, both sides said there were no formal negotiations on a political settlement at those meetings. Britain has expressed support for such talks and, on October 2008, Secretary Gates said the United States could "ultimately" consider such talks if doing so would produce a political settlement in Afghanistan. General Petraeus has indicated similar support for negotiated solutions. U.S. officials say the United States would not, however, undertake talks with Al Qaeda members, or with Mullah Umar. Another round of government-Taliban talks is reportedly planned to be held in Saudi Arabia in early 2009.

Training Tribal Militias/Community Guard Program

Since June 2006, Karzai and international force donors have been considering arming some local tribal militias (*arbokai*) in eastern Afghanistan, building on established tribal structures, to help in local policing. Karzai argued that these militias provide security and are loyal to the nation and central government and that arming them is not inconsistent with the disarmament programs discussed above. Until mid-2008, U.S. military commanders opposed assisting tribal militias anywhere in Afghanistan for fear of creating new rivals to the central government, but the urgent security needs in Afghanistan caused re-consideration. The upper house of the Afghan parliament also passed a resolution in November 2008 opposing the concept.

Despite the reservations, since September 2008, press reports have said that there will be Afghan-led coordination of tribal or local militias as part of a broader emphasis on local ("bottom-up") solutions to security. The militia formation will be conducted as part of the IDLG's Social Outreach Program, which was discussed above, and is intended to strengthen the ability of local communities to keep Taliban infiltrators out. It is being termed the "Community Guard" program, and will be funded with DoD (CERP) funds. Participants in the program will be given a reported $200 per month. General Petraeus endorsed this new tactic during his first visit to Afghanistan as CENTCOM commander on November 5, 2008. The formation of the local militias is reportedly to begin in Wardak Province in early 2009 and then be tested in Ghazni, Lowgar, and Kapisa provinces. U.S. commanders say that no U.S. weapons will be supplied to the militias, but this is an Afghan-led program and some reports say the Afghan government might provide weapons to the local armed groups. Although U.S. commanders say they will be able to keep the militias "under control," some experts fear that the militias could become an additional source of arbitrary administration of justice and of corruption against local populations, and question the apparent U.S./Afghan deviation from the post-September 11 commitment to building the central government as the only legitimate source of Afghan armed force.

U.S. Military Presence/SOFA/Use of Facilities

U.S. forces operate in Afghanistan under a "status of forces agreement" (SOFA) between the United States and the interim government of Afghanistan in November 2002; the agreement gives the United States legal jurisdiction over U.S. personnel serving in Afghanistan and stated the Afghan government's acknowledgment that U.S.-led military operations were "ongoing." Even if the Taliban insurgency ends, Afghan leaders say they want the United States to maintain a long-term presence in Afghanistan. On May 8, 2005, Karzai summoned about 1,000 delegates to a consultative *jirga* in Kabul on whether to host permanent U.S. bases. They supported an indefinite presence of international forces to maintain security but urged Karzai to delay a decision. On May 23, 2005, Karzai and President Bush issued a "joint declaration"[22] 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 the table. In order to avoid the impression that foreign forces are "occupying" Afghanistan, NATO said on August 15, 2006, that it would negotiate an agreement with Afghanistan to formalize the NATO presence in Afghanistan and stipulate 15 initiatives to secure Afghanistan and rebuild its security forces.

The August 22, 2008, incident in Herat might have prompted some Afghan reconsideration of the status of forces arrangements in operation. After the incident, the Afghan cabinet demanded negotiation of a more formal status of forces agreement that would spell out the combat authorities of non-Afghan forces, and would limit the U.S. of airstrikes, detentions, and house raids.[23] In late November 2008, at a multi-lateral conference, Karzai called for a timetable for a withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan, perhaps borrowing from similar nationalistic calls by the government of Iraq in its negotiations with the United States.

[22] See http://www.mfa.gov.af/Documents/ImportantDoc/US-Afghanistan%20Strategic%20Partnership%20Declaration.pdf.

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

Table 2. Afghan and Regional Facilities Used for Operations in Afghanistan

Facility	Use
Bagram Air Base	50 miles north of Kabul, the operational hub of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and base for CJTF-101 and Gen. Schloesser. At least 500 U.S. military personnel are based there. Handles many of the 150 U.S. aircraft (including helicopters) in country. Hospital constructed, one of the first permanent structures there. FY2005 supplemental (P.L. 109-13) provided about $52 million for various projects to upgrade facilities at Bagram, including a control tower and an operations center, and the FY2006 supplemental appropriation (P.L. 109-234) provides $20 million for military construction there. NATO also using the base and sharing operational costs.
Qandahar Air Field	Just outside Qandahar, the hub of military operations in the south. Turned over from U.S. to NATO/ISAF control in late 2006 in conjunction with NATO assumption of peacekeeping responsibilities. Being enhanced (along with other facilities in the south) at cost of $1.3 billion in expectation of more U.S.-led combat 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, whose militia forces controlled the facility.
Peter Ganci Base: Manas, Kyrgyzstan	Used by 1,200 U.S. military personnel as well as refueling and cargo aircraft. Leadership of Kyrgyzstan changed in April 2005 in an uprising against President Askar Akayev, but senior U.S. officials reportedly received assurances about continued U.S. use of the base from his successor, Kurmanbek Bakiyev. Bakiyev demanded a large increase in the $2 million per year U.S. contribution for use of the base; dispute eased in July 2006 with U.S. agreement to give Kyrgyzstan $150 million in assistance and base use payments.
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. About 5,000 U.S. personnel in Qatar. Houses central air operations coordination center for U.S. missions in Iraq and Afghanistan; also houses CENTCOM forward headquarters.
Naval Support Facility, Bahrain	U.S. naval command headquarters for OEF anti-smuggling, anti-terrorism, and anti-proliferation naval search missions, and Iraq-related naval operations (oil platform protection) in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea. About 5,100 U.S. military personnel there.
Karsi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan	Not used by U.S. since September 2005 following U.S.-Uzbek dispute over May 2005 Uzbek crackdown on unrest in Andijon. Once housed about 1,750 U.S. military personnel (900 Air Force, 400 Army, and 450 civilian) in supply missions to Afghanistan. Uzbekistan allowed German use of the base temporarily in March 2008, indicating possible healing of the rift. Could also represent Uzbek counter to Russian offer to U.S. coalition to allow use of its territory to transport equipment into Afghanistan.

The NATO-Led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)[24]

Cooperation with partner forces is a major issue for the Obama Administration, in part because the partnership has come under question as Afghanistan strategy has not produced clear or quick

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

results. Although the United States is increasingly leading both combat and command, the U.S. role remains largely under the umbrella of the NATO-led "International Security Assistance Force" (ISAF)—consisting of all 26 NATO members states plus partner countries. ISAF was created by the Bonn Agreement and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 (December 20, 2001),[25] 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 mission was most recently renewed (until October 13, 2009) by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1833 (September 22, 2008). It reiterated the previous year's renewal resolution (1776) support for the Operation Enduring Freedom mission. Tables at the end of this report list contributing forces, areas of operations, and their Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

The transition process continued on July 31, 2006, with the formal handover of the security mission in southern Afghanistan to NATO/ISAF control. As part of this "Stage 3," a British/Canadian/Dutch-led "Regional Command South" (RC-S) was formed. Britain is the lead force in Helmand; Canada is lead in Qandahar, and the Netherlands is lead in Uruzgan; the three now rotate the command of RC-S. "Stage 4," the assumption of NATO/ISAF command of peacekeeping in fourteen provinces of eastern Afghanistan (and thus all of Afghanistan), was completed on October 5, 2006. As part of the completion of the NATO/ISAF takeover of command, the United States put about half the U.S. troops operating in Afghanistan under NATO/ISAF in "Regional Command East" (RC-E).

As of now, the partner forces that are bearing the brunt of combat in southern Afghanistan are Britain, Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Australia. The need to line up new pledges became acute in February 2008, when Canada said it would extend its 2,500 troop deployment until 2009, but not beyond that, unless other partners contribute 1,000 forces to assist with combat in the Canadian sector (Qandahar province). Canada insists its mission in Afghanistan will end in 2011, as does the Netherlands.

New NATO Force Pledges in 2008 and Since

At and in conjunction with the NATO summit in Bucharest in early April 2008, twelve countries did indicate new pledges, although some are of reconstruction aid rather than troops, and others were restatements of previous pledges. The following were the major pledges in 2008:

- France has deployed about 1,000 additional forces—a battalion of about 700 plus 200 special forces that formerly were part of OEF. The French forces are deploying mostly in Kapisa province to block Taliban movements toward Kabul. Some French forces are going to the southern sector to help train Afghan security forces there. President Sarkozy won a parliamentary vote of support for the

[25] 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).

mission, in late September 2008, following the killing of ten French soldiers in August 2008.

- Poland added 400 troops to the 1,200 already in Afghanistan. They are alongside U.S. forces as part of RC-E, operating mainly in Ghazni province.
- Norway has added 200 troops but in the largely passive north, where Norway is deployed.
- Denmark has added about 600 forces to the mission in the south.
- Georgia has added 500 forces for Afghanistan.
- Croatia has added 200-300, doubling its previous force.
- The Czech Republic added 120 forces in 2008, although in December 2008 the Czech parliament did not extend the mandate for its forces to remain in Afghanistan or Iraq.
- Greece and Romania have sent an unspecified number of additional trainers for the Afghan security forces.
- New Zealand increase its contingent at the PRT it runs in Bamiyan province.
- Azerbaijan sent an additional 45, more than its previous force there.
- In February 2008, Australia ruled out sending more forces to supplement its contingent, which operates in combat intense Uruzgan province, but said it would augment civilian assistance such as training Afghan police and judges and build new roads, hospitals, and schools.
- As noted above, Britain is increasing its troop commitment in Afghanistan to about 8,700 in early 2009. Although the forces serve in Britain's sector of the south (very high combat Helmand Province), the extra forces are mainly conducting training for the Afghan security forces.
- Germany has repeatedly turned U.S. requests to send forces to the combat-heavy south, but in 2008 it increased its authorized troop ceiling for Afghanistan to 4,500, from 3,500, still in the northern sector. (Despite opposition in Germany to the entire Afghanistan mission, Germany's parliament voted by a 453-79 vote margin on October 12, 2007, to maintain German troop levels in Afghanistan.)
- Singapore is sending 20 military personnel to do development-related work in Uruzgan province. That is in addition to the 20 personnel Singaporean contingent that has been in Bamiyan. (No Singaporean forces were listed in NATO's factsheet of December 1, 2008, the most recent one available.)

Among unfulfilled pledges are 3,200 trainers that are needed for Afghan security forces. It is likely this requirement will be filled by American forces.

Another key point of contention has been NATO's chronic equipment shortages—particularly helicopters, both for transport and attack—for the Afghanistan mission. One idea considered at a NATO meeting in Scotland on December 13, 2007, was for U.S. or other donors to pay for the upgrading of helicopters that partner countries might possess but have inadequate resources to adapt to Afghanistan's harsh flying conditions. In 2007, to try to compensate for the shortage, NATO chartered about 20 commercial helicopters for extra routine supply flights to the south,

freeing up Chinooks and Black Hawks for other missions. Some of the extra Polish troops deployed in 2008 are operating and maintain eight helicopters.

The shortages persist even though several partner nations brought in additional equipment in 2006 in conjunction with the NATO assumption of peacekeeping command. At that time, Apache attack helicopters and F-16 aircraft were brought in by some contributors. Italy sent "Predator" unmanned aerial vehicles, helicopters, and six AMX fighter-bomber aircraft.[26] Germany notes that it provides six Tornado combat aircraft to assist with strikes in combat situations in the south. NATO/ISAF also coordinates with Afghan security forces and with OEF forces as well, and it assists the Afghan Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism in the operation of Kabul International Airport (where Dutch combat aircraft also are located). In October 2008, Hungary added 60 troops to take over security at the airport.

National "Caveats" on Combat Operations

In an effort to repair divisions within the Afghanistan coalition over each country's respective domestic considerations, Secretary Gates presented, at a NATO meeting in Scotland on December 13, 2007, a "strategic concept paper" that would help coordinate and guide NATO and other partner contributions and missions over the coming three to five years. This is an effort to structure each country's contribution as appropriate to the politics and resources of that contributor. The concept paper, now titled the "Strategic Vision," was endorsed by the NATO summit in Bucharest, Romania in April 2008.

One of the most thorny issues has been the U.S. effort to persuade other NATO countries to adopt flexible rules of engagement that allow all contributing forces to perform combat missions, although perhaps not as aggressively as do U.S. forces. All have agreed that their forces would come to each others' defense in times of emergency anywhere in Afghanistan. At the NATO summit in April 2008, NATO countries pledged to continue to work remove the other so-called "national caveats" on their troops' operations that U.S. commanders say limit operational flexibility. For example, some nations refuse to conduct night-time combat. Others have refused to carry Afghan personnel on their helicopters. Others do not fight after snowfall. These caveats were troubling to those NATO countries with forces in heavy combat zones, such as Canada, which feel they are bearing the brunt of the fighting.

At the same time, the United States has adapted some approaches from its partners. There was early skepticism of the Dutch approach in Uruzgan, which focuses heavily on building relationships with tribal leaders and identifying reconstruction priorities, and not on actively combating Taliban formations. The Netherlands says this approach is key to a long-term pacification of the south and the United States subsequently altered its strategy in the eastern sector somewhat to approach that used by the Netherlands. (See CRS Report RL33627, *NATO in Afghanistan: A Test of the Transatlantic Alliance*, by Vincent Morelli and Paul Gallis.)

Provincial Reconstruction Teams

U.S. and partner officials have generally praised the effectiveness of "provincial reconstruction teams" (PRTs)—enclaves of U.S. or partner forces and civilian officials that provide safe havens

[26] Kington, Tom. *Italy Could Send UAVs, Helos to Afghanistan*. Defense News, June 19, 2006.

for international aid workers to help with reconstruction and to extend the writ of the Kabul government—in accelerating reconstruction and assisting stabilization efforts. The PRTs, announced in December 2002, perform activities ranging from resolving local disputes to coordinating local reconstruction projects, although most U.S.-run PRTs and most PRTs in combat-heavy areas focus mostly on counter-insurgency. (U.S. PRTs in restive regions are "co-located" with "forward operating bases" of 300-400 U.S. combat troops.) Some aid agencies say they have felt more secure since the PRT program began, fostering reconstruction.[27] Secretary Gates and U.S. commanders have attributed 2007 successes in stabilizing areas such as Ghazni and Khost to the PRTs' ability to intensify reconstruction by coordinating many different security and civilian activities. In Ghazni, almost all the schools are now open, whereas one year ago many were closed because of Taliban intimidation. In Khost, according to Secretary Gates on December 11, 2007, PRT activities focused on road building and construction of district centers that tie the population to the government.

On the other hand, some relief groups do not want to associate with military forces because doing so might taint their perceived neutrality. Others argue that the PRTs are delaying the time when the Afghan government has the skills and resources to secure and develop Afghanistan on its own.

There are 26 PRTs in operation. Virtually all the PRTs, including those run by the United States, are now under the ISAF mission, but with varying lead nations. The list of PRTs, including lead country, is shown in. Each PRT operated by the United States is composed of U.S. forces (50-100 U.S. military personnel); Defense Department civil affairs officers; representatives of USAID, State Department, and other agencies; and Afghan government (Interior Ministry) personnel. Most PRTs, including those run by partner forces, have personnel to train Afghan security forces. USAID officers assigned to the PRTs administer PRT reconstruction projects, as shown in the tables at the report's end. According to U.S. officials in March 2008, about 250 PRT development projects have been completed or are ongoing. USAID spending on PRT projects is in the table on USAID spending in Afghanistan at the end of this paper and in the aid tables by fiscal year.

In August 2005, in preparation for the establishment of Regional Command South, Canada took over the key U.S.-led PRT in Qandahar. In May 2006, Britain took over the PRT at Lashkar Gah, capital of Helmand Province. The Netherlands took over the PRT at Tarin Kowt, capital of Uruzgan Province. Germany (with Turkey and France) took over the PRTs and the leadership role in the north from Britain and the Netherlands when those countries deployed to the south.

Representing evolution of the PRT concept, Turkey opened a PRT, in Wardak Province, on November 25, 2006, to focus on providing health care, education, police training, and agricultural alternatives in that region. In March 2008, the Czech Republic established a PRT in Lowgar Province. There also has been consideration to turn over the lead in the U.S.-run PRTs to civilians rather than military personnel, presumably State Department or USAID officials. That was first attempted in 2006 with the establishment of a civilian-led U.S.-run PRT in the Panjshir Valley.

Afghan National Security Forces

Capable Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are the means by which the United States and NATO might wind eventually down their involvement in Afghanistan. U.S. forces ("Combined

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

Security Transition Command-Afghanistan," CSTC-A, headed as of July 2007 by Gen. Robert Cone), along with partner countries and contractors, are training the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP). However, that point is said to be a long way off.

Afghan National Army and Planned Expansion

U.S. and allied officers say that the ANA, now about 76,000 trained and assigned (with the total to be about 98,000 by mid-2009) is becoming a major force in stabilizing the country and a national symbol. It now has at least some presence in most of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, working with the PRTs, and it deployed outside Afghanistan to assist relief efforts for victims of the October 2005 Pakistan earthquake. In August 2008, the ANA took over security of the Kabul regional command from Italy. In June 2007, the ANA and ANP led "Operation Maiwand" in Ghazni province, intended to open schools and deliver humanitarian aid to people throughout the province. According to the DoD report of June 2008 referenced earlier, the ANA has taken the lead in 30 significant combat and clearing operations to date, and has demonstrated "increasing competence, effectiveness, and professionalism." The ANA is now leading 75% of the combat operations in the eastern sector. The commando forces of the ANA, trained by U.S. Special Operations Forces, are considered well-trained and are taking the lead in some operations against high value targets, particularly against HIG elements in Nuristan province. The United States has built four ANA bases (Herat, Gardez, Qandahar, and Mazar-e-Sharif).

Then NATO/ISAF commander General McNeill said in April 2008 that it would not be until 2011 that ANA (and ANP) forces would be capable enough to allow for a drawdown of coalition forces. This assessment was corroborated by a June 2008 DoD report on the ANSF.[28] Further negative assessments came in a GAO study released June 2008 that, of 105 ANA units, only two are assessed by DoD as being fully capable of conducting their primary missions.[29] This report also cited U.S. officers as observing continuing personnel problems (desertion, absentee), ill discipline, and drug abuse, although some concerns have been addressed. Some accounts say that a typical ANA unit is only at about 50% of its authorized strength at any given time. The GAO study said that there are significant shortages in about 40% of equipment items, although CSTC-A envisions that all ANA brigades are equipped to 85% of requirements as of the end of 2008. Few soldiers have helmets, many have no armored vehicles or armor.. The tables below discuss major equipment donations, as well as U.S. equipment being delivered in mid-2008.

The emerging U.S. plan to increase its focus on the Afghan theater includes substantial expansion of the ANA. The plan, agreed jointly by the United States and Afghanistan in September 2008, provides for expanding its size to 134,000 within five years. The funds for the expansion—about $20 billion in that time frame—will come from the United States, possibly defrayed by partner contributions. Observers say the United States has made a major funding request from Japan for some of that cost.

ANA battalions, or "Kandaks," are the main unit of the Afghan force. They are assisted by embedded U.S. trainers (about 10-20 per battalion). The Kandaks are stiffened by the presence of U.S. and partner embeds, called "Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams" (OMLTs). Each OMLT has about 12-19 personnel, and U.S. commanders say that the ANA will continue to need embeds

[28] Required by FY2008 National Defense Authorization Act, Section 1231. (PL. 110-181).

[29] Government Accountability Office. Further Congressional Action May Be Needed to Ensure Completion of a Detailed Plan to Develop and Sustain Capable Afghan National Security Forces. GAO-08-661. June 2008.

for the short term, because embeds give the units confidence they will be resupplied, reinforced, and evacuated in the event of wounding. Coalition officers also are conducting heavy weapons training for a heavy brigade as part of the "Kabul Corps," based in Pol-e-Charki, east of Kabul. Among the partner countries contributing OMLTs (all or in part) are Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Britain, and the United States.

At the time the United States first began establishing the ANA, Northern Alliance figures reportedly weighted recruitment for the national army toward its Tajik ethnic base. Many Pashtuns, in reaction, refused recruitment or left the ANA program. U.S. officials in Afghanistan say this problem has been at least partly alleviated with better pay and more close involvement by U.S. forces, and that the force is ethnically integrated in each unit. The naming of a Pashtun, Abdul Rahim Wardak, as Defense Minister in December 2004 also reduced desertions among Pashtuns (he remains in that position). The chief of staff is Gen. Bismillah Khan, a Tajik who was a Northern Alliance commander. U.S. officers in Afghanistan add that some recruits take long trips to their home towns to remit funds to their families, and often then return to the ANA after a long absence. Others, according to U.S. observers, often refuse to serve far from their home towns. The FY2005 foreign aid appropriation (P.L. 108-447) required that ANA recruits be vetted for terrorism, human rights violations, and drug trafficking.

Afghan Air Force

Equipment, maintenance, and logistical difficulties continue to plague the ANA. The Afghan Air Force, a carryover from the Afghan Air Force that existed prior to the Soviet invasion, is expanding gradually after its equipment was virtually eliminated in the 2001-2002 U.S. combat against the Taliban regime. It now has about 400 pilots, as well as 22 helicopters and cargo aircraft. Its goal is to have 61 aircraft by 2011, but Defense Minister Wardak said in September 2008 that it will remain mostly a support force for ground operations rather than a combat-oriented Air Force. Gen. McKiernan, in statements in November 2008, credited the Afghan Air Force with an ability to make ANA units nearly self-sufficient in airlift.

In May 2008, the Afghan Air Force received an additional 25 surplus helicopters from the Czech Republic and the UAE, bought and refurbished with the help of U.S. funds. Afghan pilots are based at Bagram air base. Afghanistan is seeking the return of 26 aircraft, including some MiG-2s that were flown to safety in Pakistan and Uzbekistan during the past conflicts in Afghanistan. U.S. plans do not include supply of fixed-wing combat aircraft such as F-16s, which Afghanistan wants, according to U.S. military officials.

Table 3. Recent and Pending Foreign Equipment for ANA

Country	Equipment
Overview	Since 2002, 46 donor nations have contributed equipment worth $822 million (a/o July 2008). Another 187 donations are pending, worth almost $200 million. Major items include Leopard 1 tanks, MI-17 and MI-35 helicopters, M2 machine guns, and 81 mm mortars.
United States	Major $2 billion value in arms delivered between May 2006-end of 2007. Includes several hundred Humvees, 800 other various armored vehicles. Also includes light weapons. Authorized total drawdown ceiling (un-reimbursed by appropriations) is $550 million; H.R. 2446-AFSA reauthorization—would increase ceiling to $300 million/year. Afghanistan is eligible to receive grant U.S. Excess Defense Articles (EDA) under Section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act.
Hungary	20,500 assault rifles
Egypt	17,000 small arms
Russia	4 helicopters and other equipment, part of over $100 million military aid to Afghanistan thus far
Turkey	24—155 mm Howitzers
Bulgaria	50 mortars, 500 binoculars
Czech Republic	12 helicopters and 20,000 machine guns
Estonia	4,000 machine guns plus ammunition
Greece	300 machine guns
Latvia	337 rocket-propelled grenades, 8 mortars, 13,000 arms
Lithuania	3.7 million ammunition rounds
Montenegro	1,600 machine guns
Poland	110 armored personnel carriers, 4 million ammo rounds
Switzerland	3 fire trucks
Turkey	2,200 rounds of 155 mm ammo
Croatia	1,000 machine guns plus ammo
UAE	10 Mi-17 helicopters

Source: CRS.

Afghan National Police/Justice Sector

U.S. and Afghan officials believe that building up a credible and capable national police force is at least as important to combating the Taliban insurgency as building the ANA. There is a widespread consensus that this effort lags that of the ANA by about 18 months, although U.S. commanders say that it is increasingly successful in repelling Taliban assaults on villages and that the ANP (now numbering about 80,000 assigned) is experiencing fewer casualties from attacks. However, according to the June 2008 GAO study referenced above, none of the ANP units is rated as fully capable.

To try to advance the effort, the U.S. military is conducting reforms to take ANP out of the bureaucracy and onto the streets and it is trying to bring ANP pay on par with the ANA. It has

also launched a program called "*focused district development*" to concentrate resources on developing individual police forces in districts, which is the basic geographic area of ANP activity. (There are about ten "districts" in each of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.) In this program, a district force is taken out and retrained, its duties temporarily performed by more highly trained police, and then reinserted after the training is complete. As of November 2008, 42 districts have undergone this process, which is expected to take five years to complete for the remainder of the country. A similar process is being applied to Afghanistan's border forces.

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

To address equipment shortages, in 2007 CSTC-A provided about 8,000 new vehicles and thousands of new weapons of all types. A report by the Inspectors General of the State and Defense Department, circulated to Congress in December 2006, found that most ANP units have less than 50% of their authorized equipment,[30] among its significant criticisms.

Justice Sector

Many experts believe that comprehensive police and justice sector reform is vital to Afghan governance. Some of the criticisms and allegations of corruption at all levels of the Afghan bureaucracy have been discussed throughout this paper. Police training now includes instruction in human rights principles and democratic policing concepts, and the State Department human rights report on Afghanistan, referenced above, says the government and outside observers are increasingly monitoring the police force to prevent abuses. However, some governments criticized Karzai for setting back police reform in June 2006 when he approved a new list of senior police commanders that included 11 (out of 86 total) who had failed merit exams. His approval of the 11 were reportedly to satisfy faction leaders and went against the recommendations of a police reform committee. The ANP work in the communities they come from, often embroiling them in local factional or ethnic disputes.

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

U.S. justice sector programs generally focus on building capacity of the judicial system, including police training and court construction; many of these programs are conducted in partnership with Italy, which is the "lead" coalition country on judicial reform. The United States has trained over 950 judges, lawyers, and prosecutors, according to President Bush on February 15, 2007, and built 40 judicial facilities. USAID also trains court administrators for the Ministry of Justice, the office of the Attorney General, and the Supreme Court. The United States and its partners have, to

[30] Inspectors General, U.S. Department of State and of Defense. Interagency Assessment of Afghanistan Police Training and Readiness. November 2006. Department of State report No. ISP-IQ0-07-07.

date, generally refrained from interfering in traditional mechanisms such as village *jirgas* convened to dispense justice.

U.S. Security Forces Funding/"CERP"

U.S. funds are used to cover ANA salaries. Recent appropriations for the ANA and ANP are contained in the tables at the end of this paper. In addition to the train and equip funds provided by DOD, the U.S. military in Afghanistan has additional funds to spend on reconstruction projects that build goodwill and presumably reduce the threat to use forces. These are Commanders Emergency Response Program funds, or CERP. Some CERP funds are being used for the Community Guard program discussed earlier. The U.S. military spent about $206 million in CERP in FY2007 and about $269 million in FY2008. During 2002-2006, over 40 non-U.S. donors provided about $425 million to train and equip the ANA. As noted in the table, the security forces funding has shifted to DOD funds instead of assistance funds controlled by the State Department.

Table 4. Major Security-Related Indicators

Force	Current Level
Total Foreign Forces in Afghanistan	About 65,000, of which: 51,350 are NATO/ISAF. (12,000 ISAF in 2005; and 6,000 in 2003.) U.S. forces: 36,000 total, of which 20,000 in NATO/ISAF and 14,000 U.S. (plus 2,000 partner forces) in OEF (DoD figures) . (U.S. total was: 25,000 in 2005; 16,000 in 2003; 5,000 in 2002). U.S. expected to rise further in 2009 by at least 20,000. U.S. forces deployed at 88 bases in Afghanistan, and include 1 air wing (40 aircraft) and 1 combat aviation brigade (100 aircraft).
U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan	567 killed, of which 413 by hostile action. Additional 66 U.S. deaths in other OEF theaters, including the Philippines and parts of Africa (OEF-Trans Sahara). About 400 partner forces killed. 155 U.S. killed in 2008-highest yet. 150 U.S. killed from October 2001-January 2003. About 20/month killed since July 2008.
NATO Sectors (Regional Commands-South, east, north, west, and central/Kabul)	RC-S- 18,100 (Canada, UK, Netherlands rotate lead; 9,000 in Helmand); RC-E-19,660 (U.S. lead); RC-N-4,690; RC-W-2,990 (Italy lead) RC-Kabul-5,850 (France, Afghan lead).
Afghan National Army (ANA)	76,000 assigned, including civilian support. There are 49 combat battalions. 98,000 is expected by end of 2009. Goal raised to 134,000 by as early as 2011. About 2,000 trained per month. 4,000 are commando forces, trained by U.S. Special Forces. ANA private paid about $150 per month; generals receive about $750 per month. ANA being outfitted with U.S. M16 rifles and 4,000 up-armored Humvees.
Afghan National Police (ANP)	80,000 assigned, close to authorized strength: 82,000. 11,000 are border police/18,000 authorized; 3,800+ counter-narcotics police; 5,300 civil order police. 700 are female. Salaries raised to $150 per month in 2008 from $70 to counter corruption.
U.S. and Partner Trainers	About 9,000 total: 2,000 U.S. military trainers as Embedded Training Troops and Police Mentoring Teams. 3,000 civilian trainers. 800 coalition trainers, including EUPOL for ANP (European Union contingent of 190 trainers, organized as OMLTs), and 41 German trainers of senior ANP. U.S. commanders requesting 3,200 more U.S. trainers.
Legally Armed Fighters disarmed by DDR	63,380; all of the pool identified for the program
Number of Taliban fighters	10,000-15,000 (U.S. military estimates). Plus about 1,000 Haqqani faction and 1,000 HIG. 7,000 killed 2007-8.

Force	Current Level
Armed Groups disbanded by DIAG	161 illegal groups (five or more fighters) disbanded. Goal is to disband 1,800 groups, of which several hundred groups are "significant." 5,700 weapons confiscated, 1.050 arrested. About 5,000 Taliban reconciled since May 2005.
Weapons Collected by DDR	57,630 medium and light; 12,250 heavy.
Attacks per day (average)	1,000 per month in 2008; 800 per month in 2007 and 2006; 400 in 2005. Attacks up 40% in eastern sector compared to 2007. 2,000 roadside bombs in 2008, highest yet.
Number of Suicide Bombings	21 in 2005; 123 in 2006; 160 in 2007.
Afghan Casualties	About 5,500 in 2008; 6,000 in 2007 (including Taliban; all types of violence).

Source: CRS.

Regional Context

Although most of Afghanistan's neighbors believe that the fall of the Taliban has stabilized the region, some experts believe that some neighboring governments are attempting to manipulate Afghanistan's factions to their advantage, even though six of Afghanistan's neighbors signed a non-interference pledge (Kabul Declaration) on December 23, 2002. The Washington Post reported on November 11, 2008, that the incoming Obama Administration might formulate an approach toward Afghanistan that focuses on ensuring that Afghanistan's neighbors do not allow militants to flow into Afghanistan, and to securing existing or new supply lines. In November 2005, Afghanistan joined the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and Afghanistan has observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which is discussed below. (Karzai attended the SCO summit in Tajikistan on August 30, 2008.)

Pakistan/Pakistan-Afghanistan Border[31]

As Pakistan's government has changed composition over the past year, U.S. commanders have focused on the degree to which Pakistan is helping U.S. efforts to stabilize Afghanistan. This has caused occasional recriminations between the United States and Pakistan, and even some shooting incidents between Pakistani forces and U.S. forces patrolling the Afghan border area. Some experts see Pakistani and Afghan Taliban militants increasingly merging and pooling their efforts against governments in both countries, and Al Qaeda is reportedly actively facilitating the Afghanistan insurgency. The volatility in relations contrasts with that during 2001-2006, when the Bush Administration praised then President Pervez Musharraf for Pakistani accomplishments against Al Qaeda, including the arrest of over 700 Al Qaeda figures, some of them senior, since the September 11 attacks.[32] After the attacks, Pakistan provided the United States with access to

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

[32] 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).

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 by that organization. Musharraf announced his resignation and the new governing coalition fractured in August 2008, leaving the newly dominant party of the late Pakistani secular leader Benazir Bhutto—now in the hands of her widower, President Asif Ali Zardari—with substantial discretion over Pakistan's policy.

Afghan leaders still resent Pakistan as the most public defender of the Taliban movement when it was in power and they suspect it wants to have the option to restore a Taliban-like regime. (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.) Pakistan viewed the Taliban as providing Pakistan strategic depth against rival India, and it remains wary that any Afghan government might fall under the influence of India, which Pakistan says is using its diplomatic facilities in Afghanistan to train and recruit anti-Pakistan insurgents, and is using its reconstruction funds to build influence there. Pakistan ended its public support for the Taliban after the September 11, 2001, attacks, but Pakistan-Afghanistan relations began deteriorating after the March 2006 Afghan accusation that Pakistan was allowing Taliban remnants, including Mullah Umar, to operating there. In January 2007, Karzai strongly criticized a Pakistani plan to mine and fence their common border in an effort to prevent infiltration of militants to Afghanistan, saying the move would separate tribes and families that straddle the border.

The U.S. shift toward a more critical position increased following a *New York Times* report (February 19, 2007) that Al Qaeda had re-established some small Al Qaeda terrorist training camps in Pakistan, near the Afghan border. This possibly was an outgrowth of a September 5, 2006, agreement between Pakistan and tribal elders in this region to exchange an end to Pakistani military incursions into the tribal areas for a promise by the tribal elders to expel militants from the border area. In July 2007, U.S. counter-terrorism officials publicly deemed the agreement a failure. Despite this U.S. view, in April 2008, the new government dominated by Bhutto's party, prevailed in February 2008 parliamentary elections, negotiated a similar "understanding" with members of the Mehsud tribe, among which is militant leader Baitullah Mehsud. Mehsud is believed responsible for harboring and assisting Afghan Taliban, including sending his own supporters in to Afghanistan, and for growing militant acts inside Pakistan itself, possibly including the December 27, 2007, killing of Bhutto. U.S. commanders in Afghanistan have blamed the negotiations for an increase in militant infiltration across the border. U.S. officials, in July 2008, confronted Pakistani officials with evidence that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency (ISI) is actively helping Afghanistan militants, particularly the Haqqani faction.[33] Afghan officials have said they have evidence that ISI agents were involved in the July 7, 2008, suicide bombing of India's embassy in Kabul.

In late 2008, U.S. officials have indicated that they are seeing greater Pakistani cooperation. In February 2008, Pakistan stopped attending meetings of the Tripartite Commission" under which NATO, Afghan, and Pakistani military leaders meet regularly on both sides of the border. Meetings resumed in June 2008, and the fourth since then is planned in December 2008. According to U.S. Army chief of staff Gen. George Casey in November 2008, U.S.-Pakistani military cooperation is broadening as U.S. and Pakistani commanders have been meeting once a week. In April 2008, in an extension of the Tripartite Commission's work, the three agreed to set up five "border coordination centers"—which will include networks of radar nodes to give liaison

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

officers a common view of the border area. These centers build on an agreement in May 2007 to share intelligence on extremists' movements. Only one has been established to date—near the Torkham Gate at the Khyber Pass. Also, U.S. commanders have praised October 2008 Pakistani military moves against militant enclaves in the tribal areas, and U.S. and Pakistani forces are jointly waging "Operation Lionheart"against militants on both sides of the border, north of the Khyber Pass.

In addition, Afghanistan-Pakistan relations are improving since the Musharraf era ended in September 2008. Karzai attended the September 9, 2008, inauguration of President Asif Ali Zardari, the widower of Benazir Bhutto. The "peace jirga" process—a series of meetings of notables on each side of the border, which was agreed at a September 28, 2006, dinner hosted by President Bush for Karzai and Musharraf, has resumed. The first *jirga*, in which 700 Pakistani and Afghan tribal elders participated, was held in Kabul August 9-10, 2007.[34] Another was held in the improving climate of Afghanistan-Pakistan relations during October 27-28, 2008; the Afghan side was headed by former Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah. It resulted in a declaration to endorse efforts to try to engage militants in both Afghanistan and Pakistan to bring them into the political process and abandon violence. Zardari and Karzai held bilateral meetings in Turkey on December 6, 2008, and, in the clearest sign of closer ties, Zardari visited Kabul and met with Karzai on January 9, 2009, where the two signed a joint declaration against terrorism that affects both countries.

Increased Direct U.S. Action[35]

U.S. officials are increasingly employing new tactics to combat militant concentrations in Pakistan without directly violating Pakistan's limitations on the U.S. ability to operate "on the ground" in Pakistan. U.S. officials are also attempting to formulate a strategy to protect U.S./NATO supply lines through Pakistan, increasingly the focus of attacks on the Pakistani side of the border, as well as to secure new routes. Pakistani political leaders across the spectrum publicly oppose any presence of U.S. combat forces in Pakistan, and a reported Defense Department plan to send small numbers of U.S. troops into the border areas was said to be "on hold" because of potential backlash from Pakistan. This purported U.S. plan was said to be a focus of discussions between Joint Chiefs Chairman Mullen and Pakistani Chief of Staff Ashfaq Kayani aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Lincoln on August 26, 2008, although the results of the discussions are not publicly known.[36] On September 3, 2008, one week after the meeting, as a possible indication that at least some aspects of the U.S. plan is going forward, U.S. helicopter borne force reportedly crossed the border to raid a suspected militant encampment, drawing criticism from Pakistan. However, there still does not appear to be U.S. consideration of longer term "boots on the ground" in Pakistan. In January 2008, Secretary of Defense Gates said that any U.S. troops potentially deployed to Pakistan would most likely be assigned solely to train Pakistani border forces, such as the Frontier Corps.

Since well before the September 3 incursion, U.S. military forces have been directing increased U.S. firepower against militants in Pakistan.[37] Press reports add that visits to Pakistan by top U.S.

[34] Straziuso, Jason. Musharraf Pulls Out of Peace Council. Associated Press, August 8, 2007.

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

[36] Jelinek, Pauline. "U.S., Pakistan, In Secret, Discuss Rise in Violence." *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 29, 2008.

[37] Tyson, Ann Scott. "Pakistan Strife Threatens Anti-Insurgent Plan." *Washington Post*, November 9, 2007.

intelligence officials in January 2008 resulted in agreement for more U.S. Predator unmanned aerial vehicle flights over the border regions. Since October 2008, there has been one Predator strike on militant targets in Pakistan almost every day, each time incurring Pakistani official protestations. In addition, U.S. forces in Afghanistan now acknowledge that they shell purported Taliban positions on the Pakistani side of the border, and do some "hot pursuit" a few kilometers over the border into Pakistan. One air strike in early June 2008 reportedly killed by accident a number of Pakistani border forces, incurring intense Pakistani criticism. U.S. commanders said in June 2008 that NATO and U.S. forces had beefed up their numbers on the border to deal with the spike in attacks caused by Pakistan's relaxation of efforts to prevent militant infiltration.

Suggesting that it can act against the Taliban when it intends to, on August 15, 2006, Pakistan announced the arrest of 29 Taliban fighters in a hospital in the Pakistani city of Quetta. On March 1, 2007, Pakistani officials confirmed they had arrested Mullah Ubaydallah Akhund, a top aide to Mullah Umar and who had served as defense minister in the Taliban regime, in Quetta. He was later reported released.

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

Iran

Iran perceives its key national interests in Afghanistan as exerting its traditional influence over western Afghanistan, which Iran borders and was once part of the Persian empire, and to protect Afghanistan's Shiite minority. Iran's assistance to Afghanistan has totaled about $1.164 billion since the fall of the Taliban, mainly to build roads and schools and provide electricity and shops to Afghan cities and villages near the Iranian border. This makes Iran among the top financial donors to Afghanistan.

After the fall of the Taliban in late 2001, President Bush warned Iran against meddling in Afghanistan. Partly in response to the U.S. criticism, in February 2002 Iran expelled Karzai-opponent Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, but it did not arrest him. Iran did not oppose Karzai's firing of Iran ally Ismail Khan as Herat governor in September 2004, although Iran has opposed the subsequent U.S. use of the Shindand air base.[38] Iran is said to be helping Afghan law enforcement with anti-narcotics along their border. Karzai, who has visited Iran on several occasions says that Iran is an important neighbor of Afghanistan. During his visit to Washington, DC, in August 2007, some differences between Afghanistan and the United States became apparent; Karzai publicly called Iran part of a "solution" for Afghanistan, while President Bush called Iran a "de-stabilizing force" there. Still, Karzai received Ahmadinejad in Kabul in mid-August 2007. The incoming Obama Administration is believed more open to talks with Iran on a broad range of issues, including its activities in Afghanistan.

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

The U.S.-Afghan differences over Iran's role represent a departure from the past five years, when Iran's influence with political leaders in Afghanistan appeared to wane, and U.S. criticism of Iran's role in Afghanistan was muted. The State Department report on international terrorism, released April 30, 2008, said Iran continued during 2007 to ship arms to Taliban fighters in Afghanistan, including mortars, 107mm rockets, and possibly man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS). On April 17, 2007, U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan captured a shipment of Iranian weapons that purportedly was bound for Taliban fighters. On June 6, 2007, NATO officers said they caught Iran "red-handed" shipping heavy arms, C4 explosives, and advanced roadside bombs ("explosively-forced projectiles, EFPs, such as those found in Iraq) to Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. Another such shipment was intercepted in western Afghanistan on September 6, 2007. Gen. McNeill said the convoy was sent with the knowledge of "at least the Iranian military." Because such shipments would appear to conflict with Iran's support for Karzai and for non-Pashtun factions in Afghanistan, U.S. military officers did not attribute the shipments to a deliberate Iranian government decision to arm the Taliban. However, some U.S. officials say the shipments are large enough that the Iranian government would have to have known about them. In attempting to explain the shipments, some experts believe Iran's policy might be shifting somewhat to gain leverage against the United States in Afghanistan (and on other issues) by causing U.S. combat deaths.

There is little dispute that Iran's relations with Afghanistan are much improved from the time of the Taliban, which Iran saw as a threat to its interests in Afghanistan, especially after Taliban forces captured Herat (the western province that borders Iran) in September 1995. Iran subsequently drew even closer to the Northern Alliance than previously, providing its groups with fuel, funds, and ammunition.[39] 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. About 300,000 Afghan refugees have returned from Iran since the Taliban fell, but about 1.2 million remain, mostly integrated into Iranian society, and a crisis erupted in May 2007 when Iran expelled about 50,000 into Afghanistan.

India

The interests and activities of India in Afghanistan are almost the exact reverse of those of Pakistan. India's goal is to deny Pakistan "strategic depth" in Afghanistan, and India supported the Northern Alliance against the Taliban in the mid-1990s. A possible reflection of these ties is that Tajikistan allows India to use one of its air bases; Tajikistan supports the mostly Tajik Northern Alliance. India saw the Taliban's hosting of Al Qaeda as a major threat to India itself because of Al Qaeda's association with radical Islamic organizations in Pakistan dedicated to ending Indian control of parts of Jammu and Kashmir. Some of these groups have committed major acts of terrorism in India. For its part, Pakistan accuses India of using its nine consulates in Afghanistan to spread Indian influence. The growing Indian financial and political influence might have been a cause of the July 2, 2008, attack on India's embassy, presumably by pro-

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

Pakistan elements that want to limit India's influence. The attack has triggered more debate in India about whether it should deploy more security forces in Afghanistan to protect its construction workers, diplomats, and installations. India reportedly decided in August 2008 to improve security for its officials and workers in Afghanistan, but not to send actual troops there, either as protection forces or as part of the NATO-led coalition.

India has funded Afghanistan projects worth about $1.2 billion, making it the fifth largest single country donor. India, along with the Asian Development Bank, is financing a $300 million project, mentioned above, to bring electricity from Central Asia to Afghanistan. It has also renovated the well known Habibia High School in Kabul and committed to a $25 million renovation of Darulaman Palace as the permanent house for Afghanistan's parliament. Numerous other India-financed reconstruction projects are under way throughout Afghanistan, including a road to the Iranian border in remote Nimruz province. India is also helping the IDLG with its efforts to build local governance organizations.

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 OEF.

Russia

Russia provides some humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, although it keeps a low profile in Afghanistan because it still feels humiliated by its withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 and senses Afghan resentment of the Soviet occupation. In an effort to try to cooperate more with NATO at least in Afghanistan, in conjunction with the April 2008 NATO summit, Russia agreed to allow NATO to ship non-lethal supplies to coalition forces in Afghanistan by land over Russian territory. However, that pledge was put into doubt following the August 2008 crisis over Georgia, an outcome of which has been suspension of Russian military cooperation with NATO; Russia says this land route cooperation constitutes military coordination covered under that suspension announcement. Still, U.S. officials are said to be trying to revive the route possibility amid increasingly effective attacks on U.S. supply lines through Pakistan.

During the 1990s, Russia supported the Northern Alliance against the Taliban with some military equipment and technical assistance in order to blunt Islamic militancy emanating from Afghanistan.[40] 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.

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

Central Asian States

These states are becoming increasingly crucial to U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan could become pivotal actors in U.S. efforts to secure alternate supply routes into Afghanistan. During Taliban rule, Russian and Central Asian leaders grew increasingly alarmed that radical Islamic movements were receiving safe haven in Afghanistan. Uzbekistan, in particular, has long asserted that the group Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), allegedly responsible for four simultaneous February 1999 bombings in Tashkent that nearly killed President Islam Karimov, is linked to Al Qaeda.[41] One of its leaders, Juma Namangani, reportedly was killed while commanding Taliban/Al Qaeda forces in Konduz in November 2001. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan do not directly border Afghanistan, but IMU guerrillas transited Kyrgyzstan during incursions into Uzbekistan in the late 1990s.

During Taliban rule, Uzbekistan supported Uzbek leader Abdul Rashid Dostam, who was part of that Alliance. It allowed use of Karshi-Khanabad air base by OEF forces from October 2001 until a rift emerged in May 2005 over Uzbekistan's crackdown against riots in Andijon, and U.S.-Uzbek relations remained largely frozen. Uzbekistan's March 2008 agreement with Germany for it to use Karshi-Khanabad air base temporarily, for the first time since the rift in U.S.-Uzbek relations developed in 2005, suggests that U.S.-Uzbek cooperation on Afghanistan and other issues might be rebuilt. As a follow-up to this, Uzbekistan at the April 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest, proposed to revive the "6 + 2" process of neighbors of Afghanistan to help its stability, but Karzai reportedly opposes this idea as unwanted Central Asian interference in its affairs.

In 1996, several of the Central Asian states banded together with Russia and China into a regional grouping called the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to discuss the Taliban threat. It includes China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Reflecting Russian and Chinese efforts to limit U.S. influence in the region, the group has issued statements, most recently in August 2007, that security should be handled by the countries in the Central Asia region. Despite the Shanghai Cooperation Organization statements, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan are all, for now, holding to their pledges of facility support to OEF. (Tajikistan allows access primarily to French combat aircraft, and Kazakhstan allows use of facilities in case of emergency.)

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

China[42]

A major organizer of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, China has a small border with a sliver of Afghanistan known as the "Wakhan corridor" (see **Figure A-1**). China had become

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

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

increasingly concerned about the potential for Al Qaeda to promote Islamic fundamentalism among Muslims in China. In December 2000, sensing China's increasing concern about Taliban policies, a Chinese official delegation met with Mullah Umar. China did not enthusiastically support U.S. military action against the Taliban, possibly because China was wary of a U.S. military buildup nearby. In addition, China has been allied to Pakistan in part to pressure India, a rival of China. Still, Chinese delegations are visiting Afghanistan to assess the potential for investments in such sectors as mining and energy,[43] and a deal was signed in November 2007 as discussed above (China Metallurgical Group).

Saudi Arabia and UAE

During the Soviet occupation, Saudi Arabia channeled hundreds of millions of dollars to the Afghan resistance, primarily the Hikmatyar and Sayyaf factions. Saudi Arabia, a majority of whose citizens practice the strict Wahhabi brand of Islam also practiced by the Taliban, was one of three countries to formally recognize the Taliban government. The Taliban initially served Saudi Arabia as a potential counter to Iran, but Iranian-Saudi relations improved after 1997 and balancing Iranian power ebbed as a factor in Saudi policy toward Afghanistan. Drawing on its reputed intelligence ties to Afghanistan during that era, Saudi Arabia worked with Taliban leaders to persuade them to suppress anti-Saudi activities by Al Qaeda. Some press reports indicate that, in late 1998, Saudi and Taliban leaders discussed, but did not agree on, a plan for a panel of Saudi and Afghan Islamic scholars to decide bin Laden's fate.

According to U.S. officials, Saudi Arabia cooperated extensively, if not publicly, with OEF. It broke diplomatic relations with the Taliban in late September 2001 and quietly permitted the United States to use a Saudi base for command of U.S. air operations over Afghanistan, but it did not permit U.S. airstrikes from it. As noted above, it has hosted talks between the Karzai government and moderate Taliban leaders to pursue potential reconciliation.

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

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

Many experts believe that financial assistance and accelerating reconstruction would do more to improve the security situation—and to eliminate narcotics trafficking—than intensified anti-Taliban combat. Afghanistan's economy and society are still fragile after decades of warfare that left about 2 million dead, 700,000 widows and orphans, and about 1 million Afghan children who were born and raised in refugee camps outside Afghanistan. More than 3.5 million Afghan

[43] CRS Conversations with Chinese officials in Beijing. August 2007.

refugees have since returned, although a comparable number remain outside Afghanistan. The U.N. High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) supervises Afghan repatriation and Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan.

Still heavily dependent on donors, Karzai has sought to reassure the international donor community by establishing a transparent budget and planning process. Some in Congress want to increase independent oversight of U.S. aid to Afghanistan; the conference report on the FY2008 defense authorization bill (P.L. 110-181) established a "special inspector general" for Afghanistan reconstruction, (SIGAR) modeled on a similar outside auditor for Iraq ("Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction," SIGIR). The law also authorized $20 million for that purpose, and some funds were provided in P.L. 110-252, as shown in the tables. On May 30, 2008, Maj. Gen. Arnold Fields (Marine, ret.) was named to the position. He has filed two reports on Afghan reconstruction, most recently October 30, 2008.[44]

Efforts to build the legitimate economy are showing some results, by accounts of senior U.S. officials, including expansion of roads and education and health facilities constructed. USAID spending to promote economic growth is shown in **Table 14**, and U.S. and international assistance to Afghanistan are discussed in the last sections of this paper.

Some international investors are implementing projects, and there is substantial new construction, such as the Serena luxury hotel that opened in November 2005 (long considered a priority Taliban target and was attacked by militants on January 14, 2008, killing six) and a $25 million new Coca Cola bottling factory that opened in Kabul on September 11, 2006. Several Afghan companies are growing as well, including Roshan and Afghan Wireless (cell phone service), and Tolo Television. A Gold's Gym has opened in Kabul as well. The 52-year-old national airline, Ariana, is said to be in significant financial trouble due to corruption that has affected its safety ratings and left it unable to service a heavy debt load, but there are new privately run airlines, such as Pamir Air, Safi Air, and Kam Air. 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). However, in November 2007, the Afghan government signed a deal with China Metallurgical Group for the company to invest $2.8 billion to develop Afghanistan's Aynak copper field in Lowgar Province; the agreement will include construction of a coal-fired electric power plant and a freight railway.

The United States is trying to build on Afghanistan's post-war economic rebound. In September 2004, the United States and Afghanistan signed a bilateral trade and investment framework agreement (TIFA). These agreements are generally seen as a prelude to a broader but more complex bilateral free trade agreement, but negotiations on an FTA have not begun to date. On December 13, 2004, the 148 countries of the World Trade Organization voted to start membership talks with Afghanistan. Another initiative supported by the United States is the establishment of joint Afghan-Pakistani "Reconstruction Opportunity Zones" (ROZ's) which would be modeled after "Qualified Industrial Zones" run by Israel and Jordan in which goods produced in the zones receive duty free treatment for import into the United States. For FY2008, $5 million in supplemental funding was requested to support the zones, but P.L. 110-252 did not specifically mention the zones. Bills in the 100th Congress, S. 2776 and H.R. 6387, would authorize the President to proclaim duty-free treatment for imports from ROZ's to be designated by the President.

[44] For text of the reports, see http://www.sigar.mil.

Afghanistan's prospects also appeared to brighten by the announcement in March 2006 of an estimated 3.6 billion barrels of oil and 36.5 trillion cubic feet of gas reserves. Experts believe these amounts, if proved, could make Afghanistan relatively self-sufficient in energy and able to export energy to its neighbors.

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

Another major energy project remains under consideration. During 1996-1998, the Clinton Administration supported proposed natural gas and oil pipelines through western Afghanistan as an incentive for the warring factions to cooperate. A consortium led by Los Angeles-based Unocal Corporation proposed a $2.5 billion Central Asia Gas Pipeline (CentGas), which is now estimated to cost $3.7 billion to construct, that would originate in southern Turkmenistan and pass through Afghanistan to Pakistan, with possible extensions into India.[45] The deterioration in U.S.-Taliban relations after 1998 largely ended hopes for the pipeline projects while the Taliban was in power.

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

Some of the more stable provinces, such as Bamiyan, are complaining that international aid is flowing mostly to the restive provinces in an effort to quiet them, and ignoring the needs of poor Afghans in peaceful areas. Later in this paper are tables showing U.S. appropriations of assistance to Afghanistan, including some detail on funds earmarked for categories of civilian reconstruction, and **Table 14** lists USAID spending on all of these sectors for FY2002-FY2007. The following are some key sectors and what has been accomplished with U.S. and international donor funds:

- **Roads.** Road building is considered a U.S. priority and has been USAID's largest project category there, taking up about 25% of USAID spending since the fall of the Taliban. Roads are considered key to enabling Afghan farmers to bring legitimate produce to market in a timely fashion and former commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan Gen. Eikenberry said "where the roads end, the Taliban begin." Among major projects completed: the Kabul-Qandahar roadway project; the Qandahar-Herat roadway, funded by the United States, Japan, and Saudi Arabia, completed by 2006; a road from Qandahar to Tarin Kowt, built by U.S. military personnel, inaugurated in 2005; and a road linking the Panjshir Valley to

[45] 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.

Kabul. In several provinces, U.S. funds (sometimes CERP funds) are being used to build roads connecting remote areas to regional district centers in several provinces in the eastern sector. A key priority is building a Khost-Gardez road, under way currently.

- **Education.** Despite the success in enrolling Afghan children in school since the Taliban era (see statistics above), setbacks have occurred because of Taliban attacks on schools, causing some to close.
- **Health.** The health care sector, as noted by Afghan observers, has made considerable gains in reducing infant mortality and improving Afghans' access to health professionals. In addition to U.S. assistance to develop the health sector's capacity, Egypt operates a 65-person field hospital at Bagram Air Base that instructs Afghan physicians. Jordan operates a similar facility in Mazar-e-Sharif.
- **Agriculture.** USAID has spent about 5% of its Afghanistan funds on agriculture, and this has helped Afghanistan double its agricultural output over the past five years. Afghan officials say agricultural assistance and development should be a top U.S. priority as part of a strategy of encouraging legitimate alternatives to poppy cultivation. (Another 10% of USAID funds is spent on "alternative livelihoods" to poppy growing, mostly in aid to farmers.) One emerging "success story" is growing Afghan exports of high quality pomegranate juice called Anar. To help Afghanistan develop this sector, the U.S. National Guard is deploying "Agribusiness Development Teams" in several provinces to help Afghan farmers with water management, soil enhancement, crop cultivation, and improving the development and marketing of their goods.
- **Electricity.** About 10% of USAID spending in Afghanistan is on power projects. The Afghanistan Compact states that the goal is for electricity to reach 65% of households in urban areas and 25% in rural areas by 2010. There have been severe power shortages in Kabul, partly because the city population has swelled to nearly 4 million, up from half a million when the Taliban was in power, but power to the capital is more plentiful as of March 2008. The Afghan government, with help from international donors, plans to import electricity from Central Asian and other neighbors beginning in 2009. Another major pending project is the Kajaki Dam, located in unstable Helmand Province. USAID has allocated about $500 million to refurbish the remaining two electricity-generating turbines (one is operating) of the dam (total project estimate, when completed) which, when functional, will provide electricity for 1.7 million Afghans and about 4,000 jobs in the reconstruction. In an operation involving 4,000 NATO troops, components of the second turbine was successfully delivered to the dam in September 2008 and it is expected to be operational in mid-late 2009.

National Solidarity Program

The United States and the Afghan government are also trying to promote local decision making on reconstruction. The "National Solidarity Program" (NSD) largely funded by U.S. and other international donors seeks to create and empower local governing councils to prioritize local reconstruction projects. The assistance, channeled through donors, provides block grants of about $60,000 per project to the councils to implement agreed projects, most of which are water projects. Elections to these local councils have been held in several provinces, and almost 40% of

those elected have been women.[46] The U.S. aid to the program is part of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) account. (Of FY2008 ESF funds requested, USAID expects to spend $45 million on the ARTF, of which $25 million was to be for the budgetary support portion of the ARTF account, and the remainder might be available for the NSD.

U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan

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

Since FY2002 and including funds already appropriated for FY2008, the United States has provided over $31 billion in reconstruction assistance, including military "train and equip" for the ANA and ANP and counter-narcotics-related assistance. These amounts do not include costs for U.S. combat operations, which are discussed in CRS Report RL33110, *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11*, by Amy Belasco. The tables below depict the aid.[47]

Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002 and Amendments

A key post-Taliban aid authorization bill, S. 2712, the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act (AFSA) of 2002 (P.L. 107-327, December 4, 2002), as amended, authorized about $3.7 billion in U.S. civilian aid for FY2003-FY2006. For the most part, the humanitarian, counter-narcotics, and governance assistance targets authorized by the act were met or exceeded by appropriations. However, no Enterprise Funds have been appropriated, and ISAF expansion was funded by the contributing partner forces. The act authorized the following:

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

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

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

- $300 million for an Enterprise Fund;
- $550 million in draw-downs of defense articles and services for Afghanistan and regional militaries. (The original law provided for $300 million in drawdowns. That was increased to $450 million by P.L. 108-106, an FY2004 supplemental appropriations); and
- $1 billion ($500 million per year for FY2003-FY2004) to expand ISAF if such an expansion takes place.

A subsequent law (P.L. 108-458, December 17, 2004), implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, contained a subtitle called "The Afghanistan Freedom Support Act Amendments of 2004." The subtitle mandates the appointment of a U.S. coordinator of policy on Afghanistan and requires additional Administration reports to Congress, including (1) on long-term U.S. strategy and progress of reconstruction, an amendment to the report required in the original law; (2) on how U.S. assistance is being used; (3) on U.S. efforts to persuade other countries to participate in Afghan peacekeeping; and (4) a joint State and Defense Department report on U.S. counter-narcotics efforts in Afghanistan. The law also contains several "sense of Congress" provisions recommending more rapid DDR activities; expansion of ISAF; and counter-narcotics initiatives.

Afghan Freedom Support Act Re-Authorization

In the 110th Congress, H.R. 2446, passed by the House on June 6, 2007 (406-10), would reauthorize AFSA through FY2010. Some observers say the Senate might take it up early in 2008. The following are the major provisions of the bill:

- A total of about $1.7 billion in U.S. economic aid and $320 in military aid (including draw-downs of equipment) per fiscal year would be authorized.
- pilot program of crop substitution to encourage legitimate alternatives to poppy cultivation is authorized. Afghan officials support this provision as furthering their goal of combating narcotics by promoting alternative livelihoods.
- enhanced anti-corruption and legal reform programs would be provided.
- mandated cutoff of U.S. aid to any Afghan province in which the Administration reports that the leadership of the province is complicit in narcotics trafficking. This provision has drawn some criticism from observers who say that the most needy in Afghanistan might be deprived of aid based on allegations that are difficult to judge precisely.
- $45 million per year for the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, and programs for women and girls is authorized.
- $75 million per year is authorized specifically for enhanced power generation, a key need in Afghanistan.
- a coordinator for U.S. assistance to Afghanistan is mandated.
- military drawdowns for the ANA and ANP valued at $300 million per year (un-reimbursed) are authorized (versus the aggregate $550 million allowed currently).

- authorizes appointment of a special U.S. envoy to promote greater Afghanistan-Pakistan cooperation.
- reauthorizes "Radio Free Afghanistan."
- establishes a U.S. policy to encourage Pakistan to permit shipments by India of equipment and material to Afghanistan.

International Reconstruction Pledges/Aid/Lending

International (non-U.S.) donors have provided over another $25 billion since the fall of the Taliban, as of October 2008. When combined with U.S. aid, this by far exceeds the $27.5 billion for reconstruction identified as required for 2002-2010. The U.S. and international totals also exceed the $30 billion pledged at donors conferences in 2002 (Tokyo), Berlin (April 2004), Kabul (April 2005), the London conference (February 2006), and since. The Afghanistan Compact leaned toward the view of Afghan leaders that a higher proportion of the aid be channeled through the Afghan government rather than directly by the donor community. Only about $3.8 billion of funds disbursed have been channeled through the Afghan government, according to the Finance Minister in April 2007. The Afghan government is promising greater financial transparency and international (United Nations) oversight to ensure that international contributions are used wisely and effectively.

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

Among multilateral lending institutions, in May 2002, the World Bank reopened its office in Afghanistan after 20 years. On March 12, 2003, it announced a $108 million loan to Afghanistan, the first since 1979. Its total loan pledges are listed below, and its projects are concentrated in the telecommunications and road and sewage sectors. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has also been playing a major role in Afghanistan; its pledge totals are listed below as well. One of its projects in Afghanistan was funding the paving of a road from Qandahar to the border with Pakistan, and as noted above, it is contributing to a project to bring electricity from Central Asia to Afghanistan.

Major International (non-U.S.) Pledges to Afghanistan Since Jan. 2002

($ in millions)

Britain	2,897
World Bank	2,803
Asia Development Bank	2,200
Japan	1,900
European Commission (EC)	1,768
Netherlands	1,697
Canada	1,479
India	1,200
Iran	1,164
Germany	1,108
Norway	977
Denmark	683
Italy	637
Saudi Arabia	533
Total Non-U.S. Pledges (including donors not listed)	25,300

Source: Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. October 2008 report. p. 140. This table lists donors pledging over $500 million total.

Residual Issues from Past Conflicts

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

Stinger Retrieval

Beginning in late 1985 following internal debate, the Reagan Administration provided about 2,000 man-portable "Stinger" anti-aircraft missiles to the *mujahedin* for use against Soviet aircraft. Prior to the U.S.-led war against the Taliban and Al Qaeda, common estimates suggested that 200-300 Stingers remained at large, although more recent estimates put the number below 100.[48] The Stinger issue resurfaced in conjunction with 2001 U.S. war effort, when U.S. pilots reported that the Taliban fired some Stingers at U.S. aircraft during the war. No hits were reported. Any Stingers that survived the anti-Taliban war are likely controlled by Afghans now allied to the United States and presumably pose less of a threat. However, there are concerns that remaining Stingers could be sold to terrorists for use against civilian aircraft. In February 2002, the Afghan government found and returned to the United States "dozens" of Stingers.[49] In late

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

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

January 2005, Afghan intelligence began a push to buy remaining Stingers back, at a reported cost of $150,000 each.[50]

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 Stinger buy-back effort. On March 7, 1994, the Washington Post reported that the CIA had recovered only a fraction (maybe 50 or 100) of the at-large Stingers.

The danger of these weapons has become apparent on several occasions. Iran bought 16 of the missiles in 1987 and fired one against U.S. helicopters; some reportedly were transferred to Lebanese Hizballah. India claimed that it was a Stinger, supplied to Islamic rebels in Kashmir probably by sympathizers in Afghanistan, that shot down an Indian helicopter over Kashmir in May 1999.[51] It was a Soviet-made SA-7 "Strella" man-portable launchers that were fired, allegedly by Al Qaeda, against a U.S. military aircraft in Saudi Arabia in June 2002 and against an Israeli passenger aircraft in Kenya on November 30, 2002. Both missed their targets. SA-7s were discovered in Afghanistan by U.S. forces in December 2002.

Mine Eradication

Land mines laid during the Soviet occupation constitute one of the principal dangers to the Afghan people. The United Nations estimates that 5 -7 million mines remain scattered throughout the country, although some estimates are lower. U.N. teams have destroyed one million mines and are now focusing on de-mining priority-use, residential and commercial property, including lands around Kabul. As shown in the U.S. aid table for FY1999-FY2002 (**Table 6**), the U.S. de-mining program was providing about $3 million per year for Afghanistan, and the amount increased to about $7 million in the post-Taliban period. Most of the funds have gone to HALO Trust, a British organization, and the U.N. Mine Action Program for Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Compact adopted in London in February 2006 states that by 2010, the goal should be to reduce the land area of Afghanistan contaminated by mines by 70%.

Table 5. 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	—	—	—	—	—	—

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

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

Fiscal Year	Devel. Assist.	Econ. Supp. (ESF)	P.L. 480 (Title I and II)	Military	Other (Incl. Regional Refugee Aid)	Total
1983	—	—	—	—	—	—
1984	—	—	—	—	—	—
1985	3.369	—	—	—	—	3.369
1986	—	—	8.9	—	—	8.9
1987	17.8	12.1	2.6	—	—	32.5
1988	22.5	22.5	29.9	—	—	74.9
1989	22.5	22.5	32.6	—	—	77.6
1990	35.0	35.0	18.1	—	—	88.1
1991	30.0	30.0	20.1	—	—	80.1
1992	25.0	25.0	31.4	—	—	81.4
1993	10.0	10.0	18.0	—	30.2	68.2
1994	3.4	2.0	9.0	—	27.9	42.3
1995	1.8	—	12.4	—	31.6	45.8
1996	—	—	16.1	—	26.4	42.5
1997	—	—	18.0	—	31.9[a]	49.9
1998	—	—	3.6	—	49.14[b]	52.74

Source: Department of State.

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

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

Table 6. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY1999-FY2002

($ in millions)

	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001	FY2002 (Final)
U.S. Department of Agriculture (DOA) and USAID Food For Peace (FFP), via World Food Program(WFP)	42.0 worth of wheat (100,000 metric tons under "416(b)" program.)	68.875 for 165,000 metric tons. (60,000 tons for May 2000 drought relief)	131.0 (300,000 metric tons under P.L. 480, Title II, and 416(b))	198.12 (for food commodities)
State/Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via UNHCR and ICRC	16.95 for Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, and to assist their repatriation	14.03 for the same purposes	22.03 for similar purposes	136.54 (to U.N. agencies)
State Department/ Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)	7.0 to various NGOs to aid Afghans inside Afghanistan	6.68 for drought relief and health, water, and sanitation programs	18.934 for similar programs	113.36 (to various U.N. agencies and NGOs)
State Department/HDP	2.615	3.0	2.8	7.0 to Halo

	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001	FY2002 (Final)
(Humanitarian Demining Program)				Trust/other demining
Aid to Afghan Refugees in Pakistan (through various NGOs)	5.44 (2.789 for health, training—Afghan females in Pakistan)	6.169, of which $3.82 went to similar purposes	5.31 for similar purposes	
Counter-Narcotics			1.50	63.0
USAID/Office of Transition Initiatives			0.45 (Afghan women in Pakistan)	24.35 for broadcasting/media
Dept. of Defense				50.9 (2.4 million rations)
Foreign Military Financing				57.0 (for Afghan national army)
Anti-Terrorism				36.4
Economic Support Funds (E.S.F)				105.2
Peacekeeping				24.0
Totals	**76.6**	**113.2**	**182.6**	**815.9**

Source: CRS.

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

($ in millions, same acronyms as Table 6)

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

Source: CRS.

Table 8. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2004

($ in millions, same acronyms as previous tables)

FY2004 Supplemental (P.L. 108-106)	
Disarmament and Demobilization (DDR program) (ESF)	30
Afghan government (ESF) $10 million for customs collection	70
Elections/democracy and governance (ESF)	69
Roads (ESF)	181
Schools/Education (ESF)	95
Health Services/Clinics (ESF)	49
Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)	58
Private Sector/Power sector rehabilitation	95
Water Projects	23
Counter-narcotics/police training/judiciary training (INCLE)	170
Defense Dept. counter-narcotics support operations	73
Afghan National Army (FMF)	287
Anti-Terrorism/Afghan Leadership Protection (NADR)	35
U.S. Embassy expansion and security/AID operations	92
Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP)	40
Total from this law: (of which $60 million is to benefit Afghan women and girls)	**1.367 billion**
FY2004 Regular Appropriations (P.L. 108-199)	
Development/Health	171
Disaster Relief	35
Refugee Relief	72
Afghan women (ESF)	5
Judicial reform commission (ESF)	2
Reforestation (ESF)	2
Aid to communities and victims of U.S. military operations (ESF)	2
Other reconstruction (ESF). (Total FY2004 funds spent by USAID for PRT-related reconstruction = $56.4 million)	64
ANA train and equip (FMF)	50
Total from this law:	**403**
Other: P.L. 480 Title II Food Aid	.085
.Total for FY2004	**1.767 billion**

Source: CRS.

Table 9. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2005

($ in millions)

FY2005 Regular Appropriations (P.L. 108-447)	
Assistance to Afghan governing institutions (ESF)	225
Train and Equip ANA (FMF)	400
Assistance to benefit women and girls	50
Agriculture, private sector investment, environment, primary education, reproductive health, and democracy-building	300
Reforestation	2
Child and maternal health	6
Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission	2
Total from this law	**985**
Second FY2005 Supplemental (P.L. 109-13)	
Other ESF: Health programs, PRT programs, agriculture, alternative livelihoods, government capacity building, training for parliamentarians, rule of law programs (ESF). (Total FY2005 funds spent by USAID for PRT-led reconstruction = $87.89 million.)	1,073.5
Aid to displaced persons (ESF)	5
Families of civilian victims of U.S. combat ops (ESF)	2.5
Women-led NGOs (ESF)	5
DOD funds to train and equip Afghan security forces. Of the funds, $34 million may go to Afghan security elements for that purpose. Also, $290 million of the funds is to reimburse the U.S. Army for funds already obligated for this purpose.	1,285
DOD counter-narcotics support operations	242
Counter-narcotics (INCLE)	220
Training of Afghan police (INCLE)	400
Karzi protection (NADR funds)	17.1
DEA operations in Afghanistan	7.7
Operations of U.S. Embassy Kabul	60
Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP)	136
Total from this law	**3.453 billion**
Other: P.L. 480 Title II Food Aid	56.95
Total	**4.495 billion**

Source: CRS.

Table 10. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2006

($ in millions)

FY2006 Regular Foreign Aid Appropriations (P.L. 109-102)	
ESF (ESF over $225 million subject to certification that Afghanistan is cooperating with U.S. counter-narcotics)	430 (Mostly for reconstruction, governance, and democracy-building; Includes $20 million for PRTs)
Peacekeeping (ANA salaries)	18
Counter-narcotics (INCLE)	235 (Includes $60 million to train ANP)
Karzai protection (NADR funds)	18
Child Survival and Health (CSH)	43
Reforestation	3
Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission	2
Aid to civilian victims of U.S. combat operations	2
Programs to benefit women and girls	50
Development Assistance	130.4
Total from this law:	931.4
FY2006 Supplemental Appropriation (P.L. 109-234)	
Security Forces Fund	1,908
ESF	43 (Includes $11 million for debt relief costs, $5 million for agriculture development, and $27 million for Northeast Transmission electricity project)
Embassy operations	50.1
DOD Counter-narcotics operations	103
Migration and Refugee aid	3.4
DEA counter-narcotics operations	9.2
Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP)	215
Total from this law	**$2.331 billion**
Other: P.L. 480 Title II Food Aid	60
Total for FY2006	**$3.323 billion**

Source: CRS.

Table 11. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2007

($ in millions)

Regular Appropriation (Continuing Appropriation P.L. 110-5)	
ESF	479 (USAID plans $42 million for PRTs)
Counter-narc (INCLE)	209.7
Child Survival and Health (CSH)	100.77
Development Assistance (DA)	166.8
IMET	1.138
NADR	21.65
P.L. 480	125.268
Total This Law	1,104.326 m
DOD Appropriation (P.L. 109-289)	
Security Forces train and equip	1,500 m
DOD Counter-narcotics support	100
Total	1,600 m
FY2007 Supplemental (H.R. 2206/P.L. 110-28)	
ESF	$653 million request/$737 in final law of which: 174 for PRTs; 314 for roads; 40 for power; 155 for rural development; 19 for agriculture; 25 for governance; and 10 for the "civilian assistance program"
P.L. 480 Title II Food Aid	30 million also provides $16 million in Migration and Refugee aid for displaced persons, and $16 million International Disaster and Famine Assistance
U.S. Embassy security	47.2 million requested/79 in final version
Security Forces train and equip	5.900 billion requested/5.9064 in final version (includes 3.2 billion for equipment and transportation; 624 million for ANP training; 415 for ANA training;
INCLE	no request/47 million in agreement; plus 60 million in DOD aid to counter-narcotics forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan; 12 million DEA
Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP)	206 (for Afghanistan)
FY2007 supp.	6.970 billion in final version
FY2007 Total	9. 674 billion (all programs)

Source: CRS.

Table 12. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2008

(Appropriated, In millions)

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

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

Table 13. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY2009

($ in millions)

Regular Request	
ESF	707 (includes 120 for alternative livelihoods, 248 for democracy and governance, 226 for econ. growth, 74 for PRT programs)
Child Survival and Health	52 (Plus 57 more of ESF for health and education)
International Counter-Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INCLE)	250
International Military Education and Training (IMET)	1.4
Other non-military accounts	44 (incl. 12 m. in non-emergency food aid)
Embassy security and maintenance	41.3 appropriated in H.R. 2642
Afghan National Security Forces Funding (DOD funds)	2,000 (provided in H.R. 2642, FY2009 bridge)
Total Regular Request	**$3.054 billion**
Supplemental Request/H.R. 2642 (P.L. 110-252) FY2009 Supplemental	
ESF	749.9 (455 provided in H.R. 2642)
INCLE	175 (funded by H.R. 2642)
Total Supplemental Request	**924.9** **(730 funded)**
Other funds	$5 million for Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction
These figures do not include approximately $2.5 billion in DoD funds being used to improve facilities in Qandahar and elsewhere that will handle the large numbers of U.S. troops expected to arrive in Afghanistan in 2009.	

Source: CRS.

Table 14. USAID Obligations FY2002-FY2008

($ millions)

Sector	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY2007 (reg. + supp)	FY 2008 (reg + supp)	FY2002-FY2008
Agriculture	27	56	50	77	27	67	31	335
Alternative Livelihoods	3	1	5	185	121	229	121	665
Roads	51	142	354	276	250	365	398	1836
Power	3		77	286	66	195	203	830
Water	2	1	27	21	1	2	1	54
Econ. Growth	21	12	84	91	46	69	61	383
Education	19	21	104	86	51	63	53	397
Health	8	56	83	111	52	113	66	489
Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund	38	40	67	87	45	46	45	368
Support to Afghan Gov't	3		36	31	15	15	17	117
Democracy	22	34	132	88	17	134	17	444
Rule of Law	4	8	21	15	6	10	4	68
PRT Programs		11	56	85	20	126	30	328
Program Suppt	5	6	17	16	4	35	15	98
Internally Displaced Persons	108	23	10			-		141
Food Aid	159	51	49	57	60	-	10	386
Civilian Assistance						10		10
Totals	471	462	1171	1510	779	1478	1108	6979

Source: CRS.

Table 15. NATO/ISAF Contributing Nations

(As of December 1, 2008, press reports http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/isaf_placemat.pdf)

NATO Countries		Non-NATO Partner Nations	
Belgium	400	Albania	140
Bulgaria	460	Austria	1
Canada	2750	Australia	1090
Czech Republic	415	Azerbaijan	45
Denmark	700	Croatia	300
Estonia	130	Finland	80
France	2785	Georgia	1
Germany	3600	Ireland	7
Greece	130	Macedonia	135
Hungary	240	New Zealand	150
Iceland	8	Sweden	400
Italy	2350	Ukraine	10
Latvia	70		
Lithuania	200		
Luxemburg	9	Total ISAF force (approx.) 51,350	
Netherlands	1770	(NATO factsheet also lists contributors Jordan, UA, and Singapore but with "0" forces at this time. Diplomats from Singapore maintain that there are military units of 20 persons each in Bamiyan and Uruzgan provinces under ISAF command.)	
Norway	455		
Poland	1130		
Portugal	70		
Romania	740		
Slovakia	180		
Slovenia	70		
Spain	780		
Turkey	860		
United Kingdom	8745		
United States	19,950		

Source: CRS.

Table 16. Provincial Reconstruction Teams

(RC=Regional Command)

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

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). Jalaludin and Siraj Haqqani allied with Taliban and Al Qaeda. Umar, born in Tarin Kowt, Uruzgan province, is about 65 years old.	ultra-orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Insurgent groups, mostly in the south and east, and in Pakistan
Islamic Society (leader of "Northern Alliance")	Burhannudin Rabbani/ Yunus Qanooni (speaker of lower house)/Muhammad Fahim/Dr. Abdullah Abdullah (Foreign Minister 2001-2006). Ismail Khan, a so-called "warlord," heads faction of the grouping in Herat area. Khan, now Minister of Energy and Water, visited United States in March 2008 to sign USAID grant for energy projects.	moderate Islamic, mostly Tajik	Much of northern and western Afghanistan, including Kabul
National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan	Abdul Rashid Dostam. Best known for March 1992 break with Najibullah that precipitated his overthrow. Subsequently fought Rabbani government (1992-1995), but later joined Northern Alliance. Commanded about 25,000 troops, armor, combat aircraft, and some Scud missiles, but was unable to hold off Taliban forces that captured his region by August 1998. During OEF, impressed U.S. commanders with horse-mounted assaults on Taliban positions at Shulgara Dam, south of Mazar-e-Sharif, leading to the fall of that city and the Taliban's subsequent collapse. About 2,000 Taliban prisoners taken by his forces were held in shipping containers, died of suffocation, and were buried in mass grave. Grave excavated in mid-2008, possibly an effort by Dostam to destroy evidence of the incident. Was Karzai rival in October 2004 presidential election, then his top "security adviser" but now in exile in Turkey.	secular, Uzbek	Mazar-e-Sharif, Shebergan, and environs
Hizb-e-Wahdat	Composed of Shiite Hazara tribes from central Afghanistan. Karim Khalili is Vice President, but Mohammad Mohaqiq is Karzai rival in 2004 presidential election and parliament. Generally pro-Iranian. Was part of Rabbani 1992-1996 government, and fought unsuccessfully with Taliban over Bamiyan city. Still revered by Hazara Shiites is the former leader of the group, Abdul Ali Mazari, who was captured and killed by the Taliban in March 1995.	Shiite, Hazara tribes	Bamiyan province
Pashtun Leaders	Various regional governors and local leaders in the east and south; central government led by Hamid Karzai.	Moderate Islamic, Pashtun	Dominant in southern, eastern Afghanistan
Hizb-e-Islam Gulbuddin (HIG)	*Mujahedin* party leader Gulbuddin Hikmatyar. Was part of Soviet-era U.S.-backed "Afghan Interim Government" based in Peshawar, Pakistan. Was nominal "Prime Minister" in 1992-1996 mujahedin government but never actually took office. Lost power base around Jalalabad to the Taliban in 1994, and fled to Iran before being expelled in 2002. Still allied with Taliban and Al Qaeda in operations east of Kabul, but may be open to ending militant activity. Leader of a rival Hizb-e-Islam faction, Yunus Khalis, the mentor of Mullah Umar, died July 2006.	orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Small groups around Jalalabad, Nuristan, and Kunar provinces
Islamic Union	Abd-I-Rab Rasul Sayyaf. Islamic conservative, leads a pro-Karzai faction in parliament. Lived many years in and politically close to Saudi Arabia, which shares his "Wahhabi" ideology. During anti-Soviet war, Sayyaf's faction, with Hikmatyar, was a principal recipient of U.S. weaponry. Criticized the U.S.-led war against	orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Paghman (west of Kabul)

Party/ Leader	Leader	Ideology/ Ethnicity	Regional Base
	Saddam Hussein after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.		

Source: CRS.

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.

- 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 was denied GSP on May 2, 1980, under Executive Order 12204 (45 F.R. 20740). This was done under the authority of Section 504 of the Trade Act of 1974 [19 U.S.C. § 2464].
- 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 country 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 President to deny any U.S. credits or most-favored-nation (MFN) tariff 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 receiving exports or licenses for exports of 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.)

- 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 its national airline (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); directing a reduction of Taliban diplomatic representation abroad; and banning 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.
- P.L. 108-458 (December 17, 2004, referencing the 9/11 Commission recommendations) repeals bans on aid to Afghanistan outright, completing a pre-Taliban effort by President George H.W. Bush to restore aid and credits to Afghanistan. On October 7, 1992, he 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.)

Figure A-1. Map of Afghanistan

Source: Map Resources. Adapted by CRS.

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