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**TRANSITION IN AFGHANISTAN:
VIEWS OF OUTSIDE EXPERTS**

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

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ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

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[There were no Questions submitted during the hearing.]

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TRANSITION IN AFGHANISTAN: VIEWS OF OUTSIDE EXPERTS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, February 27, 2013.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (chairman of the committee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" MCKEON, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA, CHAIRMAN, COM- MITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. The House Armed Services Committee meets today to receive testimony on the Transition in Afghanistan. Today we have with us Dr. Catherine Dale, General (Retired) Jack Keane, Lieutenant General (Retired) David Barno, and Mr. Anthony Cordesman. Thank you all for joining us here today and sharing your expertise.

A discussion on our transition from Afghanistan should start with the reminder of why the United States went there in the first place. The most lethal and complex terrorist attack in U.S. history was plotted and perpetrated by Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. But after over 10 years of war the American people are understandably war-weary. The United States has committed a wealth of resources in the form of both blood and treasure to preserve a U.S. vital national security interest and prevent Afghanistan from being used again as a safe haven for terrorists.

The question before us is whether or not we can continue to prevent Afghanistan from being used as such a sanctuary. The NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] mission officially ends December 31st, 2014. Although we have not finalized the transition to Afghan security lead, President Obama already has announced withdrawal of half of the U.S. forces in Afghanistan, approximately 34,000 troops, by this time next year. In the near future the President likely will order additional troop withdrawals and determine the United States post-2014 mission set and military posture in Afghanistan.

In my view the President is not adequately evaluating the risk associated with rapid and large-scale troop withdrawals in terms of both local and regional consequences, as well as U.S. vital interests. The President has decided to conduct the significant withdrawal of U.S. troops during the same time period that the Afghan security forces will be in the lead across the entire country for the first time. Moreover, the Administration does not have a discern-

ible plan to reinforce the Afghan security forces if they cannot hold the gains and/or maintain the necessary security across the country. Consequently the President's approach is fraught with risk and lacks a comprehensive strategy to ensure the security and sovereignty of Afghanistan, and thereby U.S. interests over time.

Rather, the President's approach to Afghanistan appears to be "withdraw and hope." I am not advocating for a never ending combat mission in Afghanistan, but the President should make decisions on troop withdrawals within the context of the security conditions on the ground, the capability and capacity of the ANSF [Afghan National Security Forces] and the required mission sets after December 31st, 2014. We owe nothing less to the victims on 9/11, the U.S. troops and their families who have served and sacrificed, and our sons and daughters who will have to return if we get this wrong. The simple justice that comes from that principled position cannot be overstated.

I look forward to your testimony and insights into the transition and way forward for U.S. policy in Afghanistan.

Mr. Smith.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McKeon can be found in the Appendix on page 35.]

STATEMENT OF HON. ADAM SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM WASHINGTON, RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for holding this hearing and bringing together such a distinguished panel of experts on this very important topic, and I also agree that the mission in Afghanistan is very straightforward and clear. We were attacked by Al Qaeda and their organization which was based out of Afghanistan. We want to make sure that such an attack cannot emanate from that region ever again. We want to degrade Al Qaeda as much as possible and weaken their ability and the ability of any groups allied with them, and I think we have made considerable progress in that goal. I think the most notable example of that of course is getting Osama bin Laden but it is much, much deeper than that. The central structure of Al Qaeda has been largely smashed in Afghanistan and in neighboring Pakistan and their ability to plot and plan attacks against us has been significantly weakened. It has certainly not gone and we shouldn't elude ourselves about that, but progress has been made in that regard. We have also made progress in terms of the number of troops and security forces that we have trained in the ANSF, and we are moving in the right direction on that but should have no illusions. This is a very, very difficult part of the world. In both Afghanistan and Pakistan they have an endless series of problems with governance, corruption, education. It is not a stable place, and some of the most violent and dangerous ideologies that we face are present there. We are always going to have to pay attention to this region for our national security interests, but the question at this point is, is an unending U.S. military presence going to significantly change those challenges? I don't believe that it is. I believe that we have gotten pretty close to the point where we have done militarily what we can do in that region and it is time for the Afghan National Secu-

rity Force and the Afghan people to take responsibility for their own security and their own governance. And the only way to do that is to transition over to them taking the lead. Now that process has begun. In a number of different provinces the ANSF has taken the lead on security and we are moving in that direction.

Again I want to emphasize that I don't have any illusions here. I think perhaps the largest struggle there in Afghanistan is the governance piece: What happens in 2014 when President Karzai can no longer be president, when there is a new election—who we transition to in Afghanistan. How do we deal with the corruption issues and the lack of economic opportunity. Those challenges will always be present but having 100,000 U.S. troops in the region isn't going to change that past a certain point. I think we have reached that point. I think the challenge for the Commander in Chief and the challenge for this committee and our experts is to figure out the best way to implement that path going forward is.

I think the President has laid out a pretty reasonable strategy for doing that. Again, no guarantees, but it is the most logical thing to do at this point to transition over to the Afghan National Security Force, to reduce our presence in the region and move out and turn over responsibility to the folks who ultimately are going to have to be responsible for it. It is a simple fact that past a certain point a large foreign military force is in and of itself destabilizing. It does not build confidence in the Afghan, in any country's government, and any people would be concerned about having a large number of foreign military forces on their land. It is time to make that transition.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about what the best way to do that, the difficult decisions that we face in making that decision, but I believe it is time to move in that direction. I look forward to the testimony and to the questions from the panel.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith can be found in the Appendix on page 37.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Again I appreciate all of you being here today. We will proceed with Dr. Dale and then move to your left down the table.

STATEMENT OF DR. CATHERINE DALE, SPECIALIST IN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

Dr. DALE. Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify about transition in Afghanistan. As both a CRS [Congressional Research Service] analyst and as a practitioner I have had the privilege of spending considerable time on the ground throughout Afghanistan with our troops and our civilians. They are great American heroes.

This is a critical time of transition in every sense from President Obama's recent announcement about troop drawdowns to the formal transition process, to Afghanistan's political transition in 2014, to broad shifts in international community engagement.

A time of transition is an opportunity to revisit and affirm or refine U.S. strategy. So to that end it might be helpful to consider four basic questions. First, is it working? The campaign on the

ground aims to reduce insurgent strength and build up the Afghan national security forces so that the ANSF can handle the residual threat, and it is working. The insurgencies are increasingly degraded, ANSF capabilities and confidence are growing, and our forces are successfully reorienting their efforts on advising and helping Afghans acquire and use their own organic enablers.

The key question is whether the logic of the campaign is basically sound. If it isn't going to work, how can it be worth another dollar or another life? Second, what more needs to be done? It is not over yet. Campaign gains on the ground in the south still need to be consolidated and key challenges remain in the east further degrading the Haqqani network, eliminating Al Qaeda incursions in upper Kunar and Nuristan provinces and securing the long border with Pakistan. Many Afghanistan commanders are saying this is our fight now, but they are still eager for more advising and enabling support and for making sure that their own institutional architecture can support them.

The choices we make now about the drawdown ramp and the enduring presence will have a major impact on those efforts. Too precipitous a drawdown could mean that Afghan forces attempt too little, ceding territory or striking bargains with the Taliban or that they attempt too much, failing catastrophically and destroying confidence in their ability to provide security.

The key question is what we would need to do over time to help ensure that Afghan forces can handle that residual threat, that is a troop to task, not a task to troop analysis. Then those conclusions can be weighed against costs, risks, and competing exigencies.

Third, is it sustainable? It is not all near term and it is not all about security. There are at least four arenas that could put the longer term sustainability of campaign gains and U.S. interests at risk. Pakistan, what would it take to make Afghanistan self-resilient enough to provide a bulwark against insurgent incursions from safe havens in Pakistan?

The ANSF, what ANSF end strength and force mix would be needed over the longer term to provide sufficient security and protect campaign gains and who is going to pay for it. The economy, what would it take to make Afghanistan's economy truly viable over the longer term to make the most of its natural resources and human capital. And governance, what basic architecture of governance would be required to protect campaign gains, to hold the ANSF accountable, to steward the nation's resources, to provide access to justice, to foster good faith with Afghanistan's neighbors, to encourage foreign investment and to earn the trust of the Afghan people.

The key question in all four arenas is what it would take to make campaign gains genuinely sustainable and what role we ourselves would need to play to make that happen. And then given the opportunity costs and realistic prospects for sustainability, is it worth it?

Fourth and finally, how does this end? The war is not going to end with a great clash on the battlefield or even with the accumulation of campaign gains on the ground; it is likely to end with a political settlement of some kind, one that establishes the fate of insurgent leaders and fighters, the disposition of political power,

the demobilization of some Afghan forces and modalities for societal reconciliation.

The question is how to achieve a lasting settlement that would best protect U.S. interests. Is it a near-term, high-level deal between a government that many Afghans consider rapacious and a Taliban leadership that many Afghans fear or is it a longer term process that brings to bear Afghanistan's greatest advantage: the 95 percent of the Afghan people eager for a stable future? The Afghan people are the ultimate arbiters of stability in Afghanistan. A clear shared vision and clarity about future commitment by the international community could help dispel Afghan's powerful tendency to hedge in the face of great future uncertainty.

One final word, this four-part framework cannot determine the best way forward, but it may suggest value if we go forward of guiding our steps with clear political strategy, a strategy based on U.S. national security interests in Afghanistan and the region, that aims at minimum essential conditions necessary to protect those interests, that lays out ways and means and rules and responsibilities over time and that very clearly assesses and weighs the associated risks.

Thank you for the opportunity, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Dale can be found in the Appendix on page 39.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
General Keane.

**STATEMENT OF GEN JOHN M. KEANE, USA (RET.), FORMER
VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, U.S. ARMY**

General KEANE. Chairman McKeon, Ranking Minority Smith, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on a critical subject as we transition U.S.-NATO operations in Afghanistan. I am honored to be here with such a distinguished panel who I have known for many years, and I do appreciate Dr. Dale's comments she just made on setting a framework for our discussion today.

Some of the committee members are aware that I have conducted several assessments for our military commanders in Afghanistan. Having completed my last assessment for Generals Mattis and Allen last year, those visits have been invaluable to understanding so-called ground truth by assessing the progress or lack thereof of our campaign plans, goals, and objectives.

And let me make an editorial comment, General Allen has turned over command in Afghanistan as we all know. I just want to make a comment for the record about what a superb commander General Allen has been, and he has been given one of the toughest tasks any general officer can be in having to prosecute our national interests in Afghanistan and he has just been a remarkable person and remarkable general officer.

Given the four panel members today who are all making statements, I am going to make my remarks brief and I have taken some license to change my prepared remarks as I received some additional information.

Afghanistan is rapidly moving toward its most critical milestone since 2001 when we deposed the Taliban. As 2014 approaches and Afghanistan participates in a political, economic and security transition Afghanistan's future is dependent on the transition success of 2014. While the economic and security transitions are driven largely by NATO force level reductions, the political transition with the national election is exclusively Afghan as it will impact the confidence of the Afghan people and the international community at large in the Afghan political process. A relatively fair and open election that reflects the people's choices and results in an improved national government will be a significant step forward in the political development of Afghanistan.

After almost 12 years of war in Afghanistan the central issue for me is how do we manage the risk, how do we avoid squandering the gains that we have made in Afghanistan. In the brief time available I will focus my remarks on that issue.

Yes, we have been in Afghanistan a long time, ironically driven mainly by the United States decision to go to war in Iraq. As such Afghanistan in 2002 quickly became a secondary effort, indeed an economy of force operation and from 2002 to 2009. When in 2009 the President of the United States made a decision to conduct counterinsurgency operations and to escalate the war by adding 30,000 surge forces, even this decision did not reflect what Generals McChrystal and Petraeus believed was the minimal force to succeed, 40,000 surge forces. Instead they received a force which was 25 percent smaller which dictated that the campaign in the south and the east be conducted sequentially versus simultaneously. Their campaign in the south was largely successful while the campaign in the east has not been completed, because the surge forces were withdrawn in my mind prematurely in 2012 over General Petraeus' objection.

Recently the President of the United States made the decision to remove 34,000 of the 66,000 forces remaining by February 2014, versus keeping the 66,000 till the end of 2014. These decisions must be understood because they all have impacted mission success by increasing the risk.

The most serious security situation lies in the east where we have never been able to conduct extensive clear-and-hold operations which led to much of our success in the south. As such there are Taliban and Haqqani support zones in the east, some not too far from Kabul. It is unrealistic to believe that the ANSF will succeed in eliminating these support zones permanently in the east, where NATO and ISAF [International Security Assistance Force] has failed to do so.

In the south what remains is to consolidate the gains that were made in achieving relative stability, which has led to improved security and also improved local governance. Can we mitigate the risk? Well, I am not certain. I know not to try will doom us to likely fail.

Three key decisions can begin to mitigate the risk and provide a hedge. First is the size and missions of the residual post-2014 force. There are three missions for the force: counterterrorism, training and assistance, and enablers to the ANSF. The counterterrorism mission to have the necessary reach to be effec-

tive given the challenges of the terrain in Afghanistan should operate from multiple locations, ideally coast Jalalabad and Kandahar, but certainly the commanders will make those decisions. These Special Operations Force units require, in addition to their own units, drone crews, analysts, helicopters with maintenance, medical trauma units and also security forces. If we consolidate the CT [counterterrorism] force to a single base, then we are not mitigating the risk; we are in fact increasing the risk by not having an effective CT force.

The training and assisted mission spreads across six Army corps with permanent presence in three corps that have the main effort and across police zones. This is primarily advisers to assist with the continued growth and development of the ANSF. We would also be advising the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior and of course the corps and where necessary the brigades. There would not be embedded in the brigades a permanent advisory force.

Finally, are the enablers for the ANSF. This is often misunderstood as to its importance. Just about every NATO country in Afghanistan requires enablers from the United States in varying degrees such as helicopters, intelligence, medical logistics, road and mine clearance. When the ANA [Afghan National Army], this is the army, was organized, recruited and trained the decision was to build an infantry force or a boots-on-the-ground force, the point of the spear in other words and not the shaft. The enablers would be provided by the United States and are similar to what the United States provides NATO forces. Eventually the ANA will have its own enablers but not until beyond 2014. If the ANA is to be offensive minded, they must have confidence in their support, otherwise they will be paralyzed and reduced to defending their bases. At a minimum we must accelerate providing those enablers to the ANSF now so that we would reduce the requirement for them later.

A summary of the forces required for 2014, residual force, are counterterrorism 7,000. This number includes all the support requirements to include security in addition to about the 2,000 CT SOF [Special Operations Forces] units. Training and assistance about 5,000, enablers to the ANSF about 8,000. This number can be reduced through acceleration of those forces now. That totals about 20,000, plus about 6,000 that would come from NATO. When the 2014 force level decision is made, I hope that we avoid announcing a drawdown ramp with that decision before we know what the impact of that decision is.

The second mitigation to reduce the risk is the force level for the ANSF. Let me just say I believe the growth and development of the ANSF has exceeded our expectations. They are an acceptable force, which has and enjoys the respect of its people. All that said, it is too early to tell how they will do on their own, but the preliminary indications are positive based on what has taken place in the south where they are operating on their own. Currently at 352,000, which is the size of that force now, one of the options is to draw down the ANSF post-2015 to a level of 228,000. This makes no sense given the NATO-U.S. drawdown which is under way and which culminates in 2014, while we obviously do not know yet what that impact will be.

We can mitigate the risk by planning to fund the ANSF at the current 352,000 to 2020 and at least until 2018. At some point the Afghans will be in a position to making contribution to this funding level themselves.

A third mitigation and my last one is to reduce the risk by authorizing the targeting of the Taliban and Haqqani leaders in the sanctuaries in Pakistan. Priority is the Haqqani sanctuary because of the unstable situation in the east. This will be an extension of the mission the OGA [other government agency] is conducting against the Al Qaeda in the FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas].

Once systematic targeting commences the sanctuary will cease to exist as we currently know it, a place where strategy, training, operational oversight, intelligence and logistics is executed routinely in safe haven. These functions will suffer significantly, which will positively impact operations in the east. Additionally it will be a huge morale boost for the ANSF.

Let me conclude by saying I believe there is far too much risk to a stable security situation in Afghanistan as we meet here today. This is driven mostly by past U.S. policy decisions. I recognize that many observers are looking to a political settlement as the most desirable outcome, and certainly it is that. But the harsh reality is the more risk there is to mission success the less likelihood of a settlement. If the Taliban and Haqqani believe they will gain an influence in 2014 and beyond, why settle? If future policy decisions on U.S. 2014 force size and ANSF force levels, the two remaining key decisions, do in fact increase the risk versus mitigate the risk, a favorable outcome is unlikely.

Ambassador Ryan Crocker, as you many of you know, is an extraordinary diplomat, the very best we have had in the region who said, "How we end the conflict and what we leave behind is more important than how we began it."

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Keane can be found in the Appendix on page 52.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

General Barno.

STATEMENT OF LTG DAVID W. BARNO, USA (RET.), SENIOR ADVISOR AND SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER FOR A NEW AMERICAN SECURITY

General BARNO. Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith, members of the committee, I would like to express my appreciation for being invited to appear before you today to address the coming U.S. and NATO transition in Afghanistan. I will try and be fairly brief.

As the war now enters its twelfth year Americans deserve a serious look at the plans now in place to responsibly conclude our involvement in this long and difficult conflict. My remarks on the topic today reflect my own personal views and are not those of the Center for New American Security or any other entity; they are my own.

Unlike our other panelists today I have had the privilege of commanding the Afghan theater of war. My service there spanned 19

months from October 2003 to May of 2005. That tenure was one of the longest among our 11 different military commanders that the U.S. has had in the Afghan war, and it certainly occurred at a less violent and broadly more optimistic time. But since 2005 I have also remained closely in touch with the progress of the war and traveled back several times to the theater, both Afghanistan and to Pakistan, to observe ongoing operations and speak with Afghans, Pakistanis, Americans and our NATO allies across the region. I have also written and spoken extensively on the course of the conflict during the last 8 years and appeared before this committee and in other congressional committees in excess of 10 times now.

On a more personal level both my sons are Army captains who have served a year or more in combat in Afghanistan. Scores of my uniformed and former colleagues' sons and daughters during our time growing up in the military, the former playmates of my children at military posts all across the country, have also served in Afghanistan. Some have been wounded, others killed, folks that we know well, family members from across the big military family out there. So my involvement in this very long fight is both personal and professional. I know as a parent what it is like to have a family member in the combat zone. I know that is true of members sitting in the committee today. This outlook is apparent, it is never far from my thinking as I try to reach logical conclusions about our ongoing efforts and try to think about the road ahead. So our decisions are set in this context broadly.

As we seek to achieve our long-term strategic objectives with that risk of keeping Americans at war in Afghanistan, we have to be thoughtful about what we have done and what can still be accomplished in this war. In my judgment the lives of future Americans serving in Afghanistan only deserve to be put at risk where vital U.S. interests are at play, and that the risk of those lives is demanded by defending those vital interests. I know that that is a calculus that this committee takes very seriously.

So in examining our efforts looking to 2014 and beyond, it is worth returning briefly to first principles, what are our vital interests in this region, now and after 2014. What are the absolute essentials and what is the minimum essential military force we need to be able to defend those.

I would characterize perhaps three. The first that we all recognize is preventing the region's uses of base for terror attacks on the United States and our allies. That is why we are in Afghanistan, the 9/11 attacks, which we all vividly remember are something that can never happen again.

Second, I think we have a regional vital interest to prevent nuclear weapons or nuclear materials from falling into the hands of terrorists or other hostile actors. That of course is outside of Afghanistan but very much in the neighborhood.

And then third, I think we also have a vital interest in regionally preventing a nuclear war between India and Pakistan. So I would argue that defending those vital interests in the coming years ought to be the focus of our efforts, that we should not be overly fixated on our current commitments, what we have done for the last decade, but think about how do we use this upcoming transition to make sure we are postured to defend those three vital inter-

ests in the years ahead. Those are I think of overriding importance to the United States.

How do we go about doing that? I think that we clearly need a U.S. base in this region from which to exert influence on all the regional actors, to keep relentless pressure on terrorist groups targeting the United States and our allies, and to support our friends across the region. So I think again, as Keane pointed out, there is a two-fold mission here, enduring mission for American forces, one counterterrorism and secondly support for Afghan security forces, training, advising and assisting them. But whatever we do has to be sustainable as well as being able to protect those interests. We are in a fiscally austere environment today, we can use a rough order of magnitude of math that it is a million dollars per American soldier per year in Afghanistan. Looking ahead and as those numbers come down that number might go up because some of the economies start to dissipate. So I think we have got to keep that in mind as we protect these vital interests.

In my judgment we can accomplish those two missions, the CT mission and the support mission, in Afghanistan with somewhere in the neighborhood of 8–12,000 forces, U.S. and NATO combined. I would also agree that we need to sustain the size of the Afghan military and police, the security forces, at their current levels of 352,000 for another 5 years. We do not need to be drawing those forces down at the very time that American forces are drawing down. I think the dollars that we would save there are better invested in maintaining robust Afghan security forces.

And then finally I would argue most importantly for the Afghans we need to continue our financial support for their military. That in many ways I think is even more important than maintaining large numbers of American forces in Afghanistan attempting to help them be successful. I think after 8, 9, 10 years of effort of training Afghans, equipping Afghans and supporting Afghans in the field at the cost of somewhere in the neighborhood of \$50 plus billion, the 352,000 Afghan security forces have every ability to defend against about 30,000 Taliban who don't have an air force, who don't have a large training establishment, who don't have modern equipment. I think that ratio is well within the Afghan's capabilities.

So I would just close by thanking you again for the opportunity to present my views on this very long, very difficult, very intractable conflict as we consider the road ahead. I think I will agree with almost all of our panelists today that this coming transition is a tipping point for our long-standing efforts in Afghanistan. Making the right choices at this juncture can help us secure the gains paid for by Americans and our allies and so much blood and so much of our treasure over the last decade.

Securing our long-term vital interest is achievable as we end our combat presence, but I think it can be done with a limited U.S. and NATO footprint, paired with sustained international financial support for the Afghan forces. I think the limited troop deployments and outlays are required as a prudent investment to help assure stability in a very dangerous part of the world.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of General Barno can be found in the Appendix on page 64.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
Mr. Cordesman.

**STATEMENT OF ANTHONY H. CORDESMAN, ARLEIGH A. BURKE
CHAIR IN STRATEGY, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTER-
NATIONAL STUDIES**

Mr. CORDESMAN. Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the committee, I have a few minutes in which to deal with what is an extremely complex and controversial set of issues that are shaping whether the ANSF, the Afghan forces, can actually support an effective transition. I have provided a detailed analysis that really explains what I am about to say in depth and I have relied largely on official statistics for most of it as well as my own visits to Afghanistan and experience, and I would request that that be put into the record.

But let me quickly focus on what I think the key issues are here. Dr. Dale touched on part of this. You can't have an effective Afghan force mix unless you have effective Afghan leadership and leadership that focuses on actually using those forces, allocating them, and supporting them effectively. It is highly questionable whether we have that in President Karzai and those around him. It is even more questionable who will replace him and whether there will be enough unity in Afghanistan as transition proceeds to actually have effective leadership of Afghan forces.

Money has historically been a critical metric in supporting any forces, whether they are Vietnam, Iraq or Afghanistan. The fact is that we have gone from figures that once were over \$9 billion a year to \$6.7 billion a year, to \$4.1 billion a year and no one has provided any clear plan or justification for this funding or cost. I can't tell you whether the numbers are high or low, but the numbers emerge after we set the force goals, and it is rather striking that we seem to be moving toward less and less as we are attempting to build up to more and more.

I have to say that any focus on total manning is to me largely meaningless, 352,000 going down to 328,000 at some unstated time in the future. What force elements are involved? What capabilities do they actually have? How are they actually performing in the field? And I would say this number is particularly meaningless when what you have in terms of actual combat capability is a strengthening Afghan National Army, a very uncertain plan for the Afghan Air Force, and one effective element of the Afghan police which is called the ANCOP, or Afghan National Civil Order Police. That makes up 49 percent of the force. The other 51 percent, according to both the most recent report from the Department of Defense and from the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction is a largely corrupt and often incapable mix of the Afghan Uniform Police and Afghan Border Police. These lack the support of effective governance and the other elements of the justice system in much of the field, particularly in high risk areas. They are subject to local power broker influence today and in the case of Iraq the type of force essentially dissolved as an effective national force when we left and did so within about 3 months. National polls do

not show these forces are as popular as the other forces and do show they are intensely corrupt. And that means a focus on building forces should be a focus on the forces that work, not manpower goals.

We also see in the most recent reporting, particularly of the Department of Defense, we have not provided even today adequate numbers of trainers and partners for much of the ANA and we have drastic shortfalls in the numbers of those partners for the Afghan police. All of that is laid out in the report, the semiannual report of the Department of Defense.

For all the reasons General Keane laid out, we need a clear plan for how we are going to provide air power, enablers, trainers and partners over time. And we need conditions-based efforts, not some fixed number. At this point in time we have no such plan, and we are now less than 2 years from transition.

There is another more public focus on what are called capability milestones and commander unit assessment tool scoring systems. We say that forces are in the lead, for reasons laid out in the latest Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction as well as in reporting by the Department of Defense. We have never been able to stabilize what we mean in this ranking system for even 3 months, much of the force is not covered, particularly the police force, in the ranking system. The Department of Defense has stated the whole system will be replaced by an Afghan system in the course of the next year and no one knows what "in the lead" means in terms of practical performance in the field.

The fact is if you want a meaningful system, you have to describe forces by key element of the order of battle in terms of what they do in the field. And the problem is not simply the threat, it is how stable the overall capability is in terms of do they have support from local power brokers, are they getting support from the government, are they properly funded? All of this requires to us have the kind of active support presence General Keane has outlined. But to measure what they can and cannot do, you need meaningful, unclassified metrics of what is actually happening in the field. We now show units in the lead without saying where, doing what, or what their impact is. We have largely meaningless statistical reporting on enemy initiated attacks, a terrible measure even if the data were accurate, for counterinsurgency, and there is no progress by that metric since 2009. If we go back to the Iraq war the dominant metric was SIGACTs, significant acts per month. That showed a massive improvement over time. If you look at the Department of Defense reporting there is zero improvement over time by that metric. We don't see an improvement in overall IED [improvised explosive device] attacks versus bombs actually exploded. And the U.N. [United Nations] has reported a 700 percent increase in the attacks on Afghan officials in the course of the last 12 months. The latest DOD [Department of Defense] report if you look at the annex shows that a major insurgent presence still continues in Kandahar and Helmand, the reporting on drugs show a very significant increase in drug cultivation in Helmand. That is in other parts of the areas we did not occupy and the Taliban influence is not addressed. We basically have dropped from all of our reporting progress in the 81 critical districts and more than 40 districts of interest, which

were the focus of our strategy until mid-2011. And with that we have removed every public indication of progress in governance, in aid by district and in the rule of law by district.

So let me just say if we are going to make this work we need patience, we need to be there long after 2014, but above all what we really need are honest assessment, honest metrics, and honest plans to focus on each element of the Afghan forces separately and show two things: what can they really do relative to the insurgents over time, and second, how do they relate to the problems within the Afghan government and within Afghan power brokers?

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Cordesman can be found in the Appendix on page 73.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. The written statements of each of you will be included in the record. Without objection, so ordered.

General Keane, there was a report in the *Washington Post* that the White House is seriously considering a plan from the Pentagon in which the U.S. would retain a residual force of 8,000 troops after the NATO mission ends in December 2014 and then reduce the number of troops to between 3,500 and 6,000 by 2016. Additionally, the option of further reducing the U.S. troop presence to 1,000 troops by 2017 is under serious consideration.

What are the reasonable sets of missions that the U.S. military would be able to conduct with 8,000, 6,000, 3,000 and 1,000 troops? Is there any threshold of troops in which the risk to the U.S. forces outweighs the value of having them deployed in Afghanistan?

General KEANE. Well, that is a great question, Mr. Chairman. The fact of the matter is trying to put together a drawdown plan, as you suggest, if that is in fact the case, before we know what the impact of our current drawdown is, I think is foolish. Clearly conditions on the ground have to drive our policy decisions. I understand the urgency and I think the attitude of the American people of being tired of this war, but in the same respect it takes leadership to deal with the issue. War is fundamentally a test of wills and the amount of will that you have to see, to persevere the setbacks and disappointments is absolutely critical. In my judgment if we bring force levels down below 10,000, it seems awfully difficult for me how you will structure a counterterrorism force that is going to have the kind of effect we want it to have, which would be a hedge against the reduction of our forces, the training assistant mission will suffer and so will the enablers. Now there are some things I mentioned in my remarks. If we can accelerate the helicopters, the C-130s [Hercules strategic airlifters], the MEDEVAC [medical evacuation] capability and some of the other support infrastructure to the ANSF and put it on fast forward, we can reduce some of those numbers. But to get down below—to get to the numbers that you suggest and then draw down to 6,000 to 3,000 and 1,000 over the next few years I think dooms us to failure. I mean it is a complete disregard of what the reality on the ground is. And if that is actually the plan, if that is what we would come out with, I don't know how we justify keeping troops there, given the fact that we have given them a mission that they cannot succeed at.

The CHAIRMAN. The *Washington Post* article goes on to say that Special Operations troops would not be based in Afghanistan after 2016, but would swoop in from ships or bases in nearby nations. If this report is true is it possible to effectively conduct counterterrorism missions without a base in Afghanistan in your view? And what would be the specific challenges associated with conducting effective counterterrorism operations in this circumstance?

General Keane.

General KEANE. I thought that was Dave, I am sorry. I am used to your pattern of moving down the table.

I think believing that we can conduct over the horizon operations in that region is actually irresponsible. We have a major operation taking place, we don't discuss it very much but we all know it exists conducted by the OGA against Al Qaeda's central leadership in the FATA. That would not be able to go on if we do not maintain some kind of security presence in Afghanistan. Those operations are conducted from secure bases in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a landlocked country. It would be impossible to conduct those operations in my view from outside of those distances which would be greater than 600 miles. I mean you just can't get there, refueling helicopters, et cetera, the other support mechanisms that we need, refueling drones, it is impossible to conduct that mission with any effectiveness.

So I think it is absolutely irresponsible to think we can do that. General Barno is absolutely right. Regardless of how we size this force and we are going to argue over ANSF force levels as well, the United States in terms of its vital interest in the region has to maintain a base in Afghanistan to support our vital interests in that region and not the least of which is the relentless and dogged pursuit of the Al Qaeda central leadership which is currently resident in Pakistan.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just two areas of questioning. One, governance is a key piece here, I mentioned in my opening remarks the transition coming in 2014. So I am curious how you see that playing out and what the challenges are in finding the next president of Afghanistan whether or not we can find a reliable partner.

The other question I have and I don't think too many people are seriously saying that we shouldn't have a base in Afghanistan. Certainly we are going to need to continue operations there, but I think the comparison I will make and the thing that I find puzzling is we also have a major national security challenge in the Horn of Africa between Somalia and Yemen, and certainly the challenges are different I will grant you that. No two situations are exactly the same. But certainly they are pretty significant in Somalia and Yemen and neither one of those governments are exactly models of democracy or even functioning government, Al Qaeda is very present, certainly in Yemen, arguably in Somalia. We can't just walk away from that either, we have to have a presence, we have to meet our national security interest just like in Afghanistan. And yet in that area the exact number as I understand it is classified,

in that area the number of U.S. troops present is less than four digits and that is what we are managing. So when we talk about Afghanistan we talk about oh, my goodness, we are going to be below 68,000 or we are going to be below 34,000, I think we are missing something in terms of how we should apply our national security strategy here. There is unquestionably a national security interest in that region that will last frankly for as long as I can envision. Maybe 10 years from now something is dramatically different. I would bet against it but it is at least possible. We will always for some long period of time have an interest in making sure we can contain that threat. But I think we just aren't doing our jobs from a national security standpoint if we can't figure out a way to maintain that threat with less of tens thousands of troops and tens of billions of dollars a year. That I think is our charge. It is a huge challenge, I grant you, but again it is not like we don't have that challenge in other places. So why is it we are hearing dire predictions about going down to 34,000 and yet again in this other place where we have a similar challenge we are able to do it for less than a thousand? Again granting that there are differences, but we ought to be able to get to that place over a reasonable time frame, because our mission is not to build and perfect government in Afghanistan, it is not to fix that country or nation-build, it is to protect our national security interests, as the chairman described and I think most of you have described. So why can't we get there in a more affordable path?

General Barno, I will give you the first crack at that.

General BARNO. Thanks very much. I think first comment on your opening note on the political transition in 2014. We are looking at a military transition, we will spend most of our time on that today. This political transition may be the most important transition in Afghanistan in the next 5 years.

Mr. SMITH. I believe that it is.

General BARNO. I was there for the first election in 2004, I watched from Washington the disastrous 2009 election which was in some ways not even a legitimate outcome. We can't replicate that again, so we have got to take a much more active role behind the scenes to ensure there is for Afghan standards a reasonably fair and free election, because if that doesn't work we have got much bigger problems.

You second question on the size of the force, I think one of the fundamental questions that we are dancing around a bit today and we will for the next couple of years is to what degree is the United States going to continue to fight the Taliban versus fighting Al Qaeda after 2014. I think the shape of the transition right now would suggest that our new approach in a sense, and I wrote down what is our theory of victory over the Taliban here. Our new approach essentially is to empower the Afghan forces to take on that role, to backstop them but to give that to them as a principal responsibility and thereby lessen U.S. outlays and resources and troops. Pretty sensible, especially after 11 years and a tremendous investment in preparing that.

I would agree with General Keane we do need to accelerate the Afghan enablers, their helicopters, their attack helicopters, their C-130 airlifts because they need to be relying on their own re-

sources not on American resources. So I think that would be a very smart move in addition to maintaining substantial forces for them, but I do agree that we can drive our forces down to a significantly lower level. I don't necessarily think the 1,000 Americans or 8,000 is the right answer but I think in the 10,000 plus or minus range is viable.

Mr. SMITH. Okay. Mr. Cordesman, do you want to take a stab?

Mr. CORDESMAN. Yes. I think first we need to be much franker about the prospects of what will happen with this election. The Afghans themselves talk about having some kind of *loya jirga* [grand council] so the key factions will actually have some degree of national unity as we depart.

The election by itself, honest as it may be, is very unlikely to produce a leader that will really be able to deal with this on his own, because none of us can name that leader, and the people we can name have not shown that they are easily able to deal with this. But the caution I would give you is when you are dealing with the Taliban and the insurgents, it isn't governance in Kabulstan that counts, it is governance in the areas where the threat is present or where there are ethnic and sectarian factions that may split out.

Now for all the talk of our training of new civil servants, when we went into Kandahar and Helmand we had to waive the qualifications to staff it, and we still have serious problems.

I think we need to have a much franker picture of what is going to happen and stop focusing simply on the legitimacy of the election.

But let me go on to your point about troop levels. Like it or not, we shape this force in many ways to our standard, by our rules. We have rushed it forward progressively at almost 6-month intervals, forcing NTM-A [NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan] and others to change their mission. It isn't going to be ready at the end of 2014. It is going to need, not simply enablers and trainers and partners, we are short about 20 percent of those already for the ANA, for the ANP [Afghan National Police] it is more like 35 percent. We are not going into this with a stable basis for meeting our requirements. And we are really rushing the Afghans into a training role for which they are not qualified.

Mr. SMITH. Well let me ask you this: Would it be ready in 2020?

Mr. CORDESMAN. The answer I think is, is it credible that we could do this with the ANA and the ANCOP and the Afghan National Air Force by 2017? If we put the effort into it, yes. Can I give you say more than a 60-percent assurance? Even that requires a level of prophecy I don't have.

Mr. SMITH. I apologize, I have to run to something so I will have to close by saying I think that is the point. The challenges you all describe present there in 2 years, in 3 years, in 5 years, in 10 years, in 15 years there is a limitation on the capability of people in Afghanistan and us spending a lot more money and risking a lot more lives butting our heads up against that just is not the prudent policy. I think we need to begin the transition as best as we can.

I thank you for your answers, I will be right back for the rest of your testimony as well. Thank you.

Mr. THORNBERRY. [Presiding.] I will yield to myself for 5 minutes. General Barno, let's talk about political transition for just a second. This week or last week President Karzai ordered, supposedly, Special Operations to be removed from one province. It seems to me if there is a time deadline, then whether you are the president of the country or you are the local tribal leader you are going to start hedging your bets because you know that the U.S. presence is not going to be there in the future, these other guys will be, and so you start partly playing to the crowd and partly kind of hedging because you know they are going to continue to be there.

Is that not a challenge for political transition that is caused by having time deadlines rather than condition-based changes?

General BARNO. I am not sure how that plays out at the local level from the sense of the 2014 political transition. But what I do think is critical, and I think we have sent some mixed messages on this that we need to unify and send a single message, which is that the United States is not leaving after 2014, and NATO is not leaving after 2014. We are drawing down our forces, we are going to have a different mission set, we are going to have a different footprint around the country. Every district in Afghanistan that had American troops in 2009 will not have American troops in 2014. I think the Afghans actually are rather happy to have that outcome, not afraid of it. But I also think that there is a muddled message out there about whether the United States actually is exiting stage right completely in 2014. And that would very much play to the concern that you are expressing about hedging our bets, sitting on the fence, starting to look for other players to hedge to.

So I think we have got to be relentless with our message in the international community and here in the United States that we are not abandoning Afghanistan, we are going to sustain this commitment. And we have to build it in a way that is credible to them as they look at how big it is and how much it costs, too, as well as to our own people. I think that is the best way to approach that.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Okay. General Keane, General Barno brought up this point about to what extent we target the Taliban. You mentioned targeting Taliban and Haqqani in Pakistan. Talk to us a little bit about how you see that playing out. In the future, if we are going to have a limited number of people and a counterterrorism mission, whatever the number is, are we going to have to just limit our operations to people who are card carrying Al Qaeda? The lines between these groups seems to me to be a little blurry. As we look at this counterterrorism mission, which everybody agrees is the key thing that we want to focus on going forward, how do we distinguish the targets, if you will, or the enemy in carrying out that counterterrorism mission to prevent Afghanistan from being a base for operations again?

General KEANE. Yes, well, certainly the two major sanctuaries in Pakistan where the Afghan Taliban are in residence, down in Quetta and also to the east where the Haqqani is, have protracted the war. I mean you got to think of these in your own minds as military bases where primary functions take place, command and control, intelligence. These are military bases where the Pakistani military comes in and helps to train, Pakistani military comes in

and helps to train Afghan Taliban to prosecute war against us. These are bases where the ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence] provides intelligence on operations to prosecute war against U.S. forces and Afghan National Security Forces. This is what we are really talking about. And we have permitted these sanctuaries to exist. By definition, we are in Afghanistan longer because of those policy decisions. And our unwillingness to come to grips with this issue with the Pakistanis because of the so-called “complicated relationship,” I think that relationship should have changed to a conditions-based relationship a number of years ago. For the life of me, if we are going to continue to accept the risks that we are taking with force levels in Afghanistan that we are currently taking, and that I believe we will take over decisions made in the next year or so, one of the major mitigations to be able to absorb that level of risk will be to go after those sanctuaries. It would be a jolt in the arm for the ANSF to be sure. We do not have to go in there and fight these people. We have to go in there and conduct drone operations so we disrupt their activities. Right now they are holistically performing these functions similar to what we do on military bases. Once they receive systematic attacks, those functions are disrupted, they are decentralized, the whole fabric of what they are trying to achieve is impacted rather dramatically. And that is a major way to reduce the risk that we currently have and that we will have in the future. Those operations would be largely and exclusively conducted by OGA. That would be an expansion of the current mission we have against the Al Qaeda. And I am assuming that would take a finding by the President of the United States to be able to do that mission and order the OGA to do it.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Ms. Sanchez.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, all of you, for being before us today. Oh, gosh. Mr. Cordesman, I think it was you who said we have to look at this from honest assessments, honest metrics, and honest plans for the future when we look at this issue of Afghanistan. And obviously, we have been at this for over 11 years. I do agree with my colleague, Mr. Smith, that we have to look at this from a U.S. national security perspective, and not from a perspective of building Afghanistan, if you will. So, my question goes to all the information that I get back from our men and women working mostly in the military on the ground there in Afghanistan, but also some of our NGO [non-governmental organization] people and some of the Europeans trying to help in there. And this goes to the whole issue that we have sort of set our ability to leave Afghanistan and triumph, if you will, in Afghanistan with respect to the police and the Army that we have there in Afghanistan, their own security forces. You know, when I hear from people that everything at every level is corrupt—I have publicly said this, I think Karzai is one of the most corrupt people I have seen. His own members of his parliament said that to me once when I was out there. But what about, you know, when we look at this army, you know, I have people telling me that people who sign up for the army, these 300,000-some people that we have out in Afghanistan sign up at 63 years of age, don’t show up. I am told about all these ghost soldiers that we have on payroll. I am told about, you know, we are buying land in Afghanistan to set up police stations. We

don't even buy land from people as a Federal Government here in the United States to make police stations. And how, you know, one day it is clear, we decide, yes, this is what we are going to buy, and when we come back now there are squatters there, now we have to pay \$10,000 to squatters who were not there before but are there today. I mean all the corruption that happens at every level.

So my question to you is do you really think we are going to have a police force at the local level and a national army at the federal or united level there in Afghanistan that is really going to be able to move this country forward and take care of its citizens given the corruption at each and every level that is going on there?

Mr. CORDESMAN. I think we need to be very careful. The Afghan National Army has, I think, established by Afghan standards a reasonable level of integrity. It is never going to be by our standards a perfect force. Whatever happens in Afghanistan will have corruption by Afghan standards. But I think it would be dangerous to not say that there are many people in the Afghan National Army, or the ANCOs within the Afghan police that have established a very high standard of patriotism, effectiveness, and integrity. That force, if it is properly supported, may—I can't give you a prediction—be able to deal with what is a relatively small and unpopular group of insurgents. It will depend a great deal on the level of governance, and it will depend a great deal on the level of aid. When it comes down to the police, every report, including the most recent Department of Defense report and SIGAR [Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction] report, shows it remains highly corrupt. It is not going to change. It is not going to be effective in broad terms, although, again, there are elements which are both patriotic and honest. But it also is not critical to establishing security. Historically, it is also true that, like it or not, it will be local forces like the Afghan local police and militias which will be critical in many areas. And here is another reason, perhaps, for keeping a Special Forces presence in limited form. But is this a high risk operation? Yes, it is a high-risk operation. And that risk I think is exemplified again by the Department of Defense reporting on the shortfalls in advisors, trainers, corruption, and the lack of independent capability on many elements of the police and the forces within it.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you, Mr. Cordesman. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you.

Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank all of you for being here today. General Keane, it was distressing to me to hear your comments about Pakistan, because this is a country that we have worked with for decades providing aid, training the military, as you indicated. It is so disappointing, because I have seen where the American people have made such a difference. I had the opportunity to see firsthand the American marines providing the hospital care at Muzaffarabad for the victims of an earthquake. The relationship that should be there. I know that we have done so much when they have floods, with asking nothing except to back up and establish a positive relationship. I had the opportunity to visit with former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto a month and a

day prior to her murder. There should be so many opportunities, understanding that—and we read about terrorist attacks virtually weekly across their country. Why can't we truly establish an ability to work together for stability, which would be mutually beneficial for the people of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and America?

General KEANE. I think largely because our interests conflict. And the Pakistani interest in Afghanistan is a little different than ours. And that is why they have always hedged their bet with the Taliban so to speak, because they believe they may in fact have to deal with them again. And they are very concerned about the incumbent government and what they perceive to be a closer relationship between that government and India, which is the paranoia that the Pakistanis have always suffered from. So this adds to the complication, you know, of this relationship, and the fact that they are a growing nuclear arsenal in the region with a military oligarchy that truly runs the country, a largely ineffective civilian government. And it gives us a lot of concern, you know, for the region. And then you add the added factor of support for the Afghan sanctuaries in Pakistan, and I believe it has paralyzed our ability diplomatically, you know, to deal effectively with them as it pertains to the issue on Afghanistan.

You know, another data point is the two factories in Pakistan which produce close to 90 percent of all the ammonium nitrate that is used as the explosive ingredient to all the IEDs that kill us and maim us every single day. I mean we should have done something about those factories a long time ago. Now, I understand that Secretary Clinton has taken this on, and it appears maybe there has been some progress recently, although I don't have any confirmation of that. But I think that is essentially the basic reason is our interests do conflict. What I have been disappointed with, I am not a diplomat, but what I have been disappointed with is our inability to shape the conditions a little bit to bring the Pakistanis closer to what our objective is as it pertains to those sanctuaries. And obviously, they have interests that we can influence as well, and a concerted effort to do that. I don't want to be Pollyannaish about it, but I think we could have achieved better diplomatic progress than what we have had to date.

Mr. WILSON. I appreciate your efforts. And General Barno, I appreciate your family's service. And I had the privilege of you hosting me my first visit of 11 to Afghanistan. And I know firsthand your concern for our service members and military families. That is why with the incidence of green on blue attacks, what is being done to restore trust between our military personnel and to protect American and allied forces?

General BARNO. We have seen, I think very fortunately, a tremendous diminishment of those attacks over the last several months. That late summer last year was becoming a debilitating strategic problem for us back here at home, it was among the forces in Afghanistan. And I think the command in Afghanistan, led by General Allen, put in some very smart protective measures, guardian angels, where there would always be a soldier or marine over watching other soldiers that were engaging in activity with Afghans, requiring higher levels of personal protection around Afghans, looking to modify some of our exposure, and just generally

raising the threat awareness. I think that has had a very positive effect. Let's all hope that that continues to be a positive direction here in this year.

Mr. WILSON. And that is good news. And I want to thank Mr. Cordesman and Dr. Dale for being here today, too. And your metrics report is excellent. Thank you very much.

Mr. THORBERRY. Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good to have all of you here with us, although I think that it is very difficult to have a sense of optimism coming from any of you. And I think that obviously is reflected in our comments as well.

General Barno, you mentioned our strategic objectives. And I am wondering whether you think that Afghans certainly beyond the security forces themselves should share our strategic objectives, which are basically to keep Afghanistan free from terrorism and mitigate any nuclear conflict between Pakistan and India. Do they share those objectives? And is that what would promote a sustained success in the long run?

General BARNO. I think there is overlap in our objectives and the objectives of the Afghan people and their government. They are certainly not the same, and they don't have a global perspective, they don't have global responsibilities. They are worried about terrorism at home in Afghanistan. We are worried about terrorism being projected from Afghanistan or Pakistan to the United States or to Europe. So we have got a bit of a different horizon than they have. But I do think that we certainly broadly share the strategic objectives of having a stable Afghanistan that is not a sanctuary for terrorism in which the government is a reasonably fair elected government in which the economy continues to grow. There has been tremendous growth in the Afghan economy over the last 7 or 8 years. That is not remarked much upon here in the United States. The Afghans feel that, and are worried about that, returning back to a less prosperous time as forces come out and as the security threat continues to be problematic. So I think we broadly share some of those objectives. But again, our horizon is considerably different than I think the Afghans.

Mrs. DAVIS. I guess people would suggest, though, that the economy has certainly been supported by our activities there, and that in fact once we leave in great numbers that that has an opportunity to collapse.

General BARNO. There is concern about that. But I think the economic analysis I have seen suggested it is going to reduce their growth rate, but they are still going to have a fairly substantial growth rate of 5 or 6 percent a year. You know, they have been doing 12 or better for a number of years, partly because of the amount of money we put in. So they are not really looking at a depression or a recession, simply a flattening of that growth a bit. And there is a lot of sectors that—telecommunications for example—that are not really driven by military expenditures there that are blooming all across Afghanistan. So I think—and again looking at their mineral resources that are a number of years down the road, they have got some good foundation blocks there if they can maintain a government that is moderately effective and a security situation that is not chaotic.

Mrs. DAVIS. Mr. Cordesman, you spoke about the new metrics, and really it is about performance. And the Afghan Special Forces have been touted as kind of second to none, I guess, even though the numbers I think are somewhere in the neighborhood of about 15,000. Is that something that really we need to focus more on, that that is a greater source of optimism than perhaps we have acknowledged?

Mr. CORDESMAN. I think one has to be very careful, because the Afghan Special Forces have done well. How well they will do once we cease to support them is a real question. And a lot of that depends not on them, but the other aspects of the MOD [Ministry of Defense] and structure and how they are used and actually allocated. But the problem with Special Forces is that just because they are very valuable doesn't mean you can grow more easily. And again, at this point we don't have the trainer base, the partners to deal even with the ANA as a whole, much less the police and other elements.

Mrs. DAVIS. If I could just interrupt you quickly, because my time is running out, I think the focus on the Afghan people, public opinion, apparently that has been fairly strong and constant in some areas that people have a sense of confidence in the future. And yet as we have an opportunity to work even in remote provinces with women, they do not feel that the police is providing the kind of security that will really promote some ideals that we think about, which, you know, aspiring of education and work ethic in their communities. Is that something, again, that we really aren't focusing on enough, and perhaps would the elements of a civil society are such that that should be part of our national security in the area to a greater extent than we are talking about?

Mr. CORDESMAN. If I may take just a second to answer, part of the problem is that it isn't just the police. There are almost no functioning courts, no actual ability to enforce court decisions in terms of dealing with women. We have all kinds of numbers on civil society, like the number of people educated, where the minute you ask you find there is no source for the data. So we are quoting the number of women educated with no statistical base for doing it. We are talking about GDP [gross domestic product] growth, but for example Ken Katzman of CRS says 90 percent comes from aid. And the study General Barno referred to would not look at drugs, worst cases, corruption, or capital flight. It is a World Bank study, which is meaningless.

Mr. THORBERRY. Mr. Turner.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank our panelists. I appreciate both their expertise and their contribution to this important discussion on policy and objectives. We have to keep in mind the reason why we are in Afghanistan, a result of the 9/11 attacks on our country. And our goal has been ensuring that those responsible for those attacks would be held accountable, and that we would ensure that conditions in Afghanistan do not revert, and that we prevent similar future attacks.

One of the issues that I have been most concerned with with respect to the Afghanistan operation has been the issue of the drug trade, and my concern of it funding the insurgents, greater instability in the country, and corruption. I have raised this issue with

President Karzai, Generals Petraeus, Mattis, Allen, and the DEA [Drug Enforcement Agency] to try to raise the profile of the issue. And General Keane and Mr. Cordesman, I appreciate you both raising this issue. So my questions are going to be directed to you concerning this. I want to provide you some context of my concern. In 2006, General James Jones, then the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe, stated that, quote, "The Achilles heel of Afghanistan is the narcotics problem. I think the uncontrolled rise of the spread of narcotics, the business that it brings in, the money that it generates is being used to fund the insurgency, the criminal element, anything to bring chaos and disorder." General Allen stated that the narcotics trade and its linkage to the insurgency contribute to regional insecurity, corruption, volatility in the rule of law, and the stagnation of economic development.

Now, for many of our hearings I have held up this chart, which is a study that was done with the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. And it shows the historical production of opium in Afghanistan from 1991 through 2009. And you can notice in this period where we are there from 2004 through 2009, you see a doubling of the historical levels of opium production in Afghanistan. So under our efforts you actually see where there was an increase that then was available for the use to fund the insurgents. General Petraeus said this chart doesn't reflect the accomplishments that they were making while he was in command. He provided me this chart that showed, again, the peak that we had in 2009, and it was coming down in 2010, and illustrating a 48-percent decrease from 2009 to 2010. And they showed an incredible increase in the seizures and in eradication in going after the drug lords, the money, the labs, and the like. My concern is that as we are looking to the drawdown, if there is a premature effort of U.S. and ISAF forces in Afghanistan to withdraw, that we could reverse this trend. I am not confident that the Afghan police and the national forces are prepared to either continue the downward slope of that, and in fact that they might be susceptible to both the corruption and the instability caused by that funding, in addition to not be up to the challenge of what that funding represents in support for the insurgents.

I would like if both of you, Mr. Cordesman and General Keane, if you could speak on your concern or thoughts about the trends in the drug trade and the shift to the Afghan leadership. General Keane, you want to start?

General KEANE. Go ahead, Tony.

Mr. CORDESMAN. All right. Let me just say, if you looked at the updated chart you would see all those trends have been reversed. The amount of acreage that the U.N. projects has increased steadily between 2010—

Mr. TURNER. You are a little bit far away from the microphone. That first part I think was really important. Could you speak again about the trends being reversed already?

Mr. CORDESMAN. If you look at the most recent U.N. report for 2012, you will see that there is a major increase in acreage of cultivation. The decline you saw was not a result of enforcement, it was a result of poor rainfall, and it was a result of disease in the opium crop. That still is a problem. So it won't restore in terms of

the volume. But in terms of the earning power, it has gone up. And in terms of the actual area under cultivation, that is very sharply up. And it is up in Helmand, which is the area that we were attempting to secure. The other problem that you have here is as we pull aid money out, some of the U.N. estimates say that about 40 percent of the Taliban economy, the GDP came from drug earnings. The current estimate is very uncertain because nobody can agree on it. So you get anywhere from 6 to 15 percent of the Afghan GDP is funded by drugs and criminal networks. The minute we start pulling the aid money out, the incentive to do that goes way up, partly because you still haven't solved the agricultural distribution problems.

General KEANE. Yes. I appreciate that discussion. I think the drug culture and the drug trade that exists in Afghanistan will be there 10, 20 years from now. And I think that is just a harsh reality. Certainly the growth of the Afghan economy, their mineral development and their manufacturing capability that comes from that could be a major, you know, push against this drug trade continuing to grow. But I think our interest has been, and I think we have to have a limited focus here in terms of what is reasonable for us to do in the timeframe that we have to do it. And I think what we have tried to do is similar to what the Colombians tried to do with their drug trade and the FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia], and that is to separate the support from the drug trade to the insurgency. And we have had mixed success with that. I mean the fact of the matter is they are still getting money from it today, they were getting money from it before, and they are going to get money from it. And we have had some highs and lows with it. Certain districts we have had some success. But that has been a real challenge for us. I still think that the opportunity to make progress in Afghanistan as an institution politically, this is largely their choice, and also the economy is largely their choice. And also with the security situation, I am convinced we can make some progress if we mitigate the risk. And I just got to believe that we are going to make minimal impact on this drug culture that currently exists. And it is going to be there probably for another generation.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Ms. Duckworth.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, gentlemen, for being here. General Keane, I wanted to return to your discussion of the sanctuaries and the work that needs to be done there. I am a little bit concerned with the number in your report of a total of 25,000 troops needed with the counterterrorism, training and assistance enablers, and that those enablers would be supporting not just ANSF forces, but U.S. forces and NATO forces. I am going to assume that this 25,000 is exclusive of NATO forces. On top of that, we are now talking about working with drone units to continue to disrupt sanctuary operations. How long? I mean how long would we need to maintain those drones there, those forces there to disrupt? Are there metrics? Is there an end-of-mission kind of a metric that we can say, okay, we have disrupted them for long enough?

You see my concern with the length of time that we are committing troops for being there. Do we need to do this indefinitely? I

come to this a little bit from my perspective, having served in the National Guard, where we still have forces in Kosovo 13 years later. And I just am reluctant to get us into a situation where we have a mission that has no ending in sight.

General KEANE. Yeah, my oral statement had a total force of 20,000, not 25,000. But I think we are mixing the forces up a little bit. The counterterrorism force that would exist in Afghanistan would largely be conducting attacks against Afghanistan Taliban leadership within the confines of Afghanistan. The suggestion to go and violate Pakistan's sovereignty against their wishes, which is the suggestion I am making, that would be done by OGA, and it would not be done by U.S. military forces. So that would be an expansion of the mission that already exists, authorized by the President, willingly supported by Pakistan, and that is to target Al Qaeda central leadership in Pakistan. That is done, as you know, routinely, and we have had some success against that. What I am suggesting is we add to that portfolio the mission to at least begin with the Haqqani network and have that capability be used against that as well. Whether they would have to expand it or not would be up to them. So it would not come from forces inside Afghanistan, although we must admit that those operations do originate from Afghanistan, and they come from bases that are protected inside of Afghanistan to conduct those operations in Pakistan.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. So then would those bases from which the missions would be launched inside Afghanistan, would those require additional U.S. enablers, additional forces, or would that come out of the 20,000?

General KEANE. I don't think so. Right now those—some of this is classified, so we got to be careful—but we have different kinds of security forces at those bases. And just let me leave it at that. I don't believe an expansion of that particular mission would involve additional force structure in Afghanistan from the United States or from NATO.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. And do you have a metric for when, how long we would support this additional mission for the OGA of disruption of the sanctuaries? Do we do it forever? For example, if we stop, would they reconsolidate and return to what they were doing? I understand that this is a little bit of prognostication I am asking you to do. But what is the metric for when do we support this?

General KEANE. I couldn't give you an answer. But I think you would make the judgment based on the effects that you are able to achieve as a result of it in Afghanistan itself. And obviously, we would have some intelligence on what is taking place there with the Haqqani network and also with the Quetta Shura, which we do right now. So I think that would give us some sense as to whether we are achieving any results and when we could cease those operations.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you, General. I yield back my time, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. [Presiding.] Thank you. Mr. Coffman.

Mr. COFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are some who would say or have said that the Karzai government is little more than a vertically integrated criminal enterprise because of the level of corruption. And it doesn't seem like we have been successful in

terms of combating that corruption. Unless anybody on the panel can tell me, I don't know of any aid that has been permanently withheld because of their practices. And so can somebody speak to how do we deal with this extraordinary level of corruption in our partner, the Afghan Government?

Mr. CORDESMAN. I am going to take very briefly, our goal is in theory to increase funding to the Afghan Government so it can steadily take over the remaining portion of aid. We have dealt with corruption in general by not funding through the Afghan Government. So most of the aid money has gone directly around the central government structure. I think in fairness, a lot of this has been our fault, a failure to really validate the contracts, measures of effectiveness, control of funds, something General McMaster has found in his studies. But your question is a key one. The Afghan Government made commitments, very formal commitments that it would change this process as part of transition. It is up to you to hold them accountable, because it is a fair statement to say that the Karzai government has never once honored an anticorruption pledge to date.

Mr. COFFMAN. And didn't we—obviously, I think we wanted to build up their institutions of governance, their capability by initially having the aid flow through the government. But then the corruption was so incredible, I think that we diverted that aid and tried to give it directly to whatever the intended recipient was. But, you know, how do we—I mean do we establish benchmarks to where if they fail to meet them that we do permanently withhold aid? I don't think the American taxpayers should be subjected to this level of corruption without end.

Dr. Dale.

Dr. DALE. Sir, thanks for that terrific question. Absolutely, as you characterize, the way that power operates in Afghanistan is really on the basis of patronage networks of power and influence. And not all of those are malign, but some are, and they distribute resources unevenly, disenfranchise some, and do not operate in accordance with the rule of law. We have tried a number of things over the last 10 years, some more successful than others. But I would like to answer your question by pointing ahead. The mutual accountability framework that came out of the Tokyo conference last year, that includes a set of commitments, Afghan improvements in the arena of corruption and international reactions that based on whether those are complied with is a terrific opportunity. What makes it tough is we have got to discipline ourselves in order to make that work. The other piece, and ultimately the most helpful one, are frankly the Afghan people. They are the best potential checks and balances on the Afghan system. Their voices have not been very visible through years of war. But that civil society, it is the armed forces, it is the media, it is all of those organizations that can eventually be brought to bear to help hold their own system accountable. And that is another arena in which we can, with technical support and encouragement, encourage change.

Mr. COFFMAN. But even if you look at the Tokyo accords, there are not specific metrics yet that have been drafted to establish the kind of benchmarks I am talking about that makes aid contingent

upon the Afghanistan Government's ability to clean up this problem.

Dr. DALE. So you point to a great point, which is how do you implement this? The idea is look, it is a good foundation, it is a new step forward, because everyone agreed there is a lot of money on the line, which Afghanistan is going to need some help over this decade of transformation in order to sustain the campaign gains and be stable. So they have equities in all of this. It is up to us as an international community to be very disciplined amongst ourselves in figuring out what accountability really looks like. That is hard, but it is not undoable.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I believe fundamentally that we have to be willing to sever this aid is the only way I think we are going to clean up this situation for the American taxpayers and for the other donor countries that are involved with that. We deserve better.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Dr. Wenstrup.

Dr. WENSTRUP. Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we were attacked in 2001, I looked at what lay ahead for us as a 30- or 40-year effort. And I still look at it that way. In addition to the military role, I look at what our nonmilitary role is down the road. And I was just curious to hear your comments on how much are we now involved and how much should we be involved in the future, especially in Afghanistan, from an educational role and an economic development role for that country? And what your thoughts are on where we have been and where we should go.

Mr. CORDESMAN. I would certainly, all of us could make a contribution there. But I think our basic problem is this. If we go with the existing plan, we will pull most of the aid workers out of the field, we will get rid of the PRTs [Provincial Reconstruction Teams], we will become dependent on the government and on the Afghans to do this. We in theory have a commitment, and perhaps Catherine can correct me, of roughly \$1.7 billion a year in civil aid. But there is no plan to use it. And AID [Agency for International Development] is talking about emerging with the plan in the spring of 2014, which is just fine, but the last two fiscal years that influence the war will be over, and by the time the plan is written our ability to control the flow of money and assess it is going to be very limited. That pushes things down on one group, which is now back in Afghanistan, which is the World Bank. The problem is the World Bank is technically a client of Afghanistan. And as I mentioned earlier, they can't examine worst cases, drugs, corruptions, capital flight, or any of the other key variables. So unless there is a clear direction for meaningful planning based on the resources we are actually likely to get, and we actually work with Afghans like Ashraf Ghani, we end up with all of these slogans, concepts, and unstructured plans and ideas. And it is really—we have very little time to make this work, or one way or another we will simply have to give them the money, and as Catherine has pointed out, hope that some of it is used in the right way, and that most of it buys stability, even if it doesn't buy development.

Dr. WENSTRUP. Did you have anything else to add, ma'am?

Dr. DALE. Sir, from Dr. Cordesman's remarks, as we look forward with our assistance, a couple things are really critical. Prioritization really matters, with fiscal pressure absolutely on all of us. That is one thing we have been working, the international community, with the Afghan Government through the Kabul process for several years now to focus assistance efforts, where Afghans find it necessary and where we can really make a difference. But prioritization is absolutely critical. A second piece is our own just implementing role, what that looks like. Again as Dr. Cordesman points out, our civilian footprint will diminish. That is a good thing, frankly, in many ways. But how do we work through Afghan experts who then provide the right technical expertise? And how do we maintain some visibility on the results as we lose that direct day-to-day connectivity are going to be important questions.

Dr. WENSTRUP. Thank you. I yield the remainder of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And ma'am and gentlemen, thank you for your service. And one of the things that has not been discussed is China's role over the next couple of years with Afghanistan. Just reading briefly from a *USA Today* article, China, a long bystander, essentially they haven't helped us, we have borrowed money from them to conduct this war. Then it goes on to say Beijing signed a strategic partnership last summer with the war-torn country that was followed in September with trips from their leadership. It talks about China getting the development rights in the country.

My question is why should we spend, why should we borrow one more dime from countries like China to operate in Afghanistan when 2 years from now, if not sooner, they are going to be the country that Afghanistan is depending on and has the strongest relationship with with regard to trade and economic development?

Ma'am, General Keane?

Dr. DALE. Sir, thanks for that. Absolutely, China has effectively been able to play a freerider role as we worked with Afghan counterparts and other allies and partners to provide security for the Afghan people, and frankly the region. And that is true to this point. Looking ahead, though, there are great questions. Afghanistan's future stability depends on the neighborhood and on the big players who are engaged. The first trick is simply to be aware of those interests and that kind of engagement, first of all. But I think we have, as the United States, the great privilege of being seen in many quarters as the security partner and the partner in many ways of choice. So it is partly up to us what our future commitment looks like and how we want to characterize it. Particularly important is how much clarity we can provide about what our future role is. Because that is what tempers the Afghans' hedging against future uncertainty.

General KEANE. You know, I think certainly China has great interest in Afghanistan, particularly after the survey came out and the degree of minerals that are in that country. And as we all know, they have been acquiring rights to minerals all over the world. And it is something that is clearly one of their major objectives. And certainly that has been the case. And they have been in Afghanistan with that intent in mind. But in dealing with Afghan

leaders on this, I mean I think they are pretty clear-eyed here about what China's interest is, and clearly their own, in maintaining their own growth, economic growth in the future. And I also think it is, as you suggest, it is imperative on the United States and the international community also to be clear-eyed about what is happening here. And we do have a role, an influencing role with Afghanistan as it pertains to a new developing partner in China. But I think these decisions will largely be Afghan decisions. And they will be making decisions in their own national interest. And I think we have every right to help shape that, as you are suggesting. And we will just see how this plays out in the future.

Mostly, this is a good news story for Afghanistan. They have in front of them a means to acquire wealth and to begin to grow an economy that can serve its people. And we can influence that. But largely it is going to be their decisions.

Mr. SCOTT. General, if I may, and gentlemen, I am sorry, I am down to one minute, and you have been here long enough to understand how it goes. I guess my question is Georgia National Guard is going to be fighting through the next two seasons with the Taliban. Over the next 2 years, China will obviously become a larger holder of American debt. Our men, our women in uniform will be paying the price, our taxpayers will be paying the price, and China will be sitting back reaping the rewards from both sides. So why shouldn't we come home now and let the Chinese Government pay for the security in that country when they are the ones that are going to be—they are the next-door neighbor, they are the ones that will be helping develop it?

Why should one more Georgia soldier take a wound, a fatal wound in some cases, for a country that is going to be, I believe, primarily controlled by the Chinese in the future? I got 18 seconds.

General BARNO. Tough question, obviously, Congressman. I think I would argue that we need to be doing more with the Afghan Government to make sure the United States sees some benefits from this mineral wealth inside of Afghanistan as well. I don't think we want to encourage necessarily the Chinese to play a more active role or to play a security role. They are there clearly for other reasons. But I think we are the major stakeholder in Afghanistan over the last decade. We put tens of billions of dollars in there. There ought to be a continuing relationship, and the United States as well as the Afghans ought to partner in some of these mineral discoveries as they come to the fore here in the next few years. I don't think the Chinese are going to play as active a role perhaps as you might think though.

Mr. SCOTT. Maybe they could pay us back a little bit?

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Thank you for being here. You know, with all that is going on with the sequester and all the other things that are being thrown at us, gun control, illegal immigration, violence against women, there are lots of things happening here. And I think many people have forgotten we are at war. And I thank you for bringing it back to our attention. And these are things that we really need to focus on in the near future, at least this committee needs to.

Thank you very much. The committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:45 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

FEBRUARY 27, 2013

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

FEBRUARY 27, 2013

Statement of Hon. Howard P. “Buck” McKeon
Chairman, House Committee on Armed Services
Hearing on
Transition in Afghanistan: Views of Outside Experts
February 27, 2013

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. The House Armed Services Committee meets to receive testimony on the transition in Afghanistan. Today, we have with us Dr. Catherine Dale, General (Retired) Jack Keane, Lieutenant General (Retired) David Barno, and Mr. Anthony Cordesman. Thank you for joining us today and sharing your expertise.

A discussion on our transition from Afghanistan should start with a reminder of why the United States went there in the first place. The most lethal and complex terrorist attack in U.S. history was plotted and perpetrated by Al Qaeda in Afghanistan.

But after over 10 years of war, the American people are understandably war-weary. The United States has committed a wealth of resources in the form of both blood and treasure to preserve U.S. vital national security interests and prevent Afghanistan from being used again as a safe haven for terrorists.

The question before us is whether or not we can continue to prevent Afghanistan from being used as such a sanctuary. The NATO mission officially ends December 31, 2014. Although we have not finalized the transition to Afghan security lead, President Obama already has announced the withdrawal of half of the U.S. forces in Afghanistan—approximately 34,000 troops—by this time next year. In the near future, the President likely will order additional troop withdrawals and determine the United States’ post-2014 mission set and military posture in Afghanistan.

In my view, the President is not adequately evaluating the risk associated with rapid and large-scale troop withdrawals—in terms of both local and regional consequences, as well as U.S. vital interests. The President has decided to conduct this significant withdrawal of U.S. troops during the same time period that the Afghan security forces will be in the lead across the entire country for the first time. Moreover, the Administration does not have a discernible plan to reinforce the Afghan security forces if they cannot hold the gains and/or maintain the necessary security across the country. Consequently, the President’s approach is fraught with risk and lacks a comprehensive strategy to ensure the security and sovereignty of Afghanistan—and thereby U.S. interests—over time. Rather, the President’s approach to Afghanistan appears to be “withdraw and hope.”

I am not advocating for a never-ending combat mission in Afghanistan. But the President should make decisions on troop withdrawals within the context of the security conditions on the ground, the capability and capacity of the ANSF, and the required mission sets after December 31, 2014.

We owe nothing less to the victims on 9/11, the U.S. troops and their families who have served and sacrificed, and our sons and daughters who will have to return if we get this wrong. The simple justice that comes from that principled position cannot be overstated.

I look forward to your testimony and insights into the transition and way forward for U.S. policy in Afghanistan.

Statement of Hon. Adam Smith
Ranking Member, House Committee on Armed Services
Hearing on
Transition in Afghanistan: Views of Outside Experts
February 27, 2013

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for holding this hearing and bringing together such a distinguished panel of experts on this very important topic, and I also agree that the mission in Afghanistan is very straightforward and clear. We were attacked by Al Qaeda and their organization which was based out of Afghanistan. We want to make sure that such an attack cannot emanate from that region ever again. We want to degrade Al Qaeda as much as possible and weaken their ability and the ability of any groups allied with them, and I think we have made considerable progress in that goal. I think the most notable example of that of course is getting Osama bin Laden but it is much, much deeper than that. The central structure of Al Qaeda has been largely smashed in Afghanistan and in neighboring Pakistan and their ability to plot and plan attacks against us has been significantly weakened. It has certainly not gone and we shouldn't elude ourselves about that, but progress has been made in that regard. We have also made progress in terms of the number of troops and security forces that we have trained in the ANSF, and we are moving in the right direction on that but should have no illusions. This is a very, very difficult part of the world. In both Afghanistan and Pakistan they have an endless series of problems with governance, corruption, education. It is not a stable place, and some of the most violent and dangerous ideologies that we face are present there. We are always going to have to pay attention to this region for our national security interests, but the question at this point is, is an unending U.S. military presence going to significantly change those challenges? I don't believe that it is. I believe that we have gotten pretty close to the point where we have done militarily what we can do in that region and it is time for the Afghan National Security Forces and the Afghan people to take responsibility for their own security and their own governance. And the only way to do that is to transition over to them taking the lead. Now that process has begun. In a number of different provinces the ANSF has taken the lead on security and we are moving in that direction.

Again I want to emphasize that I don't have any illusions here. I think perhaps the largest struggle there in Afghanistan is the governance piece: What happens in 2014 when President Karzai can no longer be president, when there is a new election—who we transition to in Afghanistan. How do we deal with the corruption issues and the lack of economic opportunity. Those challenges will always be present but having 100,000 U.S. troops in the region isn't going to change that past a certain point. I think we have reached that point. I think the challenge for the Commander in Chief and the challenge for this committee and our experts is to

figure out what the best way to implement that path going forward is.

I think the President has laid out a pretty reasonable strategy for doing that. Again, no guarantees, but it is the most logical thing to do at this point to transition over to the Afghan National Security Forces, to reduce our presence in the region and move out and turn over responsibility to the folks who ultimately are going to have to be responsible for it. It is a simple fact that past a certain point a large foreign military force is in and of itself destabilizing. It does not build confidence in the Afghan, in any country's government, and any people would be concerned about having a large number of foreign military forces on their land. It is time to make that transition.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about what the best way to do that is, the difficult decisions that we face in making that decision, but I believe it is time to move in that direction. I look forward to the testimony and to the questions from the panel.



**Statement of
Catherine Dale
Specialist in International Security, Congressional Research Service
Before the House Armed Services Committee
On Transition in Afghanistan
February 27, 2013**

Not for publication until released by the House Armed Services Committee

Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith, Distinguished Members of the House Armed Services Committee,

It is an honor to be invited to testify before this Committee about transition in Afghanistan. It is a particular privilege to appear with my three fellow panelists – Lieutenant General Barno, Dr. Cordesman, and General Keane – all of whom have sharpened my own thinking on these important issues.

I appear here today in my capacity as an analyst with the Congressional Research Service. But I have also had the honor of serving as an advisor to a number of our military commanders in Afghanistan, as part of NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and also on extended visits as an outside expert, most recently late last year. I am profoundly grateful for the privilege of having served alongside our first-rate men and women in uniform and our civilian officials. In them, the nation has much to be proud of.

Today's discussion is timely. President Obama's announcement, as part of his State of the Union address two weeks ago, that U.S. forces in Afghanistan would draw down by 34,000 troops over the next year, established some clear parameters for further U.S. engagement in Afghanistan but also left room for further policy refinements as well as choices to make in execution.¹ His announcement took place against the backdrop of a formal Transition process – the staged shift of security responsibility from international to Afghan forces – which is set to enter its final phase this spring. This is also a time of political transition for Afghans, with the prospect of presidential elections in 2014, and a time of transition writ large for every facet of international engagement and support. A time of transition offers the opportunity to revisit – and affirm or refine – current strategy.

¹ See President Barack Obama, Remarks by the President in the State of the Union (SOTU) Address, Washington, DC, February 12, 2013.

For the U.S. Government, fundamental components of strategy for Afghanistan include:

- U.S. national security interests in Afghanistan and the region;
- the *minimum essential conditions* – political, economic, security – that would need to pertain in Afghanistan and the region in order to protect U.S. interests over the long run;
- current and projected U.S. approaches, until and after 2014, for helping Afghans establish those conditions;
- the timeline by which, and extent to which, Afghans are likely to be able to sustain those conditions with relatively limited support from the international community;
- risks to U.S. national security interests if Afghans are unable to do so; and
- the importance of this overall effort – given its likely timeline, risks, and costs – compared to other U.S. priorities.

Background

The Obama Administration has consistently articulated two core goals for the war – to defeat al-Qaeda and to prevent future safe havens in Afghanistan and Pakistan.² Yet there is little agreement in the broader policy community about what it would take to accomplish those goals. What has been missing from the debates, many suggest, is a clear and publicly available articulation of the minimum essential conditions – the specific ends – that must be achieved in Afghanistan and the region in order to ensure the protection of U.S. interests over the long-term.

The basic framework for current U.S. Government civilian and military efforts in Afghanistan dates back to 2009, when General Stanley McChrystal took command of ISAF and was tasked to conduct an initial strategic assessment. That assessment, and the subsequent ISAF campaign design it informed, were based on the Administration's two core goals as well as on the novel prospect of more troops, more civilian expertise, more resources, more high-level leadership attention, and relatively unlimited time.³

Since then, six major constraints have been introduced:

- In December 2009, in a speech at West Point, President Obama announced that a troop surge would take place, but that those surge troops would begin to draw down in July 2011.
- In November 2010, at the NATO Lisbon Summit, the Afghan Government and the NATO Allies, including the United States, agreed to pursue a formal process, Transition, in which responsibility for security would shift over time to the Afghan Government. This process was to begin soon – in early 2011 – and to be completed by the end of 2014.
- In a June 2011 speech, President Obama announced parameters for drawing down the surge forces. From the surge peak of about 100,000 U.S. troops, the U.S. troop commitment in Afghanistan would decrease by 10,000 troops by the end of 2011, and by a further 23,000 by

² See for example President Barack Obama, Remarks by the President on a New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Washington, DC, March 27, 2009; and President Barack Obama, Remarks by President Obama in Address to the Nation from Afghanistan, May 1, 2012. However, two weeks ago during his SOTU, President Obama referred to the U.S. goal as “defeating the core of al Qaeda”, a new and narrower formulation, see SOTU, 2013.

³ General Stanley McChrystal, COMISAF's Initial Assessment, August 30, 2009. I, along with fellow panelist Dr. Cordesman and others, was part of that assessment team.

the end of September 2012, reaching a total of 68,000 by that date. Afterwards, the pace of further drawdowns would be “steady” and at some point the mission would change “from combat to support.”

- In May 2012, at the NATO Chicago Summit, the Afghan Government and NATO Allies added a new step to the formal Transition process, the so-called Milestone 2013: Afghans would assume lead responsibility for security throughout Afghanistan by mid-2013, and at that point, international forces would shift to playing a primarily supporting role.
- In January 2013, during President Karzai’s visit to Washington, he and President Obama announced that Milestone 2013 would be reached earlier – in spring, not summer, 2013.
- And earlier this month, President Obama announced that the U.S. troop commitment in Afghanistan would draw down by 34,000 more troops by February 2014, and that by the end of 2014, “our war in Afghanistan will be over.”⁴

At the same time, the timeline for the declared commitment of the international community to Afghanistan has been extended well past 2014. In November 2011, at the International Conference on Afghanistan held in Bonn, the international community pledged broad support until 2024, through the so-called decade of Transformation following Transition. In May 2012, at the NATO Chicago Summit, participants affirmed that NATO’s security partnership with Afghanistan would not end with the current campaign. The U.S.-Afghan Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), signed in May 2012 – a statement of mutual commitment in multiple arenas – is scheduled to remain in force until 2024. And President Obama, during his recent press conference with President Karzai, iterated that U.S. forces would remain engaged in Afghanistan after 2014, in “two long-term tasks” – albeit “very specific and very narrow” ones – including “first, training and assisting Afghan forces and second, targeted counterterrorism missions against al Qaeda and its affiliates.”⁵

The juxtaposition of the rough continuity of U.S. core ends with significant adjustments to ways and means has led many to wonder whether the overall U.S. level of ambition in Afghanistan has been lowered. Others question whether current proposed ways and means are consonant with stated ends; to what extent any such lack of consonance might pose risks to U.S. national security interests; and to what extent, if any, various forms of longer-term “commitment” might mitigate any such risks.

A Framework for Decision-Making

Many of the recent debates have focused on U.S. force levels in Afghanistan: the “ramp” or drawdown curve between now and the end of 2014, and the “enduring presence” of U.S. forces

⁴ See President Barack Obama, Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan, West Point, NY, December 1, 2009; NATO Lisbon Summit Declaration, Lisbon, Portugal, November 20, 2010; President Barack Obama, Remarks by the President on the Way Forward in Afghanistan, Washington, DC, June 22, 2011; Chicago Summit Declaration issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Chicago, May 20, 2012; Joint Press Conference by President Obama and President Karzai, Washington, DC, January 11, 2013; and SOTU 2013.

⁵ See Afghanistan and the International Community: From Transition to the Transformation Decade, Conference Conclusions, the International Afghanistan Conference in Bonn, December 5, 2011; Chicago Summit Declaration; Joint Press Conference; and Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, May 2, 2012.

after 2014. But while troop levels and drawdown curves tend to steal the headlines, more fundamental still is the question of how coherently all the facets of U.S. engagement in Afghanistan fit together under a *single political strategy* aimed at bringing the war to a resolution that will protect U.S. interests over the long term.

The following four basic questions form one possible framework for facilitating further decision-making:

- **Is it working?** Is the campaign demonstrably helping to generate the minimum essential conditions necessary to protect U.S. interests – that is, is it succeeding on its own terms? If not, then what could be the justification for spending another dollar or putting another life on the line to continue it?
- **What more needs to be done?** If the basic logic of the campaign is sound, what more would need to be done in order to achieve the minimum essential conditions required to protect U.S. interests? What would those steps require in terms of will, resources, and time? In turn, ought those steps be taken, given costs, risks, and competing exigencies?
- **Is it sustainable?** If the basic logic of the campaign is sound, and a viable way forward in the campaign can be charted, then what more would it take to make the campaign gains sustainable – and to protect U.S. interests – over the longer term? In turn, ought those steps be taken, given costs, risks, and competing exigencies?
- **How does this end?** If all other conditions are met including the logic of the campaign, its further viability, and the plausible long-term sustainability of campaign gains, how is it expected that campaign gains would inform a comprehensive conflict settlement – an end to the war? To what extent should the existence, or otherwise, of a viable approach to war termination shape decision-making about continuing the fight?

Is it working?

The basic logic of the current campaign dates to a key premise of the 2009 McChrystal assessment and the campaign plan that was developed on that basis: working with Afghan counterparts to reduce the insurgent threat while simultaneously helping Afghan forces develop at least minimal competence so that they can handle the residual threat. In particular, one of the major conclusions of the assessment was the need for geographical prioritization across the entire theater – focusing combined efforts on the same key locations at the same time and prioritizing those locations by their strategic importance. Another major conclusion was the need for concerted use of unit partnering, in which like Afghan and coalition units live, train, plan, and execute together 24/7, in order to boost Afghan capabilities, leadership skills, and confidence. In turn, unit partnering was not designed to be an end in itself – instead, the theory was that matched, equivalent partnerships would evolve over time toward Afghan self-sufficiency with minimal support from the international community.

Most Afghan and coalition accounts conclude that the basic logic of the security component of the campaign has proven so far to be sound.

The insurgencies are certainly not defeated – and they continue to enjoy the ability to recruit, as well as the luxury of safe havens in Pakistan. But by most accounts, including their own, the insurgent networks have been degraded and the costs of doing business inside Afghanistan have risen substantially – for example, some insurgents have been forced to use longer and more

treacherous transit routes, and it has grown more expensive to pay some lower-level fighters. The changes have been most marked in those parts of Afghanistan – in the south, the Taliban’s traditional homeland – where the campaign has focused its main effort.⁶

In turn, the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are not a monolith, and they still face various challenges. But by most accounts, including their own, their confidence – particularly that of the Afghan National Army (ANA) – is rising to match their basic capabilities, and they are taking on ever more independent operations at higher levels of organization. In addition, Afghan forces – particularly the army and the police – though they continue to harbor some institutional-cultural differences, increasingly reach out to each other, with little or no prompting from the coalition, to address challenges together.⁷

Meanwhile, the roles of coalition forces have long been evolving correspondingly. U.S. and other coalition forces on the ground have not waited for the formal announcement of Milestone 2013 – as circumstances have allowed, for more than a year now, they have been pulling back from *shona ba shona* (“shoulder-to-shoulder”) partnerships, doing less themselves, playing different supporting roles over time, and encouraging Afghans to make Afghan systems work. The patterns vary from place to place but the basic theory is the same.⁸

What more needs to be done?

The work remaining to be done on the ground, by the current campaign logic, includes two main facets – continuing to reduce the insurgent threat and further developing the Afghan forces. Both target the same idea: an ANSF capable of handling the residual threat with relatively limited support from the international community.

In practice, the nature of the remaining work reflects deliberate choices made in 2009 about where and how to assume risk. Given limitations on available troop levels and other resources, choices were made to make the fight in the south the main effort, leaving less attention available for other parts of Afghanistan; and to give particular attention to the ANA compared with the rest of the Afghan forces. Those choices have produced a campaign whose results to date – as of early 2013 – vary significantly across different parts of Afghanistan and different Afghan forces.

Afghan and ISAF commanders appear generally satisfied with progress in the south though eager to consolidate and protect those gains. They express greater concerns about remaining security challenges in eastern Afghanistan. The main focus of the campaign in the east is protecting Kabul and its approaches including Highway 1, which connects Kabul and Kandahar. Another substantial requirement is continuing to disrupt the sanctuaries and transit routes of the Haqqani

⁶ Interviews with Afghan and ISAF officials, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.

⁷ Interviews with Afghan and ISAF officials, 2011, 2012 and 2013.

⁸ Interviews with Afghan and ISAF officials, 2012 and 2013. The year 2012 witnessed the introduction to theater of security force assistance teams (SFATs) – small teams that embed with much larger Afghan units or headquarters, to provide advisory support as well as connectivity to coalition enablers. The teams varied in composition, focus, and even name depending on their locations within the Afghan system, and on the nationality (and Military Service) of the troop contributor. By late 2012, the U.S. Army was moving to a model based on substituting Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs) that include their own organic SFATs, for traditional, battlespace-owning Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) supported by SFATs sourced out of other brigades – improving unity of command. The much-smaller SFABs, with significantly reduced combat power, preclude by definition “doing it for them.”

network in their traditional tribal homeland. And a further challenge is securing Afghanistan's long border with Pakistan – made all the more difficult by the fact that, of all the Afghan security forces, the Afghan Border Police have benefited the least from unit partnering with coalition forces. In addition, U.S. and Afghan officials note with concern the apparent interest of al Qaeda and other extremists in establishing a foothold in remote upper Kunar and Nuristan provinces in northeastern Afghanistan.⁹ Concerning the ANSF as a whole, remaining work includes improving the effectiveness and accountability of some of the police forces; strengthening the ability of the ANSF to support themselves with their own organic enablers such as air, fires, and intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR); strengthening leadership development; and bolstering the ability of Afghanistan's security institutions to direct and support the force responsibly and effectively.

“Advising and enabling” – a primary focus for remaining U.S. and other coalition forces, now and in any enduring presence – aims both to further develop the ANSF in key target areas, and, through the ANSF, to continue to reduce the threat. Commanders stress that “advising and enabling” is not an end in itself – and it does not simply mean “doing less.” Instead, advising includes supporting Afghan commanders, staffs, and units by encouraging best practices, bolstering confidence, and coaching counterparts through new challenges.¹⁰ Enabling, in turn, means helping Afghan forces gain the ability to provide and rely on their own organic enablers. Afghan and coalition officials generally agree that Afghan forces will not enjoy the same sophisticated enablers that foreign troops have – instead, Afghan forces are likely to use different equipment, to do things differently, and to choose not to do some things.¹¹

Reductions in U.S. and other coalition troop levels between now and the end of 2014, and after 2014, will necessarily curtail their ability to advise and enable Afghan forces and to contribute directly to the further reduction of the insurgent threat. Some see potential benefit to the campaign from these drawdowns – both Afghan and U.S. officials, for example, suggest that the growth of ANSF confidence was catalyzed in part by the final stages of U.S. “surge recovery” and its accompanying consolidation of coalition forces at fewer bases and outposts, and the very clear message that sent that coalition forces were going home.¹²

But troop drawdowns also carry potential risk. In the near-term, each reduction curtails the extent to which coalition forces can provide support to Afghan counterparts – in geographical reach, depth of coverage, or type of support. Afghan forces might simply choose not to undertake a mission from fear of failure; to cede territory altogether as too difficult to control; to make local-level accommodations with insurgent forces in areas they do not feel confident they can control; or – altogether differently – to undertake too-ambitious operations in which they not merely fail, but fail so catastrophically that it destroys their own confidence in their abilities, or the confidence of the Afghan people in the ability of the ANSF to protect them. For the near-term 34,000-troop drawdown, a ramp that keeps most of those troops in Afghanistan through the 2013 fighting season, rather than bringing them home earlier, would tend to reduce the scope and

⁹ Interviews with U.S. and Afghan officials, 2011, 2012, and 2013.

¹⁰ Many U.S. Soldiers view those roles as similar to that of Observer Controllers at U.S. Army Combat Training Centers – who typically coach training participants through jobs that they themselves have done – while many U.S. Marines mention their own “coyote” analogue.

¹¹ For example, Afghans may evacuate casualties by ground, not air, when appropriate medical facilities are available. Interviews with Afghan and ISAF officials, 2012.

¹² Interviews with Afghan and ISAF officials, 2012.

scale of the risks to campaign gains that that drawdown introduces.¹³

In turn, potential U.S. force level-related risks beyond the end of 2014 would depend a great deal on developments between now and then including the timing and slope of the current troop drawdown, and the effects generated by the campaign. Post-2014 risks would also depend significantly on the balance of ANSF troop levels and U.S. and other Allied troop contributions – none of those numbers are likely to be static. Further, post-2014 risks would also depend fundamentally on how the ends – the minimum essential conditions – are defined. Will it be simply to ensure that key leaders of al Qaeda and affiliates can be eliminated if necessary? Will it be, more broadly, to ensure that safe havens cannot coalesce? Or more broadly still, to ensure that Afghans can maintain some minimum level of stability? From the perspective of rigorous strategy, the key is to map “troops to tasks” rather than “tasks to troops.”

It is also important to bear in mind throughout that not all U.S. forces remaining in Afghanistan will be dedicated to the campaign. Significant efforts, and significant time and attention from U.S. leadership and troops, will be required for retrograde – the process of bringing troops and equipment home again safely. Bringing U.S. troops home from Afghanistan may prove far more complicated than from Iraq, given Afghanistan’s difficult terrain, its relative dearth of transportation infrastructure, and the lack of a “Kuwait” next door to pull back to.

Is it sustainable?

Even if the campaign continues to generate gains, developments in four key arenas – safe havens in Pakistan, ANSF endstrength and funding, Afghanistan’s economic viability, and Afghan governance – could put the long-term sustainability of those campaign gains, and the protection of U.S. interests, at substantial risk.

Safe Havens in Pakistan

First, many Afghans as well as a number of outside observers view the persistence of Afghan insurgent safe havens in Pakistan as the greatest long-term threat to sustaining campaign gains. The continued availability of safe havens in Pakistan gives Afghan insurgent leaders bases from which to direct operations, recruit, provide training, and receive financing, as well as the luxury of time to wait out the departure of foreign forces from Afghanistan if they so choose.

The campaign on the ground has included a fluctuating history of cooperative Afghan-Pakistani initiatives at the tactical and operational levels, facilitated by ISAF. At best, these efforts have included combined planning and – to some extent – “complementary” operations conducted simultaneously on either side of the same border. Yet while Pakistani forces have sometimes vigorously targeted their own domestically-oriented insurgencies, they apparently remain unable, unwilling, or both, to take action against Afghan insurgent safe havens in Pakistan.

While some observers view this deadlock as a showstopper – and others hope that a breakthrough in high-level political negotiations with the Taliban would render the point moot – many others suggest that the persistence of safe havens simply imposes a requirement for greater

¹³ The fighting season runs from the end of the poppy harvest in the spring until the weather turns cold in the fall.

resilience of the Afghan state. Such resilience might mean stronger, more capable, and better integrated Afghan security forces, appropriately arrayed; greater competence of the overall border regime; and staunch refusal by local Afghan communities to tolerate an insurgent presence in their midst.

Key issues for Congress might include considering whether any strategic, operational, and tactical-level outreach designed to encourage Pakistani actions against the safe havens might at last yield results; and evaluating the extent to which the threats to lasting campaign gains posed by persistent safe havens in Pakistan might be mitigated through stronger and more effective Afghan institutions and practices.

ANSF Endstrength and Funding

A second major factor shaping the sustainability of campaign gains is the ability of the ANSF to provide security for the Afghan people. That includes, first of all, an overall endstrength – and a force mix – appropriate to anticipated future security challenges. At the NATO Chicago Summit, participants broadly agreed to a “gradual managed force reduction” from the current endstrength of 352,000 “to a sustainable level”, with a working target of 228,500 personnel. But ANSF leaders and other officials raised concerns about the timeline and slope of that drawdown, and the latest thinking reportedly calls for avoiding a steep ANSF drawdown in the immediate wake of the end of the NATO ISAF mission. In general, too-low an ANSF endstrength introduces the risk that Afghan forces might be stretched too thinly to protect campaign gains, or that they might choose to leave some areas uncovered, or both. Drawing down too rapidly – in an anemic economy that lacks follow-on opportunities for demobilized troops who are familiar with weapons and accustomed to receiving salaries – might be a recipe for bolstering the ranks of the insurgencies, or at any rate of the deeply disaffected.

The ability of the ANSF to meet future security challenges also depends fundamentally on future funding levels – based on the continued largesse of the international community, which has clearly indicated its lack of eagerness or ability to support an expensive long commitment; or on the ability of the Afghan system to generate and collect revenues, still a tall order. The lower the levels of available funding, the greater the pressure to draw down ANSF endstrength, or to reduce other facets of the Afghan budget that might also be important for state stability, or both.

Key issues for Congress might include carefully assessing the risks associated with various options for post-2014 ANSF drawdowns; balancing the risks of ANSF drawdowns against the costs of continuing to support the Afghan force; and weighing any continued assistance against the likelihood that Afghanistan would eventually be able to shoulder the financial burden.

Economic Viability

Third, as the challenges of funding the ANSF suggest, Afghanistan’s future economic viability is critical for ensuring that security gains are sustainable over the longer-term. In principle, Afghanistan’s natural resources, agricultural potential, and human capital could form the basis for a viable future economy. But Afghanistan is on an ambitious timeline, trying to achieve significant economic self-sufficiency by 2024 – first of all the ability to generate, collect, and

spend revenues – and by any measure that will be a stretch.¹⁴

The potential risks are great: without a viable economy – or open-ended support from the international community – the Afghan state would likely be unable to meet even the most basic needs of the Afghan people, and thus to secure the people’s confidence, so central to basic stability.

The history of efforts by the international community to help Afghans foster a working economy has been decidedly mixed. Years of relatively indiscriminate spending led to an array of unproductive or counterproductive results, including an inability to track money spent; the flow of assistance funds out of the country; the distortion of labor markets; investment in systems or components that Afghans did not want or could not sustain; and the empowerment of “thugs.”¹⁵

But recent years have witnessed stronger collaboration both between the international community and the Afghan Government, and within the international community, aimed at crafting and pursuing a single shared approach. The so-called Kabul process encourages a shared focus on prioritized Afghan systems including infrastructure, transportation, financial mechanisms, the judicial sector, and human capital. A corresponding paradigm shift among practitioners on the ground has echoed the same theme with its emphasis on “making Afghan systems work.”¹⁶

The international community, while losing some leverage as troop levels go down, has some potential opportunities to help reduce the risks to sustainability posed by Afghanistan’s fragile economy. One approach would be simply providing as much clarity as possible about future forms and levels of assistance – many Afghan officials, including provincial and district governors, report that the uncertainty is deeply debilitating. Further, the international community could also continue to help Afghans establish appropriate accountability mechanisms, and to define and adhere to rigorous prioritization. It could encourage discipline within its own ranks in implementing the Declaration of the July 2012 Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan. And it could address an emerging tension in the assistance community in Afghanistan between pursuing emerging traditional development opportunities in more stable parts of the country, and protecting campaign gains in still-contested parts of the country.¹⁷

¹⁴ The Afghan Government currently collects about \$2 billion per year in revenues. Afghanistan’s budget for solar year 1391 (which concludes at the 2013 vernal equinox) is \$4.89 billion, but that includes some international support and does not include substantial off-budget assistance from international grants and loans. The Afghan Government and NATO estimate that the cost of sustaining the ANSF will be \$4.1 billion per year. See Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *Towards a Self-Sustaining Afghanistan: An Economic Transition Strategy*, November 29, 2011; and Ministry of Finance, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Budget 1391, “What’s in it for you?” 2012.

¹⁵ Interviews with U.S., Afghan, and other international officials, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012.

¹⁶ See *Towards a Self-Sustaining Afghanistan*, 2011; and *Afghanistan and the International Community: From Transition to the Transformation Decade*, Conference Conclusions, the International Afghanistan Conference in Bonn, December 5, 2011. Interviews with U.S. and Afghan officials, 2012.

¹⁷ Interviews with U.S., Afghan and other international officials, 2012 and 2013. See the Tokyo Declaration: *Partnership for Self-Reliance in Afghanistan, from Transition to Transformation*, from the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, July 8, 2012. At the Tokyo Conference, donors pledged support through the Transformation decade and affirmed their commitment to the principles of the Kabul Process.

Key issues for Congress might include determining the extent to which a viable economic foundation in Afghanistan constitutes part of the minimum essential conditions necessary to the protection of U.S. interests; and weighing the costs of possible further contributions of all kinds – including political capital and civilian official presence, in addition to assistance – against the likelihood of making a lasting impact.

Governance

Finally, most observers suggest that sustainable security in Afghanistan requires an architecture of good governance that appropriately and accountably directs the use of its security forces, stewards the nation's resources and revenues, and provides access to justice. Good governance might also be essential to foster good faith with Afghanistan's neighbors, to encourage foreign assistance and investment, and most importantly, to earn at least the tacit acceptance of the Afghan people – all of which have a bearing on the sustainability of security gains.

The challenges are deeply entrenched. Afghan state and society operate primarily on the basis of networks of power and influence. While not all Afghans lose out as a result, the distribution of patronage is uneven and sometimes deeply divisive, and it generally trumps the rule of law. These dynamics have led many Afghans to regard their own government as rapacious. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that after decades of war and upheaval, Afghanistan benefits from few of the societal checks and balances enjoyed at least to some degree in most other states.

The risks to the sustainability of campaign gains, without good governance, could be quite significant: Afghan security forces might have no credible authority to answer to, and popular disaffection with randomly distributed or non-existent state protections of all kinds could lead to societal fracturing along ethnic or tribal lines, persistent simmering conflict, or even violence.

The 2009 McChrystal assessment addressed such concerns in one of its main conclusions – that governance needed to be “on par with” security as a focus of the campaign in order for the campaign to succeed. The basic theory was that the primary arbiter of lasting stability in Afghanistan is the Afghan people – the extent to which they accept the system and are able to hold it accountable. But efforts to date by the international community have been distinctly uneven in both intent and effects. They have included attempts to define the minimal governance requirements at the district level by focusing on the *tashkil* (personnel structure); to exercise leverage to establish left and right limits for key powerbrokers; and to nudge the Afghan system into replacing local officials deemed by local residents to be truly up to no good.¹⁸

Meanwhile, many Afghan thought leaders have pointed to a potentially powerful remedy to help correct perceived power imbalances and the lack of accountability – the growing, and increasingly organized and powerful, voices of Afghan civil society organizations, women's groups, media outlets, private sector pioneers, religious authorities, and traditional local councils. Afghans suggest that these voices have great potential to help hold governance in check – if they are given time to develop. And while some support from the international community would be

¹⁸ Interviews with U.S., Afghan, and other international officials, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012, and see McChrystal Assessment, 2008.

welcome – including technical and advisory support, and continued guarantees of basic security – it is Afghans who would do the lion’s share of the work and indeed are already doing it.¹⁹

In principle, the international community could support such efforts by leveraging the Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF) – a pointed set of commitments, part of the Tokyo Declaration, aimed in part at countering corruption²⁰ – or at least by not pointedly foreclosing, in their rhetoric and actions, the possibility that Afghan people might contribute increasingly toward holding their government accountable.

Key issues for Congress might include weighing the potential of better Afghan civic organization of all kinds, over time, to hold governance in check; evaluating the extent to which accountable governance constitutes part of the minimum essential conditions that need to pertain in Afghanistan in order for U.S. interests to be protected; and evaluating the roles that might be played by members of the international community – not only, perhaps not even primarily, governments – in supporting its emergence.

How does this end?

Observers agree that the war is highly unlikely to end with a thunderous victory on the battlefield. And many if not all agree that it is also unlikely to end based on the gradual accretion of campaign gains on the ground. Most suggest that bringing the war to a close in a manner likely to protect U.S. interests over the long-term would require a political settlement of some kind – one that establishes the fate of insurgent leaders and fighters; the disposition of political power; the demobilization of some Afghan forces; and modalities for societal reconciliation.

By numerous accounts, efforts are now underway by multiple stakeholders to engineer a settlement, in the relatively narrow sense of a deal between the Afghan Government and insurgent leaders. As most frequently described, those efforts seek to identify common ground between the primary belligerents, and to use confidence-building measures, as steps toward a relatively near-term, high-level agreement. Yet however likely such efforts might be to achieve success on their own terms – a near-term deal – the basic approach has raised concerns among many Afghans who feel excluded from the process. A number of Afghans suggest that any such deal – between the current government, which they consider rapacious, and the Taliban leadership, which they fear – is hardly likely to provide most Afghans with an inspiring shared vision of the future.

Consequently, some Afghans and a number of outside observers have suggested that a more fruitful approach might to recast war termination as a longer-term political settlement process, one that brings to bear the full participation of the Afghan people. In such a process, based on a highly inclusive national dialogue among all key sectors of society, Afghans might agree amongst themselves on a shared future vision of Afghanistan – one that includes former Northern Alliance members and southern Pashtuns. A longer timeline might help dispel the current sense of urgency that leads insurgent leaders to up their “asks”, and the Afghan leadership to seriously consider potentially detrimental compromises. And a plausible future vision – even though not yet realized – might help dispel the grim uncertainty that prompts so many Afghans to hedge, for

¹⁹ Interviews with Afghan thought leaders, 2012 and 2013.

²⁰ See the Tokyo Declaration, 2012.

example by shoring up patronage networks, or seeking emigration opportunities, or acquiescing in local-level accommodations with insurgents.

Against that backdrop, the Afghan presidential elections scheduled to be held in 2014, an important opportunity for participation, might be reframed as a catalyst of the longer-term process, rather than as a deadline by which the groundwork for reconciliation must already be laid. And preparations for the elections could help mobilize the emergence of additional voices from civil society and other sectors, which might in turn contribute to an increasingly inclusive national dialogue about Afghanistan's future.

In this refined construct, the role of the international community would be a supporting one – and many roles might be played by non-governmental actors. U.S. opportunities might include emphasizing support for a broadly participatory settlement process and for an outcome that protects long-term Afghan and U.S. interests; and providing support to Afghan civil society and other emerging groups.

Key issues for Congress might include considering the extent to which a coherent and viable vision exists for bringing the war to a close; and evaluating the extent to which the form that war termination takes, and the outcomes it produces, constitute minimum essential conditions for protecting U.S. interests.

Final Word

This four-part framework cannot directly provide answers about the best way forward for U.S. engagement in Afghanistan. Nor can it help weigh Afghan war considerations against other national security exigencies or against wholly unlike concerns such as the domestic economy. It might, however, illuminate the broad range of choices that still exists – including choices about ends, as well as about ways and means. And it begs consideration of the risks – of different kinds and different magnitudes – that might attend any proposed course of action.

For those weighing the continuation of U.S. efforts in Afghanistan in some form, this framework might help refine *a rigorous political strategy* that:

- articulates a clear vision for a future Afghanistan that achieves the minimum essential conditions necessary to protect U.S. interests over the long term;
- lays out the required combination of security, economic, and political “ways and means”, including how they shape one another and how they change over time, necessary to realize those minimum conditions;
- defines the distribution of roles and responsibilities among the U.S. Government, other international actors, and the Afghan Government in carrying out those ways and means, including how those roles evolve over time;
- establishes a realistic timeline for accomplishment; and
- includes a very clear-eyed assessment of associated risks.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify about these issues, and I look forward to your questions.



CATHERINE DALE

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Dr. Dale is a practitioner and scholar of U.S. national and international security issues.

Since late 2007, as Specialist in International Security at the Congressional Research Service (CRS) – the Congress’s “in-house think tank” – Dr. Dale has provided analytical support to Members and staff to help frame critical national security debates. She is the lead CRS analyst on strategy and military operations in Afghanistan, and on defense strategy writ large. She also spearheads CRS’s analytical focus on national security reform.

From 2009 to 2010, on leave from CRS, as the Senior Civilian Advisor to Lieutenant General Rodriguez, then the Commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Joint Command (IJC), the operational-level NATO headquarters in Afghanistan, she helped to shape and communicate strategy and policy for the force; and to integrate tactical, operational and strategic-level efforts. In 2009 she served as a member of ISAF Commander General McChrystal’s “60-day Initial Assessment Team”; in 2010 she served as a “Directed Telescope” for then-ISAF Commander General Petraeus for two months; in 2011 she conducted a month-long assessment the ISAF Commander General Allen; and in 2012 she conducted another month-long campaign assessment for IJC Commander Lieutenant General Terry. Also in 2011, she conducted the “initial strategic assessment” at U.S. Africa Command for General Ham.

Prior to CRS, as a Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Dr. Dale helped to shape and communicate the broad strategic vision of the Department of Defense. She came to Washington from Iraq, where she served as the Political Advisor to the Commanding General of the Combined Joint Task Force-7 (and later, the Multi-National Force-Iraq). As POLAD in Iraq, she helped to integrate international civilian and military efforts. Earlier, serving for four years as the Special Assistant to the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Georgia, she helped craft a UN shuttle diplomacy effort aimed at achieving the political settlement of the conflict in Georgia’s break-away region, Abkhazia.

As an academic, Dr. Dale’s work has focused on politics and security issues in the former Soviet Union and on the problems of long-term internal displacement. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She holds a Ph.D. and an M.A. in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley; an M.S. in National Security Strategy from the National War College; and a B.A. in Slavic Studies from Harvard University.

**Congressional Testimony
Transition in Afghanistan**

**House Armed Services Committee
2118 Rayburn House Office Building**

By

**John M. Keane
General
US Army, Retired**

27 February 2013

1000 hours

**Congressional Hearing
Testimony
27 February
1000 hrs**

Mr. Chairman, ranking minority and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on such a critical subject as we transition US operations in Afghanistan. Am honored to be with such a distinguished panel who I have known for many years.

Many of the committee members are aware that I have conducted several assessments for our military commanders in Afghanistan having completed my last assessment for Generals Mattis and Allen last year. Those visits have been invaluable to understanding so called “ground truth” by assessing the progress or lack thereof of our campaign plan’s goals and objectives. Given four panel members today, I will keep my remarks brief.

Afghanistan is rapidly moving toward its most critical milestone since 2001, when the Taliban were deposed, as 2014 approaches and Afghanistan participates in a political, economic and security transition. Much of

Afghanistan's future is dependent on the success of 2014. While the economic and security transitions are driven largely by NATO force level reductions, the political transition with a national election is exclusively Afghan as it will impact the confidence of the Afghan people and the international community at large in the political process. A relatively fair and open election that reflects the peoples' choices and results in an improved national government will be a significant step forward in the political development of Afghanistan. I am disappointed that US force levels in 2014 will be so low that they will have negligible impact on the security of the elections.

After almost twelve years of war in Afghanistan the central issue for me is how do we best manage the risk? How do we avoid squandering the gains that we have made in Afghanistan?

Yes, we have been in Afghanistan a long time, driven mainly by US decision to go to war in Iraq. As such, Afghanistan in 2002 quickly became a secondary effort, indeed, an economy of force operation, from 2002 to 2009, when in 2009 the POTUS made a decision to conduct counterinsurgency

operations and to escalate the war by adding thirty thousand surge forces. Even this decision did not reflect what Generals McChrystal and Petraeus believed was the minimum force to succeed, forty thousand surge forces. Instead, they received a force which was 25% smaller, which dictated that the campaign in the SOUTH and EAST be conducted sequentially versus simultaneously. The campaign in the SOUTH was largely successful, while the campaign in the EAST was never completed, because the surge forces were withdrawn prematurely in 2012, over General Petraeus' objection. Recently the POTUS made the decision to remove thirty four thousand of the sixty six thousand forces by February 2014 versus keeping the sixty six thousand till the end of 2014. These decisions must be understood because they all have impacted mission success by increasing the risk.

The most serious security situation lies in the EAST, where we were never able to conduct extensive clear and hold operations which led to our success in the SOUTH. As such there are Taliban and Haggani sanctuaries in the EAST not too far from Kabul. It is unrealistic to believe that the ANSF will succeed in the EAST, where NATO / ISAF has not. In the SOUTH,

what remains is to consolidate the gains that were made in achieving relative stability which has led to improved security and improved local governance.

Can we mitigate the risk? While I am not certain, I know to not try will doom us to likely fail. Three key decisions can begin to mitigate the risk and provide a hedge:

POST 2014 RESIDUAL FORCE

---First, is the size and missions of the residual, post 2014 force. There are 3 missions for the force: counter-terrorism (CT), training and assistance, and enablers to ANSF. The CT mission to have the necessary reach to be effective must operate from 3 locations, Khost, Jalalabad and Kandahar. These units require drone crews, analysts, helicopters with maintenance, medical trauma units and security forces. If we consolidate the CT force within a single base then we are not mitigating the risk, we are increasing it by not having an effective CT force.

The training and assistance mission spreads across three Army Corps and across police zones is primarily advisors to assist with the continued growth

and development of the ANSF. An advisory brigade should be assigned to each corps with responsibility for the police zones in the corps as well.

Finally, are the enablers for the ANSF. This is often misunderstood as to its importance. Just about every NATO country in Afghanistan requires enablers from the US in varying degrees, such as helicopters, intelligence, medical, logistics and road and mine clearance. When the ANA was organized, recruited and trained the decision was to build an infantry force, or a “boots on the ground” force. The enablers would be provided by the US and are similar to what the US provides NATO forces. Eventually, the ANA will have its own enablers but not till beyond 2014. If the ANA is to be offensive minded they must have confidence in their support, otherwise they will be paralyzed and reduced to defending their bases.

A summary of the forces required for a post 2014 residual force are:

CT – 12,000

Training and assistance – 5,000

Enablers – 8,000

Total – 25,000

ANSF FORCE LEVEL

---The second mitigation to reduce the risk is the force level for the ANSF. Currently, at 352 thousand one of the options is to drawdown the ANSF post 2015 to a level of 228 thousand. This makes no sense given the NATO / US drawdown which culminates in 2014 and, we obviously do not know what that impact is. We can mitigate the risk by planning to fund the ANSF at the current 352 thousand to 2020. At some point the Afghans will be in a position to contribute to the funding level.

PAKISTAN SANCTUARIES

---A third mitigation to reduce the risk in to authorize the targeting of the Taliban and Haggani leaders in the sanctuaries in Pakistan. Priority is to the Haggani sanctuary because of the unstable situation in the EAST. This would be an extension of the mission the OGA is conducting against the Al Qaeda in the FATA. Once systematic targeting commences, the sanctuary will cease to exist as we currently know it; a place where strategy, training, operational oversight, intelligence and logistics is executed, routinely, in safe haven. These functions will suffer significantly which will positively impact

operations in the EAST. Additionally, it will be a huge morale boost for the ANSF.

Let me conclude by saying I believe there is far too much risk to a stable security situation in Afghanistan as we meet today. This is driven mostly by US policy decisions. I recognize that many observers are looking to a political settlement as the most desirable outcome, and certainly it is that, but the harsh reality is the more risk there is to mission success the less likelihood of a settlement. If the Taliban and Haggani believe they will gain in influence in 2014 and beyond, why settle? If future policy decisions on US post 2014 force size and ANSF force levels do in fact increase the risk versus mitigate the risk a favorable outcome is unlikely. In that case, it would be hard to justify a US presence beyond 2014. Ambassador Ryan Crocker as many of you know is an extraordinary diplomat, the very best we had in the region, who said: "how we end a conflict and what we leave behind is more important than how we began it".

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

General John M. Keane, United States Army, Retired

General Jack Keane is president, GSI, LLC. He is a director of MetLife and General Dynamics, chairman of the Institute for the Study of War, chairman of the Knollwood Foundation, a member of the Secretary of Defense's Policy Board, the George C. Marshall Foundation, the Center for Strategy and Budget Assessment, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Smith Richardson Foundation, a trustee at Fordham University, and an advisor to two foundations assisting our veterans: Welcome Back Veterans and American Corporate Partners.

General Keane, a four-star general, completed 37 years in public service in December 2003, culminating as acting Chief of Staff and Vice Chief of Staff of the US Army. As the chief operating officer of the Army for 4½ years, he directed one million, five hundred thousand soldiers and civilians in 120 countries, with an annual operating budget of 110 billion dollars. General Keane was in the Pentagon on 9/11 and provided oversight and support for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. He serves as a national security analyst for Fox News and speaks throughout the nation on national security and leadership. Since 2004, General Keane conducted frequent trips to Iraq for senior defense officials having completed multiple visits during the surge period. He played a key role in recommending the surge strategy in Iraq and is featured in many articles and a number of books to include Bob Woodward's The War Within and Tom Rick's The Gamble. Still active in national security, Gen. Keane continues to advise senior government officials on national security and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He recently completed an assessment in Afghanistan in January 2012.

General Keane is a career infantry paratrooper, a combat veteran of Vietnam, decorated for valor, who spent much of his military life in operational commands where his units were employed in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo. He commanded the famed 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and the legendary 18th Airborne Corps, the Army's largest war fighting organization.

General Keane graduated from Fordham University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting and a Master of Arts degree in Philosophy from Western Kentucky University. He is a graduate of the Army War College and the Command and General Staff College.

**DISCLOSURE FORM FOR WITNESSES
CONCERNING FEDERAL CONTRACT AND GRANT INFORMATION**

INSTRUCTION TO WITNESSES: Rule 11, clause 2(g)(5), of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives for the 113th Congress requires nongovernmental witnesses appearing before House committees to include in their written statements a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source of any federal contracts or grants (including subcontracts and subgrants) received during the current and two previous fiscal years either by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness. This form is intended to assist witnesses appearing before the House Committee on Armed Services in complying with the House rule. Please note that a copy of these statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the witness's personal privacy (including home address and phone number) will be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness's appearance before the committee.

Witness name: JACK KEANE

Capacity in which appearing: (check one)

Individual

Representative

If appearing in a representative capacity, name of the company, association or other entity being represented:

FISCAL YEAR 2013

federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
	N/A		

FISCAL YEAR 2012

federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
	N/A		

FISCAL YEAR 2011

Federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant

Federal Contract Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2013): N/A ;
 Fiscal year 2012: _____ ;
 Fiscal year 2011: _____ .

Federal agencies with which federal contracts are held:

Current fiscal year (2013): N/A ;
 Fiscal year 2012: _____ ;
 Fiscal year 2011: _____ .

List of subjects of federal contract(s) (for example, ship construction, aircraft parts manufacturing, software design, force structure consultant, architecture & engineering services, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2013): N/A ;
 Fiscal year 2012: _____ ;
 Fiscal year 2011: _____ .

Aggregate dollar value of federal contracts held:

Current fiscal year (2013): N/A ;
 Fiscal year 2012: _____ ;
 Fiscal year 2011: _____ .

Federal Grant Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has grants (including subgrants) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of grants (including subgrants) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2013): N/A _____;
Fiscal year 2012: _____;
Fiscal year 2011: _____.

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Current fiscal year (2013): N/A _____;
Fiscal year 2012: _____;
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List of subjects of federal grants(s) (for example, materials research, sociological study, software design, etc.):

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Fiscal year 2012: _____;
Fiscal year 2011: _____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal grants held:

Current fiscal year (2013): N/A _____;
Fiscal year 2012: _____;
Fiscal year 2011: _____.



Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee

Prepared Statement of LTG David W. Barno, USA (Ret.)

Senior Advisor and Senior Fellow, Center for a New American Security

February 27, 2013

Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith, Members of the Committee, I'd like to express my appreciation for being invited to appear before you today to address the coming U.S. and NATO transition in Afghanistan. As the war now enters its twelfth year, Americans deserve a serious look at the plans now in place to responsibly conclude our involvement in this long and difficult conflict. My remarks today on that topic reflect my own personal views, and do not represent those of the Center for a New American Security or any other entity.

Unlike our other panelists today, I have had the privilege of commanding the Afghan theater of war. My service there spanned nineteen months from October 2003 to May 2005. My tenure was one of the longest among our eleven different overall U.S. commanders, and occurred at what was certainly a far less violent and more optimistic period of our efforts. Since 2005, I have remained closely in touch with the progress of the war, and have travelled back several times to the theater to observe ongoing operations and speak with Afghans, Pakistanis, Americans and our NATO allies across the region. I have also written and spoken extensively on the course of the conflict during the last eight years.

On a more personal level, both my sons are Army captains who have served a year or more in combat in Afghanistan. Scores of my uniformed friends' sons and daughters -- former playmates of my kids at military posts all across the country -- have served there, where some have been wounded and some killed. My involvement in this very long fight remains thus both personal and professional. I know what it's like as a parent to have a family member at risk in the combat zone. And this outlook is never far from my thinking as I try to reach conclusions about our ongoing efforts, and attempt to think through the road ahead.

Our decisions about transition are set in this context. As we balance seeking to achieve our long-term strategic objectives with the risk inherent in keeping Americans at war in Afghanistan, we must be thoughtful and clear-headed in understanding what has been done, and what can be accomplished at this stage of the war. There is no silver bullet solution, nor any absolute right answer among our looming choices here. But the men and women serving at the tail end of our long war in Afghanistan deserve careful consideration and about the importance of the ends we seek in balance with the lives of young men and women we ask to deliver these ends. In my judgment, their lives only deserve to be put at risk where U.S. vital interests in Afghanistan and this region demand that level of commitment. I know that this calculus is one that this committee takes very seriously.

**CONGRESSIONAL
TESTIMONY**

Transition in Afghanistan: The Road Ahead
Prepared Statement of LTG David W. Barno, USA (Ret.)



Before examining the size and scope of U.S. and Afghan security forces looking ahead to 2014 and beyond, it's worth returning to first principles: what vital interests are the United States seeking to defend in Afghanistan and the region after the end of 2014? What are the absolute essentials? Only by fully understanding this basic, minimalist expression of our overall policy goals for the region can we determine what level of military and financial support will be required in Afghanistan for the this new uncharted period. We all recognize as well that the strategic context of ever-tighter budgets at home driven by years of trillion dollar deficits and a \$16.4 trillion national debt will unquestionably have an impact on decisions on our future commitments in Afghanistan.

In that light then, we must look to U.S. vital interests. As I have noted in previous testimony to this committee in 2011, in my judgment there are three U.S. vital interests at stake in Afghanistan and this region post-2014.

- 1) Preventing the region's use as a base for terror groups to attack the United States and our allies;
- 2) Ensuring nuclear weapons or nuclear materials do not fall into the hands of terrorists or other hostile actors; and,
- 3) Preventing a nuclear conflict between India and Pakistan.

In my estimation, protecting these vital U.S. interests in the coming years requires a U.S. base in the region from which to exert influence on all the regional actors, and to keep relentless pressure on terror groups targeting the United States and our allies. Afghanistan presents the most logical and likely location for such a sustained, if necessarily limited, U.S. military presence. The enduring mission of U.S. forces under this scenario is two-fold: counter-terrorism -- to continue to attack al Qaeda elements in the region who pose a transnational threat to the United States and our allies around the world; and support for Afghan security forces -- to train, advise and assist them in their ongoing fight against the Taliban.

In order to continue to protect these interests after 2014, but do so in a way that husbands taxpayers' scarce dollars, the United States will have to significantly reshape its military presence in Afghanistan. This effort is now underway. The President recently announced a withdrawal of 34,000 of the remaining 66,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan between now and this time next year. The bulk of these troops will continue to serve in Afghanistan throughout the coming April-to-October fighting season, thus preserving maximum flexibility for U.S. commanders on the ground. But the mission of these remaining troops has now shifted inexorably to support for Afghan forces in their fight against the Taliban, rather than taking on that direct combat role themselves. This is a new direction, one that has not been the focus of U.S. efforts for most of the past 11 years.

CONGRESSIONAL
TESTIMONY

Transition in Afghanistan: The Road Ahead
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As part of this shift in focus, U.S. forces now fully shift to a train, advise and assist role as Afghan security forces concurrently take lead for security around the country, while. My colleague Andrew Exum and I wrote in December 2011 that the United States should have taken on this primary role in 2012 (which we called security force assistance). While this shift could have come sooner, making this important move now without delay is vital. Only by allowing the Afghan security forces to take lead will we be able to discern where shortfalls in training, equipment and organization exist, and use the 22 months remaining prior to the end of 2014 to fix those shortcomings.

While U.S. forces will draw down to approximately 32,000 by February of 2014, those remaining forces will be well-postured to play a supporting role to the Afghan presidential election set for April of next year. I should note to this committee that neither the U.S. nor other NATO troops have played, nor in my view should play, a *central* role in the security or administration of previous Afghan elections. Afghans view security for their elections as a sovereign responsibility and their security forces are more than capable of taking on this role, as they did in both 2004 and 2009. The political legitimacy derived from conducting a free and fair election -- by Afghan standards -- is an entirely separate question from military security. While critically important in its own right, it does not fall within the scope of the Afghan or U.S./NATO military effort. U.S. diplomacy should be actively working today to help assure such an outcome in 2014. Afghans have never needed tens of thousands of NATO troops in order to secure an Afghan election. Next year will be no different, although international troops can provide useful supporting efforts.

Upon completion of the April 2014 Afghan presidential election, the remaining 32,000 U.S. troops will in turn be drawn down to the final residual presence that the U.S. plans to maintain post-2014. While no decision has yet been announced by the Administration on those ultimate numbers, recent reports from the NATO ministerial in Brussels may provide some clues. Press reports have indicated that the overall NATO presence might range from between 8,000 to 15,000 troops, including U.S. forces. As I have written recently with my colleague Matthew Irvine in the *Washington Post*, I believe a number in this range would be adequate to sustain key U.S. vital interests in the region. Doing so would entail these residual forces performing two key missions: counter-terrorism against al Qaeda remnants, and a limited effort to train, advise and equip Afghan forces. If the current 2:1 ratio of U.S. troops to NATO forces remains in place, that would suggest a number of about 8,000 to 10,000 U.S. troops.

In my estimation, such a scenario would see the bulk of residual U.S. forces rightfully focused on the CT mission, while other NATO troops would focus on training and advising Afghan security forces. This division of labor focuses U.S. forces on the protection of American vital interests while at the same time providing a long-term viable and important role for our allies. Perhaps most importantly, a comprehensive commitment of this nature signifies a long-term and enduring international commitment to our Afghan partners. Such a message will not be lost on the Afghan people, their government, nor the



Taliban: that after thirteen years, the West is in fact NOT abandoning Afghanistan. The international commitment to a post-2014 enduring (if much smaller) troop presence, accompanied by sustained and significant funding will buttress Afghan confidence immeasurably. At the same time, such a commitment entirely undermines the Taliban's core narrative of western abandonment and eventual victory.

Two final points require emphasis to the committee today.

First, The United States must continue our financial and moral commitment to the nation and people of Afghanistan. The Afghan war to date has cost the United States more than \$600 billion and over 2,100 American lives, with tens of thousands more wounded. Failing to protect long-term U.S. vital interests in this region after 2014 would largely cast aside all of those painful sacrifices. Such an abandonment would signal a regional retreat that would embolden our adversaries and frighten our friends around the world at a time when many are already deeply worried about U.S. retrenchment. Protecting our vital interests in this region after 2014 requires not just a commitment of U.S. troops, but a long-term budgetary commitment by the Congress of the United States. Along with funding from our international partners, we must financially sustain the Afghan security forces that will now be the frontline of the fight against the Taliban insurgency.

Second, the United States and NATO needs to re-look the original plan to reduce Afghan security forces from their peak strength of 352,000 to fewer than 240,000 by 2017. It is increasingly clear that implementing this roll-back of Afghan forces while the insurgency continues is deeply unwise. It will undercut the gains made by Afghan forces, undermine their morale at a critical time, and fuel the Taliban narrative of looming victory as most western forces depart. Rather than continue this ill-advised and somewhat arbitrary drawdown, the west should maintain and resource Afghan security forces at current levels for at least five years after most U.S. troops depart in 2014. A five-year period provides adequate time for Afghan forces to fully stabilize their capabilities after the departure of most western troops, and will enable them to sustain their battles with the Taliban without reducing their forces in the midst of an active insurgency fight. This decision will require not only U.S. and international willpower, but the financial support required for Afghan forces to sustain this fight. With Afghan soldier costing about 1/80th of the cost of one deployed American, this is a high-return investment in sustaining broader stability in the region. As former Afghan foreign minister Abdullah Abdullah observed in late 2009, "30,000 Taliban will never defeat 30 million Afghans." Continued financial support for robust Afghan security forces is the essential ingredient that will allow the Afghan people to ultimately prevail against the Taliban insurgency.

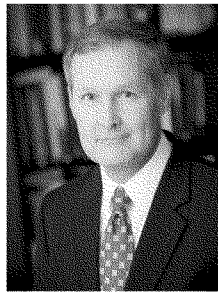
Again, I thank you for the opportunity to present my views on this long and intractable conflict as the U.S. and our international partners consider the road ahead. In many ways, the coming transition is a tipping point for these long-standing efforts in Afghanistan. Making wise choices at this key juncture can help us



secure the gains paid for by Americans and our allies in so much blood and so much treasure over the last decade. Securing our long-term regional vital interests is achievable as we end our combat presence. It will require a limited U.S. and NATO troop footprint paired with sustained international financial support for robust Afghan security forces who will continue to fight a still potent Taliban insurgency. The limited troop deployments and budget outlays required are a prudent investment to help assure stability in this very dangerous part of the world.

Biography

LTG David W. Barno, USA (Ret.) Senior Advisor and Senior Fellow, Center for a New American Security



General Barno, a highly decorated military officer with over 30 years of service, has served in a variety of command and staff positions in the United States and around the world, to include command at every level. He served many of his early years in special operations forces with Army Ranger battalions, to include combat in both the Grenada and Panama invasions. In 2003, he was selected to establish a new three-star operational headquarters in Afghanistan and take command of the 20,000 U.S. and Coalition Forces in Operation Enduring Freedom. For 19 months in this position, he was responsible for the overall military leadership of this complex political-military mission, devising a highly innovative counterinsurgency strategy in close partnership with the U.S. embassy and coalition allies. His responsibilities included regional military efforts with neighboring nations and involved close

coordination with the Government of Afghanistan, the United Nations, NATO International Security Assistance Force, the U.S. Department of State and USAID, and the senior military leaders of many surrounding nations and numerous allies.

From 2006-2010, General Barno served as the Director of the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University. Concurrently, he was the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom Veterans and Families from 2007-2009. He frequently serves as an expert consultant on counterinsurgency and irregular warfare, professional military education and the changing character of conflict, supporting a wide-range of government and other organizations. General Barno is widely published and has testified before Congress numerous times. He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the International Institute of Strategic Studies.

A 1976 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, General Barno also earned his master's degree in National Security Studies from Georgetown University. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the U.S. Army War College. General Barno has received numerous awards for his military and public service.

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Witness name: DAVID W. BARNO

Capacity in which appearing: (check one)

Individual

Representative

If appearing in a representative capacity, name of the company, association or other entity being represented:

FISCAL YEAR 2013

federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
CAERUS	DEPT OF DEFENSE	\$ 21,000	AFAAK HANDS PROGRAM
CGRT	DEPT OF ARMY	\$ 37,000	ARMY LEADER DEVELOPMENT

FISCAL YEAR 2012

federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
CAERUS	DEPT OF DEFENSE	\$ 23,500	AFAAK HANDS PROGRAM
CGRT	DEPT OF ARMY	\$ 37,000	ARMY LEADER DEVELOPMENT

FISCAL YEAR 2011

Federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
<i>NONE</i>			

Federal Contract Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2013): 2 ;
 Fiscal year 2012: 2 ;
 Fiscal year 2011: 0 ;

Federal agencies with which federal contracts are held:

Current fiscal year (2013): DOD / DEPT OF ARMY ;
 Fiscal year 2012: DOD / DEPARTMENT OF ARMY ;
 Fiscal year 2011: - ;

List of subjects of federal contract(s) (for example, ship construction, aircraft parts manufacturing, software design, force structure consultant, architecture & engineering services, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2013): LEADER DEVELOPMENT / AFPAK HANDS ;
 Fiscal year 2012: LEADER DEVELOPMENT / AFPAK HANDS ;
 Fiscal year 2011: - ;

Aggregate dollar value of federal contracts held:

Current fiscal year (2013): _____ ;
 Fiscal year 2012: \$ 60,500 ;
 Fiscal year 2011: - ;

Federal Grant Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has grants (including subgrants) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of grants (including subgrants) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2013): — ;
Fiscal year 2012: — ;
Fiscal year 2011: — .

Federal agencies with which federal grants are held:

Current fiscal year (2013): — ;
Fiscal year 2012: — ;
Fiscal year 2011: — .

List of subjects of federal grants(s) (for example, materials research, sociological study, software design, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2013): — ;
Fiscal year 2012: — ;
Fiscal year 2011: — .

Aggregate dollar value of federal grants held:

Current fiscal year (2013): — ;
Fiscal year 2012: — ;
Fiscal year 2011: — .

**The Uncertain Role of the ANSF in
Transition:**

*Establishing Real World Criteria
and Metrics*

Testimony to the House Armed Service
Committee
February 27, 2013

Anthony H. Cordesman
Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy
acordesman@gmail.com

Executive Summary

The effectiveness of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are only one element of success in Afghanistan, but they are critical to providing lasting security and stability and denying Afghanistan as a future base for international terrorism and extremism.

If the US and its allies are to succeed in Afghanistan, it must continue to support the ANSF and provide them with the capability to support a successful Transition to Afghan responsibility to security. However, for a successful Transition to occur the US must change the way in which it evaluates the ANSF's prospects for success, be ready to provide the necessary resources, and focus on the actual ability to achieve security rather than force building and evaluation tools like the CMA and CUAT system.

Two key criteria for success are external to the ANSF, and will require careful attention and support from the US. First, the ANSF cannot succeed without effective Afghan leadership and a reasonable degree of national unity following the 2014 election. Second, the ANSF cannot survive without adequate external funding through at least 2017.

The US and its allies – including the US Congress – must also understand the challenges both US and ISAF trainers and partners face, and the challenges the Afghans face as well. The present focus on force generation is being driven by pressures that mean change is inevitable once Transition occurs. These pressures include:

- A failure to meet initial US and ISAF military surge goals, implement the 2010 campaign plan, and back the US build-up with a viable civilian surge.
- Major shortfalls in providing the levels of Afghan governance and rule of law efforts in the field necessary to make ANSF efforts effective.
- The inability of the Afghan government to treat the real world impact of power brokers, corruption, narcotics, and criminal networks around and within the ANSF and to treat these problems as if they did not exist.
- The long history of underfunding and erratic funding by outside states and shortfalls in trainers and partners.
- Long periods in which salaries were not competitive and high levels of annual attrition and turnover took place.
- Steady rises in ANSF force goals based largely on arbitrary numbers and force goals accompanied by steady efforts to reduce the time available to achieve them.
- Ongoing reductions in US and allied force levels, often with limited warning and that are larger and sooner than previously anticipated.
- Reductions in outyear annual cost from some \$9 billion to \$6 billion to \$4.1 billion.
- Constant changes in performance standards and goals.

This requires a new approach to assessing the development of Afghan forces based on a net assessment of how they actually perform relative to insurgent factions and one linked that tied to a similar assessment of the success of Afghan governance in winning popular support relative that of the insurgents and other factions.

Policy-level attention must shifting from a focus on force building metrics to the overall success of the key elements of the ANSF in helping to bring security and stability and

win popular support for the government at the provincial and key District level. This, in turn, will require ISAF to develop far more realistic and honest reporting on progress in security, and the overall success of Transition, than it has made public to date.

It also seems clear that setting largely arbitrary force goals like 352,000 men – or 228,500 in the future – needs to be replaced by a focus on the force elements that can actually perform effectively in the field. These include the Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), and Afghan Local Police (ALP). It is these forces – which make up a little over half of the current ANSF – that will determine whether the ANSF can contain and defeat the insurgents during 2013-2014 and beyond.

Other elements of the Afghan National Police (ANP) – such as the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) and Afghan Border Police (ABP) – will have some utility. They will, however, remain corrupt, have limited effectiveness, lack support from effective governance in the field and from the other elements of a criminal justice system. They also are likely to revert to control by local power brokers.

The US and its allies must also recognize that many elements of the ANSF will not be fully ready for transition before 2016-2017, and that– if combat continues – they will require outside support in the form of airpower, trainers, intelligence, and sustainment. At the same time, current force development plans cannot survive engagement with reality. The Afghans must restructure their force development plans to do it their way, to cope with the problems posed by power brokers, ethnic and tribal factions, and corruption.

This requires more realistic plans for the future of each element of the ANSF based on year-by-year plans for transition and force building and tied to detailed funding plans. It also requires a new approach to force building metrics that adapts the CM and CUAT to Afghan needs and capabilities rather than outside standards. The Department of Defense reports that US and its allies are already transferring responsibility for this aspect of reporting to Afghan developed metrics. The key elements of the ANSF must use this opportunity both to develop metrics designed to meet Afghan rather than outside needs and their own net assessment approach necessary to determine their capabilities for Transition.

Like every aspect of Afghan governance and politics, the end result is unlikely to meet the current planned goals set by the US, ISAF and aid donors. It may, however, still meet real world meet Afghan needs and provide a level of strategic success the US can credibly hope to achieve.

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Introduction

Any real world assessment of the role of the ANSF in Transition must be based on the fact that the criteria for assessment have changed fundamentally in the course of the last two years. The issue is no longer the level of progress in generating new elements of the Afghan forces with only vague constraints on cost and time. It is whether an effective mix of Afghan forces can take over from the remaining elements of US and ISAF forces and related support by the end of 2014, and do so in support of an effective Afghan government with enough resources to survive.

This does not mean that past metrics are unimportant, but it does mean that many are at best of marginal value. Using rating systems to measure progress in creating, training, and equipping given unit elements or aspects of the force structure is not a measure of whether the ANSF will be effective or sustainable in a post Transition period. Neither, for that matter, is whether individual units are capable of operating independently or in the lead at some unstated level of performance and combat intensity.

The test of Afghan forces is not success in meeting some outside scoring system for force development. It lies in whether key elements of the force like the ANA and ANCOF can maintain or increase security in critical areas, actually assume responsibility for security, and contain or defeat insurgent movements like the Taliban and Haqqani Network. The issue is one of net assessment, not whether unit elements are “in the lead,” and it cannot be separated from the quality of the Afghan government and civil political, governance, and economic stability of the country.

In short, assessment of the ANSF should now be based on a net assessment of whether its key elements will be able to provide security over enough of the country to hold Afghanistan together, and do so with far more limited resources and outside aid. This involves a very different set of criteria, enablers, and metrics, and one that the US and ISAF urgently need to adopt.

National Leadership, Politics, and Unity of Effort

Given the past history of force building efforts in Vietnam, El Salvador, Columbia, the Balkans and Iraq; Afghanistan’s future leadership, political unity, and overall quality of governance in the field are likely to be most important criteria determining the effectiveness of the ANSF. No matter how well the ANSF is created, advised, and partnered, it cannot succeed with a weak leader in “Kabulstan” and/or the lack of some viable form of unity and governance outside it.

The Impact of Leadership, Political Alignments, and Corruption

The legitimacy of the election will be an important factor in determining whether the leader it produces has popular support. But the leadership qualities of next Afghan leader and the unity of the various ethnic and sectarian power brokers will be critical. Real legitimacy is never based on how a leader is chosen, but on the quality and popular perceptions of how well he leads.

This has already emerged as a high-risk area for transition and for the future of the ANSF. It is not clear that there is an effective replacement for Karzai. Creating honest and effective provincial and district governance remains a critical problem and one where recent SIGAR studies and Department of Defense reports indicate limited progress has been made little additional progress is likely as aid efforts are cut and withdrawn from the field during 2013-2014.

The real political and power structure of Afghanistan still consists of the Afghan president's ability to balance given factions, ethnic groups, power brokers and warlords – some of which are tied to criminal networks, some of which are deeply corrupt, and some of which have links to the insurgents.

The real effectiveness of the ANSF depends upon the leader's willingness to commit forces where they are most needed, manage and promote on the basis of merit, keep corruption to limited and popularly acceptable levels, and make effective use of tactics like night raids, air strikes, detentions, and other measures which require a careful balance between military effectiveness and the political and popular impact of the tactics involved. They depend on allocating resources for governance and the rest of the legal system in ways that build an effective mix of popular support and security, and on the willingness to both use and support the use of US and other ISAF forces where they are needed.

These are all areas where Karzai showed limited leadership ability, a tendency to focus on power brokering and winning short-term popular support, and created growing constraints on the effectiveness of US, other ISAF, and ANSF forces over time. They are also areas where Karzai's lack of support for other US and ISAF forces may have helped create serious problems in terms of green of blue attacks and popular resentment of foreign forces. They are all areas where Karzai made many promises to deal with corruption and either found symbolic scapegoats or use anti-corruption to enhance his own power.

As is discussed later, the polling data on corruption in the latest SIGAR report track closely with reports of groups like Transparency International that warn every element of Afghan governance – including the MoD, MoI, and most elements of the ANSF – is corrupt and perceived as corrupt by the Afghan people.¹As bad as this current situation is, it is far from clear that the next leader will be able to balance various factions as well as Karzai, and the reemergence of a Northern Alliance is only one warning signal of the fact that the leadership that emerges out of the 2014 election will be critical to the future of both the ANSF and the ability of the US and outside powers to support it.

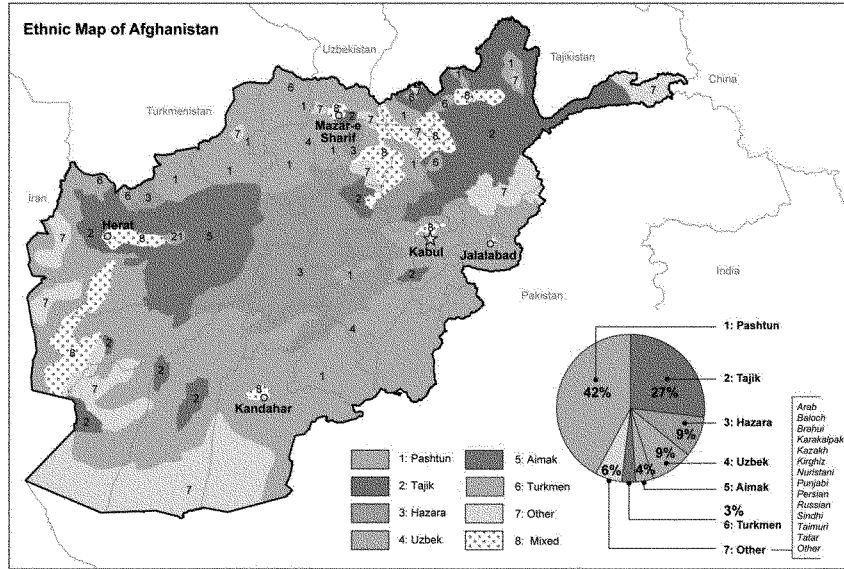
The February 2013 Quarterly Report by SIGAR, and work by Catherine Dale and Ken Katzman of the Congressional Research Service, warn that key elements of leadership and governance will be missing through at least 2014.² Effective governance is still lacking at the provincial, district, and local level in many areas, and so are the civil elements of a rule of law necessary to allow a police force to work and maintain its integrity. The ANSF cannot operate in a vacuum, and weak local governance can ensure its ineffectiveness, reinforce its corruption, and either empowers power brokers or the insurgents.

Some senior Afghans have privately made it clear that they believe success will not depend on the election but on some new agreement among power brokers to make it through Transition. Others have made it clear that there is a real risk of Transition producing a mix of a weak “Kabulstan” and regions under power broker control, or even some form of coup within the ANA.

It is all too clear from examples like Iraq, that there is a risk of an ethnic leader effectively taking control of the military, a quick break up of the police into local ethnic and sectarian factions, and divisions within the Afghan Army along ethnic lines. The basic ethnic divisions in Afghanistan are shown in **Figure 1**, although this map does not distinguish important differences within the Pashtuns, and does not reflect critical tribal and geographic divisions within the structure of Afghan politics and power brokers. Much of the real world future of Transition will depend on the post-2014 alignment of tribal factions in the east and south both in terms of limiting insurgent influence in the border and less populated areas, and in determining to what level key power brokers in populated areas will align with the central government.

There are no metrics that make it possible to estimate the probabilities involved in some form of factional division of the country and ANSF, but it is striking that OSD reported in December 2012 that Tajiks made up some 40% of the officer and 41% of the NCO corps (p. 58), while Tajiks only make up roughly 27% of the population according to the CIA. Uzbeks, Hazara, and other ethnic/sectarian groups are badly underrepresented at the top while the Pashtuns are also over-represented.³

Figure 1: Kabulstan vs. Afghanistan: Ethnic and Sectarian Divisions⁴



Source: GAO analysis of Central Intelligence Agency and National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency data; National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and Map Resources (maps).

Ethnic Structure of ANA Q42012

	Pashtun	Tajik	Hazara	Uzbek	Others
Officer	43.1%	39.5%	7.4%	4.3%	5.8%
Officer Delta	-0.9%	14.5%	-2.6%	-3.7%	-7.2%
NCO	49.6%	41.3%	5.6%	2.0%	1.4%
Soldier	42.6%	30.9%	11.7%	8.2%	6.6%
Total Force	44.8%	35.2%	9.3%	5.8%	4.9%
Delta	0.8%	10.2%	-0.7%	-2.2%	-8.1%
ANA Ethnic Breakout Requirement	44%	25%	10%	8%	13%

This mix of weak central governance, weaker and divided governance in the field, real rule by local power broker and tribal faction, and corruption does not mean Afghanistan cannot function after Transition, but it does mean that the ANSF will be under intense, and potentially divisive political pressure. Key elements may divide along regional, ethnic, and power broker lines, the relative influence in Pashtun areas will be critical in checking the insurgents, and the next President risks becoming steadily more isolated in Kabul, tied to regional and ethnic factions, and/or forced to try to use the ANSF to preserve personal power. Saigon and Baghdad are practical examples of the potential extremes.

Focusing on the Real World Effectiveness of Key Elements of the ANSF

The future effectiveness of the ANSF has to be viewed in both political terms and by force element. **Figure 2** summarizes their current and probable post-Transition capabilities in these terms, and it should be clear that only two force elements – the ANA and ANCOPs – have a high probability of emerging as effective national forces. Even if fully staffed their peak-manning goal, they would only total some 186,503 men, or 53% of the goal of 352,000.

The differences between given elements of the ANSF, and the external forces shaping these differences, are described in more detail later in this analysis. They are summarized in **Figure 2**, and it is important to realize that even the ANA and ANCOP forces will have serious problems in their future performance without effective Afghan political leadership and unity. Additionally, many – if not most – of the various other elements of the Afghan National Police are likely to remain problematic in terms of integrity, loyalty, and effectiveness well beyond 2014 and indefinitely into the future.

Figure 2 also shows, however, that the 352,000-man goal does not include a goal of 30,000-40,000 Afghan Local Police, 11,000-23,000 Afghan Public Protection Force personnel, and an unknown number of independent militia(s) – some of which do receive some form of government support. If these now transitional and uncertain programs go forward to their present goals, they would total 41,000 to 63,000 men, and represent highly political wild cards in the ANSF. At present, however, there is no clear way to rate them and it seems unlikely that neither the ALP nor APPF will emerge at end-2014 in anything like their presently planned form.

Figure 2: The Power Structure of Afghan Forces During and After Transition in 2014⁵

Force Element	Manpower		Current and Future Status
	Goal	Total % of ANSF	
MOD	NA	NA	The Ministry of Defense (MoD) has a reasonable level of leadership integrity by Afghan standards, but is subject to political influence and problems with favoritism and corruption in promotions and contracting. Being rushed into premature readiness. End-2014 is too early a date of does not have continuing outside support. Future effectiveness will, depend far more on

			post-2014 election leadership than training and readiness to assume effective management of ANA.
ANA	172,055	49%	The Afghan National Army (ANA) had 174,645 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. It is a force that is still very much in transition with a growing number of effective combat elements (Kandaks = US battalions). It has seven corps the size of US divisions, a 12,525 man Special Operations Force, and 44,712 men (13% of entire ANSF) in support elements. Force development has been consistently rushed since 2009 and the goal of creating a mature force by end 2014 has been severely affected by problems in creating the MoD, a shortfall in the number of qualified trainers and partners, increases in the force goal levels and condensed timing for security transfer. The ANA has substantially less corruption than any element of ANSF other than ANCOP. But there are still problems and question about links of some elements to powerbrokers. Attrition and shortfalls in qualified officers and NCOs will remain problems through 2014. <i>May well be capable of forcing insurgents to stay out of critical populated areas, or at least marginalizing their influence if receive full funding, substantial US partnering and enabling during 2014-2017, if new Afghan president is effective leader, and if political and ethnic factions can achieve a working post2014 election modus vivendi.</i>
AAF	7,639	2%	The Afghan Air Force (AAF) had 5,872 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. It has had major problems with development and corruption. It is not intended to be ready of self-sufficient before the end of 2016 and even then will have limited combat capability. This may make continued US air support critical through at least 2017 – a requirement that will continue to raise issues over civilian casualties and collateral damage.
ANA+AAF Subtotal	195,000	55%	
MOI	NA	NA	A reasonable level of leadership integrity by Afghan standards, but far more subject to political influence, problems with favoritism, and corruption in promotions and contracting than the MoD. Being rushed into premature readiness. End-2014 is too early if the MOI does not have continuing outside support. Future effectiveness will, again depend far more on post-2014 election leadership than training and readiness to assume effective management of various elements of ANP, and the MoI will remain far more subject to outside political pressure than MoD.
ANCOP	14,451	4%	The Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) is a relatively effective paramilitary force with 14,383 men assigned in Q4 2012. The ANCOP is the only element of ANP consistently capable of counterinsurgency operations. Currently loyal to central government, but has a high attrition rate and much depends on the next president.
AUP	110,279	31%	The Afghan Uniform Police (AUP) had 106,235 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. The AUP are a deeply divided force with some good elements and many corrupt and ineffective elements

			<p>tied to powerbrokers. There are some elements with probable links to insurgents and criminal networks. Operations are often very limited in Districts with significant insurgent elements. Lacks support of effective local government and other elements of justice system in many areas. There are major shortages in advisors and partners and many elements of the ANSF are unrated by. There is an uncertain overall ability to sustain readiness and training levels, pay, and selection and promotion by merit if advisors phase down. Many elements likely to devolve to force elements tied to local power brokers, make deals with insurgents, or collapse after 2014.</p>
ABP	23,090	7%	<p>The Afghan Border Police (ABP) had 21,928 personnel assigned in Q4 2012. The force had some good elements, and others that were corrupt, but actively fought or resisted insurgents. However, there are many corrupt and ineffective elements operating as local power brokers or tied to powerbrokers. Often guilty of extortion in AOR or at checkpoints, and sometimes seizure of boys. Some elements with links to criminal networks and working arrangements with insurgents. Serious problem in terms of lost government revenues because of corruption. Many elements likely to devolve to force elements tied to local power brokers, make deals with insurgents, or collapse after 2014.</p>
ANP Subtotal	157,000	45%	
CNPA	2,986?	0.8%	<p>The Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan are a small force that had 2,581 men assigned in Q4 2012. They are a small force charged with helping to implement a large program that has cost some \$6.1 billion since 2002. Their effectiveness is unclear, and as is the broader role of the ANSF – which often does not operate in key narcotic growing areas, or has tailored eradication to support given power brokers and respond to bribes. The overall effort has had little impact since 2010, although disease and drought have affected total production. UNDOC estimates that the area under cultivation increased from 131,000 hectares in 2011 to 154,000 in 2012, and major increases took place in southern areas under Taliban influence.</p>
Total ANSF	352,000	100%	
ALP	30,000-40,000	NA	<p>A force very much in development and manned at only 16,474 in December 2012 with enough problems and links to Taliban so that SOJIF was re-validated manning. However, it has shown that elements have been effective where Afghan, US, and other special forces or high quality trainers are present and efforts to improve local security maintain links to the ANP/Mol are supported by governance and development activity like the Village Stability Operations. Recruiting and manning has largely tribal elements, many with ties to local power brokers and some with past ties to insurgent elements. Can potentially be a critical element in limiting insurgent presence or control, but can easily break up or change sides as outside advisors withdraw or if the central government lacks unity and leadership.</p>

APPF	11,000- 23,000	NA	In theory, the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) will replace private security companies (PSCs) with an 11,000-23,000man government run security force with 270-445 sites. The PSC do present major problems in terms of ties to power brokers, corruption, high cost, failure to provide effective security, and de facto deals with insurgents to permit movement and cargo transfers rather than providing actual security. The creation of the APPF, however, is more a Karzai power grab than a real security reform. The APPF has fallen far behind the goal of replacing PSCs this year, future capability is highly uncertain, and is likely to be loyal to the highest bidder in a post-2014 environment.
Militias	NA	NA	There is no meaningful unclassified data on their number and strength, but they range from small local elements to significant forces and often play a key role in local security, or in supporting power brokers. Little or no real loyalty to government; and often exploit and abuse power, are corrupt, tied to criminal networks, or make deals with insurgents. As much of a threat to unity and effective governance as a check on insurgents.

A Caution About Peace Negotiations

There is a further wild card. It is important to realize that peace negotiations cannot be decoupled from plans for the ANSF. At least to date, the official Taliban or “Emirates” line is that the Afghan central government is a puppet regime, the ANSF are tools of the US, and any negotiation would require all US and outside forces to leave – presumably include trainers and advisors.

As cases like China, Vietnam and Nepal make clear, peace negotiations can easily be turned into an extension of war by other means, and particularly if outside powers use them to rush to the exits. Even good plans that separate opposing forces can easily become the focus of power struggles and civil conflict. The search for peace does not depend on preserving the current plans for the ANSF, but it must not be decoupled from clear plans for their future role and size. It is also clear that virtually any plan acceptable to the Taliban could mean drastic changes in both the current role and structure of the ANSF and outside funding and advisors.

Money as a Key ANSF Metric

History provides clear warnings that the continued availability of enough money to fund the ANSF, and the degree of honesty in distributing that money, will be another key criteria shaping the ANSF’s real world effectiveness. At present, there are no credible unclassified data on either the future costs involved or the level of funds that will really be made available.

There have been vague statements about future funding of the ANSF at \$4.1 billion a year, but with no definition of why the figure is \$4.1 billion, where the money will really go, or the cost of combat. This disguises the reality that it is more important to have the ability to consistently pay for the necessary mix of forces than having scoring systems that count equipment, manning, and training, or the level of independence of given units.

At present, neither ISAF nor DoD has presented any meaning public details on the project cost and detailed plan for the future development of the ANSF. SIGAR and GAO have, however, provided the kind of cost profiles shown in **Figure 3**.

A History of Erratic Resourcing

The SIGAR data for FY2005-FY2012 at the top of **Figure 3** include spending that accounts for roughly 90% of the total US *and* other outside funding of the ANSF. The data also show something that is all too easy to forget in evaluating both ANSF progress and the quality of the training and force building effort. Serious funding did not begin until FY2007, and quickly saturated a training and force development base that lacked the personnel to do the job. This led to a pause in FY2008, and consistent funding did not begin until FY2009.

Delays between authorization and disbursement meant that the ANSF force building effort only gathered full funding momentum in FY2010, and as of end FY2012, SIGAR calculated that only \$38.14 billion of \$55.37 billion in authorized funds for the Afghan Security Force Fund – the chief source of force building money– had actually been disbursed. Actually manning the training bases really only took place in FY2010 and is still seriously short qualified trainers.

The Need to Fund the Future

The key lesson for Congress, the Administration, and other donors should draw from this history – and from the collapse of ARVN forces in Vietnam and of Najibullah’s Afghan forces in the post-Soviet period –is that erratic funding resources for the ANSF and manning for trainer/partner roles are at best “force delayers” and at worst “force killers.” Resourcing the force is as important as shaping it and the same GAO report that provides the funding profile at the bottom of **Figure 3** warns that,⁶

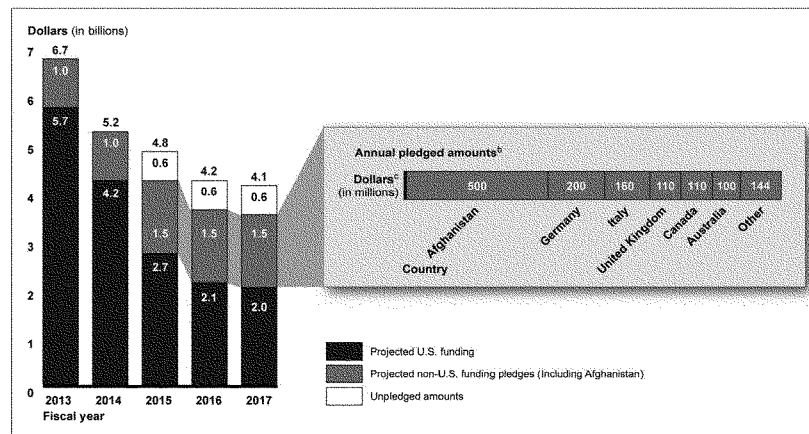
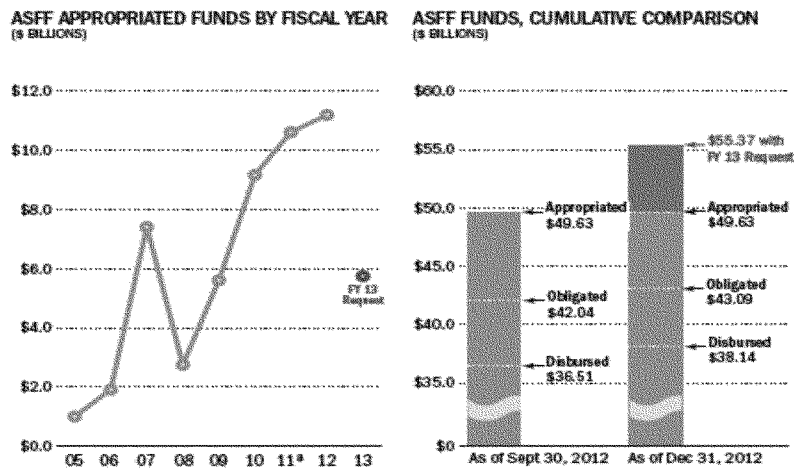
Our analysis shows that projected Afghan domestic revenues will be insufficient to cover the cost of ANSF through fiscal year 2015. Our analysis of DOD data estimates that the cost of continuing to build and sustain ANSF will be at least \$25 billion for fiscal years 2013 through 2017. Multiple factors are expected to influence the final cost of sustaining ANSF, including the size of the force—which is expected to decline, according to a preliminary model, from 352,000 to 228,500 by 2017—as well as planned reductions in infrastructure and training costs by 2014. According to DOD, continuous efforts are made to adjust ANSF capabilities and requirements to achieve cost reductions, including the Afghan First (the purchase of goods and services from Afghan producers) and Afghan Right (building and procuring items according to Afghan specifications) initiatives.

At the Chicago Summit, the Afghan government pledged to devote at least \$500 million in 2015 and annually thereafter to funding ANSF, which is about 14 percent of its 2015 projected domestic revenues. However, even if the Afghan government committed 100percent of its projected domestic revenues to funding ANSF, this amount would cover only about 75 percent of the cost of supporting security forces in fiscal year 2015 and would leave the Afghan government no revenues to cover any non-security-related programs, such as public health.

At the Chicago Summit, the United States and its allies laid out a plan for future funding for ANSF; the U.S. annual contribution is projected to decline over time but still cover the majority of the costs. Our analysis shows that donors funded about 95 percent (\$33.7 billion) of Afghanistan’s total security expenditures, with the United States funding approximately 91 percent (\$32.4 billion) of that amount from 2006 through 2011.

On the basis of projections of U.S. and other donor support for ANSF for fiscal years 2012 through 2017, we estimate that there will be a gap each year from 2015 through 2017 between ANSF costs and donor pledges if additional contributions are not made (see fig. 7). According to State, excluding Afghan and U.S. funds, the international community has pledged over \$1 billion annually to support ANSF from 2015 through 2017.

Figure 3: Projected US and Other Donor Support for the ANSF⁷



Source: GAO analysis of Departments of Defense and State data.

If the US wants the ANSF to be successful, it must be prepared to pay what it takes on a contingency basis for as long as it takes. This does not mean agreeing to an arbitrary \$4.1 billion a year, but it does mean agreeing to fund a credible Afghan force plan and being

willing to adjust that funding at conditions-based levels. Moreover, funding the ANSF will be pointless if the US does not also ensure that enough civil aid will be available to keep the civil economy from gravely weakening or imploding as aid funds and outside military spending in country is cut.

Economic realism is as critical as realism about the future capabilities of the ANSF. The absurd claims that State, USAID, and UNAMA have made about the progress Afghanistan has made in terms of increases in GDP and per capita income in past years may well come back to haunt the ANSF as well as the Afghan government's ability to function and every aspect of Afghan stability.

Experts like Ken Katzman may overstate dependence on outside funding when they say it accounts for some 95% of the GDP.⁸ However, even low end estimates from officials in the EXIM Bank indicate it must account for over 40%, and that almost all of the growth in the GDP as defined in market terms has been driven by outside expenditures and not development. And even if there was a credible statistical base for an estimate of the total Afghan GDP in either market or PPP terms, it still would be meaningless to quote per capita income statistics when sources like the Afghan Central Statistics Organization, CIA, State, World Bank, IMF, and UN produce estimates of the population varying between 26 and 36 million.

The key role of money in shaping the ANSF's future is further illustrated by the limited ability of the Afghan government to fund *both* the ANSF and all its other needs over at least the period through 2020. The present limits to Afghanistan's ability to fund its own expenses are summarized in **Figure 4**, and the GAO reports that,⁹

...the U.S. government could not fully determine the overall extent to which its efforts had improved the Afghan government's public financial management capacity because (1) U.S. agencies have reported mixed results; and (2) weaknesses in USAID's performance management frameworks, such as lack of performance targets and data, prevent reliable assessments of its results (p. 27).

Afghanistan's domestic revenues funded about 10 percent of its estimated total public expenditures from 2006 to 2011. Domestic revenue grew from \$0.6 billion to \$2.0 billion from 2006 to 2011 (see fig. 9), an increase of over 230 percent. At the same time, Afghanistan's estimated total public expenditures grew from \$5.8 billion to \$17.4 billion, an increase of over 200 percent, maintaining a gap between revenues and expenditures.

Donors funded approximately 90 percent of Afghanistan's estimated total public expenditures from 2006 to 2011, with the United States providing 64 percent of that amount... The United States funded an estimated 91 percent of Afghanistan's total security expenditures and about 37 percent of Afghanistan's total nonsecurity expenditures between 2006 to 2011. In numerous reports and congressional briefings, we have raised concerns about Afghanistan's inability to fund planned government expenditures without foreign assistance and raised questions about the sustainability of U.S.-funded road, agriculture, and water infrastructure development projects, as well as Afghanistan's ability to sustain its national security forces.

Donors funded, on average, 56 percent of Afghanistan's on-budget expenditures and 100 percent of its off-budget expenditures. Between 2006 and 2011 about 79 percent of Afghanistan's estimated \$73 billion in total public expenditures were "off-budget"—that is, funded by the international community outside of the Afghan national budget, such as equipment for Afghan National Security Forces. The remaining expenditures were "on-budget"—that is, within the government's budget and funded by domestic revenues and donor contributions. As a result, a majority of Afghanistan's total public expenditures were outside the direct control of the Afghan government.

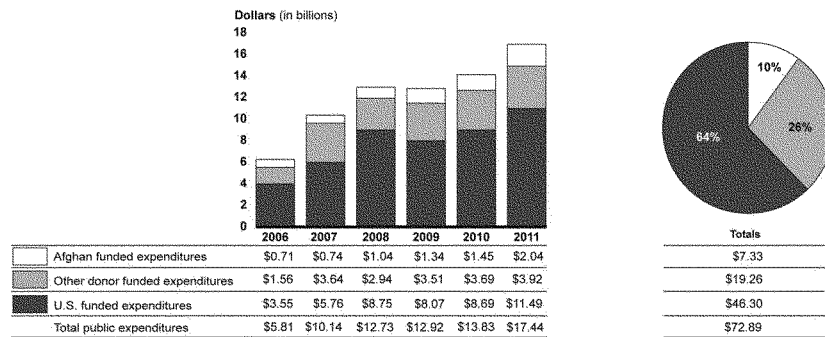
The international community has pledged to continue to support Afghanistan through 2017 if certain metrics regarding reform in Afghanistan are met. Given Afghanistan’s future revenue generation projections and expenditures, the country will likely continue to be reliant on the donor community through at least 2024. In July 2012, the international community committed to providing over \$16 billion for Afghanistan’s economic development through 2015.

As Transition proceeds, the outside money that has driven past GDP increases will largely disappear, the poverty level will rise for about one-third of the population, malnutrition and food supply problems will grow, paying for a massive trade deficit will become much more difficult, more money will flow out of the country, and dependence on the narcotics sector will rise. Moreover, narcotics, criminal activity, and corruption will become an even more important part of the domestic Afghan economy.¹⁰

Vietnam did not collapse because of force quality. Najibullah did not fall because the Afghan forces supporting him lacked training, equipment, and sustainability – or had a poor CM or CUAT rating. He fell because he could no longer pay for the military and payoff tribal militias.¹¹ US willingness to bear most of the cost of the ANSF well beyond 2014 will probably be the second most important test of the ANSF – after leadership and unity – as will the ability of the Afghan government to raise its share of the money and distribute it with some degree of honesty and integrity.

Contrasting withdrawal from Afghanistan from withdrawal from Iraq provides a warning of the dangers that corruption will pose for the funding of the ANSF and its ability to operate with suitable civil governance and popular support. An oil rich Iraq could keep funding enough of its forces to hold them together. Recent SIGAR reporting indicates that a grossly corrupt Afghan government may see ANSF money disappear or leave the country even if the US does keep providing the necessary funds.¹²

Figure 4: Afghan Government Dependence on Outside Aid: 2006-2011¹³



Source: GAO analysis of Afghan, U.S. agencies, and other donor data.

These problems will be especially severe during 2013-2016 because of the “bow wave effect” of past aid funding. Total authorization of US aid funding during rose from \$39.59 billion in FY2006 to \$98.15 billion (if one includes the FY2013 request), and averaged around \$16 billion a year from FY2010 to FY2012 – before dropping to \$9.66

billion in FY2013. No one in the US government has the faintest idea of how much of this money actually reached the Afghan economy in any form, although it is unlikely to have exceeded 30-40%.

The sharp lag between authorization and disbursement means that the flow of US civil and economic aid that actually reaches the country is peaking at a time when Afghanistan has to adapt to a coming crash in economic aid since the international community has pledged a total of only \$16 billion for 2012-2015.¹⁴ This creates a major incentive for Afghan officials to take as much money as possible during what SIGAR calls the “golden hour” and leave the country (the EXIM Bank has estimated that at least \$3 to \$6 billion has flowed out of Afghanistan in recent years). Other problems include the fact that SIGAR and the GAO have found that measures to control the integrity of spending and contracting have not been effective, and most PRTs and field efforts to control and evaluate the follow of money will be withdrawn well before the end of 2014.

Security and Transition

A third key criteria for evaluating the ANSF is the level of security that can be established and maintained in given areas and in the country. Here again, the key to meaningful measurement of the effectiveness of the ANSF does not lie in the metrics that are most useful in building up individual ANSF capabilities and force elements. For a successful Transition, there must be an overall net assessment of the present level of security and if the ANSF is likely to be able to maintain and improve that security in the face of restricted US and ISAF operations and the withdrawing of combat forces over the 2013-2014 time period.

A combination of the ANA, ANCOP, and better elements of the AUP, ABP, and ALP may be able to establish such a level of security during 2013-2017 with suitable outside funding and support. Much depends, however, on whether the US and other outside states actually meet their pledges and provide sustained support, and provide unclassified data on the trends in security that have not been driven by politics and spin and actually provide a meaningful basis for assessment.

US Force Cuts Set the Stage

The broad trends in US forces – which along with Britain have dominated the fighting – are shown in **Figure 5**. Most allied forces are likely to follow a similar pattern in terms of reductions, shifts away from combat roles, and/or new national constraints on combat. For obvious security reasons, most civil aid elements in the field will have to be withdrawn during the course of 2013 and early 2014, and some estimates indicate that the US alone will have cut back from some 90 US-controlled posts and positions in Afghanistan in mid-2012 to a total of only three to five by the end of 2014.

The White House described new US force cut plans, and US goals for Transition and the ANSF, in a statement it issued after President Obama’s State of the Union Address on February 12, 2013:¹⁵

In his State of the Union address, the President announced that the United States will withdraw 34,000 American troops from Afghanistan by this time next year, decreasing the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan by half – the next step to responsibly bringing this war to a close.

- **Afghans in the Lead:** Beginning in the spring of 2013, Afghan forces will assume the lead across the country. Even as our troops draw down, they will continue to train, advise and assist Afghan forces. In that capacity, we will no longer be leading combat operations, but a sizeable number of U.S. forces will provide support for two additional fighting seasons before Afghan forces are fully responsible for their own security.
- **Planning for post-2014:** We are continuing discussions with the Afghan government about how we can carry out two basic missions beyond 2014: training, advising and equipping Afghan forces, and continued counter-terrorism missions against al Qaeda and their affiliates.

The Security Transition Process

At the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon, the United States, our International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) partners, and the Afghan Government agreed to transfer full responsibility for Afghanistan's security to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by the end of 2014. This transition process allows the international community to responsibly draw down our forces in Afghanistan, while preserving hard-won gains and setting the stage to achieve our core objectives – defeating al Qaeda and ensuring it can never again use Afghanistan as a launching pad for attacks against us.

At the Chicago NATO Summit in May 2012, leaders reaffirmed this framework for transition and agreed on an interim milestone in 2013 to mark our progress. This milestone will mark the beginning of the ANSF's assumption of the lead for combat operations across the country. When we reach that milestone this spring, ISAF's main effort will shift from combat to supporting the ANSF. As international forces shift our primary focus to training, advising, and assisting, we will ensure that the Afghans have the support they need as they adjust to their new responsibilities.

Today, Afghan forces are already leading nearly 90 percent of operations, and by spring 2013, they will be moving into the operational lead across the country. These forces are currently at a surge strength of 352,000, where they will remain for at least three more years, to allow continued progress toward a secure environment in Afghanistan.

As the international community's role shifts and Afghan forces continue to grow in capabilities, coalition troop numbers will continue to decrease in a planned, coordinated, and responsible manner. By the end of 2014, transition will be complete and Afghan Security Forces will be fully responsible for the security of their country.

The United States believes that Afghan-led peace and reconciliation is ultimately necessary to end violence and ensure lasting stability of Afghanistan and the region. As the President has said, the United States will support initiatives that bring Afghans together with other Afghans to discuss the future of their country. The United States and the Afghan Government have called upon the Taliban to join a political process, including by taking those steps necessary to open a Taliban office in Qatar. We have been clear that the outcomes of any peace and reconciliation process must be for the Taliban and other armed opposition groups to end violence, break ties with Al Qaeda, and accept Afghanistan's constitution, including its protections for the rights of all Afghan citizens.

The Afghan Government will be holding presidential and provincial council elections in April 2014 and the United States intends to provide technical assistance and funding to support a fair and inclusive process.

The U.S. Role After 2014

In May 2012, President Obama and President Karzai signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement to cement our long-term relationship in the areas of social and economic development, security, and regional cooperation. The United States remains fully committed to a long-term strategic partnership with the Afghan Government and the Afghan people. The steps we are taking now are intended to normalize our relationship, including withdrawing troops in a way that strengthens Afghan sovereignty and the Afghan state, rather than abandoning it, as the international community did in the 1980's and 90's.

While it is too soon to make decisions about the number of forces that could remain in Afghanistan after 2014, any presence would be at the invitation of the Afghan Government and focused on two distinct missions: training, advising and equipping Afghan forces, and continued counter-terrorism missions against al Qaeda and their affiliates. As we move towards decisions about a long-term presence, we will continue to assess the situation on the ground in Afghanistan, assess the capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces, and consult with our Afghan and international partners. We also continue negotiations on a Bilateral Security Agreement with the Afghan Government that would provide the protections we must have for any U.S. military presence after 2014. We hope that agreement can be completed as soon as possible.

Consistent with our goal of ensuring that al Qaeda never again threatens the United States from Afghan soil, the United States has committed to seek funds annually to support training, equipping, advising, and sustaining the ANSF. Helping to fund the ANSF is the best way to protect the investment we all have made to strengthen Afghanistan and insulate it from international terrorist groups.

Strengthening Afghan governance and economic development is also key to achieving our core objective. We've made significant economic and development progress in the past decade, but Afghanistan will require substantial international assistance through the next decade to grow its private sector and promote its integration in greater South Asia's thriving economy. The United States has committed to seek, on a yearly basis, funding for social and economic assistance to Afghanistan. At the July 2012 Tokyo Conference, the international community and Afghanistan agreed on a long-term economic partnership, based on the principle of mutual accountability. We expect Afghan progress in fighting corruption, carrying out reform, and providing good governance as the international community provides support after 2014.

The practical problem with these statements is that the US is clearly accelerating the pace of its overall withdrawal at a time when our allies are either doing the same or changing their rules of engagement in ways that have a similar effect. The Administration has not, however, announced any clear plans for the forces it will retain through 2014 or after its formal combat mission ends.

It is not clear what combat resources will actually remain, what level of training and partnering will exist, or what allied capabilities – if any – will continue. It is unclear what the mission of any remain forces will be, how they will support given elements of the ANSF, their ROEs, basing, or any other element of their capability. Conceptual rhetoric is little more than a smoke and mirrors exercise for covering up the lack of any substantive detail.

Moreover, the present Afghan support for a continued US mission now seems as uncertain as the support Iraq provided during US withdrawal. President Karzai's office did formally welcome the President's announcement in a statement on February 13, 2013:¹⁶

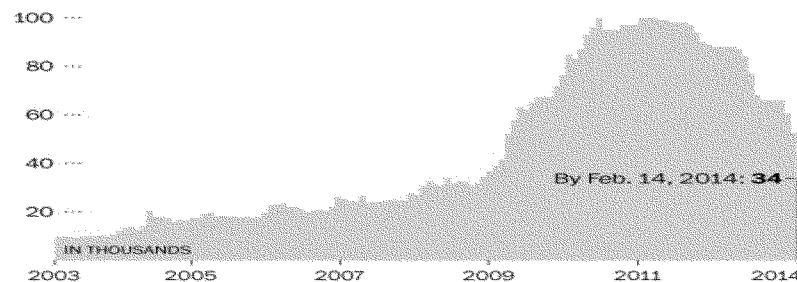
Afghanistan welcomes the announcement by President Obama, who in his state of the union address said that the US would be pulling out another 34000 troops over the next year from

Afghanistan. President Obama added, "This spring, our forces will move into a support role, while Afghan security forces take the lead...This is something Afghanistan has wanted for so long now. The withdrawal in spring of foreign forces from Afghan villages will definitely help in ensuring peace and full security in Afghanistan...As President Obama underscored America's commitment to a unified and sovereign Afghanistan beyond 2014, we hope the bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries could further expand.

However, President Karzai has never shown a serious interest in Afghan military development, has made it clear for several years that he wants to sharply constraint US and ISAF action, and has always focused on politics and power brokering. In many cases, he has been as much a problem in creating effective military forces as an enabler.

It is all too easy to formally transfer responsibility for security to the ANSF and quite another thing to have them actually achieve the level of security that is needed in Afghanistan. Vague promises and good intentions are not a concrete plan for action, and it is still unclear what posture the US or any other ISAF nations will maintain during 2014 or after 2014. Moreover, USAID has circulated graphs showing how rapidly real world funding has been cut in past crises, even concrete pledges are often forgotten, and vague commitments are even easier to forget.

Figure 5: Changes in US Troop Levels: 2003-2014¹⁷



- **Cut from 66,000 in January 2013 to 60,500 by the end of May 2013. By the end of November, the number will be down to 52,000. By the end of February 2014, the troop level is to be around 32,000-34,000.**
- **No force level announcements for rest of 2014 except withdraw all combat forces by end 2014.**
- **US force plans for post-2014 not announced. NYT estimate below 9,000.**
- **No details on future trainers, partners, enablers, combat forces.**

*Withdrawal With or Without Adequate Advisors,
Trainers, Partners, and Enablers?*

Like US and allied spending on Afghan forces, it is as yet unclear what kind of training and combat support they will have in the future. What is clear, however, is that they still

have not corrected the major shortfalls in personnel – much less qualified trainers – that have existed throughout the ANSF force generation effort. DoD reporting indicated that NTM-A had 1,752 trainers in place at the end of 2012 or 67% of a requirement of 2,612 (which had been downsized from a requirement of 2,778 in March 2012). No data were provided on how many of these trainers were qualified.¹⁸

These shortfalls were partly compensated for by rushing the training of Afghan trainers. The ANA had 2,552 of 2,709 required Afghan trainers in place at the end of 2012, but it was unclear how qualified these personnel really were. Moreover, the ANP only had 805 trained instructors to meet a requirement of 1,504 or 46.5%.¹⁹

The data are less clear on the shortfall in partners to ANSF units. DoD reported in December 2012, that 118 of 295 ANA units were being advised and 91 more were partnered. This left a total of 58 units of the ANA that needed outside support or assessment that were not receiving either, and another 28 units where NTM-A reported that assessment was not necessary. Once again, the shortfalls for the ANP were far more severe. A total of 118 of 609 ANP units were advised and 145 more were partnered. This left a total of 143 units of the ANP that needed outside support but had not received support or assessment. Another 201 units did not require assessment according to reporting by the NTM-A. Once again, the shortfalls for the ANP were far more severe.²⁰

There is no way to assess these shortfalls. It is clear from past reports that the present training and partnering process is being rushed, and that the ANSF will have far less US and other ISAF support than was originally planned both before and after 2014. It can be argued the forcing the ANA and ANP to rely on their own resources has a positive as well as a negative effect. However, it is also clear that fewer and fewer units will have outside trainers and partners in 2013 and 2014, and that fewer and fewer units will be independently rated.²¹

The end result is a set of force reductions that seem tailored largely to meet political timing in an effort to rush to the exits, and one that is not tied to the security conditions on the ground.

An Extremely Uncertain Level of Security In Spite of the “Surge”

Regardless of how the CM, CUAT, or some other set of force building scores are used to measure force building progress for the MoD, MoI, and given force elements of the ANSF, the real test of ANSF success will be the level of security provided on a threat basis that incorporates power brokers, criminal networks, insurgents, and other groups that are not affiliated with the government or anti-insurgent forces.

It is also largely meaningless to assess ANSF units based on generic descriptions of how many force elements are in some form of the lead on a national level, or are rated as effective on the basis of training, manning, equipment, facilities, and bureaucratic capabilities rather than actual security performance. It is already all too clear – as it has been in cases ranging from in Vietnam and Iraq – that it is pointless to talk about units as being in the lead without any explanation of what being in the lead actually means in the field, what missions and level of combat are involved, and what is their impact on security in key districts and populated areas.

Moreover, unclassified ISAF reporting on security has become so weak and politicized that it cannot be trusted. ISAF has focused on enemy initiated attacks at a time the insurgents still have secure sanctuaries in Pakistan, can largely avoid direct combat and still infiltrate into new areas, maintain influence in old areas, and even expand their role in areas like narcotics.²²

Relying a Largely Irrelevant Metric: Enemy Initiated Attacks

ISAF reporting – and a great deal of US reporting as well – has come to focus on one set of criteria: Enemy Initiated Attacks or EIAs, and on the period between 2010 and 2012. They have done this because it presents the most favorable set of statistical trends regardless of its lack of military and political meaning.

Trends in EIAs revert to the same kinetic focus on tactical victories in regular combat that characterized a great deal of US and ISAF reporting before the insurgency reached the crisis level in 2008, and in ways strikingly similar to pre-Tet assessments in Vietnam. The result is reporting that focuses on the areas where US, ISAF, and the best ANA forces have a decisive tactical advantage.

Focusing on EIAs ignores the fact that groups like the Taliban are fighting a political war of attrition against US and other ISAF forces that have already largely eliminated insurgents' offensive combat activity but who will be gone at the end of 2014. It ignores that fact the insurgency cannot be defeated by winning tactical clashes, and makes it remarkably difficult to assess either ISAF success or the challenges the ANSF face.

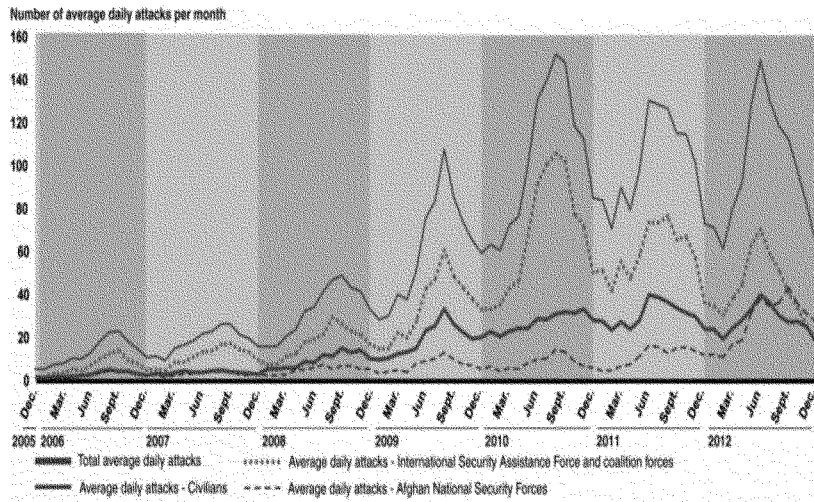
It is also unclear that there have been meaningful positive trends even in EIAs since 2011. ISAF and DoD reporting does indicate that EIA attacks did drop between 2010 and 2011, but also indicates they did not drop meaningfully in 2012 and remain far higher than in 2009.²³ This reporting also shows EIA numbers remained significant in the Kandahar and Northern Helmand River Valley in 2012, and the proportion of national EIAs in populated areas – which had declined significantly in 2010-2011 – did not decline significantly in 2011-2012.²⁴

A more detailed breakout of the trend in EIAs by GAO is shown in **Figure 6**. It not only shows no significant progress when 2010 is compared to 2012, it also shows that the insurgents kept up the pace of their attacks by shifting away from ISAF targets and focusing on ANSF and civilian targets.²⁵

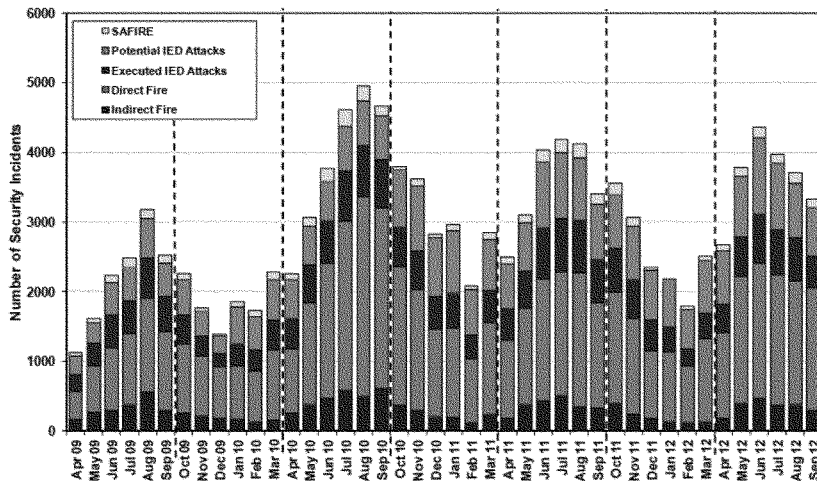
In short, the Taliban, Haqqani Network, and other insurgents have little reason to directly challenge far superior ISAF forces or the best ANSF forces when they can wait out the departure of most ISAF forces, concentrate on building influence, carry out political high profile attacks designed to push ISAF out of country and intimidate Afghans, and focus on softer Afghan government and ANSF targets. They are fighting a political war, not a conventional kinetic one, and this is the war the ANSF will have to fight after the US and ISAF essentially end major combat action following the 2013 campaign season.

Figure 6: No Meaningful Improvement in Afghan Security Metrics: 2009-2012

Average Daily Enemy-Initiated Attacks Reported by Type in Afghanistan, December 2005 through December 2012²⁶

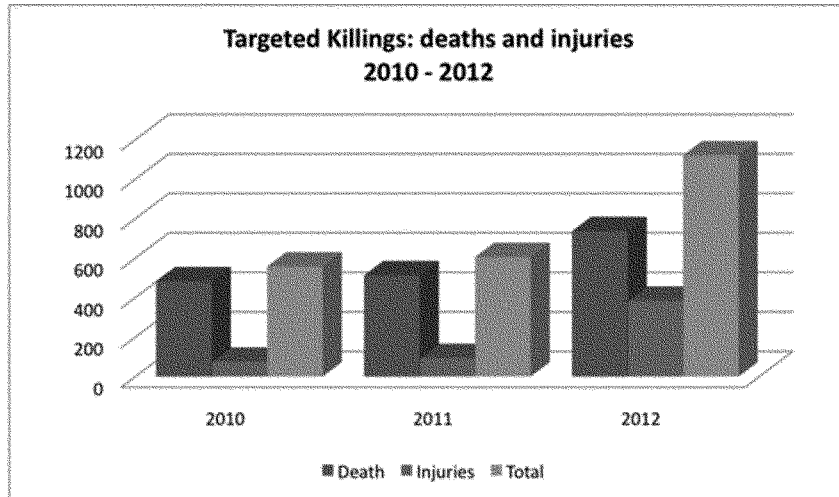


Pattern No Better in Terms of Significant Incidents: The Key Metric Used in Iraq War²⁷

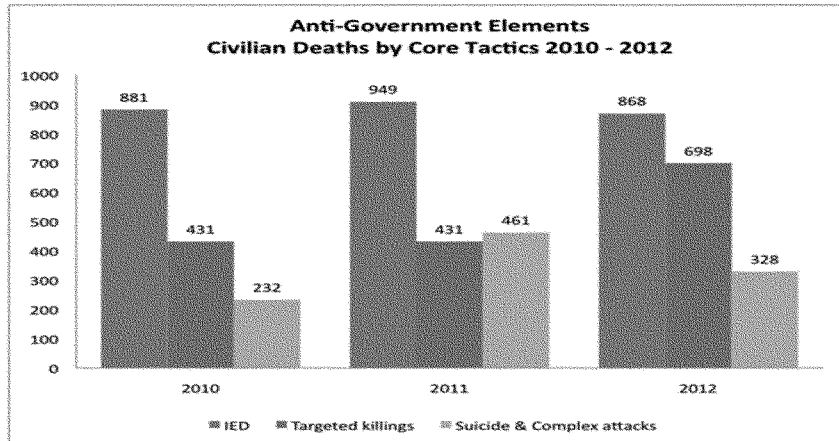


Targeted Killings – Key Measure of Insurgent Activity – Are Way Up²⁸

UNAMA documented 1,077 civilian casualties (698 civilian deaths and 379 civilian injuries in 565 incidents of targeted killings by Anti-Government Elements in 2012. This represents a 108 percent increase in civilian casualties from this tactic compared with 2011. The number of attack on Afghan government official rose by 700% during 2011-2012.²⁹



No Meaningful Improvement in IEDs, Targeted Killings, or Complex Attacks³⁰



Other Metrics Show No Clear Improvement in Security as A Result of the “Surge”

Several non-ISAF sources warn that the ANSF will face far more serious challenges than both current ISAF reporting and the pro forma transfers of responsibility for security now taking place would indicate.

If one looks at the reporting on other – non EIA – metrics of security set forth in the US Department of Defense December 2012 semi-annual report to Congress, there is little indication that the “surge” has produced lasting security benefits relative to the pre-surge period in 2009 for the ANSF to build upon:

- Little progress, if any, was made at the nationwide level in formal combat metrics between 2011 and 2012. EIAs actually rose by 1%. High profile attacks rose by 2%, direct fire incident rose by 10%, total IED events dropped by 3%, IED and mine explosions went down by 12%, and indirect fire dropped by 5%.³¹
- Monthly civilian deaths – caused almost exclusively by insurgent forces as ISAF cut its civilian casualties – rose in 2012 relative to 2010 and 2011, although they were lower than during their peak in August and September 2009.³²
- Green on Blue or Insider Attacks on ISAF personnel rose from 6 in 2009 to 11 in 2010, 20 in 2011, and 37 in 2012 – six times higher in 2012 than 2009. Green on Green or Insider Attacks on ANSF personnel rose from 7 in 2009 to 19 in 2010, 26 in 2011, and 29 in 2012 – four times higher in 2012 than 2009. While the numbers were limited, they have a major political impact and raise serious issues regarding the protection of military and civilian advisors in the field during 2014 onwards.³³ They also raise issue about the level of alienation within the ANSF, and infiltration and influence by the Taliban and other insurgents that have been met largely through unsubstantiated denials as to the scale of the problem.
- High profile attacks – ones that have major political impact and help the Taliban and other insurgents achieve their goal in pushing outside force and aid out of the country – have continued to have a major impact, and given the Taliban and other insurgents major tactical victories in strategic communications even when they have little or no real military effect.
- Insurgent reintegree numbers remained very limited during 2011-2012 and almost all within the North and West where insurgent influence is very limited. Almost no reintegrees came from high combat, high Taliban influence areas in the south and southwest.³⁴
- Total Nationwide Monthly Security Incidents (*the key metric used to assess progress in the Iraq War*) declined slightly during 2010-2011, but remained constant during 2011-2012 and were far higher than in 2009 – the year when the rise in insurgent violence triggered the “surge.”³⁵

Lies by Omission? Dropping the Metrics that May Be Less Favorable but Also Could Reflect Actual ANSF Performance

What may be even more significant is that even the Department of Defense report – the one major official report in the course of the war – has quietly dropped virtually every metric that shows progress in substantive terms. Maps showing progress in governance

and security by province and district have been deleted, as have maps showing perceptions of progress in aid.

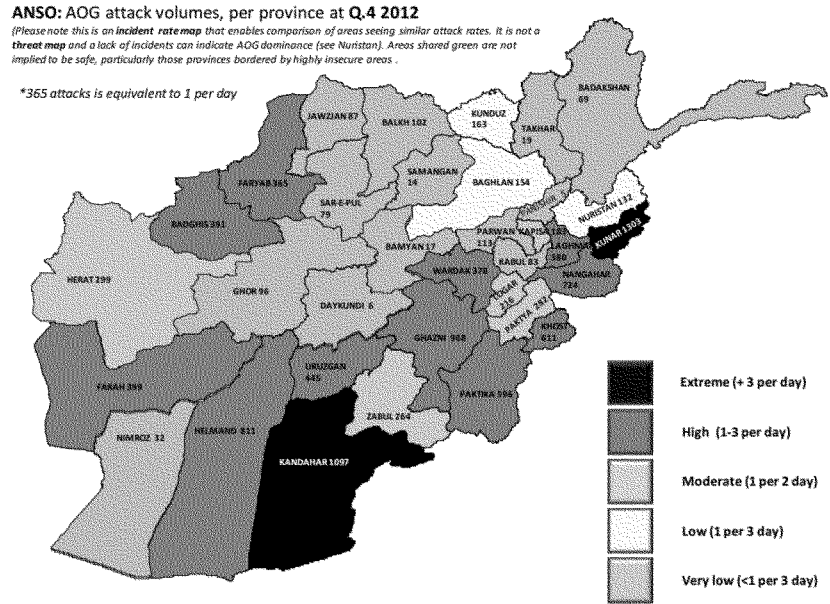
All references and maps relating to the original campaign plan are gone, along with any reference to progress in the populated 81 Critical Districts Interest and more than 40 additional Districts of Interest that were the focus of ISAF objectives in 2009 through early 2011. All references to an active campaign in Eastern Afghanistan and to second efforts in the center and north have also been dropped.

No effort is made to assess the growing impact of criminal narcotics or the resurgence of narcotics growing in insurgent areas in the south during 2011-2012. Moreover, no attempt is now made to provide unclassified maps of the areas of insurgent influence, and show how they relate to the areas of ANSF influence or control. There is no picture of where the Afghan government now actually exerts meaningful governance outside "Kabulstan," has a functioning justice system, and the ANA and AUP actually maintain security. No one discusses the scale of insurgent ratlines, shadow governments, checkpoints and local activity, or lower – but critical – levels of violence like threats, extortion, kidnappings, and individual killings.

Here it is interesting to look an independent assessment of the challenge the ANSF now faces and the overall security situation in Afghanistan. The Afghan NGO Security Office (ANSO) is an NGO organization with a well-established history of making security assessments based on NGO perceptions of violence. It has its own biases and obviously does not have to collection capabilities of a government or ISAF.

Figure 7 is still useful, however, in showing that ANSO has a different perception of the current security situation than ISAF. Where ISAF tends to focus on the worse kinetic cases, ANSO sees risk in terms any significant volume of attacks – a measurement that may provide a clearer picture of what Afghanistan could be like after US and troops leave.³⁶

Figure 7: Insurgent Attacks by Province in Fourth Quarter 2012



Transitioning Districts and Provinces to the ANSF by the Calendar with No Clear Picture of ANSF Capability

The broad transition plan for giving ANSF forces responsibility for given provinces and districts is shown in **Figure 8**. This figure is based on DoD data, and it makes an interesting comparison to **Figure 7**, since transfers in tranches 1-3 were supposed to be in the most secure areas but ANSO clearly assesses security in different terms.

Figure 8 shows that 261 of some 405 districts have already been formally transferred to the ANSF, along with some 76% of the population and all provincial capitals and major transportation corridors. The GAO reports that transfers are supposed to be based on four factors:³⁷

1. The capability of ANSF to take on additional security tasks with less assistance from ISAF;
2. The level of security needed to allow the population to pursue routine daily activities;
3. The degree of development of local governance; and
4. Whether ISAF is properly positioned to withdraw as ANSF capabilities increase and threat

levels diminish.

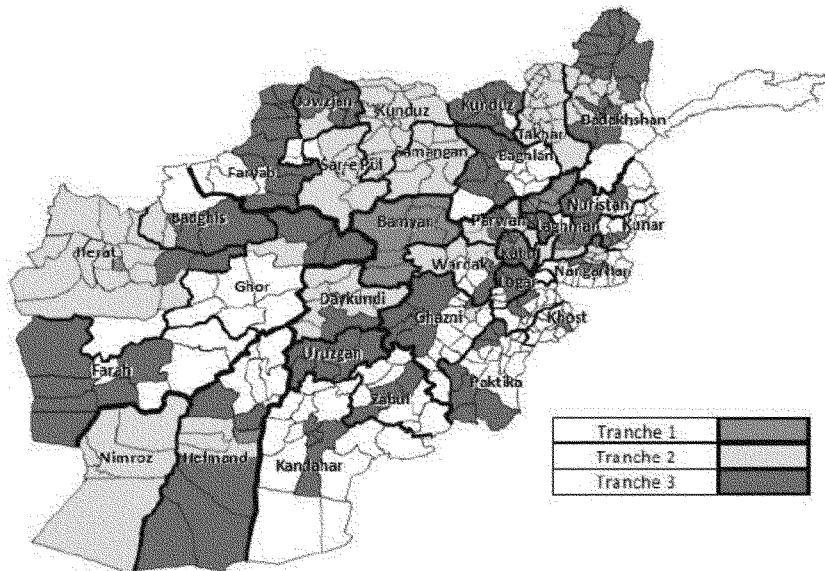
The GAO also reports even wider coverage of the population,³⁸

The transition for each geographic area is a multiphased process, with ISAF tracking progress through metrics, such as security and governance. The areas (provinces, districts, and/or cities) are grouped into one of five tranches for transition. As of December 2012, the transition of four of the five tranches had been announced, and over 87 percent of the Afghan population was living in areas under Afghan lead security with the military support of U.S. and coalition partners. By mid-2013, it is expected that all areas will have entered the transition process and that by December 2014 the transition will be complete.

According to ISAF, ANSF would need to be under effective Afghan civilian control and fully capable of addressing security challenges on a sustainable and irreversible basis for the transition to be successful.

However, the readiness of the Afghan government to sustain ANSF has been questioned.

Figure 9: Transitioning Provinces and Districts: Tranches 1-3³⁹



There is no clear way to know the degree to which Afghan forces have actually assumed responsibility in the field or their effectiveness. There is also no way to know what areas are under real central government control, dominated by local power brokers, or have serious insurgent or criminal influence. In broad terms, the transfers to date have been in areas assessed as having a low to relatively low threat – at least in terms of EIAs. DoD does, however, report that the actual level of ANSF control is mixed:⁴⁰

ISAF's mission focus remains to protect the people of Afghanistan by supporting the sovereign government in the development of a national security force capable of assuming the lead responsibility for security operations. Upon entry into Transition, the ANSF assume lead security responsibility for that area and become the supported command, with ISAF becoming the supporting command. During the Transition process, staff functions are steadily transferred to the ANSF as their capability increases. ISAF often retains military assets in that area, and when required, engages in combat operations alongside the ANSF. As the ANSF take on more responsibility and become capable of more independent operations, ISAF support is reduced, and authority to provide additional support migrates upwards to the Commander IJC (COMIJC) and then to the Commander ISAF (COMISAF). Areas proceed through Transition on different timelines based upon demonstrated improvement in security, governance, and rule of law, and to the increased proficiency of the ANSF. At completion, the ANSF assume full security responsibility.

The DoD assessment of actual progress in security and ANSF performance in this mission is the closest thing to an unclassified assessment of ANSF capability in the field that do exist, but it is important to note that it seems to be largely based on EIAs, rather than meaningful counterinsurgency criteria, and still raises important questions about ANSF performance.⁴¹

The increasing capability of the ANSF has expanded security gains in many Transitioning areas. Tranche 1 and 2 areas (138 districts in 20 provinces) continue to be the most secure areas in Afghanistan, both in terms of objective measures and Afghan population perceptions. As U.S. and Coalition Forces draw down and re-posture, the ANSF are progressively taking the lead in transition areas and helping to expand Afghan government influence, most notably in RC-N, where the Coalition will withdraw all of its forces from the eastern- and western-most districts toward the end of 2012.

Additionally, there has been evidence of the ANSF independently expanding security in areas where ISAF does not have an established presence, showing the initiative and capability to establish security in areas before they have formally entered the Transition process, including Nuristan and other districts in the north. Improving and maintaining security in Tranche 3 will be more challenging than in the first two tranches because several areas entered Transition at lower readiness levels. Additionally, later tranches may also be challenged by successful operations in Tranches 1, 2, and 3 that have caused some insurgent forces to migrate into less secure areas, largely outside of the population centers.

The DoD report does repeat ISAF's largely irrelevant focus on EIA in discussing progress to date:⁴²

Notably, during the reporting period, EIAs declined in two of the three Transition Tranches, although this reduction was variable by geographic area with some transition areas still facing challenges. EIAs declined in transitioning areas overall by four percent, with Tranches 1 and 3 experiencing nine and seven percent decreases, respectively, compared to the same period last year. EIAs in Tranche 2 went up four percent. In districts that have not yet entered Transition, there was a six percent increase in the number of EIAs over 2011. Tranches 1 and 2 continue to be the most secure areas in Afghanistan by objective measures and Afghan perceptions, although the most drastic reductions in EIA-related violence in transitioning areas occurred in RC-SW and RC-S.

EIAs say nothing about the level of insurgent influence, the level of support for the government in "Kabulstan," the overall level of security in the field, or the effectiveness of ANSF forces in maintaining and expanding security coverage in their area of operation. It borders on being a nonsense metric. The DoD report does, however, go on to say that.

Although these security gains were significant, progress was uneven across the country and within regions, with some Transition areas still facing challenges and occasionally regressing insecurity.

Transitioning areas with the greatest reduction in attacks were Helmand, around the southern Helmand River Valley, and Kandahar, particularly Kandahar City and Uruzgan, where combined operations were focused over the summer. Additionally, in Kabul, where the ANSF have full security lead, security incidents have stayed at minimal levels, with HPAs declining significantly since last year.

EIA trends in Transition areas in the east were mixed. Many districts in Wardak and Kapisa saw considerable reductions in ELAs, while much of Logar and Ghazni experienced sizable increases, likely due to the preponderance of ANSF/ISAF operations those areas and the introduction of an additional Coalition brigade in Ghazni. The ANSF conducted unilateral operations in southern Paktika, establishing security and accepting responsibility for security lead.

Although attacks rose slightly in Transition areas in the west, it was not statistically significant, and much of the increase occurred in the southern-most and least-populated provinces of Farah and Ghor – likely a result of spillover from operations in northern Helmand. Similarly, in the north, there was a slight increase in insurgent-related violence but the overwhelming majority was concentrated in the ethnic Pashtun pockets of the Kunduz-Baghlan corridor.

In general, the ANSF are displaying increased capability and sophistication in transitioning areas, particularly in RC-E and RC-S, where they are planning and conducting large-scale, multiday operations and showing increased coordination and integration across military and police pillars. Kabul remains the safest area in the country under ANSF-led security.

However, lack of coordination between ANA and AUP in general continues to be one of the major challenges in transitioning areas, along with attacks along access routes to major population centers and government ineffectiveness. Governance and development tend to lag behind security and will require continued assistance through the Decade of Transformation

This latter assessment has a certain amount of public relations spin, and other groups like ANSO have drawn different conclusions about the impact of transfer of responsibility, even in the relatively secure areas involved in Tranches 1-3. ANSO found that six of the 11 provinces transferred to date in Tranches 1-3 recorded an increase in insurgent activity during 2010-2011, while three of the six provinces where insurgent activity increased also saw a decrease in ANSF activity. It found that Uruzgan was the only province that experienced an increase in ANSF activity.⁴³

ANSO found that overall, insurgent activity declined by 7% in the transitioned provinces in 2010-2011, but it declined by 25% in the non-transitioned provinces. In short, ANSO found that the provinces not transitioned to ANSF control did better in terms of violence than those who were not – evidently because of the superior military and security capabilities of ISAF. ANSO concluded that, “This leaves us with the conclusion that there is no clear correlation between Transition, reduced AOG (insurgent) activity, and increased ANSF activity.”⁴⁴

ANSO may or may not be correct, but it should be clear that simply stating responsibility has been transferred is in no way a measure of merit. Failing to show that transfer is effective and lasting – rather than driven by cost, time, and withdrawal deadlines – may pave the way to the exit but it is in no way an honest assessment of the ANSF’s performance.

The ANSF, Security, and Popular Support

More broadly, Afghan security will be shaped by popular support for the government – a critical metric in measuring real world ANSF capability and particularly that of the police. The issue in net assessment is not simply the strength of the insurgency relative to the

ANSF and the level of governance in the field; it is the strength or weakness of popular support.

The Department of Defense report has ceased to report on surveys of popular support for the government. However, the SIGAR quarterly report for January 2013 did show the results of an Asia Foundation poll that indicated that 32% of Afghans saw corruption as the government's most serious failing followed by 23% that saw the key problem as security, 18% that focused on the lack of job opportunities, 11% that feared suicide attacks, 9% that focused on weak government, and 8% that focused on the failure to remove the Taliban.⁴⁵

SIGAR also showed the results of polls that showed a rise in popular perceptions of corruption at the local, provincial and national government level during 2006-2012, and that nearly 80% of Afghans saw corruption at the national level as a serious problem in 2012.⁴⁶

What is missing from such surveys is any indication of how the ANSF is now perceived, although past surveys indicated that the ANA had won growing respect and that the high levels of corruption in the police were at least tolerated. Equally important, what is lacking are popular opinion polls to assess how security, governance, and key elements of the ANSF are perceived in key districts and high risk areas, and their popularity relative to power brokers and the insurgents. Generic nation-wide polling is no substitute for meaningful focus on the areas where Transition presents the most import challenges.

Building and Sustaining Afghan Forces

Given this background, it should be clear that many of the metrics used by NTM-A are important to the force building, but do not provide a meaningful picture of whether the ANSF can be successful in actually taking over responsibility for security.

The Limits to Capability Milestone (CM) and Commanders Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) Ratings

As **Figure 2** has made clear, Capability Milestone (CM) and Commanders Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) ratings of individual force elements and groups within the MoD and MoI are useful to force building and partner operations, but do not provide a basis for evaluating success in the field and only cover part of the force.

Moreover, the standards for assessment keep changing, which makes it impossible to use either CM or CUAT effectiveness ratings to analyze trends in readiness and effectiveness even by force generation standards. Even if "in the lead" was somehow related to what and where, a narrow focus on how many units have top rating in this metric and are said to be in the lead in some form has little value except to the trainer and partner.

SIGAR notes the scale of such problems in its January 2013 report, and its comments are broadly supported in the December 2012 reporting by DoD:⁴⁷

In 2010, SIGAR audited the previous assessment tool—the Capability Milestone (CM) rating system which had been in use since 2005—and found that it did not provide reliable or consistent assessments of ANSF capabilities. During the course of that audit, DoD and NATO began using a

new system, the CUAT, to rate the ANSF. In May 2010, the ISAF Joint Command (IJC) issued an order to implement the new system which would “provide users the specific rating criteria for each [ANSF] element to be reported by the CUAT including leader/commander considerations, operations conducted, intelligence gathering capability, logistics and sustainment, equipping, partnering, personnel readiness, maintenance, communications, unit training and individual education, as well as the partner unit or advisor team’s overall assessment.”

Since the implementation of the CUAT, the titles of the various rating levels have changed, as shown in Table 3.3. In July 2012, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) raised concerns that the change of the title of the highest rating level from “independent” to “independent with advisors” was, in part, responsible for an increase in the number of ANSF units rated at the highest level. GAO also noted that, “the change lowered the standard for unit personnel and equipment levels from ‘not less than 85’ to ‘not less than 75’ percent of authorized levels.” In a response to SIGAR last quarter, the IJC disagreed with GAO’s assessment, saying a change in title does not “equal a change in definition.” Since last quarter, the IJC has initiated a CUAT Refinement Working Group to standardize inputs and outputs in the areas covered by the assessments.

This quarter, IJC included all units that had been reported in previous assessments in the category “not assessed.” In prior quarters, only units that were required to be assessed (but were not assessed) were included in that category. This may, in part, have contributed to a rise in the total number of ANA units from 267 to 292 and the number of units “not assessed” from 51 to 81, as shown in Figure 3.24. For the ANP, the total number of units rose from 408 to 536 and the number “not assessed” from 131 to 301.

Because not every unit is reported in every CUAT cycle, the IJC used the most recent assessment (within the last 18 months) to “enable cycle to cycle comparisons.” When compared this way, 19 more ANA units were “independent with advisors” since last quarter; three more were “effective with advisors.” For the ANP, 31 more units were “independent with advisors” and 10 fewer units were “effective with advisors.”

Broad Metrics of Numbers of Operations and Afghan-Led Operations Have Some Value

It should be noted, however, that the Department of Defense did provide other metrics that are more useful. Its December 2012 report now focuses on the level of contingency operations – which is a security and war fighting metric rather than a force generation metric. It also now reports the actual level of ISAF vs. ANSF-led operations – although it makes no attempt tie them to its scoring system for the difficulty of the operation, which element of the ANSF was involved at what level of force, the level of risk, the location of the operation, or its impact on security. These data are shown in **Figure 10**. They do show that the ANSF is making progress toward independence, and they at least make a start toward some form of meaningful measurement of ANSF capability.

Figure 10: Levels of Contingency Operation and Trend in Partnered Operations⁴⁸**Levels of Risk**

Level R (Routine)	Routine operations that do not involve entries into compounds (i.e., operations other than level 0, 1, or 2). Not expected to have political consequences.
Level 0 (Low Risk)	Day-time deliberate pre-planned forced entry required (progressive 'soft-knock' and 'hard-knock'). Political consequences offer minimum potential of prejudicial IO, media, or political impact.
Level 1 (Medium Risk)	Operations involving entry into houses or compounds at night to include deliberate pre-planned forced entry required (progressive 'soft-knock' and 'hard-knock'). May have minor to moderate unfavorable regional media impact, detrimental IO and/or undesirable political consequences, manageable at the regional level.
Level 2 (High Risk)	Pre-planned kinetic operations within 10km of border with Pakistan or Iran. SOF conducting deliberate operations with company size force or greater within 1km of border with Pakistan, or 10km of border with Iran. Arrest, apprehension, or detainment of any current or prominent former Afghan Government appointed official. Potential for collateral damage, unfavorable media impact, severely detrimental IO, and/or undesirable political consequences.

Conventional Partnered Operations

Operational Category	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12
ISAF Unilateral	601	734	525	748
ISAF Led - Partnered	1,359	1,033	790	428
ANSF Led - Partnered	240	278	287	194
ANSF Led - Advised	125	161	113	139
ANSF Unilateral	5,322	7,136	5,994	6,225
Total ISAF-Led OPS	1,960	1,767	1,315	1,176
Total ANSF Led OPS	5,687	7,575	6,394	6,558
Total OPS	7,647	9,342	7,709	7,734
% of Total OPS That are ISAF Led	26%	19%	17%	15%
% of Total OPS That Are ANSF Led	74%	81%	83%	85%

Special Forces Partnered Operations

ISAF SOF & ANSF SOF	April-12	May-12	June-12	July-12	August-12	September-12
ANSF-Led Partnered SOF Ops	173	199	250	301	195	250
ISAF-led Partnered SOF Ops	123	139	73	73	90	60
ISAF SOF Advised Ops / ANSF in lead	30	69	40	36	46	52
Total Partnered or Advised SOF Ops	326	407	363	410	331	362
ANSF SOF Unilateral Ops	18	10	21	20	64	52
ISAF SOF Unilateral Ops	6	11	4	13	40	20
Total Unilateral SOF Ops	24	21	25	33	104	72
Total SOF Ops	350	428	388	443	435	434
% of Total SOF Ops that are Partnered	93%	95%	94%	93%	76%	83%
% of Partnered SOF Ops that are ANSF-Led	62%	66%	80%	82%	73%	83%

In any case, the Department of Defense reports that the present rating systems will be replaced by an Afghan system, and almost regardless of what the US and ISAF want, such a system will become one dominated by Afghan standards, values, and accuracy of reporting.⁴⁹

The ISAF Joint Command (IJC) is currently developing a proposed self-assessment capability to be used by the ANSF. The proportion of ANSF units that are partnered or advised will decline as the number of ISAF personnel in theater decreases and as more ANSF units are fielded. As ISAF starts receiving fewer and fewer CUAT reports, it will require an additional system to inform leadership and the international community on progress within the ANSF. Additionally, the ANSF itself will need an Afghan-run self-assessment system after transition. This ANSF self-assessment capability is not meant to be an entirely new system, rather it is intended to augment and improve Afghan reporting systems currently used by the ANA and ANP. The existing systems are the Readiness Reporting System (RRS) used by the ANA, and the Force Readiness Report (FRR) used by the ANP. As they are currently designed, neither of these systems is sufficient to replace the CUAT because neither system provides an extensive enough assessment of the operational capabilities of the ANSF. IJC is also working to augment the existing ANSF capability to validate these assessments – a crucial part of any honest assessment system. The systems under development by IJC are intended to enhance the existing systems. These enhancements to the existing ANSF reporting systems require Afghan assistance to be fully developed and require the support of senior MoD and MoI leadership to ensure successful implementation.

Measuring Progress in Force Generation

More broadly, it is time to accept the fact that whatever emerges in 2015 will not be based on the kind of detailed force generation plans that exist today. NTM-A and US and ISAF partners and advisors have long faced an extremely difficult mission, and the more than the US and its allies reduce their forces and efforts, the more the Afghans actually do take responsibility (or fail to do so) and the more the actual Afghan force structure will change.

The present force generation exercise is being driven by pressures that mean further change is inevitable:

- A failure to meet initial US and ISAF military surge goals, implement the 2010 campaign plan, and back the US build-up with a viable civilian surge.
- Major shortfalls in providing the levels of Afghan governance and rule of law efforts in the field necessary to make ANSF efforts effective.
- The inability of the Afghan government to treat the real world impact of power brokers, corruption, narcotics, and criminal networks around and within the ANSF and to treat these problems as if they did not exist.
- The long history of underfunding and erratic funding by outside states and shortfalls in trainers and partners.
- Long periods in which salaries were not competitive and high levels of annual attrition and turnover took place.
- Steady rises in ANSF force goals based largely on arbitrary numbers and force goals accompanied by steady efforts to reduced the time available to achieve them.
- Ongoing reductions in US and allied force levels, often with limited warning that are larger and sooner than previously anticipated.
- Reductions in outyear annual cost from some \$9 billion to \$6 billion to \$4.1 billion.
- Constant changes in CMA and CUAT performance standards and goals to be followed by new Afghan systems.

What is striking in view of these pressures is not the fact the ANSF is far from perfect and will have serious weaknesses and flaws well beyond, but rather how much progress

has actually been made in force generation to date. **Figure 11** summarizes this progress in terms of manpower, units, and equipment, and it is clear that although many key specialties and elements of sustainment are still lacking even within the ANA, there may be enough resources for the Afghan government to maintain security in some form through and after Transition. But this will depend on if it has effective leadership, enough outside aid, and a sufficient number of US enablers to give key elements of the ANSF enough time to become effective.

Figure 11: ANSF Development – Institutional Metrics and Benchmarks

Category	Metric	Sep-11	Feb-12	Mar-12	Aug-12	Sep-12
Recruit	ANSF End Strength	305,000	330,014	332,750	337,187	349,000
Train	ANA trained in specialty	10%	35%	30%	39%	40%
	ANP patrolmen trained	67%	76%	75%	75%	90%
	AAF Courses	C-27 IQT Started	Basic RW & FW Start 18 Feb	Basic RW & FW course	Mi-17 IQT started on 15 Sep 12	Mi-17 IQT
Fielding	New ANA unit manning	80%	87%	85%	92%	90%
	CS Kandaks fielded	68%	82%	86%	92%	100%
	MP Coys** fielded		64%	79%	100%	100%
	Engineer Kandaks fielded		-	-	-	14%
	RCCs fielded	82%	92%	95%	92%	100%
	Signal (Coys) fielded		14%	14%	-	29%
	MI Kandaks fielded		-	-	-	-
	MSF Kandaks fielded		-	-	29%	20%
Equip the Force	ANA Fielded unit equipment fill	80%	84%	83%	90%	86%
	ANP Unit & District equipment fill	70%	71%	80%	89%	90%
Develop the Force	ANSF Level I Literacy		61%	57%	73%	65%
	ANA Instructors assigned & trained (T2I)	20%	63%	65%	80%	
	ANP Assistant Instructor and Instructor positions filled	40%	50%	45%	54%	50%
Leader Development	New ANA officers with Branch School training	15%	100%	52%	100%	
	Junior NCOs trained	72%	67%	67%	75%	75%
	AAF officer & NCO positions filled	88%	68%	68%	75%	74%
	ANP NCO Positions Filled	60%	74%	65%	80%	70%
	MoD and GS ministerial departments at CM-1B*		9%	23%	16%	30%
Transition the Force	MoI ministerial departments at CM-1B*		2	2	2	9
	ANA training institutions transitioned		-	9%	38%	42%
	ANP training institutions transitioned		-	-	15%	25%
	ANA Regional Logistics Support Commands at FOC		6 IOC	6 IOC	6 IOC	

* Data as of June 30. CM ratings are assessed quarterly, with the next assessment to be conducted at the end of September.

** Coys are the Afghan equivalent of Companies

IOC – Initial Operational Capability

FOC – Full Operational Capability

The MoD and the MoI

That said there are certain realities about the future force generation effort that the US, its allies, and the Afghan government will have to accept. One is that the current goals for developing the MoD and MoI are both too ambitious and too Western-oriented to survive

engagement with reality, both Ministries will remain highly political, will be caught up in Afghan power politics, and significant levels of corruption will take place.

The realities involved are already outlined in Department of Defense and SIGAR reporting.⁵⁰ The more the US phases forces and advisors out, and the more Afghan politics become caught up in the full impact of Transition, the more Afghans will do it their way. As the key continuing source of funds and advisors, the US must be ready to accept this, and it must judge success on the basis of the level of security and stability the ANSF can prove and not by either US standards or whether the MoD and MoI come to operate as currently planned.

Focus on the ANA

Success will not be determined by the overall level of progress in the ANSF but – as **Figure 2** has indicated – by the effectiveness of the ANA and ANCOP forces, and by the alignments of the ALP and militias. Resources need to be concentrated on the force elements that can actually deal with serious insurgent threats, and on at least trying to create local security forces with some ties to the government in “Kabulstan” and that can deter or contain extremist element in the field.

This means the US and its allies must be prepared to support the ANA and ANCOP forces where they still have serious shortfalls in areas like sustainment and intelligence after Transition. The US must also tolerate the fact that whatever emerges by way of local forces will often come under power broker and tribal control, and be justified more on the basis of being better than the Taliban and Haqqani Network than any approaching the kind of force that the US might desire under more ideal circumstances.

Here, it is important to note that DoD reports the ANA still has serious problems that deserve attention in terms of management by exception. One is the lack of adequate intelligence and sustainment capability; another is relatively high levels of attrition (roughly 3% per month) and AWOL rates, and a shortfall of some 7,100 NCOs. The ANA also faces the problem that the AAF will not be ready or capable by end 2014.⁵¹

Accordingly, it is almost certainly far more important for anyone assessing the probable success of the ANSF in broad terms to focus on the key areas where there are measured shortfalls that have an obvious impact on security levels rather than scoring of unit elements using systems like the CMA and CUAT systems.

Furthermore, the success or failure of the ANA and every element of the ANSF will become sharply more dependent on the Afghans ability to depart from many aspects of the current US-ISAF developed plan as more forces are cut, money and advisors are cut, and Afghan truly adapt to doing thing on their own and find ways to do it their way. Sticking with the plan is not a meaningful objective. Help the Afghans as they adapt to doing it their way is.

Accept Marginal Success with the Police and Rule of Law

Official reporting on the various elements of the ANP has long disguised a largely corrupt, failed force, that is actively involved in power brokering at every level and has

little over counterinsurgency capability, alienates many Afghans, and is not supported by the necessary elements of governance other parts of the justice system in much – if not most – of Afghanistan. Corruption and incompetence are major problems in Kabul as well as most areas.⁵²

Both most current indicators, and historical experience in past efforts to build regular police efforts in wartime like Iraq, warn that the bulk of the Afghan police will at best have limited effectiveness and will be corrupt. Nothing can be done from the outside that will determine the relative post-Transition strength of the Central Government versus to local power brokers in controlling the police, or the rise of local police leaders that become the equivalent of mini-warlords. The question is not how good the AUP and ABP will become as Transition proceeds, but how bad?

The answer is that the best elements of the police will continue to support the central government and the MOI, but that most much of the police are likely to remain what they now are, other elements will become tied to local power brokers, and still other elements will become passive or reach a modus vivendi with any insurgent or hostile group that threatens them. The Western dream of creating an effective civil police force will not survive Transition and engagement with reality in much, if not most, of the country.⁵³

The end result will often be corrupt or passive elements tied to local leaders or who cooperate with insurgents. This will be the result of problems within key elements of the police force. However, it will also be the result of a lack of effective civil governance and the other elements of the rule of law in the field. A police force cannot be an effective civil police force without the support and control of effective local governance and all of the other elements of the rule of law. The failure to tie the assessment of police development to these other two criteria for success has made current effectiveness ratings of the ANP largely meaningless – a problem compounded by deliberately ignoring the scale of corruption.

The scale of the problems in the rule of law effort are summarized in recent SIGAR and DOD reporting as described below:⁵⁴

Insecurity has continued to impede expansion of rule of law, especially at the district level. Prolonged dispute resolutions in the formal justice system have led many rural Afghans to view it as ineffective and inaccessible. In addition, widespread corruption and inadequate transparency continue to stifle development of a self-sustaining rule of law system. Furthermore, DoD noted that the Afghan government's lack of political will to operate and maintain justice programs and facilities has hindered justice development.

USAID noted that the judiciary has also not had sufficient political will to establish genuine independence from the executive branch. Rule of law activities will need to be included in the overall transition effort and will be most successful in the areas where capable governance has followed stabilization, according to DoD.

Although the Afghan government and the international community have identified "law and justice for all" as an NPP, they have not agreed on program specifics that would lay out a clear and verifiable roadmap to improve the Afghan justice system. This quarter, donor dissatisfaction at the continued failure to finalize the justice program led the European Union to indicate that it will put on hold its future funding for the sector until the program has been endorsed. All of the NPPs were supposed to be endorsed by July 2011. The UN Secretary-General noted that the program's complexity and wide scope presented challenges, although there was hope for an endorsement of the NPP in early 2013.

Weaknesses within both the formal and informal justice systems, along with ineffective linkages between the two systems, continue to lead many Afghans to go to the Taliban for dispute resolution. The Taliban process is based on stern religious precepts, but is also rapid, enforced, and often considered by Afghans as less corrupt than the formal system.

The broad scale of the problem of corruption in the police – placed in the context of a UN survey of Afghan popular perceptions of corruption in the government and other elements of the rule of law – is shown in **Figure 12**. The good news is that perceptions of police corruption – while still high – has dropped. The bad news is that it has not improved significantly in the rest of the justice system, and the problem of corruption is much higher in the south and east where the insurgents present the most serious threat. It is also that the UN found that,⁵⁵

Some 50 per cent of employees in both the National Police and the Border Police admitted to receiving ... help in their recruitment, as did roughly half of all provincial, district and municipal officers. Approximately 6 per cent of these officials also acknowledged having paid bribes during their recruitment... Of particular concern is the recruitment of school teachers, during which over half received assistance and more than 21 per cent also conceded to the payment of bribes. Furthermore, while between 24 and 30 per cent of prosecutors, Hoqooq and Ministry of Justice officers stated that they received assistance during recruitment, a smaller percentage of officials in the judicial sector admitted having paid a bribe in order to secure their job in the civil service.

Focus on ALP and Future Role of Militias

Local forces may well prove to provide a better level of security in less populated areas where insurgents are active than the ANA or ANP. They have marginal or no cost, can provide significant security with small arms and little – if any – outside logistic support, and have a clear motive to defend their own interests.

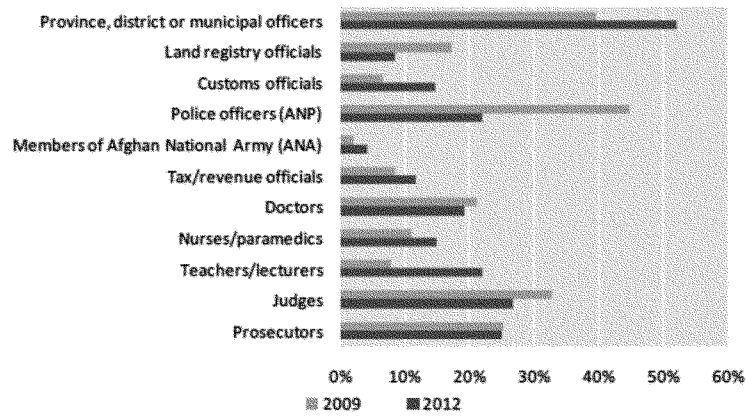
The Afghan Local Police have so far done a good job in the areas where they have had US or Afghan SOF advisors and partners – although they have been subject local feuds, power brokers, and exploiting the population. Militias – sometimes with de facto government support – have played the same role in other areas, although they have been guilty of more serious abuses, and are far more subject to influence from local power brokers, narcotraffickers/criminal networks, and warlords.⁵⁶

The practical problem is that central government from Kabulstan will be uncertain at best, and diminish the moment outside advisors are gone and in any areas where governance and the ANP are weak or corrupt. Any divisions by regional or ethnic group will also tend to move local forces into the dominant faction in a given area.

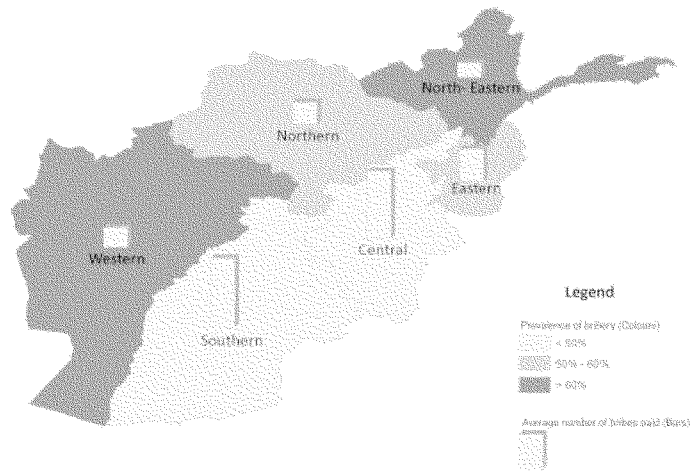
In practice, this will often mean relying on a necessary evil, particularly since the remaining level of US and other ISAF forces and advisors is likely to be so limited, and their influence will decline sharply as withdrawal proceeds. The frank answer may be that government money will be just as much the key as under Najibullah. Force loyalty, capability and restraint will often depend largely on the size of the fee or bribe

Figure 12: Popular Perceptions of Corruption in the ANSF, Government, and Justice System⁵⁷

Percentage of bribe-payers who paid a bribe to selected types of public official, Afghanistan (2009 and 2012)



Prevalence of bribery and average number of bribes paid, by region, Afghanistan (2012)



Narcotics, Criminal Networks, and Leadership Flight

The problems in dealing with the AUP and ABP are likely to be particularly serious if the Afghan government and outside aid do not deal effectively with the economic impact of cuts in outside military spending and aid. The failure to assess the impact of corruption on progress in the ANP – and to a lesser degree the ANA – is only part of the problem. Some studies of Afghanistan indicate that as much as 40% of the GNP was dependent on opium at the time of the Taliban. Current studies put the percentage at anywhere from 3% to 10% of the GDP, but do not explain any aspect of the calculation. Moreover, opium is only one of Afghanistan's drug crops and drugs are only a part of the activity of its criminal networks.

As noted earlier, UNDOC stated in a November 20, 2012 press release that,⁵⁸

“Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan covered 154,000 hectares (ha) in 2012, 18 per cent higher than the 131,000 recorded the previous year.... Cultivation increased despite a significant 154 per cent increase in Government eradication efforts (over 9,600 ha eradicated in 2012 compared with just over 3,800 in 2011).

The number of poppy-free provinces remains unchanged at 17 but Ghor province in the west lost that status in 2012 while Faryab province in the north regained it. This year saw 95 per cent of cultivation concentrated in the southern and western provinces where insecurity and organized crime are present: 72 per cent in Hilmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Day Kundi and Zabul provinces in the south, and 23 per cent in Farah, Hirat, and Nimroz provinces to the west. This confirms the link between insecurity and opium cultivation observed since 2007...Cultivation rose 19 per cent in Hilmand, which, with over 75,100 hectares, accounted for around half the cultivation taking place in Afghanistan.

...Looking at the eastern region, cultivation rose significantly in Kunar (121 per cent), Kapisa (60 per cent) and Laghman (41 per cent). However, the eastern provinces contributed only 4 per cent to the national total of opium production in 2012. In the north, opium cultivation increased by 10 per cent in Baghlan despite the eradication of 252 hectares in 2012. Badakhshan was the only northeastern province to see cultivation rise (13 per cent) in spite of a sizeable 1,700 ha eradicated. In Kabul, the central region's only poppy-growing province, cultivation decreased by 45 per cent.”

It makes no sense to analyze the role of the ANSF in transition – or any other aspect of Transition – by acting as if Afghanistan's main domestic source of income was not dependent on a narco-economy, that criminal networks were not as serious a problem as corruption, that Transition will not lead to capital and personal flight out of the country, and that the ANP or any other element of the ANSF can be treated on a business as usual basis.

Green on Blue and Green on Green Attacks

Finally, the US and any ally that plans to stay in Afghanistan through 2014 or beyond must accept the risks of “insider attacks” and the risks of relying largely on being embedded in friendly Afghan forces force security. Even under the best conditions, this will mean further casualties from “friendly” forces. **Figure 13** shows a DoD estimate of the trends in attacks by members of the ANSF on US/ISAF (Green on Blue) and ANSF on ANSF (Green on Green) during 2002-2012.

No one can disregard the costs of such attacks, and that the coming withdrawals will increasingly expose US military and civil aid advisors to an extent that various elements

of the ANSF cannot protect them. If the US wants to succeed in Transition, however, it cannot both blow their impact out of proportion and stay in Afghanistan.

The peak numbers to date are small and may well remain so as the US withdraws most of its personnel. The wild cards the US will have to accept are: the risk that withdrawal will anger some Afghans, dependence on a stream of new Afghan recruits (many rural Pashtuns) which may be less loyal to the ANSF, increased insurgent efforts to make political statements and use insider attacks to level the US out of the country and keep the ANSF bottled up, and Afghan resentment of a different set of cultural and religious values come to increase the volume of such attacks.

The DoD noted in a December 2012 report that,⁵⁹

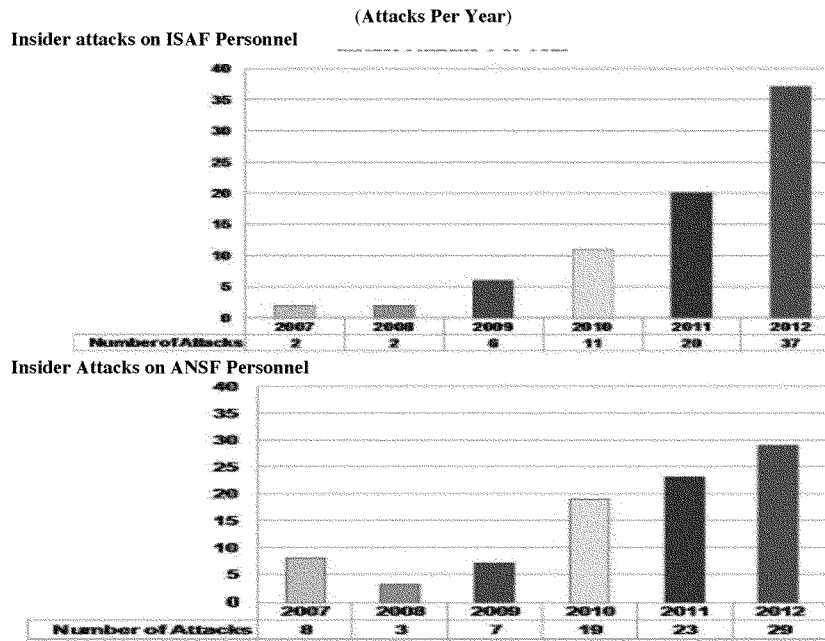
The Taliban has adapted its propaganda, hoping to inspire attacks through themes of praise, revenge, and provision of support and sanctuary. For example, in Taliban supreme leader Mullah Omar's August 2012 Eid al-Fitr address, he praised ANSF members who conduct insider attacks and urged other ANSF to do as "your brave friends have done." Taliban statements have promoted the protection and facilitation of attackers out of Afghanistan, and projected a willingness to support those committing insider attacks, even those without prior Taliban affiliation. As part of this messaging, the Taliban claims attacks they did not engineer and exaggerates ISAF casualty numbers for attacks that do occur.

The DoD also, however, described a wide range of steps being taken to reduce the risk in the future.⁶⁰ These steps cannot guarantee protection, and many depend on the US having enough presence with most elements of ANSF forces to be certain they are effective. They depend on good relations between the ANSF and US and other ISAF personnel and advisors. Furthermore, **Figure 13** warns that this is not a Green on Blue problem in the sense that the ANSF does not face nearly the same threat as the US and other ISAF forces

Nevertheless, the Taliban and other insurgents will have every incentive to use cooption, infiltration, impersonation, and personal motives to keep up insider attacks on both US/ISAF and ANSF targets as the US and ISAF withdraw troops and close the facilities they secure for themselves. Tragic as the resulting casualties may be, however, they are the price of success in both Afghanistan and in any future cases of this kind. The US and its allies must accept this, and make it clear to media and legislators why they are unavoidable, to succeed in staying in country.

Moreover, it is now impossible to estimate the level of popular and ANSF support the US and other advisory and aid elements will have during and after transition, how many US and combat and enabling forces will remain, how exposed US and other advisors and trainers will be, how much elements of the ANSF will be able to stand on their own, and how active insurgent elements will be in attacking US and ISAF forces as they withdraw, the elements to stay in country, and ANSF forces. All that is clear at this point is (i) public opinion polls and news reports do indicate a drop in Afghan support for US and ISAF forces, (ii) no meaningful US or allied plans have been announced for the number of forces and aid workers that will remain in the field from 2014 onwards, and (iii) the ANSF will steadily evolve so every element develop Afghan solutions to future operations in ways that currently cannot be predicted and will ensure much of the present force building program is changes or never fully implemented.

Figure 13: Insider Attacks on ISAF and ANSF Personnel: 2007-2012⁶¹



⁶¹In December 2012, Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index again rated Afghanistan with Somalia, and North Korea as the most corrupt countries in the world. Afghanistan was ranked 174th out of 176 countries. "Countries at the bottom of our corruption indices remain largely failed states with

repression of human rights, social chaos and continued poverty. Afghanistan is one such country. Sufficient evidence suggests that corruption in Afghanistan is getting rampant. According to President Karzai himself, the phenomenon is now at a level "never before seen... corruption manifests itself in Afghan society: widespread charges of fraud and election-rigging; a judiciary subservient to the government and officials engaging in arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, extortion, and extrajudicial killings.... Corruption is also present in daily life and stands out in public surveys. According to Integrity Watch Afghanistan, one Afghan in seven paid a bribe in 2010 and the average bribe is equal to one third of the average Afghan salary.... Corruption in Afghanistan also impacts the international community, who need to start thinking long-term. According to an article from Huguette earlier this year, as much as \$1 billion of the \$8 billion donated in the past eight years has been lost to corruption. As much as US\$ 60 billion of military contracts have been lost to fraud and waste. The country receives \$70 billion in foreign military assistance and development aid annually. Afghan government revenue was \$1.3 billion in 2009. The country's future depends on tackling corruption more than almost any other. A Transparency International report last year warned: Corruption, weak institutions and a lack of economic development pose a fatal threat to the viability of Afghanistan." (See <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2012/results> and <http://blog.transparency.org/2012/12/03/corruption-perceptions-index-2012-will-demand-a-new-tack-in-afghanistan/>)

²Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 99-120. Also see Catherine Dale, *Next Steps in the War in Afghanistan? Issues for Congress*, CRS Ken Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy*, January 4, 2013, CRS RL30588, pp. 9-13, 21-32, 62-67; and *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, November 30, 2012, CRS21922, especially pp. 36-52. Key issues in governance are also raised in Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 103-129

³Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 58.

⁴GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 36; Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 58...

⁵The manning totals are taken from Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 79, 84, 87 and show authorized totals as of Q4 2012.

⁶GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP pp. 21-22. The GAO notes that, "Although DOD has developed ANSF cost estimates beyond 2014, it has not provided its long-term cost estimates for sustaining ANSF in its semiannual reports to Congress. Our analysis of DOD data estimates the cost of continuing to support ANSF from 2013 through 2017 over \$25 billion, raising concerns about the sustainability of ANSF. We previously recommended, and Congress mandated, that DOD report to Congress about the long-term cost to sustain ANSF. While DOD's semiannual reports issued to date include information on current or upcoming fiscal year funding requirements for ANSF and donor contributions, estimates for long-term costs are absent. DOD stated that because the long-term ANSF cost estimates depend on a constantly changing operational environment, it provides cost information to Congress through briefings and testimony, as appropriate. This mechanism, however, does not allow for independent assessment of DOD's estimates to assist Congress as it considers future budget decisions."

⁷Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 58-59. GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP pp. 21-22.

⁸See Ken Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban governance, Security, and US Policy*, January 4, 2013, CRS RL30588, p. 62. His estimate is based on a report by the National Security Staff released in December 2, 2011, and mandated by the national Defense Authorization Act for FY 2011 (Section 1535 of P.L. 111-338).

⁹GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP pp. 25-27.

¹⁰ There are no reliable statistics, but the figures in the CIA World Factbook for Afghanistan seem broadly correct in illustrating the scale of the problem. For the growing scale of the drug problem even before aid cuts begin, see the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) annual surveys for Opium and Cannabis growing in Afghanistan. The UNDOC survey for 2012 found a 7% annual growth in the total area under cultivation. There was little correlation between area of drug cultivation and combat in south. Helmand dropped by only % during the surge, while Kandahar rose by 5% and Nimroz by 22%. The Taliban's ties to narcotics effectively moved out of the lower Helmand River Valley into upper areas and into different provinces. (see the 2012 UNDOC report, p. 29, http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/ORAS_report_2012.pdf.)

¹¹ The total size of the Afghan forces under the Soviet occupation and Najibullah was then 25,000–40,000 regular military supplemented by about 20,000 militia and paramilitary forces. Ken Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban governance, Security, and US Policy*, January 4, 2013, CRS RL30588, p. 2.

¹² Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 99-115. A different report by UNDOC found that, "the total corruption cost has increased by some 40 per cent over the last three years (2010-2012) to reach \$3.9 billion. Moreover, in 2012, half of Afghan citizens paid a bribe while requesting a public service... See UNDOC, *Corruption in Afghanistan, Recent Patterns and trends*, December 2012, http://www.unodc.org/documents/frontpage/Corruption_in_Afghanistan_FINAL.pdf.

¹³ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 26.

¹⁴ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 26.

¹⁵ The White House, "Fact Sheet: Afghanistan," Office of the Press Secretary, February 12, 2013. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/02/12/fact-sheet-afghanistan>

¹⁶ News Unit, Office of the Spokesperson to the President of Afghanistan, Presidential Palace (Arg), Kabul, February 13, 2013.

¹⁷ Adapted from the Washington Post, February 13, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-troops-in-afghanistan/2013/02/12/e9a14926-757e-11e2-95e4-6148e45d7adb_graphic.html; and Michael R. Gordon and Mark Landler, *Decision on Afghan Troop Levels Calculates Political and Military Interests*, New York Times, February 13, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/13/us/politics/obama-to-announce-troops-return.html?ref=world&_r=0&pagewanted=print.

¹⁸ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 52-53.

¹⁹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 52-53.

²⁰ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 88-89.

²¹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 88-89.

²² UNDOC noted in a November 20, 2012 press release that, "Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan covered 154,000 hectares (ha) in 2012, 18 per cent higher than the 131,000 recorded the previous year....Cultivation increased despite a significant 154 per cent increase in Government eradication efforts (over 9,600 ha eradicated in 2012 compared with just over 3,800 in 2011). See UNDOC, *Opium-crop cultivation rises in Afghanistan, prices remain high*, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2012/November/opium-crop-cultivation-rises-in-afghanistan-prices-remain-high.html>

²³ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 152-153.

²⁴ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 162-164.

²⁵ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 17.

²⁶ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 17.

²⁷ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 23.

²⁸ UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, Kabul, Afghanistan 2012, pp. 22-23.

²⁹ Within the 1,077 civilian casualties from overall targeted killings, the deliberate targeting of Government employees increased by almost 700 percent. In 2012, UNAMA documented 47 separate incidents of targeted killings of civilian Government workers which killed 107 civilians and injured 148. In 2011, UNAMA documented 23 of the same type of targeted killing incidents which killed 23 and injured 11 civilians. UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, Kabul, Afghanistan 2012, pp. 21-22.

³⁰ UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, Kabul, Afghanistan 2012, pp. 28-29.

³¹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 20.

³² Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 33.

³³ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 34-36.

³⁴ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 40-41.

³⁵ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 28-30.

³⁶ ANSO Quarterly Data Report, Q4, 2012, <http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>, p. 15.

³⁷ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 19.

³⁸ GAO, *Afghanistan, Key Oversight Issues*, February 2013, GAO-13-218SP p. 19.

³⁹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 151.

⁴⁰ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 28.

⁴¹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 29-31.

⁴² Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 29-31.

⁴³ ANSO Quarterly Data Report, Q4, 2012, <http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>, p. 17

⁴⁴ ANSO Quarterly Data Report, Q4, 2012, <http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=88>, p. 17

⁴⁵Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 99 and 116.

⁴⁶Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 99 and 116.

⁴⁷Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 76-78. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 89-95.

HISTORY OF CHANGES TO CUAT RATING LEVEL TITLES, APRIL 2010-PRESENT				
April 2010	July 2010	September 2010*	October 2010	August 2011
Effective with Advisors	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent with Advisors
Effective with Assistance	Effective with Advisors	Effective with Advisors	Effective with Advisors	Effective with Advisors
Dependent on CF for Success	Effective with Assistance	Effective with Assistance	Effective with Assistance	Effective with Partners
Barely Effective	Dependent on CF for Success	Dependent on CF for Success	Developing	Developing with Partners
Ineffective	Ineffective	Ineffective	Established	Established
Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed

* The CUAT report includes color coding for each rating level; the difference between July and September 2010 was changes to the color coding for the ratings. *CF = coalition forces.

Source: IJC, response to SIGAR data call, 12/26/2012.

⁴⁸ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 90-91.

⁴⁹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 91-92.

⁵⁰Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 78-79. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 47-52.

⁵¹ The key problems in the ANA are summarized in Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 55-57, 60.

⁵² For recent, on-the-scene reporting, see Azam Ahmed, "In Kabul's 'Car Guantánamo,' Autos Languish and Trust Dies," *New York Times*, February 19, 2013; Kevin Sieff, "To cut Afghan red tape, bribery is the norm," *Washington Post*, February 19, 2013. Also see, UNDP, *Police Perception Survey – 2011: The Afghan Perspective*, Afghan Center for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research (ACSOR) Surveys, Kabul, Langer Research Associates, December 2011; UNDOC, *Corruption in Afghanistan, Recent Patterns and Trends*, December 2012, http://www.unodc.org/documents/frontpage/Corruption_in_Afghanistan_FINAL.pdf, pp. 7-21.

⁵³ The scale of the problems involved in the ANP is laid out in Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 67-76; and Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, pp. 84-87.

⁵⁴Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, January 30, 2013*, p. 111.

⁵⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), *Corruption in Afghanistan: Recent Patterns and Trends*, 2012, pp. 8 & 10.

⁵⁶ Some criticism of the ALP has been unfair and confused real ALP, without meaningful outside or ANSF training and ties to the MoI, with militias or "ALP" that have designated themselves as ALP. There is, however, a range of legitimate criticism of even well-advised and supported units, just as there is of the abusive use of force by some elements of the ANA and ANP. See UNAMA, *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in armed Conflict, Kabul, Afghanistan 2012*, pp. 35-56.

⁵⁷ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), *Corruption in Afghanistan: Recent Patterns and trends*, 2012, p. 20.

⁵⁸ UNDOC, *Opium-crop cultivation rises in Afghanistan, prices remain high*, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2012/November/opium-crop-cultivation-rises-in-afghanistan-prices-remain-high.html>

⁵⁹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, p. 35.

⁶⁰ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 23-39.

⁶¹ Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and stability in Afghanistan*, (the 1230 Report) December 2012, pp. 34-35.

Anthony H. Cordesman



Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy

Anthony H. Cordesman holds the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at CSIS. He is a recipient of the Department of Defense Distinguished Service Medal. During his time at CSIS, he has completed a wide variety of studies on energy, U.S. strategy and defense plans, the lessons of modern war, defense programming and budgeting, NATO modernization, Chinese military power, the lessons of modern warfare, proliferation, counterterrorism, armed nation building, the security of the Middle East, and the Afghan and Iraq conflicts. (Many of these studies can be downloaded from the Burke Chair section of the CSIS Web site at <http://www.csis.org/program/burke-chair-strategy>.) Cordesman has directed numerous CSIS study efforts on terrorism, energy, defense planning, modern conflicts, and the Middle East. He has traveled frequently to Afghanistan and Iraq to consult for MNF-I, ISAF, U.S. commands, and U.S. embassies on the wars in those countries, and he was a member of the Strategic Assessment Group that assisted General Stanley McChrystal in developing a new strategy for Afghanistan in 2009. He frequently acts as a consultant to the U.S. State Department, Defense Department, and intelligence community and has worked with U.S. officials on counterterrorism and security areas in a number of Middle East countries.

Before joining CSIS, Cordesman served as director of intelligence assessment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and as civilian assistant to the deputy secretary of defense. He directed the analysis of the lessons of the October War for the secretary of defense in 1974, coordinating the U.S. military, intelligence, and civilian analysis of the conflict. He also served in numerous other government positions, including in the State Department and on NATO International Staff. In addition, he served as director of policy and planning for resource applications in the Energy Department and as national security assistant to Senator John McCain. He had numerous foreign assignments, including posts in the United Kingdom, Lebanon, Egypt, and Iran, as well as with NATO in Brussels and Paris. He has worked extensively in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf.

He is the author of a wide range of studies on energy policy, national security, and the Middle East, and his most recent publications include (CSIS, 2010), *Iraq and the United States: Creating a Strategic Partnership* (CSIS, 2010), *Saudi Arabia: National Security in a Troubled Region* (Praeger, 2009), *Iranian Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Birth of a Regional Nuclear Arms Race?* (Praeger, 2009), *Withdrawal from Iraq: Assessing the Readiness of Iraqi Security Forces* (CSIS, 2009), and *Winning in Afghanistan: Creating Effective Afghan Security Forces* (CSIS, 2009).

**DISCLOSURE FORM FOR WITNESSES
CONCERNING FEDERAL CONTRACT AND GRANT INFORMATION**

INSTRUCTION TO WITNESSES: Rule 11, clause 2(g)(5), of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives for the 113th Congress requires nongovernmental witnesses appearing before House committees to include in their written statements a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source of any federal contracts or grants (including subcontracts and subgrants) received during the current and two previous fiscal years either by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness. This form is intended to assist witnesses appearing before the House Committee on Armed Services in complying with the House rule. Please note that a copy of these statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the witness's personal privacy (including home address and phone number) will be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness's appearance before the committee.

Witness name: Anthony H. Cordesman

Capacity in which appearing: (check one)

Individual

Representative

If appearing in a representative capacity, name of the company, association or other entity being represented:

FISCAL YEAR 2013

federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
None			

FISCAL YEAR 2012

federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
None			

FISCAL YEAR 2011

Federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
None			

Federal Contract Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2013): None _____;
 Fiscal year 2012: None _____;
 Fiscal year 2011: None _____.

Federal agencies with which federal contracts are held:

Current fiscal year (2013): None _____;
 Fiscal year 2012: None _____;
 Fiscal year 2011: None _____.

List of subjects of federal contract(s) (for example, ship construction, aircraft parts manufacturing, software design, force structure consultant, architecture & engineering services, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2013): None _____;
 Fiscal year 2012: None _____;
 Fiscal year 2011: None _____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal contracts held:

Current fiscal year (2013): None _____;
 Fiscal year 2012: None _____;
 Fiscal year 2011: None _____.

Federal Grant Information: If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has grants (including subgrants) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of grants (including subgrants) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2013): None _____;
Fiscal year 2012: None _____;
Fiscal year 2011: None _____.

Federal agencies with which federal grants are held:

Current fiscal year (2013): None _____;
Fiscal year 2012: None _____;
Fiscal year 2011: None _____.

List of subjects of federal grants(s) (for example, materials research, sociological study, software design, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2013): None _____;
Fiscal year 2012: None _____;
Fiscal year 2011: None _____.

Aggregate dollar value of federal grants held:

Current fiscal year (2013): None _____;
Fiscal year 2012: None _____;
Fiscal year 2011: None _____.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

FEBRUARY 27, 2013

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. LANGEVIN

Mr. LANGEVIN. 1) There are certainly a broad range of competing interests at stake—from the Northern Alliance's general hostility and difficulty in dealing politically with the Taliban, to the various disparate factions within the Taliban itself. Equally pressing are the interests of the Afghan government, as well as the interests of actors in Pakistan who have great sway over those within Afghanistan. Certainly the withdrawal of American and NATO troops affects the dynamics of these relationships, as does the implied continued financial support for Afghan security signified by a troop presence, regardless of U.S. insistence that negotiations be Afghan-led. Can you share with us how you see the various permutations of residual forces affecting the political dynamics of negotiations?

Dr. DALE. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. 2) Governance reform is going to be integral to the stability of an Afghan government, but has been shunted aside in large part due to other concerns. With reduced troop levels and challenges to funding of ANA forces, do you see the United States as still having the leverage to encourage governance reform?

Dr. DALE. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. 3) Recently, President Karzai ordered the withdrawal of U.S. special forces from Wardak, a key province southwest of Kabul. This follows the ban on coalition airstrikes in residential areas last week. With the understanding that such controversies will arise, can you speak to the effect of these moves on the broader picture? How will this affect the training of and transition to ANA forces, and does this strengthen Karzai's hand in negotiations?

Dr. DALE. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. 4) There are certainly a broad range of competing interests at stake—from the Northern Alliance's general hostility and difficulty in dealing politically with the Taliban, to the various disparate factions within the Taliban itself. Equally pressing are the interests of the Afghan government, as well as the interests of actors in Pakistan who have great sway over those within Afghanistan. Certainly the withdrawal of American and NATO troops affects the dynamics of these relationships, as does the implied continued financial support for Afghan security signified by a troop presence, regardless of U.S. insistence that negotiations be Afghan-led. Can you share with us how you see the various permutations of residual forces affecting the political dynamics of negotiations?

General KEANE. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. 5) Governance reform is going to be integral to the stability of an Afghan government, but has been shunted aside in large part due to other concerns. With reduced troop levels and challenges to funding of ANA forces, do you see the United States as still having the leverage to encourage governance reform?

General KEANE. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. 6) Recently, President Karzai ordered the withdrawal of U.S. special forces from Wardak, a key province southwest of Kabul. This follows the ban on coalition airstrikes in residential areas last week. With the understanding that such controversies will arise, can you speak to the effect of these moves on the broader picture? How will this affect the training of and transition to ANA forces, and does this strengthen Karzai's hand in negotiations?

General KEANE. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. 7) There are certainly a broad range of competing interests at stake—from the Northern Alliance's general hostility and difficulty in dealing politically with the Taliban, to the various disparate factions within the Taliban itself. Equally pressing are the interests of the Afghan government, as well as the interests of actors in Pakistan who have great sway over those within Afghanistan. Certainly the withdrawal of American and NATO troops affects the dynamics of these relationships, as does the implied continued financial support for Afghan security signified by a troop presence, regardless of U.S. insistence that negotiations be Afghan-led. Can you share with us how you see the various permutations of residual forces affecting the political dynamics of negotiations?

Mr. CORDESMAN. Transition is going to involve continuing Pakistani struggles to dominate the east and south of Afghanistan, and use the ISI to manipulate the Taliban and Haqqani Network. India will play its own game through aid to GIROA and working with Iran to create new rail and road links to the West.

Iran will seek influence in western Afghanistan with the Hazara, and to counter U.S. influence. Each of the central Asia states will pursue its own interests in the north, with links to its own ethnic groups in Afghanistan. Russia will seek to contain any threat and the flow of narcotics, but avoid any new commitment. China will pursue its own economic interests cautiously.

The end result will be a “new great game” and not regional cooperation, regardless of rhetoric to the contrary. It will also be extremely dependent on how well the new Afghan leadership actually leads and governs after the 2014 election, and the unity of the ANSF.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 8) Governance reform is going to be integral to the stability of an Afghan government, but has been shunted aside in large part due to other concerns. With reduced troop levels and challenges to funding of ANA forces, do you see the United States as still having the leverage to encourage governance reform?

Mr. CORDESMAN. The U.S. has little meaningful leverage now, aside from occasionally influencing the appointments of provincial and district governors and police chiefs. World Bank studies and the DOD 1230 reports indicate that U.S. aid efforts have had little effect. The U.S. will, however, see a decline in both its awareness of problems and progress and its influence as its forces drop. In general, Afghanistan’s government will be weak and often corrupt, and the Afghan President’s control over appointments and government revenues will make him the decisive factor.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 9) Recently, President Karzai ordered the withdrawal of U.S. special forces from Wardak, a key province southwest of Kabul. This follows the ban on coalition airstrikes in residential areas last week. With the understanding that such controversies will arise, can you speak to the effect of these moves on the broader picture? How will this affect the training of and transition to ANA forces, and does this strengthen Karzai’s hand in negotiations?

Mr. CORDESMAN. As has become all too clear since the hearing, President has never shown much concern for military effectiveness and pursues his own political interests as well as listens to close advisors that do not support the U.S. and often provide grossly exaggerated picture of U.S. military mistakes. These problems can be papered over until the 2014 elections, but not without difficulty and the near certainty of new incidents and tensions. The key test will be the 2014 elections: Whether they are held, their results after they, and how the new President and Afghan senior officials deal with security issues and the U.S.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 10) There are certainly a broad range of competing interests at stake—from the Northern Alliance’s general hostility and difficulty in dealing politically with the Taliban, to the various disparate factions within the Taliban itself. Equally pressing are the interests of the Afghan government, as well as the interests of actors in Pakistan who have great sway over those within Afghanistan. Certainly the withdrawal of American and NATO troops affects the dynamics of these relationships, as does the implied continued financial support for Afghan security signified by a troop presence, regardless of U.S. insistence that negotiations be Afghan-led. Can you share with us how you see the various permutations of residual forces affecting the political dynamics of negotiations?

General BARNO. In my view, negotiations with the Taliban will not reach a serious stage until the bulk of foreign/international forces exit Afghanistan in December 2014. Once the Taliban and the successor to the Karzai government recognize that they remain locked in a potentially interminable Afghan vs. Afghan conflict, options for serious talks will likely emerge. I believe the prospects for any type of negotiated end to the war prior to the end of 2014 are highly dubious.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 11) Governance reform is going to be integral to the stability of an Afghan government, but has been shunted aside in large part due to other concerns. With reduced troop levels and challenges to funding of ANA forces, do you see the United States as still having the leverage to encourage governance reform?

General BARNO. I believe serious Afghan government reform will only come if the Afghan government, president and people collectively realize that there is no other choice for survival. I see almost no circumstances for that to occur in the next two years. Moreover, I believe that ineffective and often corrupt Afghan governance is endemic, and unlikely to be influenced through Western leverage. The last ten years should provide ample evidence of the degree of difficulty inherent in this effort. If we achieved little success in a decade with massive international troop presence and financial support, the prospects for a better future outcome in this arena with neither present in Afghanistan are minimal.

Mr. LANGEVIN. 12) Recently, President Karzai ordered the withdrawal of U.S. special forces from Wardak, a key province southwest of Kabul. This follows the ban on coalition airstrikes in residential areas last week. With the understanding that such controversies will arise, can you speak to the effect of these moves on the broader picture? How will this affect the training of and transition to ANA forces, and does this strengthen Karzai's hand in negotiations?

General BARNO. These recent moves by President Karzai relate, in my view, to his attempts to burnish his legitimacy as a nationalist leader "pushing back on behalf of his people" against western power and influence in Afghanistan. These proclamations have more to do with short-term political gain than any efforts to strengthen his negotiating hand for residual presence. In fact, I believe that there is substantial danger that Karzai could overplay his hand and so outrage Western sentiment that the U.S. and the international community may simply choose a "zero option" of no residual troop presence after 2014 if Karzai does not moderate his rhetoric.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MS. SPEIER

Ms. SPEIER. 13) As a taxpayer, I find the amount of corruption, and Karzai's failure to really do anything about it, extremely concerning. The World Bank recently estimated that the cost of corruption in Afghanistan has actually increased significantly in the last three years to \$3.9 billion. And I am alarmed that SIGAR and CRS have warned Congress that key elements of leadership and governance will be missing through at least 2014, so it's likely that we'll keep contributing to this corruption problem. What steps can DOD or NATO take to make sure that our security role isn't defined by subsidizing this corruption problem?

Dr. DALE. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Ms. SPEIER. 14) Dr. Dale, I think whether or not a program or project is going to be sustainable must be one of the first questions we ask for all of our efforts in Afghanistan. SIGAR has exposed millions of dollars of projects that will never really be used in Afghanistan, including electrical equipment that can't be installed. And on the security side, you point to significant concerns about the political will of the Afghan government or the Pakistanis to go after safe havens in Pakistan. You say some argue that stronger Afghan institutions might help, but is relying on that really a sustainable, or even a realistic strategy?

Dr. DALE. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Ms. SPEIER. 15) As a taxpayer, I find the amount of corruption, and Karzai's failure to really do anything about it, extremely concerning. The World Bank recently estimated that the cost of corruption in Afghanistan has actually increased significantly in the last three years to \$3.9 billion. And I am alarmed that SIGAR and CRS have warned Congress that key elements of leadership and governance will be missing through at least 2014, so it's likely that we'll keep contributing to this corruption problem. What steps can DOD or NATO take to make sure that our security role isn't defined by subsidizing this corruption problem?

General KEANE. [The information was not available at the time of printing.]

Ms. SPEIER. 16) As a taxpayer, I find the amount of corruption, and Karzai's failure to really do anything about it, extremely concerning. The World Bank recently estimated that the cost of corruption in Afghanistan has actually increased significantly in the last three years to \$3.9 billion. And I am alarmed that SIGAR and CRS have warned Congress that key elements of leadership and governance will be missing through at least 2014, so it's likely that we'll keep contributing to this corruption problem. What steps can DOD or NATO take to make sure that our security role isn't defined by subsidizing this corruption problem?

Mr. CORDESMAN. The Tokyo conference did set clear standards for Afghan reform based on Afghan pledges and commitments. The U.S. should hold the Afghan government fully accountable, and make aid and military support conditional on the basis of Afghan performance.

At the same time, the U.S. is as much to blame as the Afghans. Pouring money into the country without meaningful plans, management, and accountability has had an immense corrupting effect. It has distorted much of the economy, raised prices and costs, and vastly exceeded Afghan absorption capacity. The U.S. military and USAID did not enforce meaningful accountability and contract standards before 2011, and SIGAR is just becoming effective.

No American should ever talk about Afghan corruption without looking in the mirror, and no member of Congress should ever forget that Congress failed to en-

force meaningful standards on a grossly negligent State Department and USAID, and marginally better Department of Defense.

Ms. SPEIER. 17) I am very concerned about the transition from private security contractors to the APPF, and have been frustrated that both GAO and SIGAR have had problems accessing reports assessing their effectiveness. Mr. Cordesman, you describe the creation of the APPF as “more a Karzai power grab than a real security reform.” What are the political and cost implications of this power grab?

Mr. CORDESMAN. We don’t know how bad it will be. So far waivers and delay have solved the problem, and the APPF has been no more corrupt than the existing PSCs. It does seem likely, however, that the APPF will remain weaker than today’s PSCs and that this will present growing problems after 2014 that the U.S. may have to solve by either using troops to provide security or sharply limiting its State Department and USAID movements in the field and the number of posts it can maintain outside Kabul.

Ms. SPEIER. 18) As a taxpayer, I find the amount of corruption, and Karzai’s failure to really do anything about it, extremely concerning. The World Bank recently estimated that the cost of corruption in Afghanistan has actually increased significantly in the last three years to \$3.9 billion. And I am alarmed that SIGAR and CRS have warned Congress that key elements of leadership and governance will be missing through at least 2014, so it’s likely that we’ll keep contributing to this corruption problem. What steps can DOD or NATO take to make sure that our security role isn’t defined by subsidizing this corruption problem?

General BARNO. This will remain a deep-seated problem in Afghanistan well beyond 2014. The U.S. and the international community must continue efforts such as SIGAR, using “name and shame” investigations, and sustain recent efforts to ensure western contracts are let with the appropriate “teeth” built in to deliver satisfactory performance and avoid obvious corrupt practices. The delivery of sustained aid should be tied to the commensurate ability of the United States to oversee and inspect the effective use of that aid. Providing dollars in coming years without adequate oversight is both a very likely outcome, and one guaranteeing waste, fraud and abuse of those dollars.

