

**Statement by Amb. Karl F. Inderfurth
Senate Armed Services Committee
February 14, 2008**

***“Afghanistan: Replacing the ‘Light Footprint’
with the ‘Right Footprint’“***

Chairman Levin, Ranking Member McCain, Members of the Committee:

Thank you very much for your invitation to discuss the security, political and economic challenges facing Afghanistan today and the recommendations contained in the recently released report of the Afghanistan Study Group for addressing those challenges.

Afghanistan Study Group (ASG)

First, by way of introduction, a word about the Afghanistan Study Group.

The Center for the Study of the Presidency, led by former U.S. ambassador to NATO David Abshire, was closely engaged in the work of the 2006 Iraq Study Group. During the deliberations of that group, it became more and more evident that Afghanistan was at great risk of becoming “the forgotten war.” It was also evident that one of the principal reasons for this was the war in Iraq. According to the study group (in its final report): “The huge focus of U.S. political, military and economic support on Iraq has necessarily diverted attention from Afghanistan.”

I should add that Afghanistan is still being overshadowed by the Iraq war. As the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, told the House Armed Services Committee in December: “It is simply a matter of resources, of capacity. In Afghanistan, we do what we can. In Iraq, we do what we must.”

Participants and witnesses before the Iraq Study Group also pointed to the danger of losing the war in Afghanistan unless a reassessment took place of the effort being undertaken by the United States, NATO and the international community. In its final report, the study group reached this conclusion: “It is critical for the United States to provide additional political, economic and military support for Afghanistan, including resources that might become available as combat forces are moved from Iraq.”

In the spring of 2007, concerned about the deepening crisis in Afghanistan, Ambassador Abshire decided to establish a smaller scale study group. Co-chaired by Ambassador Thomas Pickering and General (ret.) James Jones, it included 19 former government officials and experts on Afghanistan and the region, including former Senator Charles Robb, Ambassador James Dobbins, and Dr. Barnett Rubin among others, including myself. The goal of the Afghanistan Study Group was to provide policy

makers with key recommendations that will contribute to revitalizing our efforts and rethinking our strategies for a successful long-term outcome in Afghanistan.

Overall Evaluation

Before highlighting the recommendations contained in the study group's report, let me share with you this overall evaluation of the situation in Afghanistan, as provided by our co-chairs:

Afghanistan stands today at a crossroads. The progress achieved after six years of international engagement is under serious threat from resurgent violence, weakening international resolve, mounting regional challenges and a growing lack of confidence on the part of the Afghan people about the future direction of their country. The United States and the international community have tried to win the struggle in Afghanistan with too few military forces and insufficient economic aid, and without a clear and consistent comprehensive strategy to fill the power vacuum outside Kabul and to counter the combined challenges of reconstituted Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a runaway opium economy, and the stark poverty faced by most Afghans.

Success in Afghanistan remains a critical national security imperative for the United States and the international community. Achieving that success will require a sustained, multi-year commitment from the U.S. and a willingness to make the war in Afghanistan – and the rebuilding of that country – a higher U.S. foreign policy priority. Although the obstacles there remain substantial, the strategic consequences of failure in Afghanistan would be severe for long-term U.S. interests in the region and for security at home. Allowing the Taliban to re-establish its influence in Afghanistan, as well as failure to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a failed state, would not only undermine the development of the country, it would constitute a major victory for al-Qaeda and its global efforts to spread violence and extremism.

The ‘light footprint’ of the U.S. and its allies in Afghanistan needs to be replaced with the ‘right footprint.’ It is time to re-double our efforts toward stabilizing Afghanistan and re-think our economic and military strategies to ensure that the level of our commitment is commensurate with the threat posed by possible failure in Afghanistan.

Key Recommendations

Attached to this written statement is a summary of the 34 recommendations contained in the report of the Afghanistan Study Group. For more focused work, the group decided to center its analysis on several issues that its members identified as both urgent and crucial for future success, beginning with three overarching recommendations.

First, the study group proposes to establish an Eminent Persons Group to develop a long-term, coherent international strategy for Afghanistan and a strategic communications plan to garner strong public support for that strategy.

Second, the study group calls for decoupling Iraq and Afghanistan, including in the funding and budget process. Doing so would enable more coherence and focus on the increasingly important Afghanistan (and I would add Pakistan) issues, both for the Congress and the Executive branch as well as in dealing with other governments and international organizations.

Third, the study group recommends that a Special Envoy for Afghanistan position be established within the U.S. Government, charged with coordinating and orchestrating all aspects of U.S. policies towards Afghanistan, including the direction of U.S assistance programs and relations with European and Asian counterparts and Afghan government officials.

The remainder of the study group's recommendations fell into the following six specific subject areas:

On International Coordination: appoint a high-level coordinator with a UN-mandate to advise all parties to the mission in Afghanistan (over 40 countries, three major international organizations and scores of other agencies and non governmental organizations) on needed changes to their policies, funding and actions and also to ensure that all international assistance programs (now fragmented among 62 donors) have a coordinated strategy that aims to bolster the central government's authority throughout the country and is closely coordinated with the Afghan government. As Secretary Rice has noted: "There are a lot of cooks in the kitchen. We owe it to President Karzai to have an effective international coordinator." In short, the international community must get its act together in Afghanistan.

General Jones will address the need for greater international coordination on the military side.

On Security: increase the number of NATO troops and military equipment in Afghanistan to the levels requested by the commanders and ensure that the increase in *quantity* of forces is matched with the *quality* of the forces that are needed for the mission they are sent to perform. Also, the study group welcomes the significant increases in congressional funding for the Afghan National Army and Police (the ANA and ANP) as well as Defense Secretary Gates' recent announcement that the U.S. will support the expansion of the army to 80,000, beyond its current goal of 70,000 by next year. A further expansion may be required, but any such consideration must take into account affordability, sustainability and the proper balance between police and military forces.

On Governance and the Rule of Law: a coherent and resourced strategy to increase the reach, capacity and the legitimacy of the Afghan government must be a top priority. Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry, the former U.S. military commander in Afghanistan, has said the greatest long-term threat to success in Afghanistan is not the resurgence of the Taliban, but "the irretrievable loss of legitimacy of the government of Afghanistan," citing specifically corruption, justice and law enforcement. Afghanistan has slipped sharply in

Transparency International's annual corruption index and now ranks among the worst eight countries in the world.

On Counter-Narcotics: the study group cautions that proposals to increase eradication immediately - especially the use of herbicides whether sprayed from the air or the ground - could prove extremely dangerous for Afghanistan, further undermining support for the government of President Karzai and providing new recruits for the Taliban. Instead, the study group proposes much larger alternative livelihood programs and greater interdiction efforts, including the use of international military forces to assist the Afghan police to destroy heroin labs and the removal of high officials benefiting from the drug trade.

On Economic Development and Reconstruction: rebuilding and development assistance must flow into a region immediately after it is cleared of Taliban presence. Infrastructure development -- especially outlays on roads, power and water systems -- should be accelerated. These efforts should utilize the Afghan labor force and contractors as much as possible. In short, a construction "surge" is needed in Afghanistan, as are jobs. Very high unemployment in Afghanistan is a major factor in undermining the legitimacy of the Karzai government and adding to instability.

On Afghanistan and its Neighbors, the study group makes several recommendations, especially about Pakistan.

Afghanistan and Pakistan are inextricably linked. It is clear there can be no successful outcome for Afghanistan if Pakistan is not a part of the solution. The future stability of both depends on the development of an effective strategy to counter and uproot the Taliban/ al Qaeda sanctuary in Pakistan's tribal border areas. Indeed Director of National Intelligence Mike McConnell told the Senate Intelligence Committee last week that radical elements in these areas are now a threat to the survival of the Pakistan state.

The study group recommends that the U.S. and its allies develop a regional plan to effectively target the risks coming out of the border region area with Pakistan, involving the governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan and other regional powers and including better combined intelligence, operations and non-military efforts.

Countering cross border infiltration is critical. The Trilateral Afghanistan-Pakistan-NATO Military Commission is an important mechanism in this regard. So is the strengthening of the U.S. military presence along the Afghan side of the border, which the latest U.S. Marine contingent arriving in April will assist. Washington also needs to work more closely with Pakistan in joint counter-terrorism operations that can bring U.S. resources (including intelligence) and military assets to bear in the borders areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan. That possibility exists, if pursued in appropriate channels. JSC Chairman Mullen's recent visit to Islamabad to meet with his counterpart, Army chief Gen. Ashfaq Kayani, was the right step in this regard. The January 31 missile strike in North

Waziristan that killed senior al Qaeda operative Abu Laith al-Libi is an example of the right kind of counter-terrorism operation.

But the study group cautions that a large-scale U.S. military intervention in Pakistan's tribal areas would be disastrous for the Pakistani state and for U.S. interests and would not provide a lasting solution to the problem. Rather than trying to insert U.S. influence directly into the region, Washington should strongly encourage systemic political and economic effort that incorporates the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) into the administrative, legal and political systems of Pakistan. This involves improving overall governance and law and order in the region as well as facilitating economic development. As Pakistan's ambassador, Mahmud Duranni, says, what is needed in the tribal areas is a "multi pronged strategy. That is, military force, development and empowerment of the people. Using force alone is not the answer."

In addition to pursuing these steps with Pakistan, the study group recommends that the U.S. develop a strategy toward Iran -- Afghanistan's other key neighbor -- that includes the possibility of resuming discussions with Iran to engender greater cooperation to help stabilize Afghanistan, beginning with the issue of counter-narcotics where common ground already exists.

The present U.S. stance of not speaking with Teheran about Afghanistan risks increasing the likelihood that Iran will step up its covert interference as a way of undermining U.S. interests and the international effort in Afghanistan.

Closing Remarks

In closing, let me end on a more upbeat note. As I mentioned at the beginning of my testimony, the genesis for the Afghanistan Study Group was the growing concern that Afghanistan was becoming "the forgotten war" and that it had been pushed to the side by the requirements of the war in Iraq. In recent months, however, there are some encouraging signs that the U.S. and its international partners in Afghanistan have recognized the hard truth that defeat in Afghanistan is a possibility -- and are beginning to rethink and adjust strategy and resources accordingly.

Several world leaders have recently traveled to Kabul to meet with President Karzai and their national contingents in the country, including British Prime Minister Gordon Brown (who said U.K. troops will have to remain in Afghanistan for more than a decade), French President Nicolas Sarkozy (the first French head of state to travel to Afghanistan), newly elected Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (who announced his country will stay for the "long haul"), and Italy's Prime Minister Romano Prodi (his first visit to Afghanistan). There was also a high level international donors conference on Afghan reconstruction in Tokyo.

Just last week Secretary Rice and British Foreign Secretary Miliband traveled to Kandahar. Secretary Gates was in Vilnius to meet with his NATO counterparts and gave a major address on Afghanistan in Munich. All of these visits and meetings are pointing toward the critical NATO summit that will be held in early April in Bucharest, where the alliance will have the opportunity to demonstrate the strength of its resolve and its long term commitment to a stable and secure Afghanistan. Hopefully the reports you have before you today by the Afghanistan Study Group (“Revitalizing Our Efforts -- Rethinking Our Strategies”) and the Atlantic Council (“Saving Afghanistan: An Appeal and Plan for Urgent Action”) will contribute to U.S. and NATO deliberations.

So, working closely with the Afghan government and its people, I am optimistic we can succeed in Afghanistan. In many respects the situation there is dire, but still doable. And terribly important. As the U.S. ambassador to NATO, Victoria Nuland, correctly points out: “If we can get it right in the Hindu Kush, we will also be stronger the next time we are called to defend our security and values so far from home.”

THANK YOU.

AFGHANISTAN

STUDY GROUP REPORT

REVITALIZING OUR EFFORTS RETHINKING OUR STRATEGIES

Co-Chairs:

General James L. Jones, USMC (Ret.)

Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering

Released: January 30, 2008

AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP (ASG) – LETTER FROM CO-CHAIRS

Afghanistan stands today at a crossroads. The progress achieved after six years of international engagement is under serious threat from resurgent violence, weakening international resolve, mounting regional challenges and a growing lack of confidence on the part of the Afghan people about the future direction of their country. The United States and the international community have tried to win the struggle in Afghanistan with too few military forces and insufficient economic aid, and without a clear and consistent comprehensive strategy to fill the power vacuum outside Kabul and to counter the combined challenges of reconstituted Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a runaway opium economy, and the stark poverty faced by most Afghans.

We believe that success in Afghanistan remains a critical national security imperative for the United States and the international community. Achieving that success will require a sustained, multi-year commitment from the U.S. and a willingness to make the war in Afghanistan – and the rebuilding of that country – a higher U.S. foreign policy priority. Although the obstacles there remain substantial, the strategic consequences of failure in Afghanistan would be severe for long-term U.S. interests in the region and for security at home. Allowing the Taliban to re-establish its influence in Afghanistan, as well as failure to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a failed state, would not only undermine the development of the country, it would constitute a major victory for al-Qaeda and its global efforts to spread violence and extremism.

The “light footprint” in Afghanistan needs to be replaced with the “right footprint” by the U.S. and its allies. It is time to re-vitalize and re-double our efforts toward stabilizing Afghanistan and re-think our economic and military strategies to ensure that the level of our commitment is commensurate with the threat posed by possible failure in Afghanistan. Without the right level of commitment on the part of the U.S., its allies, and Afghanistan’s neighbors, the principles agreed upon by both the Afghan government and the international community at the 2006 London Conference and the goals stated in the Afghanistan Compact will not be achievable. Additionally, recent events in Pakistan further emphasize that there can be no successful outcome for Afghanistan if its neighbors, especially Pakistan, are not part of the solution.

The efforts of the Afghanistan Study Group to help re-think U.S. strategy comes at a time when polls indicate a weakening of resolve in the international community to see the effort in Afghanistan through to a successful conclusion. The Pew Global Attitudes Survey of June 2007 reported that the publics of NATO countries with significant numbers of troops in Afghanistan are divided over whether U.S. and NATO forces should be brought home immediately, or should remain until the country is stabilized. In all but two countries, the U.S. and the United Kingdom, majorities said troops should be withdrawn as soon as possible.

Moreover, recent polls in Afghanistan reflect a downward turn in attitudes toward the ability of the Afghan government and the international community to improve those conditions the Afghan people identify as the most critical problems facing the country: insecurity, weak governance, widespread corruption, a poor economy and unemployment.

What should the United States and the international community do to address the many obstacles to success in Afghanistan? Many efforts to assess what needs to be done at this point have included an analysis of the mistakes that have been made – and the opportunities lost – since the Taliban were removed from power in late 2001. While we acknowledge that mistakes have been made, the Study Group focuses its attention on the future – analyzing the current situation with a view to what is needed to match our strategies with our goals and the required resources.

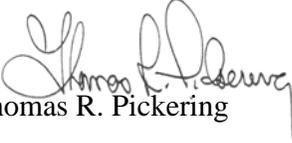
After offering its assessment of the current situation in Afghanistan, the Study Group addresses six critical issues to revitalize the U.S. and international effort in Afghanistan – international coordination, security, governance and the rule of law, counter-narcotics, economic development and reconstruction, and Afghanistan and its neighbors. Policy recommendations of the Study Group on each of these issues are found in italics.

In addition to the recommendations on these six issues, the Study Group offers three overarching recommendations to bring sharper focus and attention to Afghanistan – within the U.S. government and within the broader international community. The first is a proposal for the Administration and

the Congress to decouple Iraq and Afghanistan in the legislative process and in the management of these conflicts in the Executive branch. The second is to establish a Special Envoy for Afghanistan position within the U.S. government, charged with coordinating all aspects of U.S. policies towards Afghanistan. The third is to propose an international mandate to formulate a new unified strategy to stabilize Afghanistan over the next five years and to build international support for it.

At the most recent NATO Defense Ministerials, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said: “We need to lift our sights and see what is required for long-term success.” In this regard we strongly commend the efforts now underway within the U.S. government and other national governments; NATO, the EU and the UN; non-governmental organizations; and, most importantly, Afghanistan itself to address the many shortcomings in current strategies and policies.

It is in this spirit – and with the hope of elevating the dialogue of the critical importance of succeeding in Afghanistan – that the Afghanistan Study Group offers this report and its recommendations.


Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering


General James L. Jones, USMC (Ret.)

AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP (ASG) - OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

While most of our analysis and recommendations fall into specific subject areas – including security, governance, counter-narcotics, development, and regional considerations – some of the challenges and solutions facing our effort in Afghanistan cut across those issues. This section deals with crosscutting recommendations.

It is clear that one of the key challenges that the mission in Afghanistan now faces is the lack of a common strategic vision that will reinvigorate our efforts under unified attainable goals. This process has to be done comprehensively – involving both military and civilian aspects of the mission

as equals – and in a cooperative fashion among the U.S., NATO, the UN, the EU, and the Afghan government. The Afghanistan Compact should be the basis for any common strategic vision, and discussion should focus on developing strategies to achieve that vision.

For that purpose, *the Study Group proposes to establish an Eminent Persons Group to develop a long-term, coherent international strategy for Afghanistan and a strategic communications plan to garner strong public support for that strategy.* The Eminent Persons Group would aim to have its report and recommendations available for the April 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest, Romania, and the opening of the UN General Assembly the following September. If an International Coordinator position were created under a UN mandate¹ (as is strongly recommended), this group should be established to serve as an advisory body to that individual. However, *if the efforts to appoint an individual to that position continue to lag, we recommend that NATO establish the Eminent Persons Group under its auspices,* while including representatives from other partnering organizations (such as the UN, World Bank and EU) and appropriate countries. A principal objective of the group should be to rally support for continued and enhanced efforts by NATO countries and other regional players in Afghanistan – in all spheres, military and civilian. The Eminent Persons Group would also aim to increase public awareness in partnering countries, especially in Europe, of the relevance of this conflict to their own security. To maximize this effort, the U.S. should support a European or other highly qualified international leader to chair this group, while remaining fully engaged as a key participant in the process.

Within the U.S., *the Study Group calls for decoupling Iraq and Afghanistan.* Since 2003, U.S. funding of military and other mission operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have been linked together in the Congressional and Executive branch budget processes for authorizations, appropriations and supplemental requests. The rationale for this was that it would provide a more unified focus on overall “Global War on Terrorism” efforts by the Congress, the Administration and the military.

In July 2007, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) issued a report on the costs of Iraq, Afghanistan, and other war on terror operations since 9/11. The report emphasized the issue of transparency in war and related costs, noting the Iraq Study Group’s observation that the funding/budget requests from the Executive branch are presented in a confusing manner, making it difficult for both the general public and members of Congress to understand the request or to differentiate it from counter-terrorism operations around the world or operations in Afghanistan. While arguments have been made that in effect the two missions are practically decoupled, we believe this to be insufficient.

There is, accordingly, an emerging view that Afghanistan and its long-term problems would be better addressed by decoupling funding and related programs from those for Iraq. Doing so would enable more coherence and focus on the increasingly important Afghanistan (and related Pakistan) issues, both for the Congress and the Executive branch as well as in dealing with other governments and international organizations to achieve needed improvement in coordination, collaboration, and efficacy of efforts in the interrelated military, economic and reconstruction spheres.

Decoupling these two conflicts likely will improve the overall U.S. approach to fighting global terrorism. While the fates of these two countries are connected – and a failure in Iraq would

¹ The ASG regrets the news that the lead candidate for this position, Lord Paddy Ashdown, has withdrawn his candidacy due to opposition from the Afghan government and hopes that the international community and the Afghan government will be able to achieve agreement on this issue in a timely manner.

influence Afghanistan and vice versa – tying together Afghanistan and Iraq also creates the false impression that they consist of the same mission, while in reality the challenges in these countries differ significantly from one another. It is not the intention of this recommendation to speak to the comparative funding levels for the two conflicts – only that the Afghanistan Study Group believes it would be best to consider each on their own merits.

Finally, a more unified management structure within the U.S. government would create a more unified approach toward the international community and Afghanistan. Therefore, in addition to decoupling the funding mechanisms, *we recommend that a Special Envoy to Afghanistan position be established within the U.S. government, charged with coordinating and orchestrating all aspects of U.S. policies towards Afghanistan.* This should include (but not be limited to) the strategic guidance of military operations, all civilian operations, and links to the UN, NATO and Europe. This official should have overall responsibility for the direction of U.S. assistance programs to Afghanistan and coordinating these programs and policies with European and Asian counterparts and Afghan government officials. While potentially challenging and possibly contentious within the U.S. bureaucracy, higher level of coordination in Washington is necessary to increase our chances of success in Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN STUDY GROUP (ASG) - SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUE RECOMMENDATIONS

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION

- While the current command structure may be very difficult to change in light of existing differences among the Allies on mission participation in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) missions, it is essential that NATO authorities regularly review the command and control arrangement with the aim to simplify and streamline it at the earliest moment.
- While it is not advisable to immediately attempt an overhaul of the command structure, NATO and the U.S. should strive to achieve greater unity of command whenever possible. As a first step toward this objective, the U.S.-led training mission for the Afghan National Army (ANA), which occupies the bulk of American forces in Afghanistan still under national command, could be shifted to NATO once sufficient NATO resources have been committed for this purpose. G8 considerations would have to be addressed should this be deemed as worthwhile mission realignment.
- Appoint a high-level international coordinator under a UN mandate to: advise all parties to the mission in Afghanistan on needed changes to their policies, funding and actions; ensure that all international assistance programs have a coordinated strategy that aims to bolster the central government's authority throughout the country and is closely coordinated with the Afghan government; advise on the implications to and needs for security coordination; and conduct dialogue with Afghanistan's neighbors. Assign to this individual a joint professional staff representing a wide range of partnering countries and organizations in Afghanistan.
- Develop, with all countries involved, an agreed concept of operations, goals and objectives, organizational structure and set of metrics to evaluate Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). Ideally, the international coordinator, when appointed, should be tasked with overseeing this process.

SECURITY

- Work to increase the number of NATO troops and military equipment in Afghanistan to the levels requested by the commanders. Ensure that the increase in quantity of forces is matched with the quality of the forces that is needed for the mission they need to perform. We endorse the recommendation of the Iraq Study Group that "It is critical for the United States to provide additional...military support for Afghanistan, including resources that might become available as combat forces are moved from Iraq."
- Focus more efforts and resources on training and standing up the ANA and recruiting, training, and providing adequate pay and equipment to the Afghan National Police (ANP) to maintain security in an area once coalition forces depart. The U.S. and its NATO partners should reconsider, together with the Afghan government, benchmarks for force levels of both the ANA and ANP that are realistic, attainable, and maintainable.
- The U.S. needs to play a greater role in building and expanding the ANP, while continuing to engage other international allies in this mission. This would also require a G8 mission realignment as this task is presently under Germany's leadership. Assistance needs to go beyond equipping and training, and should be directed towards embedding foreign police officers into Afghan units – possibly by creating a mechanism similar to the NATO-led Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT) mechanism for the

ANA. The international community also needs to focus on holding Afghan police officers and their superiors accountable for their performance.

- While “zero civilian casualties” may not be an attainable goal given the nature of the enemy and the battlefield, the U.S. and NATO should, as a matter of policy, continue to publicly reinforce their goal of minimizing civilian casualties, as well as being judicious in the frequent use of air power, erring on the side of caution when civilian casualties are probable.
- Better involve Afghan forces in U.S. and NATO military planning and operations. Enhance coordination with the Afghan Ministry of Defense and the Afghan National Army.
- Set up a special NATO compensation fund for civilian deaths, injuries or property damage resulting from its military operations in Afghanistan, to which all NATO member states should contribute.
- Develop, with the international community, a coordinated strategy in support of President Karzai’s national political reconciliation efforts. Consider providing incentives to Taliban that do not subscribe to extremist ideologies and agree to put down their weapons and join the political process. The international coalition partners need to adhere to the same standards as the Afghan government when negotiating with insurgents.
- Develop a regional plan to effectively target the risks coming out of the border region area with Pakistan – this plan should involve the governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan and other regional powers and include better combined intelligence, operations and non-military efforts. Specifically, with regard to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), rather than trying to insert U.S. influence directly into the region, Washington should encourage systemic political and economic reform that incorporates the FATA into the administrative, legal and political systems of Pakistan.

GOVERNANCE AND RULE OF LAW

- A coherent and resourced strategy to increase the reach, capacity, and legitimacy of the Afghan government must be a top priority.
- The Afghan government and the international community must refocus their efforts to resurrect an integrated and effective justice system for Afghanistan, through increased and sustained funding to the sector and through working towards an Afghan-led prioritization process that will set a realistic agenda for progress in the justice sector.
- Work to establish “pockets of competence” throughout the country by focusing on development of human resources in the sector and institutional development of the Supreme Court, the Office of the Attorney General, the Ministry of Justice, and the Afghan National Police (currently within the Ministry of Interior) at the national and provincial levels.
- Provide resources and political support to the newly created Advisory Panel on Presidential Appointments.

COUNTER-NARCOTICS

- Sequence the core tools of counter-narcotics policy – crop eradication, interdiction (including arresting and prosecuting traffickers, destruction of labs, etc.), and development (alternative livelihoods).

- Increase investment in development – especially infrastructure and industry development – in all provinces, but ensure that these programs go first of all to provinces that are not planting poppy or that are reducing production.
- Enhance interdiction efforts. Ensure the removal of high officials benefiting from the drug trade from the government but also from contracts operating on behalf of the coalition.
- Integrate counter-narcotics and counter-insurgency by using international military forces to assist the ANP in interdiction, including supporting the ANP in its efforts to destroy heroin labs.
- How best to pursue poppy eradication and the relation of eradication to counter-insurgency presents the greatest challenge – and controversy – for the U.S., the international community, and the Afghan government. Proposals to enhance eradication immediately (including the use of herbicides whether sprayed from the air or the ground), especially in Helmand province, could prove extremely dangerous for Afghanistan, further undermining support for the government of President Hamid Karzai, alienating thousands of Afghan farmers and providing new recruits for the Taliban.
- In lieu of massive eradication, adopt an “Afghan-centric” approach that will include: public information campaign stating that the purpose of counter-narcotics is not to destroy but to enhance the livelihoods of the people of Afghanistan; a request for voluntary restraint in planting while actually delivering (not just announcing or funding or launching) much larger alternative livelihood programs; the provision of all the services currently provided to farmers by drug traffickers: futures contracts, guaranteed marketing, financing, and technical assistance (extension services); and increased availability of micro-finance.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION

- The donor community should focus on giving the Afghan government credit for projects and programs. To do so, donors need to focus on improving Afghan government accounting and enhance anti-corruption reforms.
- Encourage the Afghan government to appoint an Afghan development “czar”, drawing authority from President Karzai and able to coordinate the various government ministries, to work with the international community to ensure concerted development efforts.
- Spread development assistance more evenly around the country. The donor community should ensure that relatively peaceful areas benefit from assistance.
- Reconstruction aid and development assistance must flow into a region immediately after it is cleared of Taliban presence by the coalition. Representatives of the local governments must be directly involved in administering the aid to build support and trust between the Afghan people and the local authorities.
- Enhance and accelerate infrastructure development – especially outlays on roads, power and water systems – that are necessary to improve security, governance and the Afghan economy. These efforts should utilize the Afghan labor force, as well as Afghan contractors, as much as possible.

AFGHANISTAN AND ITS NEIGHBORS

- Embark on a sustained, long-term diplomatic effort to reduce antagonisms between Pakistan and Afghanistan. As part of that, the international community should: encourage Kabul to accept the Durand Line as the international border; work with Pakistan to make every effort to root out Taliban ideology from its own society and close down the extremist madrassahs (religious schools) and training camps that perpetuate the Taliban insurgency and cross-border activities; and encourage Pakistan to remove burdensome restrictions that inhibit the transportation of goods through Pakistan to and from Afghanistan, including from India.
- Pakistan has to develop fully effective means for asserting its authority and physical control over the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), including reforming archaic administrative arrangements and fully integrating these areas politically and economically within Pakistan.
- Develop a strategy towards Iran that includes the possibility to resume discussions with Iran to coax greater cooperation from Tehran in helping to stabilize Afghanistan. Establish, with U.S. allies, a cooperative net assessment of what Iran is doing in Afghanistan to map out a sound strategy that seeks to convince Tehran to develop a more constructive role there and includes the possibility to reestablish direct talks on Afghanistan.
- Initiate a regional process to engage Afghanistan's neighbors and potential regional partners in future sustainable development of Afghanistan. This process can begin with relatively minor confidence building measures and the establishment of a regional forum for discussion of common challenges. Over the longer term, as Afghanistan makes progress towards standing on its own feet, these can serve as a basis for a multilateral regional accord that would: recognize Afghanistan as a permanently neutral state; provide international recognition for Afghanistan's borders; pledge non-interference in internal Afghan affairs; ban the clandestine supply of arms to nongovernmental actors; and establish a comprehensive regime to promote the flow of trade through Afghanistan.