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

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July 11, 2014

Congressional Research Service
7-5700
www.crs.gov
RL30588

CRS REPORT
Prepared for Members and
Committees of Congress

Summary

Afghan security forces have lead security responsibility throughout the country, and the United States and its partner countries are in the process of winding down the current international security mission by the end of 2014. A planned post-2014 mission will consist mostly of training the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF). The number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, which peaked at about 100,000 in June 2011, was reduced to 34,000 as of February 2014. President Obama announced in late May 2014 that the post-2014 mission will include 9,800 U.S. forces, shrinking by the end of 2015 to 4,900 mostly in Kabul and at Bagram Airfield. The force will shrink to a small force of several hundred after 2016, engaged mostly in handling military sales to Afghanistan.

The post-2014 force is contingent on Afghanistan's signing a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) with the United States. All the candidates in the April 5, 2014, presidential election publicly support the agreement, including Dr. Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani, who garnered enough votes to proceed to a runoff on June 14. Preliminary runoff results released on July 7 showed Ghani ahead by 56% to 44%, but Afghan and international officials have acknowledged there was substantial fraud and Dr. Abdullah has said he will not recognize a Ghani victory under existing vote certification processes. U.S. officials are attempting to broker a resolution process that would involve auditing votes from a substantial number of polling stations. The dispute has clouded prospects for a peaceful transfer of power to a new president by the August 2 planned date and the signing of a U.S.-Afghanistan Bilateral Security Agreement that is required to keep U.S. forces in Afghanistan after 2014.

Even if the election dispute is resolved, experts remain concerned that Afghan stability is at risk from weak and corrupt Afghan governance and insurgent safe havens in Pakistan. U.S. and partner country anti-corruption efforts in Afghanistan have yielded few concrete results. An unexpected potential benefit to stability could come from a negotiated settlement between the Afghan government and the Taliban and other insurgent groups. Negotiations were sporadic, but in May 2014 produced an exchange of prisoners that included the return of U.S. prisoner of war Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl. Afghanistan's minorities and women's groups fear that a settlement might produce compromises with the Taliban that erode human rights and ethnic power-sharing.

The United States and other donors continue to fund development projects, but increasingly delegate implementation to the Afghan government. U.S. officials assert that Afghanistan might be able to exploit vast mineral and agricultural resources to prevent a major economic downturn as international donors scale back their involvement. U.S. officials also seek greater Afghan integration into regional trade and investment patterns as part of a "New Silk Road." Persuading Afghanistan's neighbors, particularly Pakistan, to support Afghanistan's stability has shown some modest success.

Despite economic development initiatives, Afghanistan will remain dependent on foreign aid for many years. Through the end of FY2013, the United States provided nearly $93 billion in assistance to Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban, of which more than $56 billion has been to equip and train Afghan forces. The appropriated U.S. aid for FY2014 is over $6.1 billion, including $4.7 billion to train and equip the ANSF, and the total FY2015 request is about $4.5 billion. These figures do not include funds for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. Administration officials have pledged to Afghanistan that economic aid requests for Afghanistan are likely to continue roughly at recent levels through at least FY2017. See CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

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Background

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

From Early History to the 19th Century

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

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

A strong ruler, Dost Muhammad Khan, emerged in Kabul in 1826 and created concerns among Britain that the Afghans were threatening Britain's control of India; that fear led to a British decision in 1838 to intervene in Afghanistan, setting off the first Anglo-Afghan War (1838-1842). Nearly all of the 4,500-person British force was killed in that war. The second Anglo-Afghan War took place during 1878-1880.

Early 20th Century and Cold War Era

King Amanullah Khan (1919-1929) launched attacks on British forces in Afghanistan (Third Anglo-Afghan War) shortly after taking power and won complete independence from Britain as recognized in the Treaty of Rawalpindi (August 8, 1919). He was considered a secular modernizer presiding over a government in which all ethnic minorities participated. He was succeeded by King Mohammad Nadir Shah (1929-1933), and then by King Mohammad Zahir Shah. Zahir Shah's reign (1933-1973) is remembered fondly by many older Afghans for promulgating a constitution in 1964 that established a national legislature and promoting freedoms for women, including dropping a requirement that they cover their face and hair. In part, the countryside was secured during the King's time by local tribal militias called a*rbokai*. However, possibly believing that he could limit Soviet support for Communist factions in

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

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

Afghanistan's slide into instability began in the 1970s, during the Nixon Administration, when the diametrically opposed Communist Party and Islamic movements grew in strength. While receiving medical treatment in Italy, Zahir Shah was overthrown by his cousin, Mohammad Daoud, a military leader who established a dictatorship with strong state involvement in the economy. Daoud was overthrown and killed[1] in April 1978, during the Carter Administration, by People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA, Communist party) military officers under the direction of two PDPA (Khalq, or "Masses" faction) leaders, Hafizullah Amin and Nur Mohammad Taraki, in what is called the *Saur* (April) Revolution. Taraki became president, but he was displaced in September 1979 by Amin. Both leaders drew their strength from rural ethnic Pashtuns and tried to impose radical socialist change on a traditional society, in part by redistributing land and bringing more women into government. The attempt at rapid modernization sparked rebellion by Islamic parties opposed to such moves.

Soviet Invasion and Occupation Period

The Soviet Union sent troops into Afghanistan on December 27, 1979, to prevent further gains by the Islamic militias, known as the *mujahedin* (Islamic fighters). Upon their invasion, the Soviets replaced Amin with another PDPA leader perceived as pliable, Babrak Karmal, who led the Parcham ("Banner") faction of the PDPA. Kamal was part of the 1978 PDPA takeover but hd been exiled by Taraki and Amin.

Soviet occupation forces numbered about 120,000. They were assisted by Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) military forces of about 25,000-40,000, supplemented by about 20,000 paramilitary and tribal militia forces, including the PDPA-dominated organization called the *Sarandoy*. The combined Soviet and Afghan forces were never able to pacify the outlying areas of the country. DRA forces were consistently plagued by desertions and its effectiveness on behalf of the Soviets was limited. The *mujahedin* benefited from U.S. weapons and assistance, provided through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in cooperation with Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence directorate (ISI).

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

The Seven Major "*Mujahedin*" Parties and Their Activities

The *mujahedin* were also relatively well organized and coordinated by seven major parties that in early 1989 formed what they claimed was a government-in-exile—a Peshawar-based "Afghan Interim Government" (AIG). The seven party leaders and their parties—sometimes referred to as the "Peshawar 7"—were Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi (Islamic Revolutionary Movement of Afghanistan); Sibghatullah Mojaddedi (Afghan National Liberation Front); Gulbuddin Hikmatyar (Hezb-i-Islam—Gulbuddin, Islamic Party of Gulbuddin, HIG); Burhanuddin Rabbani (Jamiat-Islami/Islamic Society); Yunus Khalis (Hezb-i-Islam); Abd-i-Rab Rasul Sayyaf (*Ittihad Islami*/Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan); and Pir Gaylani (National Islamic Front of Afghanistan, NIFA). Mohammadi and Khalis died of natural causes in 2002 and 2006, respectively, and Rabbani was killed in a September 20, 2011, assassination. The others are still active in Afghan politics and governance or, in the case of Hikmatyar, fighting the Afghan government. Sayyaf, who is politically close to Saudi Arabia, is a parliamentarian.

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

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

Geneva Accords (1988) and Soviet Withdrawal

On April 14, 1988, Gorbachev agreed to a U.N.-brokered accord (the Geneva Accords) requiring it to withdraw. The withdrawal was completed by February 15, 1989, leaving in place the weak Najibullah government. A warming of relations moved the United States and Soviet Union to try for a political settlement to the Afghan conflict, a trend accelerated by the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, which reduced Moscow's capacity for supporting communist regimes in the Third World. On September 13, 1991, Moscow and Washington agreed to a joint cutoff of military aid to the Afghan combatants as of January 1, 1992, which was implemented by all accounts.

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

per year in FY1980 to about $300 million per year during FY1986-FY1990.[2] The Soviet pullout was viewed as a decisive U.S. "victory." The Soviet pullout caused a reduction in subsequent covert funding and, as indicated in **Table 10**, U.S. assistance to Afghanistan remained at relatively low levels after the Soviet withdrawal. There was little support for a major U.S.-led effort to rebuild the economy and society of Afghanistan. The United States closed its embassy in Kabul in January 1989, as the Soviet Union was completing its pullout, and it remained so until the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

Despite the Soviet troop withdrawal in 1989, Najibullah still enjoyed Soviet financial and advisory support and Afghan forces beat back the first post-Soviet withdrawal *mujahedin* offensives—defying expectations that his government would immediately collapse after a Soviet withdrawal. However, military defections continued and his position weakened subsequently, particularly after the Soviets cut off financial and advisory support as of January 1, 1992, under the agreement with the United States discussed above. On March 18, 1992, Najibullah publicly agreed to step down once an interim government was formed. That announcement set off rebellions by Uzbek and Tajik militia commanders in northern Afghanistan—particularly Abdul Rashid Dostam, who joined prominent *mujahedin* commander Ahmad Shah Masoud of the Islamic Society, a largely Tajik party headed by Burhannudin Rabbani. Masoud had earned a reputation as a brilliant strategist by preventing the Soviets from conquering his power base in the Panjshir Valley north of Kabul. Najibullah fell, and the *mujahedin* regime began April 18, 1992.[3]

The *Mujahedin* Government and Rise of the Taliban

The fall of Najibullah exposed the differences among the *mujahedin* parties. The leader of one of the smaller parties (Afghan National Liberation Front), Islamic scholar Sibghatullah Mojadeddi, was president during April-May 1992. Under an agreement among the major parties, Rabbani became president in June 1992 with agreement that he would serve until December 1994. He refused to step down at that time, saying that political authority would disintegrate without a clear successor. That decision was strongly opposed by other *mujahedin* leaders, including Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, a Pashtun, and leader of the Islamist conservative Hizb-e-Islam Gulbuddin *mujahedin* party. Hikmatyar and several allied factions began fighting to dislodge Rabbani. Rabbani reached an agreement for Hikmatyar to serve as Prime Minister, if Hikmatyar would cease the shelling Kabul that had destroyed much of the western part of the city. However, because of Hikmatyar's distrust of Rabbani, he never assumed a working prime ministerial role in Kabul.

In 1993-1994, Afghan Islamic clerics and students, mostly of rural, Pashtun origin, formed the Taliban movement. Many were former *mujahedin* who had become disillusioned with conflict among *mujahedin* parties and had moved into Pakistan to study in Islamic seminaries ("madrassas") mainly of the "Deobandi" school of Islam.[4] Some say this interpretation of Islam is similar to the "Wahhabism" that is practiced in Saudi Arabia. Taliban practices were also consonant with conservative Pashtun tribal traditions. The Taliban's leader, Mullah Muhammad

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

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

[4] The Deobandi school began in 1867 in a seminary in Uttar Pradesh, in British-controlled India, that was set up to train Islamic clerics and to counter the British educational model.

Umar, had been a fighter in Khalis's Hezb-i-Islam party during the anti-Soviet war—Khalis' party was generally considered moderate Islamist during the anti-Soviet war, but Khalis and his faction turned against the United States in the mid-1990s. Many of his fighters, such as Mullah Umar, followed Khalis' lead. Umar, a low-ranking Islamic cleric, lost an eye in the anti-Soviet war.

The Taliban viewed the Rabbani government as weak, corrupt, and anti-Pashtun, and the four years of civil war between the *mujahedin* groups (1992-1996) created popular support for the Taliban as able to deliver stability. With the help of defections, the Taliban peacefully took control of the southern city of Qandahar in November 1994. Upon that capture, Mullah Umar ordered the opening of the Qandahar shrine containing the purported cloak used by the Prophet Mohammad; he reportedly donned the purported cloak briefly in front of hundreds of followers.[5] By February 1995, it was approaching Kabul, after which an 18-month stalemate ensued. In September 1995, the Taliban captured Herat province, bordering Iran, and imprisoned its governor, Ismail Khan, ally of Rabbani and Masoud, who later escaped and took refuge in Iran. In September 1996, Taliban victories near Kabul led to the withdrawal of Rabbani and Masoud to the Panjshir Valley (north of Kabul); the Taliban took control of Kabul on September 27, 1996. Taliban gunmen then entered a U.N. facility in Kabul to seize Najibullah, his brother, and aides, and hanged them.

Taliban Rule (September 1996-November 2001)

The Taliban regime was led by Mullah Muhammad Umar, who held the title of Head of State and "Commander of the Faithful." He remained in the Taliban power base in Qandahar and made no public speeches or appearances, although he did occasionally receive high-level foreign officials. Al Qaeda leaders Osama bin Laden relocated from Sudan to Afghanistan, where he had been a recruiter of Arab fighters during the anti-Soviet war, in May 1996. He at first was located in territory in Nangarhar province controlled by Hezb-i-Islam of Yunus Khalis (Mullah Umar's party leader) but then had free reign in Afghanistan as the Taliban captured nearly all the territory in Afghanistan. Umar reportedly forged a political and personal bond with Bin Laden and refused U.S. demands to extradite him. Like Umar, most of the senior figures in the Taliban regime were Ghilzai Pashtuns, which predominate in eastern Afghanistan. They are rivals of the Durrani Pashtuns, who are predominant in the south.

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

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

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

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

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

The Taliban's hosting of Al Qaeda's leadership gradually became the Clinton Administration's overriding agenda item with Afghanistan. In April 1998, then-U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson and two other senior U.S. officials visited Afghanistan, but they did not meet Mullah Umar and the Taliban refused to hand over Bin Laden. After the August 7, 1998, Al Qaeda bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the Clinton Administration began to strongly pressure the Taliban to extradite him, imposing U.S. sanctions on Taliban-controlled Afghanistan and achieving adoption of some U.N. sanctions as well. On August 20, 1998, as a response to the Africa embassy bombings, the United States fired cruise missiles at Al Qaeda training camps in eastern Afghanistan.[6] Some observers assert that the Administration missed several opportunities to strike bin Laden himself, including a purported sighting of him by an unarmed Predator drone at a location called Tarnak Farm in Afghanistan in the fall of 2000.[7] Clinton Administration officials said that U.S. domestic and international support for ousting the Taliban militarily was lacking.

The "Northern Alliance" Congeals

The Taliban's policies caused different Afghan factions to ally with the Tajik core of the anti-Taliban opposition—the ousted President Rabbani, Ahmad Shah Masoud, and their ally in the Herat area, Ismail Khan. Joining the Tajik factions in the broader "Northern Alliance" were Uzbek, Hazara Shiite, and even some Pashtun Islamist factions discussed below. Virtually all the figures mentioned remain key players in politics in Afghanistan, sometimes allied with and at other times adversaries of President Hamid Karzai. (One key Tajik, Vice President Muhammad Fahim, who became military commander of the Alliance after Ahmad Shah Masud on September 9, 2001, died of natural causes in March 2014. He was replaced as Vice President by another key Alliance Tajik, former parliament speaker Yunus Qanooni.) The Soviet occupation-era parties remain relatively intact informally, although they do not generally operate under those names. (Detail on these figures is in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman.)

- **Uzbeks/General Dostam.** One major faction was the Uzbek militia (the *Junbush-Melli*, or National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan) of General Abdul Rashid Dostam. Frequently referred to by some Afghans as one of the "warlords" who gained power during the anti-Soviet war, Dostam first joined those seeking to oust Rabbani during his 1992-1996 presidency, but later joined him and the other Northern Alliance factions opposed to the Taliban.

[6] A pharmaceutical plant in Sudan (Al Shifa) believe to be producing chemical weapons for Al Qaeda also was struck that day, although U.S. reviews later corroborated Sudan's assertions that the plant was strictly civilian in nature.

[7] http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/4540958.

- **Hazara Shiites.** Members of Hazara tribes, mostly Shiite Muslims, are prominent in Bamiyan, Dai Kundi, and Ghazni provinces of central Afghanistan. During the various Afghan wars, the main Hazara Shiite militia was Hizb-e-Wahdat (Unity Party, composed of eight groups). In 1995, the Taliban captured and killed Hizb-e-Wahdat's leader Abdul Ali Mazari. One of Karzai's vice president's Karim Khalili, is a Hazara. Another prominent Hazara faction leader, Mohammad Mohaqeq, is a Karzai critic.
- **Pashtun Islamists/Sayyaf.** Some Pashtuns joined the Northern Alliance in opposing the Taliban. Among them was the conservative Islamist *mujahedin* faction *Ittihad Islami*) headed by Abd-i-Rab Rasul Sayyaf. Sayyaf reportedly viewed the Taliban as selling out Afghanistan to Al Qaeda.

Policy Pre-September 11, 2001

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

Even though the Northern Alliance was supplied with Iranian, Russian, and Indian financial and military support, the Northern Alliance nonetheless continued to lose ground to the Taliban after it lost Kabul in 1996. By the time of the September 11 attacks, the Taliban controlled at least 75% of the country, including almost all provincial capitals. The Alliance suffered a major setback on September 9, 2001 (two days before, and possibly a part of, the September 11 attacks), when Ahmad Shah Masoud was assassinated by Al Qaeda operatives posing as journalists. He was succeeded by a top lieutenant, Muhammad Fahim, a veteran Tajik figure but who lacked Masoud's charisma and undisputed authority (and who died of natural causes in early 2014).

September 11 Attacks and Operation Enduring Freedom

After the September 11 attacks, the Bush Administration decided to militarily overthrow the Taliban when it refused a final U.S. offer to extradite Bin Laden in order to avoid military action. President Bush articulated a policy that equated those who harbor terrorists to terrorists

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

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

themselves, and judged that a friendly regime in Kabul was needed to enable U.S. forces to search for Al Qaeda personnel there.

U.N. and Congressional Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF)

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

In Congress, S.J.Res. 23 (passed 98-0 in the Senate and with no objections in the House, P.L. 107-40, signed September 18, 2011), was somewhat more explicit than the U.N. Resolution, authorizing:[10] "all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001 *or harbored such organizations or persons*."

Major Combat Operations

Major combat in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom, OEF) began on October 7, 2001. The U.S. effort initially consisted primarily of U.S. air-strikes on Taliban and Al Qaeda forces, facilitated by the cooperation between reported small numbers (about 1,000) of U.S. special operations forces and Central Intelligence Agency operatives. The purpose of these operations was to help the Northern Alliance and Pashtun anti-Taliban forces by directing U.S. air strikes on Taliban positions, for example on the Shomali plain that extends to Bagram Airfield; that airport marked the forward positions of the Northern Alliance. In late October 2001, about 1,300 Marines moved into Afghanistan to pressure the Taliban around Qandahar, but there were few pitched battles between U.S. and Taliban soldiers.

The Taliban regime unraveled rapidly after it lost Mazar-e-Sharif on November 9, 2001, to forces led by General Dostam, mentioned above.[11] Northern Alliance forces—despite promises to then-Secretary of State Colin Powell that they would not enter Kabul—did so on November 12, 2001, to popular jubilation. The Taliban subsequently lost the south and east to U.S.-supported Pashtun leaders, including Hamid Karzai. The Taliban regime formally ended on December 9, 2001, when the Taliban and Mullah Umar fled Qandahar, leaving it under Pashtun tribal law.

Subsequently, U.S. and Afghan forces conducted "Operation Anaconda" in the Shah-i-Kot Valley south of Gardez (Paktia Province) during March 2-19, 2002, against 800 Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters. In March 2003, about 1,000 U.S. troops raided suspected Taliban or Al Qaeda fighters in villages around Qandahar (Operation Valiant Strike). On May 1, 2003, then-Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld announced an end to "major combat."

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

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

Post-Taliban Governance Established[12]

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

The Obama Administration's strategy review in late 2009 initially narrowed official U.S. goals to preventing terrorism safe haven in Afghanistan, but policy in some ways expanded the preexisting nation-building effort.[13] No matter how the U.S. mission has been defined, building the capacity of and reforming Afghan governance have been consistently judged to be key to the success of U.S. policy. These objectives have been stated explicitly in each Obama Administration policy review, strategy statement, and report on progress in Afghanistan, as well as all major international conferences on Afghanistan, including the NATO summit in Chicago during May 20-21, 2012, and the Tokyo donors' conference on July 8, 2012.

The conclusion of virtually every Administration and outside assessment has been that Afghan central governmental capacity and effectiveness has increased, but that local governance remains weak and all levels of government are plagued by governmental corruption. U.S. assessments say that the deficiencies in governance could jeopardize stability after the 2014 transition. **Table 1** briefly depicts the process and events that led to the formation of the post-Taliban government of Afghanistan.

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

[13] Text of the released summary is at http://documents.nytimes.com/the-obama-administrations-overview-on-afghanistan-and-pakistan.

Table 1. Afghanistan Political Transition Process

Interim Administration	Formed by Bonn Agreement. Headed by Hamid Karzai, an ethnic Pashtun, but key security positions dominated by mostly minority "Northern Alliance." Karzai reaffirmed as leader by June 2002 "emergency *loya jirga*." (A *jirga* is a traditional Afghan assembly.)
Constitution	Approved by January 2004 "Constitutional *Loya Jirga*" (CLJ). Set up strong presidency, a rebuke to Northern Alliance that wanted prime ministership to balance presidential power, but gave parliament significant powers to compensate. Gives men and women equal rights under the law, allows for political parties as long as they are not "un-Islamic;" allows for court rulings according to Hanafi (Sunni) Islam (Chapter 7, Article 15). Set out electoral roadmap for simultaneous (if possible) presidential, provincial, and district elections by June 2004. Named ex-King Zahir Shah to non-hereditary position of "Father of the Nation;" he died July 23, 2007.
Presidential Election	Elections for president and two vice presidents, for five-year term, held October 9, 2004. Turnout was 80% of 10.5 million registered. Karzai and running mates (Ahmad Zia Masoud, a Tajik and brother of legendary *mujahedin* commander Ahmad Shah Masoud, who was assassinated by Al Qaeda two days before the September 11 attacks, and Karim Khalili, a Hazara) elected with 55% against 16 opponents. Second highest vote getter, Northern Alliance figure (and Education Minister) Yunus Qanooni (16%). One female ran. Funding: $90 million from donors, including $40 million from U.S. (FY2004, P.L. 108-106).
Parliamentary Elections	Elections held September 18, 2005, on "Single Non-Transferable Vote" System; candidates stood as individuals, not in party list. Parliament consists of a 249 elected lower house (*Wolesi Jirga*, House of the People) and a selected 102 seat upper house (*Meshrano Jirga*, House of Elders). 2,815 candidates for *Wolesi Jirga*, including 347 women. Turnout was 57% (6.8 million voters) of 12.5 million registered. Upper house is appointed by Karzai (34 seats, half of which are to be women), and by the provincial councils (68 seats). When district councils are elected, they will appoint 34 of the seats. Funded by $160 million in international aid, including $45 million from U.S. (FY2005 supplemental, P.L. 109-13).
First Provincial Elections/ District Elections	Provincial elections held September 18, 2005, simultaneous with parliamentary elections. Exact powers vague, but now taking lead in deciding local reconstruction Provincial council sizes range from 9 to the 29 seats on the Kabul provincial council. Total seats are 420, of which 121 held by women. 13,185 candidates, including 279 women. District elections not held due to complexity and potential tensions of drawing district boundaries.
Second Presidential/Provincial Elections	Presidential and provincial elections were held August 20, 2009, but required a runoff because no candidate received over 50% in certified results. Runoff cancelled when Dr. Abdullah dropped out. Election costs: $300 million.
Second Parliamentary Elections	Originally set for May 22, 2010; held September 18, 2010. Result disputed but dispute resolved through Afghan negotiations that overturned results in some districts. Abdul Raouf Ibrahimi, an ethnic Uzbek, is lower house speaker, and upper house speaker is Muslim Yaar, a Pashtun. Next parliamentary elections are to be held in 2015.
Third Presidential/Provincial Election	First round held on April 5, 2014, and runoff between Dr. Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani held on June 14. Abdullah won 45% in the first round and Karzai adviser Ashraf Ghani won about 32%. Preliminary runoff results July 7 gave Ghani a lead with 56% to Abdullah's 44%. Certified results were to be released July 22 and a new president sworn in August 2, but widespread allegations of major fraud could change the outcome and delay the certification. U.S. and U.N. officials attempting to broker an accepted vote certification process. For more detail, see CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance.*

U.S. and International Civilian Policy Structure

U.S. and international civilian officials and institutions have helped build the capacity of the Afghan government. The U.S. embassy in Kabul, which had closed in 1989 when the Soviets pulled out of Afghanistan and was guarded by Afghan caretakers, reopened shortly after the Taliban was ousted in late 2001. The U.S. Ambassador and other high-ranking officials manage U.S. economic assistance and Embassy operations and coordinate U.S. rule of law programs. Some U.S. civilian and coalition military personnel are assigned as advisors to Afghan ministries. At the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Ambassador Ryan Crocker was succeeded by James Cunningham, formerly the "deputy Ambassador," in July 2012.

As the military aspect of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan winds down, the Administration has sought to "normalize" its presence in Afghanistan. The State Department is planning to assume the lead role in Afghanistan, as it did in Iraq, and all U.S. personnel will be under Embassy authority after 2016 under the plan announced by President Obama on May 27, 2014.

Consulates Opened or Planned. In June 2010, Deputy Secretary of State William Burns formally inaugurated a U.S. consulate in Herat. The State Department spent about $80 million on a facility in Mazar-e-Sharif that was slated to open as a U.S. consulate in April 2012, but the site was abandoned because of concerns about the security of the facility. A U.S. consulate there is considered an important signal of U.S. interest in engagement with the Tajik and Uzbek minorities of Afghanistan. Alternative locations are being considered,[14] and consulates are planned for the major cities of Qandahar and Jalalabad. The tables at the end of this report include U.S. funding for State Department and USAID operations, including Embassy construction and the "Embassy air wing" that transports U.S. officials and contractors around Afghanistan.

In terms of Afghan policymaking in Washington, DC, in February 2009, the Administration set up the position of appointed "Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan" (SRAP), occupied first by Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, reporting to Secretary of State Clinton. Holbrooke died on December 13, 2010, and that office at the State Department was led during February 2011-November 2012 by Ambassador Marc Grossman. In May 2013, he was replaced by Ambassador James Dobbins. Amb. Dobbins has announced he will retire in July 2014 but the SRAP office will remain in place for the near future, headed by deputy SRAP Dan Feldman.

From 2009-2012, the U.S. civilian presence expanded dramatically to mentor and advise the Afghan government, particularly at the local level. Since 2011, there have been about 1,300 U.S. civilian officials in Afghanistan—up from only about 400 in 2009—of which about one third serve outside Kabul helping build governance at the provincial and district levels. That is up from only 67 outside Kabul in 2009. However, the State Department is planning for a 20% reduction in staff by the completion of the transition in 2014.

On February 7, 2010, in an effort to improve civilian coordination between the United States, its foreign partners, and the Afghan government, the powers of the NATO "Senior Civilian Representative" in Afghanistan were enhanced as UK Ambassador Mark Sedwill took office. This office works with U.S. military officials, officials of partner countries, and the special U.N.

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

Assistance Mission-Afghanistan (UNAMA, see **Table 2**). Since June 2013, that position has been held by Dutch senior diplomat Maurits Jochems.

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

The United Nations is extensively involved in Afghan governance and national building, primarily in factional conflict resolution and coordination of development assistance. The coordinator of U.N. efforts is the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). It was headed during March 2010-December 2011 by Swedish diplomat Staffan de-Mistura, replacing Norwegian diplomat Kai Eide. Slovakian diplomat Jan Kubis replaced him in January 2012.

U.N. Security Council Resolution 1806 of March 20, 2008, expanded UNAMA's authority to strengthen cooperation between the international peacekeeping force (ISAF, see below) and the Afghan government. In concert with the Obama Administration's emphasis on Afghan policy, UNAMA opened offices in many of Afghanistan's 34 provinces. On March 19, 2013, the mandate of UNAMA, was renewed for another year (until March 19, 2014) by Resolution 2096. Resolution 2096 reiterates the expanded UNAMA mandate, while noting that UNAMA and the international community are moving to a supporting role rather than as direct deliverers of services in Afghanistan. Resolution 2096 restated UNAMA's coordinating role with other high-level representatives in Afghanistan and election support role, as well as its role in reintegration of surrendering insurgent fighters through a "Salaam (Peace) Support Group" that coordinates with Afghanistan's High Peace Council (that is promoting reconciliation and reintegration). UNAMA has always been involved in local dispute resolution and disarmament of local militias,

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

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

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

Afghan Ambassador to the United States Sayed Tayib Jawad served as Ambassador from 2004 until his recall in August 2010. Then deputy Foreign Minister Eklil Hakimi replaced him on February 23, 2011. Hakimi was Afghanistan's chief negotiator of the Bilateral Security Agreement, discussed later.

Security Policy: Transition, and Beyond[15]

The Obama Administration policy goal is to prevent Afghanistan from again becoming a safe haven for terrorist organizations. The Administration has defined that goal as enabling the Afghan government and security forces to defend the country and govern effectively and transparently. However, President Obama defined the post-2014 mission somewhat more narrowly focused mainly on counterterrorism—in his May 27, 2014, statement on the post-2014 U.S. force posture in Afghanistan. The U.S. security mission had already changed from combat leadership to a "support" role on June 18, 2013. Even with Afghan forces in the lead, many of the long-standing pillars of U.S. and NATO security strategy remain intact until the end of 2014. The United States is partnered with 49 other countries and the Afghan government and security forces. On February 10, 2013, Marine General Joseph Dunford succeeded Lieutenant General John Allen as top U.S. and NATO commander in Afghanistan. Gen. John Campbell, currently Army Vice Chief of Staff, has been nominated to succeed Dunford as top U.S. commander in Afghanistan. After 2016, according to President Obama's May 27 statement, U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan will be under chief-of-mission authority.

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

Security in Afghanistan is challenged by several armed groups, loosely allied with each other. There is not agreement about the relative strength of insurgents in the areas where they operate.

Groups: The Taliban/"Quetta Shura Taliban"(QST)

The core insurgent faction in Afghanistan remains the Taliban movement, much of which remains at least nominally loyal to Mullah Muhammad Umar, leader of the Taliban regime during 1996-2001. He and those subordinates reportedly still operate from Pakistan, probably areas near the border or near the Pakistani city of Quetta. This accounts for the term usually applied to Umar and his aides: "Quetta Shura Taliban" (QST). In recent years, Umar has lost some of this top aides and commanders to combat or arrest, including Mullah Dadullah, Mullah Obeidullah Akhund, and Mullah Usmani.

Some of Umar's inner circle has remained intact, and the 2013 release by Pakistan of several top Taliban figures close to Umar has helped him restore the leadership circle. Mullah Abdul Ghani Bradar, arrested by Pakistan in February 2010 for purportedly trying to engage in negotiations with the Afghan government without Pakistani concurrence, was released in September 2013. Other pragmatists around Umar include Noorudin Turabi, logistics expert Akhtar Mohammad Mansoor, and head of the Taliban's senior *shura* council Shahabuddin Delawar. Umar and Taliban pragmatists reportedly blame their past association with Al Qaeda for their loss of power. Signals of Umar's potential for compromise have been several statements, including one on October 24, 2012, that the Taliban does not seek to regain a monopoly of power. He also was reportedly pivotal in reaching final agreement in the May 31, 2014, release of prisoner of war Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, discussed further below. However, the Taliban warned Afghans not to vote in the 2014

[15] Much of the information in this section is taken from U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), "Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan." November 2013. http://www.defense.gov/pubs/October_1230_Report_Master_Nov7.pdf.

presidential election process and claimed responsibility for several attacks on election-related targets before and during the voting.

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

Al Qaeda/Bin Laden

U.S. officials have long considered Al Qaeda to have a minimal presence in Afghanistan itself, and to act there as more a facilitator of rather than active fighting force. U.S. officials put the number of Al Qaeda fighters in Afghanistan at between 50-100,[16] who operate mostly in provinces of eastern Afghanistan such as Kunar. Some of these fighters belong to Al Qaeda affiliates such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which is active in Faryab and Konduz provinces. Still, there are concerns that Al Qaeda could regroup in Afghanistan if the security situation there becomes unstable. Admiral William McRaven, head of U.S. Special Operations Command, testified before the House Armed Services Committee on February 27, 2014, that Al Qaeda could reestablish itself in Afghanistan if all U.S. troops depart Afghanistan. Press reports say a key Al Qaeda operative, Faruq a-Qahtani al-Qatari, is working with Afghan militants to train a new generation of Al Qaeda members in Afghanistan in preparation for the U.S. troop drawdown by the end of 2014.[17]

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

U.S. efforts to find remaining senior Al Qaeda leaders reportedly focus on his close ally Ayman al-Zawahiri, who is also presumed to be on the Pakistani side of the border and who was named new leader of Al Qaeda in June 2011. CNN reported October 18, 2010, that assessments from the U.S.-led coalition said Zawahiri was likely in a settled area, and not in a remote area. A U.S. strike reportedly missed Zawahiri by a few hours in the village of Damadola, Pakistan, in January 2006.[18] Many observers say that Zawahiri is increasingly focused on taking political advantage of the Arab uprisings, particularly in Egypt where a Muslim Brotherhood leader, Mohammad Morsi, became president but then was ousted by the Egyptian military in July 2013. Other senior Al Qaeda leaders are said to be in Iran, including Sayf al Adl. Sulayman Abu Ghaith, son-in-law of bin Laden and Al Qaeda spokesperson, was expelled by Iran in March 2013 and taken into custody by U.S. authorities as he tried to return to his native Kuwait.

[16] Text of the Panetta interview with ABC News is at http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=11025299.

[17] Kimberly Dozier. "Officials: Al-Qaida Plots Comeback in Afghanistan." *Associated Press*, February 28, 2014.

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

U.S. efforts—primarily through armed unmanned aerial vehicles—have killed numerous other senior Al Qaeda operatives in recent years. In August 2008, an airstrike was confirmed to have killed Al Qaeda chemical weapons expert Abu Khabab al-Masri. Two senior operatives allegedly involved in the 1998 embassy bombings in Africa reportedly were killed by an unmanned aerial vehicle strike in January 2009. Three top leaders, Ilyas Kashmiri, Attiyah Abd al-Rahman, and Abu Yahya al-Libi were killed in Pakistan by reported U.S. drone strikes in June and August 2011 and June 2012, respectively.

Hikmatyar Faction (HIG)

Another significant insurgent leader is former *mujahedin* party leader Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, who leads Hizb-e-Islami-Gulbuddin (HIG). The faction received extensive U.S. support against the Soviet Union, but turned against its *mujahedin* colleagues after the Communist government fell in 1992. The Taliban displaced HIG as the main opposition to the 1992-1996 Rabbani government. HIG currently is ideologically and politically allied with the Taliban insurgents, but HIG fighters sometimes clash with the Taliban over control of territory in HIG's main centers of activity in provinces to the north and east of Kabul. HIG is not widely considered a major factor on the Afghanistan battlefield and has focused primarily on high-profile attacks. A suicide bombing on September 18, 2012, which killed 12 persons, including eight South African nationals working for a USAID-chartered air service, was allegedly carried out by a female HIG member. HIG claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in Kabul on May 16, 2013, that killed six Americans, (two soldiers and four contractors). On February 19, 2003, the U.S. government formally designated Hikmatyar as a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist," under Executive Order 13224, subjecting it to a freeze of any U.S.-based assets. The group is not designated as a "Foreign Terrorist Organization" (FTO).

HIG is nonetheless widely considered amenable to reconciliation with Kabul. In January 2010, Hikmatyar set conditions for reconciliation, including elections under a neutral caretaker government following a U.S. withdrawal. On March 22, 2010, the Afghan government and HIG representatives confirmed talks in Kabul, including meetings with Karzai, and Karzai subsequently acknowledged additional meetings. Some close to Hikmatyar attended the consultative peace *loya jirga* on June 2-4, 2010, which discussed the reconciliation issue. HIG figures met government representatives at a June 2012 academic conference in Paris and a follow up meeting in Chantilly, France, on December 20-21, 2012. In January 2014, Hikmatyar reportedly told his partisans to vote in the April 5, 2014, Afghan elections—an instruction widely interpreted as an attempt to position HIG for a future political role.

Haqqani Faction[19]

The "Haqqani Network," founded by Jalaludin Haqqani, a *mujahedin* commander and U.S. ally during the U.S.-backed war against the Soviet Union, is often cited by U.S. officials as a potent threat to Afghan security. The Defense Department report on Afghan security calls the faction " "the most virulent strain of the insurgency, the greatest risk to coalition forces, and a critical enabler of Al Qaeda."[20] Jalaludin Haqqani served in the Taliban regime (1996-2001) as Minister

[19] A profile of the faction and its activities is provided in: Joshua Partlow. "In Afghan War, Haqqani Group Is 'Resilient' Foe." *Washington Post*, May 30, 2011.

[20] DoD report on Afghan stability, April 2014. p. 12.

of Tribal Affairs, and his network has since fought against the Karzai government. The Haqqani Network is believed closer to Al Qaeda than to the Taliban—in part because one of the elder Haqqani's wives is Arab. Over the past few years, he has delegated operation control to his sons Siraj (Sirajjudin), Badruddin, and Nasruddin. Badruddin was reportedly killed in a U.S. or Pakistani strike in late August 2012, and Nasruddin was killed near Islamabad, Pakistan, in November 2013. The deaths of two Haqqani sons appears to support the view of those who say the Haqqani Network's influence in its core base of Paktia, Paktika, and Khost provinces of Afghanistan is waning. Some prominent Afghan clans in those areas are said to have drifted from the Haqqani orbit to focus on participating in the Afghan political process. The Haqqani Network had about 3,000 fighters and supporters at its zenith during 2004-2010. The Haqqani Network's earns funds through licit and illicit businesses in Pakistan and the Persian Gulf and in controlling parts of Khost Province.

Suggesting it has acted as a tool of Pakistani interests, the Haqqani network has targeted several Indian interests in Afghanistan, almost all of which have been located outside the Haqqani main base of operations in eastern Afghanistan. The network claimed responsibility for two attacks on India's embassy in Kabul (July 2008 and October 2009), and is considered the likely perpetrator of the August 4, 2013, attack on India's consulate in Jalalabad. U.S. officials also attributed to the group the June 28, 2011, attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul; a September 10, 2011, truck bombing in Wardak Province (which injured 77 U.S. soldiers); and attacks on the U.S. Embassy and ISAF headquarters in Kabul on September 13, 2011.

The attacks on Indian interests and the fact that it is at least tolerated in the North Waziristan area of Pakistan supports those who allege that it has ties to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), which might view the Haqqanis as a potential ally in a future Afghan political structure. Then Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Mullen, following September 2011 attacks on U.S. Embassy Kabul, testified (Senate Armed Services Committee) on September 22, 2011, that the Haqqani network acts "as a veritable arm" of the ISI. Other senior officials issued more nuanced versions of that assertion.

Perhaps in line with Pakistan's shift toward accepting a political solution for the Afghan conflict, on November 13, 2012, a top Haqqani commander said that the Haqqani Network would participate in political settlement talks with the United States if Taliban leader Mullah Umar decided to undertake such talks.[21] A Haqqani representative reportedly was stationed at the Taliban office in Doha, Qatar, that briefly opened on June 18, 2013. It has also been reported that U.S. officials met with Haqqani representatives in 2011 in UAE.[22]

The faction's possible participation in a settlement could potentially be complicated by its designation as an FTO under the Immigration and Naturalization Act. In July 2010, then-top U.S. commander in Afghanistan General David Petraeus advocated that the Haqqani network be named as an FTO.[23] Some in the State Department reportedly opposed an FTO designation because that could create pressure to name Pakistan as a state sponsor of terrorism. A number of Haqqani leaders had already been sanctioned as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT) under Executive Order 13224. In the 112th Congress, S. 1959 (Haqqani Network Terrorist

[21] Jibran Ahmad. "Afghan Haqqani Factions Would Consider Talks Under Taliban." Reuters, November 13, 2012.

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

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

Designation Act of 2012), enacted on August 10, 2012 (P.L. 112-168). It required, within 30 days of enactment, an Administration report on whether the group meets the criteria for FTO designation and an explanation of a negative decision. On September 9, 2012, the Administration reported to Congress that the Haqqani Network meets the criteria for FTO designation and it was so designated.

Pakistani Groups

A major Pakistani group, the Pakistani Taliban (Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, TTP), primarily challenges the government of Pakistan but also supports the Afghan Taliban. Some TTP fighters reportedly operate from safe havens in Taliban-controlled areas on the Afghan side of the border. Based in part on a failed bombing in New York City in May 2010 allegedly by the TTP, the State Department designated the TTP as an FTO on September 2, 2010. Its current leader, Hakimullah Mehsud, was named as terrorism supporting entities that day. He succeeded Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in a U.S. drone strike in August 2009.

Another Pakistani Islamist militant group said to be increasingly active inside Afghanistan is Laskhar-e-Tayyiba (LET, or Army of the Righteous). LET was initially focused on operations against Indian control of Kashmir, but reportedly is increasingly active elsewhere in South Asia and elsewhere. The State Department has stated that the group was responsible for the May 23, 2014, attack on India's consulate in Herat. Another Pakistan-based group that is said to be somewhat active in Afghanistan is Lashkar-i-Janghvi—it was accused of several attacks on Afghanistan's Hazara Shiite community during 2011-2012.

Insurgent Tactics

As far as tactics, prior to 2011, U.S. commanders worried most about insurgent use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), including roadside bombs. In January 2010, President Karzai issued a decree banning importation of fertilizer chemicals (ammonium nitrate) commonly used for the roadside bombs, but there reportedly is informal circumvention of the ban for certain civilian uses, and the material reportedly still comes into Afghanistan from at least two major production plants in Pakistan. U.S. commanders have said they have verified some use of surface-to-air missiles,[24] although it missiles apparently were not used in the Taliban's downing of a U.S. Chinook helicopter that killed 30 U.S. soldiers on August 6, 2011.

Some insurgents have used bombs hidden in turbans, which had, until October 2011, generally not been searched out of respect for Afghan religious traditions. Such a bomb killed former President Rabbani on September 20, 2011, as noted above. A suicide bomber who wounded then intelligence chief Asadullah Khalid in December 2012 had explosives implanted in his body.

A major concern, particularly during 2012, has been "insider attacks" (attacks on ISAF forces by Afghan security personnel, also known as "green on blue" attacks).[25] These attacks, some of which apparently were carried out by Taliban infiltrators into the Afghan forces, declined by late 2012 but continued to occur occasionally in 2013 and 2014.

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

[25] For more information on the insider attack, see CRS General Distribution memorandum "Insider Attacks in Afghanistan," October 1, 2012, available on request.

Insurgent Financing: Narcotics Trafficking and Other Methods[26]

All of the insurgent groups in Afghanistan benefit, at least in part, from narcotics trafficking. However, the adverse effects are not limited to funding insurgents; the trafficking also undermines rule of law within government ranks. At the same time, narcotics trafficking is an area on which there has been progress in recent years. Fifteen of Afghanistan's 34 provinces are considered "poppy free" by the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime—although that figure is down from 17 provinces in 2012. The trafficking generates an estimated $70 million-$100 million per year for insurgents—perhaps about 25% of the insurgents' budgets estimated by some U.N. accounts at about $400 million.

The Obama Administration approach focuses on promoting legitimate agricultural alternatives to poppy growing in line with Afghan government preferences. In July 2009, the United States ended its prior focus on eradication of poppy fields on the grounds that this practice was driving Afghans to support the Taliban as protectors of their livelihood. One U.S. program, the "Good Performers Initiative" (GPI), gives financial awards to provinces that succeed in reducing cultivation. Afghan personnel continue to conduct some eradication activities, with U.S. and NATO support. The U.S. military flies Afghan and U.S. counternarcotics agents (Drug Enforcement Agency, DEA) on missions and evacuates casualties from counterdrug operations, as well as assists an Afghan helicopter squadron transport Afghan counternarcotics forces. The DEA presence in Afghanistan expanded from 13 agents in 2008 to over 100 by 2013, but will fall by about 60% by the end of 2014.

The Bush and Obama Administrations have exercised waiver provisions to required certifications of full Afghan cooperation needed to provide more than congressionally stipulated amounts of U.S. economic assistance to Afghanistan. Successive appropriations have required certification of Afghan cooperation on counternarcotics, but no funds for Afghanistan have been held up on these grounds.

The Obama Administration has placed additional focus on other sources of Taliban funding, including continued donations from wealthy residents of the Persian Gulf. It established a multinational task force to combat Taliban financing generally, not limited to narcotics, and U.S. officials have emphasized with Persian Gulf counterparts the need for cooperation. On June 29, 2012, the Administration sanctioned (by designating them as terrorism supporting entities under Executive Order 13224) two money exchange networks (*hawalas*) in Afghanistan and Pakistan allegedly used by the Taliban to move its funds earned from narcotics and other sources. However, the sanctions prevent U.S. persons from dealing with those money exchanges, and will likely have limited effect on the networks' operations in the South Asia region.

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

During 2002-2009, most U.S. forces were in eastern Afghanistan, leading Regional Command East (RC-E) of the NATO/ISAF operation. The most restive provinces in RC-E have been Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Kunar, and Nuristan. Helmand, Qandahar, Uruzgan, Zabol, Nimruz, and Dai Kundi provinces constituted a "Regional Command South (RC-S)"—formally transferred to NATO/ISAF responsibility on July 31, 2006. The increased U.S. troop strength in RC-S in 2009

[26] For detail on the issue of Afghanistan counter-narcotics, see CRS Report R43540, *Afghanistan: Drug Trafficking and the 2014 Transition*, by Liana Rosen and Kenneth Katzman.

and 2010—a product of the fact that most of the 2009-2010 U.S. "surge" was focused on the south—prompted a May 2010 NATO decision to bifurcate RC-S, with the United States leading a "southwest" subdivision (RC-SW) for Helmand and Nimruz and later taking command of both RC-S and RC-SW. Some U.S. forces have been under German command in RC-North, headquartered in Konduz, and Italy has led RC-West. Turkey has commanded ISAF forces in the capital, Kabul, since 2011.

During 2001 to mid-2006, U.S. forces and Afghan troops fought relatively low levels of insurgent violence with focused combat operations mainly in the south and east where ethnic Pashtuns predominate. These included "Operation Mountain Viper" (August 2003); "Operation Avalanche" (December 2003); "Operation Mountain Storm" (March-July 2004); "Operation Lightning Freedom" (December 2004-February 2005); and "Operation Pil" (Elephant, October 2005). By late 2005, U.S. and partner commanders considered the insurgency mostly defeated and NATO/ISAF assumed lead responsibility for security in all of Afghanistan during 2005-2006. The optimistic assessments proved misplaced when violence increased significantly in mid-2006.

NATO operations during 2006-2008 cleared key districts but did not prevent subsequent re-infiltration. NATO/ISAF also tried preemptive combat and increased development work, without durable success. As a result, growing U.S. concern took hold, reflected in such statements as one in September 2008 by then-Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Admiral Mike Mullen that "I'm not sure we're winning" in Afghanistan.

Reasons for the security deterioration included popular unrest over corruption in the Afghan government; the absence of governance or security forces in many rural areas; the safe haven enjoyed by militants in Pakistan; the reluctance of some NATO contributors to actively combat insurgents; a popular backlash against civilian casualties caused by military operations; and unrealized expectations of economic development. Even as they sought to address many of these factors, the United States and its partners decided to respond primarily by increasing force levels. U.S. troop levels started 2006 at 30,000 and increased to 39,000 by April 2009. Partner forces also increased during that period to 39,000 at the end of 2009—rough parity with U.S. forces. In September 2008, the U.S. military and NATO each began strategy reviews. These reviews were briefed to the incoming Obama Administration.

Obama Administration Policy: "Surge" and Transition

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

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

McChrystal Assessment and December 1, 2009, Surge Announcement

On May 11, 2009, then-Secretary of Defense Gates announced the replacement of General McKiernan with General Stanley McChrystal, who headed U.S. Special Operations forces from 2003 to 2008. He assumed the command on June 15, 2009, and, on August 30, 2009, delivered a strategy assessment that recommended that[28]

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

The assessment set off debate within the Administration and another policy review. Some senior U.S. officials, such as then-Secretary of Defense Gates, were concerned that adding many more U.S. forces could create among the Afghan people a sense of "occupation" that could prove counterproductive. The high-level review included at least nine high-level meetings, chaired by President Obama, who announced the following at West Point academy on December 1, 2009:[29]

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

The Obama Administration argued that a transition to Afghan security leadership beginning in July 2011 would compel the Afghan government to place greater effort on training its own forces. However, Afghan and regional officials viewed the deadline as signaling a rapid decrease in U.S. involvement.[30] To address that perception, the November 19-20, 2010, NATO summit in Lisbon, which decided on a gradual transition to Afghan leadership that would begin in 2011 and would be completed by the end of 2014.

As this debate over transition timeframes was taking place, on June 23, 2010, President Obama accepted the resignation of General McChrystal after comments by him and his staff to *Rolling Stone* magazine that disparaged several U.S. civilian policy makers on Afghanistan. General

[28] Commander NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan, and U.S. Forces, Afghanistan. "Commander's Initial Assessment." August 30, 2009, available at http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment_Redacted_092109.pdf?.

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

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

Petraeus was named General McChrystal's successor; he was confirmed on June 30, 2010, and assumed command on July 4, 2010.

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

Goals: To prevent Al Qaeda from again taking root in Afghanistan.
U.S. Strategy Definition: To transfer full responsibility to the Afghan security forces by the end of 2014 and leave in place, until the end of 2016, a residual force of mostly trainers and some Special Operations forces conducting combat. Contingent on Afghan signature of a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) that grants U.S. troops immunity from Afghan law.
Surge and then Drawdown: Following the 2009 "surge," U.S. force levels reached a high of 100,000 in mid-2011, then fell to 90,000 by the end of 2011; to 68,000 ("surge recovery) by September 20, 2012; and to 34,000 by February 2014. Current U.S. force level is about 30,000. 9,800 forces will remain during 2015, deployed around the country, and shrinking to about 5,000 in 2016, but limited to Kabul and Bagram Airfield. Beginning in 2017, about1,000 military personnel will administer arms sales and assist Afghan security ministries under chief of mission (no separate military chain of command in country).
Long-Term Broad Engagement: A strategic partnership agreement (SPA), signed in Kabul on May 1, 2012, pledges U.S. security and economic assistance to Afghanistan until 2024.
Reintegration and Reconciliation: To support Afghan efforts to reach a settlement with insurgent leaders.
Pakistan/Regional: To enlist Pakistan's commitment to deny safe haven in Pakistan to Taliban and other Afghan militants.
Economic Development: To build an economy that can be self-sufficient by 2024 by further developing agriculture, collecting corporate taxes and customs duties, exploiting vast mineral deposits, expanding small industries, and integrating Afghanistan into regional diplomatic and trading and investment structures.

Transition and Drawdown: Afghans in the Lead

Prior to the implementation of the U.S. "surge," the Afghan Interior Ministry estimated (August 2009) that the Karzai government controlled about 30% of the country, while insurgents controlled 4% (13 out of 364 districts) and influenced or operated in another 30%. Tribes and local groups with varying degrees of loyalty to the central government controlled the remainder. Some outside groups report higher percentages of insurgent control or influence.[31] The Taliban had named "shadow governors" in 33 out of 34 of Afghanistan's provinces, although many provinces in northern Afghanistan were assessed as having minimal Taliban presence.

Despite doubts about the durability of progress, the results of the surge were considered sufficient to permit the transition to Afghan security leadership to begin on schedule in July 2011. The transition was divided into five "tranches"—the first was announced in March 2011, the second in November 2011, the third in May 2012, the fourth (52 districts) on December 31, 2012, and the fifth and final tranche (91 districts along the Pakistan border) on June 18, 2013. The process of completing the transition to Afghan responsibility takes 12–18 months.

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

Afghan Forces Assume Lead Operational Role in June 2013

The announcement of the final tranche coincided with the announcement by President Karzai and visiting NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen that day (June 18, 2013) that Afghan forces were now in the lead role throughout Afghanistan and NATO/ISAF had moved to a supporting role. That shift in roles implemented plans discussed by President Obama on March 15, 2012, and then announced formally in a joint statement following a meeting between President Karzai and President Obama on January 11, 2013.[32] According to that statement, the move to a support role implied that U.S. forces cease patrolling Afghan villages.

In concert with the transition to Afghan lead, there has been a gradual drawdown of U.S. forces. Taking into account the assessment that the killing of Osama Bin Laden represented a key accomplishment of the core U.S. mission, and financial needs to reduce the size of the U.S. budget deficit, on June 22, 2011 President Obama announced that:

- 10,000 U.S. forces would be withdrawn by the end of 2011. That drawdown brought U.S. force levels down to 90,000.
- 23,000 forces (the remainder of the surge forces) would be withdrawn by September 2012. This draw-down, completed in September 20, 2012, brought down U.S. force levels to 68,000.

In the February 12, 2013, State of the Union message, President Obama announced that U.S. force level would drop to 34,000 by February 2014. This reduction was completed. The remainder of the U.S. contingent that will exit by the end of 2014 deadline are being withdrawn gradually to reach. The U.S. force level is about 30,000 the U.S. force and is expected to shrink to about 22,000 by October 31 and then to 9,800 (residual force discussed below) by the end of 2014.

In concert with the U.S. drawdown, U.S. airpower in country has been reduced, limiting the capability to conduct strikes against insurgent positions.[33] The United States has closed nearly 300 of its bases around Afghanistan and about 80 remain as of mid-2014. The provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs), discussed below, have mostly been turned over to Afghan institutions. DOD is moving approximately $36 billion worth of U.S. military equipment out of Afghanistan, including 28,000 vehicles and trailers.

Some in Congress had expressed support for winding down the U.S. involvement in Afghanistan more rapidly than the rate implemented by the Administration. H.Con.Res. 248, requiring a withdrawal, failed by a vote of 356 to 65 on March 10, 2011. In the 112th Congress, after the death of Osama Bin Laden on May 1, 2011, an amendment to the defense authorization bill (H.R. 1540) requiring a plan to accelerate the transition to Afghan-lead security failed by a vote of 204-215 on May 26, 2011. On May 25, 2011, an amendment to that same bill that would require U.S. troops to withdraw most of its forces failed 123-294. A provision of the FY2013 defense authorization bill (Section 1226 of P.L. 112-239) expresses the Sense of Congress that the United States draw down troops at a steady pace through the end of 2014.

[32] Joint Statement by President Obama and President Karzai. January 11, 2013.

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

Post-2014 Residual Force and 2016 Exit

Assessing that Afghan forces will continue to need direct military support after 2014 to prevent the Taliban from advancing, President Obama announced on May 27, 2014, the size of the post-2014 U.S. force and plan for an eventual U.S. military exit from Afghanistan after 2016. According to President Obama's May 27 announcement,[34] the post-2014 force will be as follows, contingent on Afghanistan signing the Bilateral Security Agreement discussed further below:

- The U.S. military contingent in Afghanistan is to be 9,800 in 2015, deployed in various parts of Afghanistan, consisting mostly of trainers. The nominee to head U.S. Special Operations Forces, Lt Gen. Joseph Votel, testified at his confirmation hearings on July 10, 2014, that about 2,000 of the post-2014 force will be Special Operations Forces, of which about 980 would directly support a counterterrorism mission.[35] Press reports indicate that NATO and other partner countries will deploy an additional 4,000 troops as part of the overall "Resolute Support Mission." The international forces will not conduct any patrols of Afghan territory, and the anti-Taliban mission will be completely in the hands of the ANSF. Some of the military personnel will continue to advise the Defense and Interior Ministries.
- As of January 1, 2016, the U.S. force will decline to 4,900 based in Kabul and at Bagram Airfield.
- After 2016, the U.S. military presence will decline to one consistent with normal security relations with Afghanistan – a figure assessed at about 1,000 by experts. The forces will be under U.S. Chief-of-Mission authority and there will be no separate U.S. or NATO military chain of command in country. The U.S. forces will primarily protect U.S. installations and help process Foreign Military Sales (FMS) of weaponry to Afghanistan, which includes training the Afghans on weapons delivered.

As far as non-U.S. contributions to Resolute Support, Germany announced in late April 2013 that it was willing to keep 600-800 forces in Afghanistan after 2014, mostly in the northern sector where Germany now leads the international contingent. In June 2013, Italy said it would contribute up to 800 forces. Georgia has committed about 750 forces; Australia, 450; and Romania, 250. Turkey has said it will continue its leadership in the Kabul area beyond 2014. The United States and its partners appear to have decided to retain NATO leadership over the post-2014 international force.

Debate Over Post-2014 Security Outcomes

President Obama's May 27 announcement stimulated debate over how Afghanistan will fare after 2014. U.S. and other experts and Afghan officials and parliamentarians supported the announcement with respect to planned 2015 and 2016 force levels, but expressed concern about the virtual complete departure of international forces after 2016. Some assert that the ANSF will not be able to secure Afghanistan if left almost completely on its own by 2016, and that there could be substantial Taliban gains and even a full political collapse after international forces

[34] http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/05/27/statement-president-afghanistan

[35] Votel Pledges Support for Special Operations Forces. DoD News, July 10, 2014.

depart. The Administration asserts that a full military departure from Afghanistan will free up U.S. resources for anti-terrorism missions elsewhere and focus the Afghans on improving their training and organization that they require to operate on their own after 2016.

Those who take an optimistic view of the post-2014 period often quote from recent Defense Department reports and comments. The DOD report on security and stability in Afghanistan released in April 2014 (covering October 1, 2013-March 31, 2014)[36] assessed that the ANSF has been able to maintain the gains made by ISAF. It repeated the assertion of the previous DoD report that "insurgent territorial influence and kinetic capabilities have remained static." The report notes that the overwhelming majority of violence occurs in areas with only 25% of the Afghan population. The report asserts that the Taliban is rejected by the population. Apparently factoring in a residual presence into their analysis, General Dempsey and General Dunford said in early 2013 that the Taliban will be a persistent, though not an "existential" threat, over the longer term. The nominee to replace Gen. Dunford, Gen. John Campbell, testified at his confirmation hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee on July 10, 2014, that "I have confidence in the strength of the Afghan security forces. They've held strong despite significant casualties during the 2013 and 2014 fighting seasons."[37]

On the other hand, some other U.S. agencies and U.S.-funded reports have been less optimistic.A reported National Intelligence Estimate, the findings of which were reported in late December 2013 assesses that, even with continued international force support, Afghan security is likely to erode significantly by 2017 as both insurgents and pro-government faction leaders increase their geographic and political influence.[38] Some U.S. officials were quoted as disagreeing with the NIE findings. A report by the Center for Naval Analyses, mandated by the FY2013 National Defense Authorization Act, entitled "Independent Assessment of the Afghan National Security Forces," released February 2014, says, "We conclude that the security environment in Afghanistan will become more challenging after the drawdown of most international forces in 2014, and that the Taliban insurgency will become a greater threat to Afghanistan's stability in the 2015-2018 timeframe than it is now."[39]

Recent events also indicate the difficulties the ANSF faces as they try to keep the Taliban at bay with decreasing international support. As of early 2013, some ANSF units have been entering into local ceasefires with Taliban forces in restive areas of Afghanistan. The Taliban has been able to challenge the ANSF in several districts of northern Helmand province in mid-2014, particularly the Sangin district. In late June 2014, about 600 Taliban fighters attacked government forces in several districts, making some gains. In early July 2014, attacks killed eight members of the Afghan air force in Kabul, and Taliban fighters attempted to storm provincial governance and security offices in the key city of Qandahar. The United Nations announced on July 9, 2014, that civilian casualties in Afghanistan surged in the first half of 2014 to their highest level since 2009.

Many experts agree that factional militias will reorganize to deter or prevent Taliban gains as the international force presence diminishes. Herat leader Ismail Khan reportedly has already begun taking steps to reorganize his Soviet and Taliban-era militia. Prior to his death in March 2014, then Vice President Muhammad Fahim discussed potentially reconstituting the Northern Alliance

[36] http://www.defense.gov/pubs/April_1230_Report_Final.pdf

[37] Campbell: ISAF 'Brought Hope' to Afghan People. DoD News, July 10, 2014.

[38] Ernesto Londono et al. "Grim Future Seen for Afghanistan." *Washington Post*, December 29, 2013.

[39] http://www.cna.org/sites/default/files/research/CNA%20Independent%20Assessment%20of%20the%20ANSF.pdf.

force in anticipation of the need to assist Afghan government forces against the Taliban. Prior to joining the candidacy of Ashraf Ghani in the April 5 presidential election, Uzbek leader Dostam, also reportedly was trying to reorganize his loyalists in northern Afghanistan. These and similar moves could spark ethnic and communal conflict from an all-out struggle for power and a reversion to Afghan rule by faction leaders rather than elected leaders.

Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA)

The post-2014 U.S. military presence is contingent on signature of the BSA. U.S. officials and commanders have expressed concern that the dispute over the Afghan presidential election could delay the signature further and complicate U.S. and partner country planning for the post-2014 security mission. A similar agreement between Afghanistan and post-2014 NATO force contributors will likely be modeled on the U.S.-Afghanistan BSA. The outcome of the presidential election is key, because President Karzai has refused to sign the BSA even though Afghanistan and the United States finalized the text in November 2013. Both of Karzai's possible successors, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani, have pledged to sign the BSA.

The United States has asserted that all substantive issues in the BSA have been resolved. During an October 11-12, 2013 visit to Afghanistan, Secretary of State John Kerry and President Karzai announced that they had resolved U.S.-Afghan differences on the key issues of U.S. operations authority and security guarantee.[40] Karzai apparently relented on the demand that the United States protect Afghanistan from Pakistan, and the United States reportedly agreed to coordinate with the Afghan security forces on post-2014 anti-Al Qaeda operations. Karzai stated that the decision on legal immunities for U.S. forces in Afghanistan—a non-negotiable U.S. requirement—would be placed before the Afghan National Assembly (parliament) and a special *loya jirga*—a traditional Afghan assembly composed of about 2,500 notables convened to consider major issues. As the *loya jirga* began to convene on November 21, 2013, Secretary Kerry announced that the two sides had finalized all points of the BSA. The *loya jirga* concluded on November 24, 2013 with a decision to authorize Karzai to sign the agreement.[41] However, Karzai asserted that stipulations were still needed in the BSA to prevent U.S. troops from raiding Afghan homes, either on foot or by remotely piloted vehicle; that the 20 or so Afghans in detention at the U.S. facility in Guantanamo Bay be returned to Afghanistan; and that the United States facilitate a political settlement with the Taliban.

He subsequently refused to sign on the grounds that the signature be left to his successor who will have to implement it. Karzai might have also been trying to address domestic pressure from those who see the BSA as a forfeiture of Afghan sovereignty; pressure from Iran not to have U.S. forces in the region; possible concerns that signing the document would immediately render Karzai irrelevant to international powers. Karzai might have also perceived that refusing to sign the agreement would induce the Taliban to negotiated a political solution.

[40] Anne Gearan. "U.S., Afghanistan Reach Post-2014 Security Accord." *Washington Post*, October 13, 2013.

[41] Tim Craig. "Afghan Elders Press Karzai to Sign the Pact." *Washington Post*, November 25, 2013.

Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)

The BSA discussed above is being negotiated pursuant to the broader "Strategic Partnership Agreement" (SPA) signed by President Obama and President Karzai in Afghanistan on May 1, 2012. That broad agreement signaled that the United States is committed to Afghan stability and development for many years after the transition is complete. The SPA was completed after more than one year of negotiations that focused on resolution of two disagreements in particular—Afghan insistence on control over detention centers and a halt to or control over nighttime raids on insurgents by U.S. forces. The SPA agreement also demonstrated U.S.-Afghan ability to overcome public Afghan discomfort over such issues as the March 2011 burning of a Quran by a Florida pastor; the mistaken burning by U.S. soldiers of several Qurans on February 20, 2012; and the March 11, 2012, killing of 16 Afghans by a U.S. soldier, Sergeant Robert Bales, who was arrested and tried in the United States. On September 17, 2012, several hundred Afghans demonstrated near a U.S.-Afghan training facility east of Kabul city (Camp Phoenix) to protest a video made in the United States, "The Innocence of Muslims." About 40 Afghan police reportedly were wounded preventing the crowd from reaching the facility.

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

- A commitment to continue to foster U.S.-Afghan "close cooperation" to secure Afghanistan. This strongly implies, but does not state outright, that U.S. troops will remain in Afghanistan after 2014, and no troop numbers are mentioned in the document. The document provides for negotiations on the Bilateral Security Agreement, discussed above.
- The U.S. Administration will request appropriations to provide training and arms to the Afghan security forces. The agreement does not stipulate dollar amounts or which systems are to be provided.
- The United States will designate Afghanistan as a "Major Non-NATO Ally," a designation reserved for close U.S. allies. In keeping with that pledge, on July 7, 2012, then-Secretary Clinton stopped in Afghanistan and announced that designation. It opens Afghanistan to receive (sale, donation) U.S. weaponry of the same level of sophistication as that sold to U.S. NATO allies, and facilitates provision of training and funds to leasing defense articles.
- There will be no "permanent" U.S. bases or the use of Afghan facilities for use against neighboring countries, but the agreement would apparently allow long-term U.S. use of Afghan facilities. Over the past several years, successive National Defense Authorization Acts have contained a provision explicitly prohibiting the U.S. establishment of permanent bases in Afghanistan.
- The Administration will request economic aid for Afghanistan for the duration of the agreement (2014-2024). No amounts were specified in the document. The Afghan government reportedly wanted a $2 billion per year commitment written into the agreement but the United States told Afghanistan that amounts can only be determined through the appropriations process.

[42] The text is at http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/2012.06.01u.s.-afghanistanspasignedtext.pdf.

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

The SPA replaced an earlier, more limited strategic partnership agreement established on May 23, 2005, when Karzai and President Bush issued a "joint declaration."[43] The declaration provided for U.S. forces to have access to Afghan military facilities, in order to prosecute "the war against international terror and the struggle against violent extremism." Karzai's signing of the declaration was supported by the 1,000 Afghan representatives on May 8, 2005, at a consultative *jirga* in Kabul. The *jirga* supported an indefinite presence of international forces to maintain security but urged Karzai to delay a firm decision to request such a presence.

Transition Pillar: Building Afghan Forces and Establishing Rule of Law

Key to the post-2014 security of Afghanistan is the effectiveness of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), consisting primarily of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP). Analysis of the ANSF strengths and weaknesses is contained in the semi-annual DOD reports on Afghanistan stability and the Center for Naval Analyses study released in February 2014, referenced earlier.[44]

The ANSF is in the lead on more than 90% of all operations and bears the overwhelming number of coalition casualties. The ANSF has lost no significant amount of territory to the insurgency, according to the DoD report referenced above, although the report notes that U.S. officials are evaluating the effect of certain "ceasefires" the ANSF has reached with insurgents in certain places. As noted above, ANSF performance was widely credited for limiting insurgent violence during the April 5, 2014, election. The ANSF is still supported by international forces, and its performance in an environment of diminishing international involvement remains in question.

Among the major concerns about the ANSF is that about 35% of the force does not reenlist each year, meaning that about one-third of the force must be recruited to replenish its ranks. Many believe that the force has been expanded too quickly to allow for thorough vetting or for recruitment of the most qualified personnel. Many units also suffer from a deficiency of weaponry, spare parts, and fuel, although those shortfalls are ebbing, according to DOD.

U.S. commanders frequently note concerns about the ANSF's deficiency of logistical capabilities, such as airlift, medical evacuation, resupply, and other associated functions. It is these deficiencies that are a particular focus of U.S. planning for the post-2014 period. Some of the deficiency throughout the ANSF is due to illiteracy, which prompted an increasing focus (and about $200 million in funding for) providing literacy training. The goal was to have all ANSF have at least first-grade literacy, and half to have third-grade literacy, by the end of 2014. While

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

[44] http://www.cna.org/sites/default/files/research/CNA%20Independent%20Assessment%20of%20the%20ANSF.pdf.

literacy in the ANSF has been improved by the program, the SIGAR reported in January 2014 that these targets might be unrealistic.

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

Current and Post-2014 Size of the ANSF

On January 21, 2010, the joint U.N.-Afghan "Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board" (JCMB) agreed that, by October 2011, the ANA would expand to 171,600 and the ANP to about 134,000, (total ANSF of 305,600). Both forces reached that level by September 2011. In August 2011, a larger target size of 352,000 (195,000 ANA and 157,000 ANP) was set, to be reached by November 2012. The gross size of the force reached approximately that level by the end of September 2012, and remain at levels just below those targets. That figure does not include the approximately 30,000 local security forces discussed below. A higher ANSF target level of 378,000 was not adopted because of the concerns about the Afghan ability to sustain so large a force. About 1,700 women serve in the ANSF, of which about 1,370 are police.

In the run-up to the May 20-21, 2012, NATO summit in Chicago, which focused on long-term financial and military sustainment of the ANSF, there was initial agreement to reduce the total ANSF to 228,500 by 2017. However, based on assessments of the difficulty of securing Afghanistan, the February 21, 2013, NATO meeting reversed that decision.

ANSF Top Leadership/Ethnic and Factional Considerations

In the immediate aftermath of the 2001 ousting of the Taliban regime, Northern Alliance figures took key security positions and weighted recruitment for the new ANSF toward ethnic Tajiks. Many Pashtuns, in reaction, refused recruitment, but the naming of a Pashtun, Abdul Rahim Wardak, as Defense Minister in December 2004, mitigated that difficulty. The problem was further alleviated with better pay and more close involvement by U.S. forces, and that the force is ethnically integrated in each unit and has become representative. According to recent DOD reports, the overall ANSF force is now roughly in line with the ethnic composition of Afghanistan, although Tajiks are still slightly overrepresented in the command ranks.

Until 2010, the chief of staff of the ANA was General Bismillah Khan, a Tajik and former Northern Alliance commander. He was replaced by a Pashtun, Lieutenant General Sher Mohammad Karimi. Khan then served as Interior Minister until his ouster by the National Assembly in August 2012; in that position, he reportedly promoted his Tajik allies to key Interior Ministry and ANP positions. In September 2012, Karzai appointed Khan as Defense Minister, and Khan has earned U.S. and partner country praise for his performance as Defense Minister, to date.

The same day he appointed Khan, Karzai appointed professional police commander General Ghulam Mojtaba Patang as Interior Minister. Patang entered his position with high respect as the first professional officer to be appointed to the top police slot. The National Assembly voted to remove him in July 2013 for failing to improve security along the Kabul-Qandahar highway. Karzai replaced him on September 1, 2013, with Umar Daudzai, Karzai's former chief of staff, a

Pashtun, who was serving as Ambassador to Pakistan. A highly respected Tajik figure, Kabul police chief General Mohammad Ayub Salangi, was simultaneously appointed deputy Interior Minister.

Also in September 2012, Karzai named as intelligence director (National Directorate of Security, NDS) Asadullah Khalid, former Qandahar governor and a close Karzai ally, replacing Rehmatullah Nabil. Khalid was wounded by a potential assassin in December 2012. His predecessor, Nabil, was returned to the post on September 1, 2013.

ANSF Funding

On the assumption that the post-2014 ANSF force would shrink to 228,000, it was determined that sustaining a force that size would cost $4.1 billion annually. The United States pledged $2.3 billion yearly; the Afghan government pledged $500 million yearly; and allied contributions constituted the remaining $1.3 billion. The Afghan contribution is to rise steadily until 2024, at which time Afghanistan is expected to fund its own security needs. However, the apparent U.S. and NATO decision to keep the ANSF force at 352,000 produced revised funding requirement levels of about $6 billion per year. Revised donor pledges to fund the force at that level have not been announced.

Even the $4.1 billion figure was considered difficult to raise. The GAO estimated in February 2013 that there was a $600 million per year discrepancy between allied donor pledges and the $1.3 billion requirement. The specific known yearly pledges have included Germany ($190 million per year), Britain ($110 million per year), and Australia ($100 million per year). Other countries that are confirmed to have made pledges, but of unspecified amounts, include Denmark, Italy, Estonia, and the Netherlands. The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) issued an audit in October 2012 saying the Afghan government will have major difficulty meeting its obligations to fund the force as donor countries wind down their involvement.[45] According to a SIGAR audit (13-4), CSTC-A plans to provide about $1 billion directly to the Afghan government during 2013-2019 to pay for fuel for the ANSF.

The U.S. costs to train and equip the ANSF are provided in the aid table at the end of this paper. As of FY2005, the security forces funding has been DOD funds, not State Department funds (Foreign Military Financing, FMF).

NATO Trust Fund for the ANA

In 2007 ISAF set up a trust fund for donor contributions to fund the transportation of equipment donated to and the training of the ANA; the mandate was expanded in 2009 to include sustainment costs. In November 2010 a further expansion was agreed on to support literacy training for the ANA. As of March 2014, donor contributions and pledges to the ANA Trust Fund total about $855 million. U.S. funding for the ANA is provided separately, not through this fund.

[45] http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/2012-10-30audit-13-1.pdf.

Law and Order Trust Fund for the ANP

There is also a separate "Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan" (LOTFA), run by the U.N. Development Program (UNDP), which is used to pay the salaries of the ANP and other police-related functions. The United States donates to that fund, for the purpose of paying ANP salaries and food costs. From 2002 to 2012, donors contributed $2.75 billion to the Fund, of which the United States contributed about $1 billion. Japan's 2009 pledge to pay the expenses of the Afghan police for at least six months (about $125 million for each six month period) is implemented through the LOTF. The EU pledged $175 million for the fund from January 2011 to March 2013. South Korea contributes about $100 million per year to the fund.

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

Other Bilateral Donations

The DOD reports discuss other bilateral donations to the ANSF, both in funds and in arms and equipment donations. There is a "NATO Equipment Donation Program," through which donor countries supply the ANSF with equipment. Since 2002, about $2.9 billion in assistance to the ANSF has come from these sources.

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

The Afghan National Army (ANA)

The Afghan National Army has been built "from scratch" since 2002—it is not a direct continuation of the national army that existed from the 1880s until the Taliban era. That army disintegrated entirely during the 1992-1996 *mujahedin* civil war and the 1996-2001 Taliban period. Some officers who served prior to the Taliban have joined the ANA.

The ANA now plans and leads almost all combat operations—including many completely on its own with no U.S. or international input. The commando forces of the ANA, trained by U.S. Special Operations Forces, and numbering about 5,300, are considered well-trained and are taking the lead in some operations against high-value targets.

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

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

Department reportedly plans shifted in 2013 from providing new equipment to maintaining existing equipment.

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

Afghan Air Force

Equipment, maintenance, and logistical difficulties continue to plague the Afghan Air Force, and it remains mostly a support force for ground operations rather than a combat-oriented force. However, the Afghan Air Force has been able to make ANA units nearly self-sufficient in airlift. The force is a carryover from the Afghan Air Force that existed prior to the Soviet invasion, and is expanding gradually after its equipment was virtually eliminated in the 2001-2002 U.S. combat against the Taliban regime. It has about 6,300 personnel of a target size of about 8,000 by 2016. There are five female Afghan Air Force personnel; four arrived in the United States in July 2011 for training as military helicopter pilots.

The Afghan Air Force has about 100 aircraft including gunship, attack, and transport helicopters—of a planned fleet of 140 aircraft. Because the Afghan Air Force has familiarity with Russian helicopters and other equipment, the post-2014 Afghan Air Force is adding to its inventory of about 60 Mi-17 helicopters. Defense Department officials planned to buy the force another 45 Mi-17 helicopters, via the Russian state-owned Rosoboronexport arms sales agency at a cost of about $572 million and delivery by the end of 2014. However, separate House and Senate letters to the Administration, with a total of nearly 100 Member signers, called on the Defense Department to cancel the purchase because Rosoboronexport is the top supplier to the government of President Bashar Al Assad of Syria. Perhaps in response, DOD announced in November 2013 that it would not buy the 15 Mi-17s slated to be bought in FY2014, but would go ahead with the buy of 30 Mi-17s that used FY2013 funds.[46]

Among other U.S.-funded purchases, the Brazilian firm Embraer has been contracted by DOD to provide 20 Super Tucano turboprop aircraft to the force. U.S. plans do not include supply of fixed-wing combat aircraft such as F-16s, which Afghanistan wants as part of a broader request for the United States to augment Afghan air capabilities, according to U.S. military officials. There is a concern that Afghanistan will not soon have the capability to sustain operations of an aircraft as sophisticated as the F-16.

Afghanistan also is seeking the return of 26 aircraft, including some MiG-2s that were flown to safety in Pakistan and Uzbekistan during the past conflicts in Afghanistan. In 2010, Russia and Germany supplied MI-8 helicopters to the Afghan Air Force.

[46] Politico. November 18, 2013.

Afghan National Police (ANP)

U.S. and Afghan officials believe that building up a credible and capable national police force is at least as important to combating the insurgency as building the ANA. The DOD reports on Afghanistan contain substantial detail on U.S.-led efforts to continue what it says are "significant strides [that] have been made in professionalizing the ANP." However, many outside assessments of the ANP are disparaging, asserting that there is rampant corruption to the point where citizens mistrust and fear the ANP. Among other criticisms are a desertion rate far higher than that of the ANA; substantial illiteracy; involvement in local factional or ethnic disputes because the ANP works in the communities its personnel come from; and widespread use of drugs. It is this view that has led to consideration of stepped up efforts to promote local security solutions such as those discussed above. About 2,000 ANP are women, and on January 16, 2014—for the first time—a woman was appointed as a district police commander.

The United States and Afghanistan have worked to correct long-standing deficiencies. Some U.S. commanders credit a November 2009 doubling of police salaries (to $240 per month for service in high combat areas), and the streamlining and improvement of the payments system for the ANP, with reducing the solicitation of bribes by the ANP. The raise also stimulated an eightfold increase in recruitment. Others note the success, thus far, of efforts to pay police directly (and avoid skimming by commanders) through cell phone-based banking relationships (E-Paisa, run by Roshan cell network).

The ANP is increasingly being provided with heavy weapons and now have about 5,000 armored vehicles countrywide. Still, most police units lack adequate ammunition and vehicles. In some cases, equipment requisitioned by their commanders is being sold and the funds pocketed by the police officers.

A component of the ANP is the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP). As of mid-2014, the ANCOP force, which numbers over 14,000, is used to clear areas during counterinsurgency operations. The ANCOP force is considered effective because it deploys nationally and is less susceptible to local power brokers than are other ANP units.

The U.S. police training effort was first led by State Department/INL, but DOD took over the lead in police training in April 2005. A number of early support programs, such as the auxiliary police program attempted during 2005, were discarded as ineffective. It was replaced during 2007-2011 with the "*focused district development*" program in which a district police force was taken out and retrained, its duties temporarily performed by more highly trained ANCOP. Police training includes instruction in human rights principles and democratic policing concepts, and the State Department human rights report on Afghanistan, referenced above, says the government and observers are increasingly monitoring the police force to prevent abuses.

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

In 2008, the failure of several police training efforts led to a decision to develop local forces to protect their communities. Until then, U.S. military commanders opposed assisting local militias anywhere in Afghanistan for fear of re-creating militias that commit abuses and administer arbitrary justice. However, the urgent security needs in Afghanistan caused General Petraeus and his successors to expand local security experiments, based on successful experiences in Iraq and

after designing mechanisms to place them firmly under Afghan government (mainly Ministry of Interior) control. Among these initiatives are the following:

- *Village Stability Operations/Afghan Local Police (ALP)*. The Village Stability Operations (VSO) concept began in February 2010 in Arghandab district of Qandahar Province when U.S. Special Operations Forces organized about 25 villagers into an armed neighborhood watch group. The pilot program was expanded into a joint Afghan-U.S. Special Operations effort in which 12-person teams from these forces lived in communities to help improve governance, security, and development. An outgrowth of the VSO was the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program in which the U.S. Special Operations Forces set up and trained local security organs of about 300 members each. These local units are under the control of district police chiefs and each fighter is vetted by a local shura as well as Afghan intelligence. The latest DOD report says there are about 26,600 ALP now operating nationwide. However, the ALP program has been cited by Human Rights Watch and other human rights groups for killings, rapes, arbitrary detentions, and land grabs. The allegations triggered a U.S. military investigation that substantiated many of those findings, although not the most serious of the allegations.[47] In May 2012, Karzai ordered one ALP unit in Konduz disbanded because of its alleged involvement in a rape there.
- The ALP initiative was also adapted from another program, begun in 2008, termed the "Afghan Provincial Protection Program" (APPP, commonly called "AP3"), funded with DOD (CERP) funds. The APPP got underway in Wardak Province (Jalrez district) in early 2009 with 100 in May 2009. It was subsequently expanded to 1,200 personnel. U.S. commanders said no U.S. weapons were supplied to the militias, but the Afghan government provided weapons (Kalashnikov rifles) to the recruits, possibly using U.S. funds. Participants in the program were given $200 per month.
- *Afghan Public Protection Force*. This force, which operates as a "state-owned enterprise" (a business) but under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior, guards sites and convoys. It was formed to implement Karzai's August 17, 2010, decree (No. 62) that private security contractor forces be disbanded and their functions performed by official Afghan government forces by March 20, 2012. That deadline was extended to March 2013 because of the slow pace of standing up the new protection force, and some development organizations continued to use locally hired guard forces. The unit has begun operations to secure supply convoys and sites, and now numbers about 22,000 personnel guarding nearly 150 sites. Observers reported in late August 2013 that the APPF was nearly insolvent because of corruption and mismanagement, and in February 2014 the Afghan government decided to end its "state-owned enterprise" status and fold the unit into the Ministry of Interior.

The local security experiments to date resemble but technically are not *arbokai*, which are private tribal militias. Some believe that the *arbokai* concept should be revived as a means of securing

[47] Ernesto Londono. "U.S. Cites Local Afghan Police Abuses." *Washington Post*, December 16, 2011. The Human Rights Watch report is entitled "Just Don't Call It a Militia." http://www.hrw.org, September 12, 2011.

Afghanistan, as the *arbokai* did during the reign of Zahir Shah and in prior pre-Communist eras. Reports persist that some tribal groupings have formed *arbokai* without specific authorization.

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

DDR. The main program, run by UNAMA, was called the "DDR" program—Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration—and it formally concluded on June 30, 2006. The program got off to a slow start because the Afghan Defense Ministry did not reduce the percentage of Tajiks in senior positions by a July 1, 2003, target date, dampening Pashtun recruitment. In September 2003, Karzai replaced 22 senior Tajiks in the Defense Ministry officials with Pashtuns, Uzbeks, and Hazaras, enabling DDR to proceed. The major donor for the program was Japan, which contributed about $140 million.

The DDR program was initially expected to demobilize 100,000 fighters, although that figure was later reduced. Of those demobilized, 55,800 former fighters exercised reintegration options provided by the program: starting small businesses, farming, and other options. Some studies criticized the DDR program for failing to prevent a certain amount of rearmament of militiamen or stockpiling of weapons and for the rehiring of some militiamen.[48] Part of the DDR program was the collection and cantonment of militia weapons, but generally only poor-quality weapons were collected.

DIAG. After June 2005, the disarmament effort emphasized another program called "DIAG"—Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups, run by the Afghan Disarmament and Reintegration Commission, headed by Vice President Khalili. The effort was intended to disarm as many as 150,000 members of 1,800 different "illegal armed groups" - militiamen that were not part of recognized local forces (Afghan Military Forces, AMF) and were never on the rolls of the Defense Ministry. Under the DIAG, no payments were made to fighters, and the program depended on persuasion rather than use of force against the illegal groups. DIAG was not as well funded as was DDR, receiving $11 million in operating funds. As an incentive, Japan and other donors offered $35 million for development projects where illegal groups have disbanded. The goals of DIAG were not met in part because armed groups in the south said they need to remain armed against the Taliban. UNAMA reported in a March 9, 2011, report that 100 out of 140 districts planned for DIAG are considered "DIAG compliant."

Rule of Law/Criminal Justice Sector

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

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

Elections, and Government Performance, and CRS Report R41484, *Afghanistan: U.S. Rule of Law and Justice Sector Assistance*.

Policy Component: Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)

U.S. and partner officials have praised the effectiveness of "Provincial Reconstruction Teams" (PRTs)—enclaves of U.S. or partner forces and civilian officials that provide safe havens for international aid workers to help with reconstruction and to extend the writ of the Kabul government. The PRTs, the concept for which was announced in December 2002, have performed activities ranging from resolving local disputes to coordinating local reconstruction projects, although most U.S.-run PRTs and most PRTs in combat-heavy areas focused on counterinsurgency. Many of the additional U.S. civilian officials deployed to Afghanistan during 2009 and 2010 were based at PRTs, which have facilities, vehicles, and security. Some aid agencies say they felt more secure since the PRT program began,[49] but several relief groups did not want to associate with military forces because doing so might taint their perceived neutrality.

Virtually all the PRTs, listed in **Table 15**, were placed under the ISAF mission. Each PRT operated by the United States has had U.S. forces to train Afghan security forces; DOD civil affairs officers; representatives of USAID, State Department, and other agencies; and Afghan government (Interior Ministry) personnel. USAID officers assigned to the PRTs administer PRT reconstruction projects. USAID spending on PRT projects is in the table at the end of this report.

Despite the benefits, President Karzai consistently criticized the PRTs as holding back Afghan capacity-building and repeatedly called for their abolition as "parallel governing structures." USAID observers backed some of the criticism, saying that there was little Afghan input into PRT development project decision-making or as contractors for PRT-funded construction. To address this criticism, during 2008-2012 some donor countries, including the United States, enhanced the civilian diplomatic and development component of the PRTs to try to change their image from military institutions.

The May 20-21, 2012, NATO summit in Chicago expressed agreement to phase out the PRTs by the end of 2014. Karzai's July 26, 2012, administrative reforms called on the Afghan government to beginning planning to assume their functions. As of December 1, 2013, 12 PRTs have been transferred to Afghan control, and the remaining 16 are to be transferred by the end of 2014. Related U.S.-led structures such as District Support Teams (DSTs), which help district officials provide government services, are to close by the end of 2014 as well.

Cooperation With Allies

Partner forces have been key to the U.S. mission in Afghanistan. Since 2006, the vast bulk of all U.S. troops in Afghanistan have served in the NATO-led "International Security Assistance Force" (ISAF). ISAF consists of all 28 NATO members states plus partner countries—a total of 50 countries including the United States. Since the transition to Afghan security leadership began in July 2011, U.S. officials have, to a large extent, prevented a "rush to the exits" by partner forces—partner drawdowns have occurred at roughly the same rate and proportion as the U.S. drawdown, despite public pressure in Europe to end or reduce their military involvement in

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

Afghanistan. Still, during 2010-2012, the Netherlands, Canada, and France respectively, ended their combat missions, although they continue to furnish trainers for the ANSF. South Korea ended its security mission in Parwan Province, in and around Bagram Airfield, in June 2014, although its hospital and civilian development experts will remain until at least 2016.

Partner forces that continue to conduct some combat in Afghanistan include Britain, Canada, Poland, Denmark, Romania, and Australia. Romania has permitted the use of its facilities to withdraw personnel and equipment as part of the international drawdown in 2014. Britain has removed about half of its peak 10,000 person contingent, which was based mostly in Helmand, but some British forces periodically have gone back into Helmand to deal with specific security setbacks. Poland said in mid-January 2014 that it would reduce its contingent from its current level of about 1,000 to 500 forces by May 2014.

A list of remaining partner forces is in **Table 14** at the end of this report. Several partner countries have indicated they will contribute troops to the Resolute Support Mission, assuming that mission is implemented. Force pledges to Resolute Support are discussed in the section on the post-2014 residual force above.

Table 4. Background on NATO/ISAF Formation and U.N. Mandate

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was created by the Bonn Agreement and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 (December 20, 2001, a Chapter 7 resolution),[50] initially limited to Kabul. In October 2003, after Germany agreed to contribute 450 military personnel to expand ISAF into the city of Konduz, ISAF contributors endorsed expanding its presence to several other cities, contingent on formal U.N. approval—which came on October 14, 2003, in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1510. In August 2003, NATO took over command of ISAF—previously the ISAF command rotated among donor forces including Turkey and Britain.

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

The ISAF mission was renewed (until October 13, 2012) by U.N. Security Council Resolution 2011 (October 12, 2011), which reiterated previous resolutions' support for the Operation Enduring Freedom mission. Resolution 2069 of October 10, 2012, renewed the mandate for another full year (until October 11, 2014). That will likely be the last renewal until the ISAF mission ends at the end of 2014. Some countries, such as Germany and Russia (not an ISAF member), want a U.N. mandate to authorize international forces to remain in Afghanistan after 2014. Tables at the end of this report list contributing forces, areas of operations, and their Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

Reintegration and Potential Reconciliation With Insurgents[51]

Some believe that there is substantial potential for a political settlement between insurgent leaders and the Afghan government and the reintegration of insurgent fighters into society. The prospects might have increased after the April 5, 2014, presidential election in Afghanistan, in which voters mostly ignored or defied Taliban threats of violence and election day violence was minimal. However, reconciliation might involve compromises that could produce backsliding on human rights; most insurgents are highly conservative Islamists who seek strict limitations on women's rights. Many leaders of ethnic minorities believe that reconciliation and reintegration might further Pashtun political strength within Afghanistan, and enhance Pakistani influence. The United States and the Afghan government stipulate that any settlement require insurgent leaders, as an outcome,[52] to (1) cease fighting, (2) accept the Afghan constitution, and (3) sever any ties to Al Qaeda or other terrorist groups.

[50] Its mandate was extended until October 13, 2006, by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1623 (September 13, 2005); and until October 13, 2007, by Resolution 1707 (September 12, 2006).

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

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

Reintegration

The concept of providing incentives to persuade insurgents to surrender and reenter their communities has received at least some U.S. and Afghan attention since 2002. The elements included in a formal reintegration plan drafted by the Afghan government and adopted by a "peace *loya jirga*" during June 2-4, 2010,[53] included providing surrendering fighters with jobs, amnesty, protection, and an opportunity to be part of the security architecture for their communities. Later in June 2010, President Karzai issued a decree to implement the plan, which includes efforts by Afghan local leaders to convince insurgents to reintegrate, and UNAMA said in its December 6, 2013, that local civil society-sponsored meetings called the "Afghan People's Dialogue on Peace," intended to promote peace and reconciliation, have been expanding.

According to the November 2013 DOD report, about 7,800 fighters have been reintegrated. A majority of those reintegrated are from the north and west, with growing participation from militants in the more violent south and east. Some observers say there have been cases in which reintegrated fighters have committed human rights abuses against women and others, suggesting that the reintegration process might have unintended consequences.

The reintegration effort received formal international backing at the July 20, 2010, Kabul Conference. Britain, Japan, and several other countries, including the United States, have announced a total of about $235 million in donations to a fund to support the reintegration process, of which $134 million has been received.[54] The U.S. contribution to the program has been about $100 million (CERP funds).[55]

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

Reconciliation With Militant Leaders

A related U.S. and Afghan initiative is to reach a conflict-ending settlement with the Taliban. The Obama Administration initially withheld endorsement of the concept on the grounds that it might lead to the incorporation into the Afghan political system of insurgent leaders who retain ties to Al Qaeda and would roll back freedoms. The minority communities in the north, women, intellectuals, and others remain skeptical that their freedoms can be preserved if there is a political settlement with the Taliban—a settlement that might involve Taliban figures obtaining ministerial posts, seats in parliament, or even control over territory. Then-Secretary of State Clinton said in India on July 20, 2011, that any settlement must not result in and undoing of "the progress that has been made [by women and ethnic minorities] in the past decade." To respond to those fears, Afghan and U.S. officials say that the outcome—but not the precondition—of a

[53] Afghanistan National Security Council. "Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program." April 2010.

[54] United Nations. Report of the Secretary General: "The Situation in Afghanistan and Its Implications for International Peace and Security." March 9, 2011.

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

settlement would require the Taliban to drop demands that a new, "Islamic" constitution be adopted and Islamic law be imposed. On the other hand, Afghan officials have not ruled out amending the constitution to incorporate more Islamic tenets as part of a settlement.

An "Afghan High Peace Council" (HPC) intended to oversee the settlement process was established on September 5, 2010. Former President/Northern Alliance political leader Burhanuddin Rabbani was appointed by Karzai to head it, largely to gain Tajik and other Northern Alliance support for the concept. On September 20, 2011, Rabbani was assassinated by a Taliban infiltrator posing as an intermediary; on April 14, 2012, the HPC voted his son, Salahuddin, as his replacement.

During 2011, informal meetings among U.S., Taliban, and Afghan representatives proliferated, particularly in the form of U.S. meetings with Tayeb Agha, an aide to Mullah Umar. In December 2011, U.S. officials pursued confidence-building measures under which the Taliban would open a political office in Qatar; the United States would transfer five senior Taliban captives from the Guantanamo detention facility to a form of house arrest in Qatar; and the Taliban would release the one U.S. prisoner of war, it holds, Bowe Bergdahl. The United States also demanded a public Taliban statement severing its ties to Al Qaeda or other terrorist groups. The confidence-building measures were not implemented, and U.S.-Taliban talks broke off in March 2012 reportedly over Qatar's failure to assure the United States that released detainees would be able to escape custody.

The plan appeared to advance in 2013. On June 18, 2013, the Taliban opened the office in Qatar, simultaneously issuing a statement refusing future ties to international terrorist groups and expressing willingness to eventually transition to Afghan government-Taliban talks. However, the Taliban violated understandings with the United States and Qatar by raising a flag of the former Taliban regime and calling the facility the office of the "Islamic Emirate" of Afghanistan—the name the Taliban regime gave for Afghanistan during its rule. These actions prompted U.S. officials, through Qatar, to compel the Taliban to close the office. However, the Taliban officials remained in Qatar, and indirect U.S.-Taliban talks through Qatari mediation revived in mid-2014. These indirect talks led to the May 31, 2014, exchange of Bergdahl for the release to Qatar of the five Taliban figures, with the stipulation that they cannot travel outside Qatar for at least one year. The five released, and their positions during the Taliban's period of rule: were Mullah Mohammad Fazl, the chief of staff of the Taliban's military; Noorullah Noori, the Taliban commander in northern Afghanistan; Khairullah Khairkhwa, the Taliban regime Interior Minister; Mohammad Nabi Omari, a Taliban official; and Abdul Haq Wasiq, the Taliban regime's deputy intelligence chief.

In addition to U.S.-Taliban discussions, there have been exchanges between Taliban representatives and the Afghan government. In June 2012, Afghan government officials and Taliban representatives held talks at two meetings—one in Paris, and one an academic conference in Kyoto, Japan. Meetings that were potentially even more significant took place between senior Taliban figures and members of the Northern Alliance faction in France (December 20-21, 2012). The meeting in France reportedly included submission by the Taliban of a political platform that signaled acceptance of some aspects of human rights and women's rights provisions of the current constitution.[56] A statement by Mullah Omar in August 2013 said the Taliban no longer seeks a monopoly of power but rather an "inclusive" government, and backs modern education. And, perhaps reflecting divisions among insurgents, the insurgent faction of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar

[56] Author conversations with Afghan officials and U.S. experts. 2012-13.

permitted its followers in Afghanistan to vote in the April 2014 presidential and provincial elections. In February 2014, it was reported that Karzai had been engaged in further talks with Taliban representatives, although some accounts said the talks made no progress.[57] Others say that some Karzai actions, such as condemning the February 2014 killing in Pakistan of prominent Taliban commander Mullah Abdul Raqib and refusing to sign the BSA, were intended to win Taliban favor—a policy many U.S. and Afghan officials say is naive and misguided.

Previous talks between Afghan government figures and the Taliban have taken place primarily in Saudi Arabia and UAE. Press reports said that talks took place among Karzai's brother, Qayyum; Arsala Rahmani, a former Taliban official who reconciled and entered the Afghan parliament but was assassinated in May 2012; and the former Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan, Abdul Salam Zaeef, who purportedly is in touch with Umar's inner circle. Some of these same Taliban representatives may be involved in the ongoing talks referred to above. Some Taliban sympathizers reportedly attended the June 2-4, 2010, consultative peace *jirga.*

Role of Pakistan. Pakistan has also become more outwardly supportive of the reconciliation process, although experts still doubt Pakistan's true intentions for Afghanistan, as discussed below. In February 2012, Pakistani leaders, for the first time, publicly encouraged Taliban leaders to negotiate a settlement to the conflict. Following a November 2012 visit to Pakistan by Rabbani and other High Peace Council members, Pakistan released at least 26 high-ranking Taliban figures who favor reconciliation. Karzai visited Pakistan during August 26-27, 2013, and, 10 days later, Pakistan released another seven moderate senior Taliban figures. On September 22, 2013, it released from prison the highest-profile Taliban figure in detention, Mullah Abdul Ghani Bradar,[58] who had been arrested by Pakistan in February 2010, purportedly to halt talks between Bradar and Afghan intermediaries. Bradar reportedly remains under house arrest or close surveillance in Pakistan. Earlier, in August 2012, Pakistan had allowed Afghan officials to hold talks with the incarcerated Bradar.

Removing Taliban Figures From U.N. Sanctions Lists. A key Taliban demand in negotiations is the removal of the names of some Taliban figures from U.N. lists of terrorists. These lists were established pursuant to Resolution 1267 and Resolution 1333 (October 15, 1999, and December 19, 2000, both pre-September 11 sanctions against the Taliban and Al Qaeda) and Resolution 1390 (January 16, 2002). The Afghan government has submitted a list of 50 Taliban figures it wants taken off the list, which includes about 140 Taliban-related persons or entities. On January 26, 2010, Russia, previously a hold-out against such a process, dropped opposition to removing five Taliban-era figures from these sanctions lists, paving the way for their de-listing: those removed included Taliban-era foreign minister Wakil Mutawwakil and representative to the United States Abdul Hakim Mujahid. Mujahid is now deputy chair of the High Peace Council.

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

[57] Azam Ahmed and Matthew Rosenberg. "Karzai Arranged Secret Contacts with the Taliban." *New York Times*, February 4, 2014.

[58] "Afghan Officials Meet Key Taliban Figure in Pakistan." Reuters.com, August 12, 2012.

Table 5. Major Security-Related Indicators

Force	Current Level
Total Foreign Forces in Afghanistan	About 51,000: 33,000 U.S. and 18,000 partner forces. (U.S. total was: 25,000 in 2005; 16,000 in 2003; 5,000 in 2002. ISAF totals were: 12,000 in 2005; and 6,000 in 2003.)
U.S. Casualties in Afghanistan	2,197 killed, of which 1,817 by hostile action (plus 1 DOD civilian killed by hostile action). Additional 11 U.S. military deaths by hostile action in other OEF theaters. 150 U.S. killed from October 2001-January 2003. 500+ killed in 2010. U.S. casualties have dropped dramatically since mid-2013 when Afghan forces assumed lead security role throughout Afghanistan.
NATO/ISAF Sectors	RC-South: U.K. lead. RC-Southwest: U.S. lead; RC-East: U.S. lead; RC-North: Germany lead; RC-West: Italy lead; RC-Kabul: Turkey and Afghan lead.
Afghan National Army (ANA)	About 185,000, close to the 195,000 target size that was planned by November 2012. 5,300 are commando forces, trained by U.S. Special Forces.
Afghan National Police (ANP)	About 152,000, close to the target size of 157,000. 21,000 are Border Police; 3,800+ counternarcotics police; 14,400 Civil Order Police (ANCOP).
ANSF Salaries	About $1.6 billion per year, paid by donor countries bilaterally or via trust funds
Al Qaeda in Afghanistan	Between 50-100 members in Afghanistan, according to U.S. commanders. Also, small numbers of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and other Al Qaeda affiliates.
Number of Taliban fighters	Up to 25,000, including about 3,000 Haqqani network and 1,000 HIG.
Afghan casualties	See CRS Report R41084, *Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians*, by Susan G. Chesser.

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

Regional Dimension

The Obama Administration is attempting to persuade all of Afghanistan's neighbors to support a stable and economically viable Afghanistan, and to welcome Afghanistan into regional security and economic organizations and patterns. Economically, the Administration is emphasizing development of a Central Asia-South Asia trading hub—part of a "New Silk Road" (NSR)—in an effort to keep Afghanistan stable and economically vibrant as donors wind down their involvement. The FY2014 omnibus appropriation, H.R. 3547 (P.L. 113-76), provides up to $150 million to promote Afghanistan's links within its region.

The Administration first obtained formal pledges from Afghanistan's neighbors to non-interference in Afghanistan at an international meeting on Afghanistan in Istanbul on November 2, 2011 ("Istanbul Declaration"), and again at the December 5, 2011, Bonn Conference on Afghanistan (the 10th anniversary of the Bonn Conference that formed the post-Taliban government). As a follow-up to the Istanbul Declaration, confidence-building measures to be taken by Afghanistan's neighbors, were discussed at a Kabul ministerial conference on June 14, 2012. At that meeting, also known as the "Heart of Asia" ministerial conference, Afghanistan hosted 14 other countries from the region, as well as 14 supporting countries and 11 regional and international organizations. The assembled nations and organizations agreed to jointly fight terrorism and drug trafficking, and pursue economic development.[59] A subsequent Heart of Asia

[59] Participating were: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi (continued...)

meeting was held in April 2013 in Kazakhstan, but a detailed analysis of the process indicates that regional interest in the process has waned substantial due to factors in the various participating countries.[60]

Post-Taliban Afghanistan has been slowly integrated into regional security and economic organizations. In November 2005, Afghanistan joined the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and, in June 2012, Afghanistan was granted full observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a security coordination body that includes Russia, China, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. U.S. officials have also sought to enlist both regional and greater international support for Afghanistan through the still-expanding 50-nation "International Contact Group." Another effort, the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference (RECCA) on Afghanistan, was launched in 2005. Turkey and UNAMA co-chair a "Regional Working Group" initiative, which organized the November 2, 2011, Istanbul meeting mentioned above. UNAMA also leads a "Kabul Silk Road" initiative to promote regional cooperation on Afghanistan.

In addition, several regional meetings series have been established between the leaders of Afghanistan and neighboring countries. These series include summit meetings between Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Turkey; and between Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. However, this latter forum ended in mid-2012 after Afghanistan signed the SPA with the United States, which Iran strongly opposed. Britain hosted an Afghanistan-Pakistan meeting in February 2013. Russia has assembled several "quadrilateral summits" among it, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan, to focus on counternarcotics and anti-smuggling.

(...continued)

Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, UAE, and Uzbekistan.

[60] Richard Giasy and Maihan Saeedi. "The Heart of Asia Process at a Juncture: An Analysis of Impediments to Further Progress." Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies, June 2014.

Table 6. Afghan and Regional Facilities Used for Operations in and Supply Lines to Afghanistan

Facility	Use
Bagram Air Base	50 miles north of Kabul, the operational hub of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and base for CJTF-82. At least 2,000 U.S. military personnel are based there. Handles many of the 150+ U.S. aircraft (including helicopters) in country. Hospital constructed, one of the first permanent structures there. FY2005 supplemental (P.L. 109-13) provided about $52 million for various projects to upgrade facilities at Bagram, including a control tower and an operations center, and the FY2006 supplemental appropriation (P.L. 109-234) provided $20 million for military construction there. NATO also using the base and sharing operational costs. Bagram can be accessed directly by U.S. military flights following April 2010 agreement by Kazakhstan to allow overflights of U.S. lethal equipment.
Qandahar Air Field	Just outside Qandahar, the hub of military operations in the south. Turned over from U.S. to NATO/ISAF control in late 2006 in conjunction with NATO assumption of peacekeeping responsibilities. Enhanced (along with other facilities in the south) at cost of $1.3 billion to accommodate 2009-2010 influx of U.S. combat forces in the south.
Shindand Air Base	In Farah province, about 20 miles from Iran border. Used by U.S. forces and combat aircraft since October 2004, after the dismissal of Herat governor Ismail Khan, who controlled it.
Peter Ganci Base: Manas, Kyrgyzstan	Was used by 1,200 U.S. military personnel as well as refueling and cargo aircraft for shipments to and from Afghanistan. Kyrgyz governments on several occasions demanded the U.S. vacate the base but subsequently agreed to allow continued use in exchange for large increase in U.S. payments for its use (to $60 million per year currently. The Kyrzyz parliament voted in June 2013 not to extend the U.S. lease beyond 2014. U.S. forces ceased using and formally handed over the facility to Kyrgyz officials on June 4, 2014.
Incirlik Air Base, Turkey	About 2,100 U.S. military personnel there; U.S. aircraft supply U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. U.S. use repeatedly extended for one year intervals by Turkey.
Al Dhafra, UAE	Air base used by about 1,800 U.S. military personnel, to supply U.S. forces and related transport into Iraq and Afghanistan.
Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar	Largest air facility used by U.S. in region. Houses central air operations coordination center for U.S. missions in Iraq and Afghanistan; also houses CENTCOM forward headquarters. About 5,000 U.S. personnel in Qatar.
Naval Support Facility, Bahrain	U.S. naval command headquarters for OEF anti-smuggling, anti-terrorism, and anti-proliferation naval search missions, and Iraq-related naval operations (oil platform protection) in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea. About 5,000 U.S. military personnel there.
Karsi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan	Not used by U.S. since September 2005 following U.S.-Uzbek dispute over May 2005 Uzbek crackdown on unrest in Andijon. Once housed about 1,750 U.S. military personnel (900 Air Force, 400 Army, and 450 civilian) supplying Afghanistan. U.S. relations with Uzbekistan have improved since 2009, but there is still no U.S. use of the air base. Some U.S. shipments began in February 2009 through Navoi airfield in central Uzbekistan, and U.S. signed agreement with Uzbekistan on April 4, 2009, allowing nonlethal supplies for the Afghanistan war. Goods are shipped to Latvia and Georgia, some transits Russia by rail, then to Uzbekistan.
Tajikistan	Some use of air bases and other facilities by coalition partners, including France, and emergency use by U.S. India also uses bases under separate agreement. New supply lines to Afghanistan established in February 2009 ("northern route") make some use of Tajikistan.
Pakistan	As discussed below, most U.S. supplies have flowed through Pakistan, but increased use is being made through the Northern Distribution Network. Heavy equipment docks in Karachi and is escorted by security contractors to the Khyber Pass crossing.
Russia	Allows non-lethal equipment bound for Afghanistan to transit Russia by rail. Still does not allow lethal aid to transit. Route not evidently affected by U.S.-Russia tensions over Ukraine.

Pakistan

The Afghanistan neighbor that is considered most crucial to Afghanistan's future is Pakistan. DOD reports on Afghanistan's stability repeatedly have identified Afghan militant safe haven in Pakistan as a threat to Afghan stability. Pakistan's main goal is that Afghanistan not align with or be unduly influenced by rival India, and potentially provide Pakistan strategic depth against India. These goals lead many experts to assert that Pakistan privately wants proxy or friendly factions such as the Taliban to have major influence in post-2014 Afghanistan. Pakistan's goal in allowing some groups, such as the Haqqani Network, relative safe haven may be to develop leverage with Afghanistan to support Pakistan's policies. At the same time, Pakistan's releases of major pragmatic Afghan Taliban figures could signal that Pakistan has assessed that instability in Afghanistan would rebound to Pakistan's detriment.

As a result of the safe haven the Afghan Taliban appears to have in Pakistan, Afghanistan-Pakistan relations continue to fluctuate. Many Afghans view positively Pakistan's role as the hub for U.S. backing of the *mujahedin* that forced the Soviet withdrawal in 1988-1989. Later, many Afghans came to resent Pakistan as one of only three countries to formally recognize the Taliban as the legitimate government (Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are the others). Anti-Pakistan sentiment is particularly strong among the Tajiks and other non-Pashtuns. Relations improved after military leader President Pervez Musharraf left office in 2008 and was replaced by the civilian President Asif Zardari. However, the September 2011 insurgent attacks on the U.S. Embassy and killing of former President Rabbani caused another reversal and Karzai to move strategically closer to India. In May 2013, Afghan and Pakistani border forces clashed, killing some from each side. Since Nawaz Sharif came back into office as Prime Minister in June 2013, Pakistan-Afghan relations have improved again. Karzai visited Pakistan during August 26-7, 2013—a visit that produced Pakistan's subsequent release of several moderate Taliban figures, including Mullah Bradar.

Pakistan prefers Ghani to Dr. Abdullah as successor to Karzai. Ghani is a Pashtun and therefore has greater potential to be friendly to Pakistan. Dr. Abdullah and the Northern Alliance are sharply critical of Pakistan and accuse it of directly and materially seeking a return to power of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

As an indication of Pakistan's overriding interest in limiting India's influence in Afghanistan, Pakistan says India is using its Embassy and four consulates in Afghanistan (Pakistan says India has nine consulates) to recruit anti-Pakistan insurgents, and that India is using its aid programs only to build influence there. Pakistani Defense Secretary Lieutenant General Asif Yasin announced in late January 2014 that Pakistan would not accept a robust role for India in Afghanistan after the international security mission ends in 2014. At a February 2013 meeting in Britain, Pakistan demanded that Afghanistan scale back relations with India and sign a strategic agreement with Pakistan that includes Pakistani training for the ANSF.

International Border Question. The border clashes referenced above could have been a product of the differences between and Afghanistan and Pakistan over their border. Pakistan wants the government of Afghanistan to formally recognize as the border the "Durand Line," a border agreement reached between Britain (signed by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand) and then Afghan leader Amir Abdul Rahman Khan in 1893, separating Afghanistan from what was then British-controlled India (later Pakistan after the 1947 partition). The border is recognized by the United Nations, but Afghanistan continues to indicate that the border was drawn unfairly to separate Pashtun tribes and should be renegotiated. Afghan leaders bridled at October 21, 2012, comments

by then SRAP Grossman that U.S. "policy is that border is the international border," even though that comment reflected a long-standing U.S. position. As of October 2002, about 1.75 million Afghan refugees have returned from Pakistan since the Taliban fell, but as many as 3 million might still remain in Pakistan.

Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA). U.S. efforts to persuade Pakistan to forge a "transit trade" agreement with Afghanistan bore success with the signature of a trade agreement between the two on July 18, 2010. The agreement allows for easier exportation via Pakistan of Afghan products, which are mostly agricultural products that depend on rapid transit and are key to Afghanistan's economy. On June 12, 2011, in the context of a Karzai visit to Islamabad, both countries began full implementation of the agreement. It is expected to greatly expand the $2 billion in trade per year the two countries were doing prior to the agreement. The agreement represented a success for the Canada-sponsored "Dubai Process" of talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan on modernizing border crossings, new roads, and a comprehensive border management strategy to meet IMF benchmarks. A drawback to the agreement is that Afghan trucks, under the agreement, are not permitted to take back cargo from India after dropping off goods there. The Afghanistan-Pakistan trade agreement followed agreements to send more Afghan graduate students to study in Pakistan, and a June 2010 Afghan agreement to send small numbers of ANA officers to undergo training in Pakistan.[61]

U.S.-Pakistani Cooperation on Afghanistan

The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan has depended on cooperation from Pakistan. That cooperation has generally survived occasional U.S.-Pakistan strains but has also had periods of tension. The May 1, 2011, U.S. raid that killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan added to preexisting strains caused by Pakistan's refusal to crack down on the Haqqani network. Relations worsened further after a November 26, 2011, incident in which a U.S. airstrike killed 24 Pakistani soldiers, and Pakistan responded by closing border crossings, suspending participation in the border coordination centers, and boycotting the, December 2011 Bonn Conference. President Obama declined to hold a formal meeting with President Zardari during the May 20-21, 2012, NATO summit in Chicago, but then-Secretary of State Clinton's July 2, 2012, expression of remorse for the 24 Pakistani soldier deaths led Pakistan to reopen the border crossings.

In the several years after the September 11, 2001, attacks, Pakistani cooperation against Al Qaeda was considered by U.S. officials to be relatively consistent and effective. Pakistan arrested over 700 Al Qaeda figures after the September 11 attacks.[62] Pakistan allowed U.S. access to Pakistani airspace, some ports, and some airfields for OEF. Others say Musharraf acted against Al Qaeda only when it threatened him directly; for example, after the December 2003 assassination attempts against him.

In April 2008, in an extension of the work of the Tripartite Commission (Afghanistan, Pakistan, and ISAF, in which military leaders of these entities meet on both sides of the border), the three countries agreed to set up five "border coordination centers" (BCCs). The BCCs include networks of radar nodes to give liaison officers a common view of the border area and build on an

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

[62] Among those captured by Pakistan are top bin Laden aide Abu Zubaydah (captured April 2002); alleged September 11 plotter Ramzi bin Al Shibh (September 11, 2002); top Al Qaeda planner Khalid Shaikh Mohammed (March 2003); and a top planner, Abu Faraj al-Libbi (May 2005).

agreement in May 2007 to share intelligence on extremists' movements. Four have been established to date, including one near the Torkham Gate at the Khyber Pass, but all four are on the Afghan side of the border. Pakistan has not fulfilled its May 2009 pledge to establish one on the Pakistani side of the border.

Iran

As an immediate goal, Iran seeks to deny the United States the use of Afghanistan as a base from which to pressure or attack Iran, to the point where Iran strenuously sought to scuttle the May 1, 2012, U.S.-Afghanistan SPA and is trying to scuttle the BSA. As a longer term objective, Iran seeks to exert its historic influence over western Afghanistan, which was once part of the Persian empire, and to protect Afghanistan's Shiite and other Persian-speaking minorities. Most experts appear to see Iran as a relatively marginal player, particularly compared to Pakistan, while others believe Tehran is able to mobilize large numbers of Afghans, particularly in the west, to support its policies. The United States is attempting to gauge Tehran's influence through the "Iran watch" diplomatic position at the U.S. consulate in Herat established in early 2013.

The Obama Administration initially saw Iran as potentially helpful to its strategy for Afghanistan. Iran was invited to the U.N.-led meeting on Afghanistan at the Hague on March 31, 2009, and then SRAP Holbrooke gave Iran's delegation leader a letter on several outstanding cases of Iranian-Americans held in Iran. Iran pledged cooperation on combating Afghan narcotics and in helping economic development in Afghanistan—both policies Iran is pursuing to a large degree. The United States supported Iran's attendance of the October 18, 2010, meeting of the International Contact Group on Afghanistan, held in Rome. The United States and Iran also took similar positions at a U.N. meeting in Geneva in February 2010 that discussed drug trafficking across the Afghan border. Iran did not attend the January 28, 2010, international meeting in London, but it did attend the July 28, 2010, international meeting in Kabul (both discussed above). As a member of the OIC, an Iranian representative attended the March 3, 2011, Contact Group meeting at OIC headquarters in Jeddah. Iran attended the region-led international meeting in Istanbul on November 2, 2011, the December 5, 2011, Bonn Conference, and the Tokyo donors' conference on July 8, 2012.

Bilateral Government-to-Government Relations

Iran has had some success in building ties to the Afghan government, despite that government's heavy reliance on U.S. support and despite Iran's aid to Taliban and other militants, a discussed below. Karzai has, at times, called Iran a "friend" of Afghanistan; and there were regular bilateral and multilateral meetings between Karzai and then Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Karzai has repeatedly said that Afghanistan must not become an arena for the broader competition and disputes between the United States and Iran.[63] In June 2011, Iran's then Defense Minister, Ahmad Vahidi, visited Kabul to sign a bilateral border security agreement, and the two signed a Memorandum of Understanding on broader security and economic cooperation in August 2013—Iran's possible attempt to counter the U.S.-Afghanistan BSA. Karzai visited Tehran later in early December 2013 to open his relationship with the new government of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, and the visit resulted in a strategic Iran-Afghanistan agreement. Most U.S. analysts have downplayed the pact as largely an effort by Karzai to assuage Iranian concerns about the likely

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

long-term U.S. presence in Afghanistan. Most experts believe any Iran-Afghanistan pact is unlikely to be significantly implemented. Earlier, in October 2010, Karzai acknowledged accepting about $2 million per year in cash payments from Iran, but Iran reportedly ceased the payments after the Karzai government signed the SPA with the United States in May 2012.

At the public level, many Afghans appreciate Iran's aid for efforts to try to oust the Taliban regime when it was in power. Iran saw the Taliban regime, which ruled during 1996-2001, as a threat to its interests in Afghanistan, especially after Taliban forces captured Herat in September 1995. Iran subsequently drew even closer to the ethnic minority-dominated Northern Alliance than previously, providing its groups with fuel, funds, and ammunition.[64] In September 1998, Iranian and Taliban forces nearly came into direct conflict when Iran discovered that nine of its diplomats were killed in the course of the Taliban's offensive in northern Afghanistan. Iran massed forces at the border and threatened military action, but the crisis cooled without a major clash, possibly out of fear that Pakistan would intervene on behalf of the Taliban. Iran offered search and rescue assistance in Afghanistan during the U.S.-led war to topple the Taliban, and it also allowed U.S. humanitarian aid to the Afghan people to transit Iran. Iran helped construct Afghanistan's first post-Taliban government, in cooperation with the United States—at the December 2001 "Bonn Conference." In February 2002, Iran expelled Karzai-opponent Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, but it did not arrest him.

At other times, Afghanistan and Iran have had disputes over Iran's efforts to expel Afghan refugees. There are 1 million registered Afghan refugees in Iran, and about 1.4 million Afghan migrants (non-refugees) living there. A crisis erupted in May 2007 when Iran expelled about 50,000 into Afghanistan. About 300,000 Afghan refugees have returned from Iran since the Taliban fell. Press reports in May 2014 said Iran might be recruiting Shiite Afghan refugees in Iran to go to Syria to fight on behalf of the Asad regime there.

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

Despite its relations with the Afghan government, Iran, perhaps attempting to demonstrate that it can cause U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan, is allegedly arming militants there.[65] The State Department report on international terrorism for 2012, released May 30, 2013, repeats language in prior reports that the Qods Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Iran provides training to the Taliban on small unit tactics, small arms, explosives, and indirect weapons fire, and that it has shipped arms to militants in Qandahar. This phrasing implies that Iran is arming Pashtun Taliban militants in the core of the combat zone in Afghanistan. Weapons provided, according to the State Department report, include mortars, 107mm rockets, rocket-propelled grenades, and plastic explosives. On March 9, 2011, NATO said it had seized 48 Iranian-made rockets in Nimruz Province, bound for Afghan militants; the 122mm rockets, have a range (13 miles) greater than those previously provided by Iran. On August 3, 2010, the Treasury Department, acting under Executive Order 13224, named two Qods Force officers as terrorism supporting entities, freezing any U.S.-based assets.[66]

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

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

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

Iran reportedly has allowed a Taliban office to open in Iran, and a high-level Taliban delegation traveled from Qatar to Iran in early June 2013 (prior to the opening of the Taliban office there) for meetings with Iranian officials.[67] While some see the contacts as Iranian support of the insurgency, others see it as an effort to exert some influence over reconciliation efforts. Iran previously allowed Taliban figures to attend conferences in Iran that were attended by Afghan figures, including the late High Peace Council head Burhanuddin Rabbani.

Assistance to Ethnic and Religious Factions in Afghanistan

Others are puzzled by Iran's support of Taliban fighters who are Pashtun, because Iran has traditionally supported Persian-speaking or Shiite factions in Afghanistan, many of whom have been oppressed by the Pashtuns. Some of Iran's funding has been intended to support pro-Iranian groups in the west as well as Hazara Shiites in Kabul and in the Hazara heartland of Bamiyan, Ghazni, and Dai Kundi, in part by providing scholarships and funding for technical institutes. Iran has used some of its funds to construct mosques in Herat, pro-Iranian theological seminaries in Shiite districts of Kabul, and Shiite institutions in Hazara-dominated areas. Iran also offers scholarships to Afghans to study in Iranian universities, and there are consistent allegations that Iran has funded Afghan provincial council and parliamentary candidates who are perceived as pro-Tehran.[68] These efforts have helped Iran retain close ties with Afghanistan's leading Shiite cleric, Ayatollah Mohammad Mohseni, as well as Hazara political leader Mohammad Mohaqiq.

Iran's Development Aid for Afghanistan

Iran's economic aid to Afghanistan does not conflict with U.S. efforts to develop Afghanistan. Iran has pledged about $1 billion in aid to Afghanistan, of which about $500 million has been provided to date. The funds have been used mostly to build roads and bridges in western Afghanistan. In cooperation with India, Iran has been building roads that would connect western Afghanistan to Iran's port of Chahbahar, and provide Afghan and other goods an easier outlet to the Persian Gulf. In late July 2013, Iran and Afghanistan signed a formal agreement allowing Afghanistan to use the port. Iran also has provided credits to the Afghan private sector and helped develop power transmission lines in the provinces bordering Iran, two of which were turned over to Afghan ownership in January 2013. Some of the funds reportedly are funneled through the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, which provides charity in Iran and worldwide. Iran also provides gasoline and other fuels to Afghanistan, although a SIGAR report in January 2013 said that some U.S. funds might have been used to purchase fuels from Iran for Afghanistan. U.S. sanctions bar virtually all U.S. energy transactions with Iran. (See CRS Report RS20871, *Iran Sanctions*.)

India

India's goals are to deny Pakistan "strategic depth" in Afghanistan, to deny Pakistan the ability to block India from trade and other connections to Central Asia and beyond, and to prevent militants in Afghanistan from attacking Indian targets in Afghanistan. India saw the Afghan Taliban's

[67] Maria Abi-Habib. "Iranians Build Up Afghan Clout. Wall Street Journal, October 26, 2012; Afghan Taliban Reportedly Sends Delegation to Iran for Talks. CBSnews.com, June 3, 2013.

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

hosting of Al Qaeda during 1996-2001 as a major threat because of Al Qaeda's association with radical Islamic organizations in Pakista seeking to end India's control of part of the disputed territories of Jammu and Kashmir. Some of these groups have committed major acts of terrorism in India, including the terrorist attacks in Mumbai in November 2008 and in July 2011.

Afghanistan has sought close ties to India—in large part to access India's large and rapidly growing economy—but without alarming Pakistan. In May 2011, India and Afghanistan announced a "Strategic Partnership" agreement that demonstrated India's support for U.S. efforts to better integrate Afghanistan into regional political, economic, and security structures. On October 5, 2011, Karzai signed the pact in New Delhi; it affirmed Pakistani fears by giving India, for the first time, a formal role as one of the guarantors of Afghan stability. Indian experts noted that no Indian troops or security forces would deploy to Afghanistan as a consequence, but it did produce a 2011 agreement for India to train some ANSF personnel in India. After a four-day Karzai visit to India in November 2012, India agreed to train up to 600 ANSF per year at the Indian Army's jungle warfare school.

In the immediate aftermath of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border clashes in early May 2013, Karzai visited India to seek sales of Indian artillery, aircraft, and other systems that would help it better defend its border with Pakistan.[69] Karzai visited again in mid-December 2013, and reportedly urged India to deliver on the 2011 strategic pact by selling Afghanistan tanks, artillery, and helicopters.[70] India reportedly resisted the request in order not to become ever more directly involved in the conflict in Afghanistan or alarm Pakistan. Afghan diplomats have continued to raise that request with their Indian counterparts.

India's relationship with the Afghan government reflects India's concerns about potential preponderant Pakistani influence in post-2014 Afghanistan. India, which supported the Northern Alliance against the Taliban in the mid-1990s, has stepped up its contacts with those factions to discuss possible contingencies in the event of an Afghan settlement deal. Many Northern Alliance figures have lived in India at one time or another, although Indian diplomats stress they have long also had close connections to Afghanistan's Pashtuns. As noted above, Karzai studied there. In addition, Tajikistan, which also supported the mostly Tajik Northern Alliance against the Taliban when it was in power, allows India to use one of its air bases. Still, India reportedly does not want to be saddled with the burden of helping secure Afghanistan as U.S.-led forces depart. India has stressed its economic aid activities there, showcased by its hosting of a June 28, 2012, meeting in Delhi to discuss investment and economic development in Afghanistan. Prime Minister Narendra Modi of the Hindu nationalist BJP party, elected in May 2014, has not signaled there will be any significant change in India's policy on Afghanistan.

India's Development Activities in Afghanistan

Prior to 2011, India limited its involvement in Afghanistan to development issues. India is the fifth-largest single country donor to Afghan reconstruction, funding projects worth over $1.5 billion, with an additional $500 million announced during the Singh visit to Kabul in May 2011. Indian officials assert that all their projects are focused on civilian, not military, development and are in line with the development priorities set by the Afghan government. India, along with the

[69] Hamid Shalzi. "Afghanistan's Karzai Seeks Indian Military Aid Amid Tensions with Pakistan." *Reuters*, May 19, 2013.

[70] "Hamid Karzai Heads to India Waving Wish List of Military Hardware." Livemint.com, December 11, 2013.

Asian Development Bank, financed a $300 million project, mentioned above, to bring electricity from Central Asia to Afghanistan. It has also renovated the well-known Habibia High School in Kabul and committed to a $67 million renovation of Darulaman Palace as the permanent house for Afghanistan's parliament. India and Afghanistan finalized the construction plans for that building in early 2012. At a cost of about $85 million, India financed the construction of a road to the Iranian border in remote Nimruz province, linking landlocked Afghanistan to Iran's Chahbahar port on the Arabian Sea. India is currently constructing the 42 megawatt hydroelectric Selwa Dam in Herat Province at a cost of about $77 million, expected to be completed in late 2012. This will increase electricity availability in the province. In December 2011, an Indian firm, the Steel Authority of India, Ltd. (SAIL) was declared winning bidder on three of four blocs of the Hajji Gak iron ore project in Bamiyan Province.

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

Russia, Central Asian States, and China

Some neighboring and nearby states take an active interest not only in Afghan stability, but in the U.S. military posture that supports U.S. operations in Afghanistan. The region to the north of Afghanistan is a growing factor in U.S. efforts to rely less on routes through Pakistan to bring out the substantial amount of equipment that will be withdrawn as most U.S. forces depart.

Russia/Northern Distribution Network

Russia wants to reemerge as a great power and to contain U.S. power in Central Asia. There also concerns among experts that U.S.-Russia tensions over recent developments in Ukraine could cause Russia to cease facilitating the "Northern Distribution Network" supply route for NATO forces in Afghanistan. Russia has cooperated in developing that supply line because Russia supports U.S. and NATO efforts against militants who have posed a threat to Russia itself.

As a reflection in part of tensions between the United States and President Karzai, Afghanistan publicly supported the March 2014 referendum in Crimea to affiliate with Russia. That Afghan position could also reflect longstanding Afghan grievances over the Afghanistan-Pakistan border that has separated the Pashtun community.

Russia has not been a major actor in Afghanistan itself, perhaps because of the legacy of the Soviet occupation. Since 2002, Russia has only been providing small amounts of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. A Russian staffer for UNAMA, who had vast experience in Afghanistan dating from the Soviet occupation era, was killed in the Taliban attack on the Lebanese Taverna restaurant in Kabul on January 17, 2014. However, in line with Russian official comments in June 2010 that more economic and social assistance is needed there, Russia is investing $1 billion in Afghanistan to develop its electricity capacity and build out other infrastructure. Included in those investments are implementation of an agreement, reached during a Karzai visit to Moscow on January 22, 2011, for Russia to resume long dormant Soviet occupation-era projects such as expanding the Salang Tunnel connecting the Panjshir Valley to Kabul, hydroelectric facilities in Kabul and Baghlan provinces, a customs terminal, and a university in Kabul. Russia is also

raising its profile with a $25 million investment in the Kabul Housebuilding Factory, the country's largest factory, and a $20 million project to renovate the former "Soviet House of Science and Culture" as the "Russian Cultural Center" that will expand Russia's cultural influence in Afghanistan.

During the 1990s, after its 1989 withdrawal and the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia supported the Northern Alliance against the Taliban with some military equipment and technical assistance in order to blunt Islamic militancy emanating from Afghanistan.[71] Although Russia supported the U.S. effort against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan out of fear of Islamic (mainly Chechen) radicals, Russia continues to seek to reduce the U.S. military presence in Central Asia. Russian fears of Islamic activism emanating from Afghanistan may have ebbed since 2002 when Russia killed a Chechen of Arab origin known as "Hattab" (full name is Ibn al-Khattab), who led a militant pro-Al Qaeda Chechen faction. The Taliban government was the only one in the world to recognize Chechnya's independence, and some Chechen fighters fighting alongside Taliban/Al Qaeda forces have been captured or killed.

Northern Distribution Network and Other Aid to Afghan Security

Russian cooperation has been crucial to the U.S. effort in Afghanistan. In February 2009, Russia paved the way for the expansion of the Northern Distribution Network supply route into Afghanistan by allowing the resumption of shipment of non-lethal equipment into Afghanistan through Russia. (Russia had suspended the shipments in 2008 over differences over the Russia-Georgia conflict.) About half of all ground cargo for U.S. forces in Afghanistan has flowed through the Northern Distribution Network as of 2011, and the United States has emphasized this network at times of strains in U.S. relations with Pakistan, despite the extra costs as compared to the Pakistan route. The northern route has played a significant role in removing much U.S. equipment as the U.S. drawdown proceeds.

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

Central Asian States

These states are crucial to the U.S. transition in Afghanistan, as discussed in a Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff report released December 19, 2011, entitled "Central Asia and the Transition in Afghanistan." As shown in **Table 6**, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan are pivotal actors in U.S. efforts to expand the Northern Distribution Network supply route. Kyrgyzstan is key to the U.S. ability to fly troops and supplies in and out of Afghanistan, although the facility at Manas International Airport that the United States has used since 2002 will close in July 2014. These states are also becoming crucial to the New Silk Road (NSR) strategy that seeks to help Afghanistan become a trade crossroads between South and Central Asia—a strategy that could net Kabul substantial customs duties and other economic benefits. An increasing amount of trade is flowing from Afghanistan to and through the Central Asian states. As noted below, railway lines are being built to Uzbekistan. The Panj bridge, built largely with

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

U.S. funds, has become a major thoroughfare for goods to move between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Kazakhstan is funding a $50 million program to develop Afghan professionals. The revival of a long-standing plan to establish Afghanistan as a transit hub for Central Asian natural gas (*TAPI* pipeline) is discussed later in this report under "Development in Key Sectors."

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

Tajikistan

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

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan, a backer of ethnic Uzbek faction leader Abdul Rashid Dostam, allowed use of Karshi-Khanabad air base by OEF forces from October 2001 until a rift emerged in May 2005 over Uzbekistan's crackdown against riots in Andijon. Uzbekistan's March 2008 agreement with Germany for it to use Karshi-Khanabad air base temporarily, for the first time since the rift with the United States, suggested potential for resumed U.S.-Uzbek cooperation on Afghanistan. Renewed U.S. discussions with Uzbekistan apparently bore some fruit with the Uzbek decision in February 2009 to allow the use of Navoi airfield for shipment of U.S./NATO goods into Afghanistan. As a rift with Pakistan widened in September 2011, the United States launched new overtures to Uzbekistan, including a call from President Obama to Uzbek President Islam Karimov congratulating him on 20 years of independence from Russia/Soviet Union. Subsequently, the Administration opened formal negotiations with Uzbekistan to enlist its cooperation with further expansion of the Northern Distribution Network. However, in late August 2012, Uzbekistan's parliament advanced legislation that would ban foreign military bases on Uzbekistan territory—a move widely interpreted as reluctance to resume permission for U.S. forces to expand operations in Uzbekistan.

During Taliban rule, Russian and Central Asian leaders were alarmed that radical Islamic movements were receiving safe haven in Afghanistan. Uzbekistan, in particular, has long asserted that the group Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), allegedly responsible for four simultaneous February 1999 bombings in Tashkent that nearly killed President Islam Karimov, is linked to Al Qaeda.[72] One of its leaders, Juma Namangani, reportedly was killed while commanding Taliban/Al Qaeda forces in Konduz in November 2001. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan do not directly border Afghanistan, but IMU guerrillas transited Kyrgyzstan during incursions into Uzbekistan in the late 1990s.

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

Turkmenistan

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

This neutrality essentially continues the policy Turkmenistan had when the Taliban was in power. Turkmenistan was the only Central Asian state to actively engage the Taliban government, possibly viewing engagement as a more effective means of preventing spillover of radical Islamic activity from Afghanistan. It saw Taliban control as facilitating construction of the TAPI natural gas pipeline, discussed above, that was under consideration during Taliban rule and discussion of which has been revived in recent years. The September 11 events stoked Turkmenistan's fears of the Taliban and its Al Qaeda guests, and the country publicly supported the U.S.-led war.

China[73]

China's involvement in Afghanistan has been primarily to secure access to Afghan minerals and other resources but also to help its Pakistan avoid encirclement by India and to reduce the Islamist militant threat to China itself. China is concerned about the potential for Islamic militants in Afghanistan to assist China's restive Uighur (Muslim) community. A major organizer of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, China has a small border with a sparsely inhabited sliver of Afghanistan known as the "Wakhan Corridor," and it is building border access routes and supply depots to facilitate China's access to Afghanistan through the corridor.

In September 2012, a senior Chinese official made a rare visit to Afghanistan to sign security and economic agreements with Afghanistan, including a pledge to help train, fund, and equip the ANP. Prior to this agreement, China had taken only a small role in securing Afghanistan. No Chinese forces have deployed to Afghanistan, and it trained small numbers of ANP at a People's Armed Police facility in China since 2006, with a focus on counternarcotics. It also has offered training for ANSF officers at People's Liberation Army training colleges and universities. On the sidelines of the SCO meeting during June 7-8, 2012, China agreed on a strategic partnership with Afghanistan that includes security cooperation.

Still, China's activities in Afghanistan are mostly economic. Chinese delegations continue to assess the potential for new investments in such sectors as mining and energy.[74] The cornerstone of China's investment to date has been the development of the Aynak copper mine south of Kabul. In early 2012, China National Petroleum Co. was awarded the rights to develop oil deposits in the Amu Darya basin (see below). Since 2002, China has pledged about $255 million in economic aid to Afghanistan, about 75% of which has been provided to date.

During the Taliban era, in December 2000, sensing China's increasing concern about Taliban policies, a Chinese official delegation met with Mullah Umar. However, China did not

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

[74] CRS conversations with Chinese officials in Beijing. August 2007.

enthusiastically support U.S. military action against the Taliban, possibly because China was wary of a U.S. military buildup nearby.

Persian Gulf States

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

Two Gulf states, UAE and Bahrain, have contributed some of their small forces to Afghanistan security missions. The UAE has deployed about 250 troops to OEF and ISAF security missions in southern Afghanistan, including Helmand province. Some are military medical personnel who run small clinics and health programs for Afghans in the provinces where they operate. The UAE said in March 2013 it would keep at least some forces in Afghanistan after 2014. In January 2009, Bahrain sent 100 police officers to Afghanistan to help U.S./NATO-led stabilization operations there; that tour extends until the end of the ISAF mission at the end of 2014.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has many ties to Afghan figures as a result of its channeling of hundreds of millions of dollars to the Islamist *mujahedin*, factions during the war against the Soviet occupation. Some of these *mujahedin* later joined the Taliban. A majority of Saudi citizens practice the strict Wahhabi brand of Islam similar to that of the Taliban, and Saudi Arabia was one of three countries to formally recognize the Taliban government. Some press reports indicate that, in late 1998, Saudi and Taliban leaders discussed, but did not agree on, a plan for a panel of Saudi and Afghan Islamic scholars to decide Bin Laden's fate.

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

According to U.S. officials, Saudi Arabia cooperated extensively, if not publicly, with OEF. It broke diplomatic relations with the Taliban in late September 2001 and quietly permitted the United States to use a Saudi base for command of U.S. air operations over Afghanistan, but it did not permit U.S. airstrikes from it.

UAE

The United Arab Emirates, the third country that recognized the Taliban regime, is emerging as another major donor to Afghanistan. In addition to deploying about 250 troops to the U.S.-led effort (most of which are not under ISAF command), the UAE has donated at least $135 million

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

Qatar

Until 2011, Qatar was not regarded as a significant player on the Afghanistan issue. It did not recognize the Taliban regime when it was in power. However, in 2010 Qatar offered itself as a mediator on Afghan reconciliation with the Taliban and U.S.-Taliban confidence-building measures that led to the release of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl. Qatar accepts the presence of Taliban mediators and served as a location for a Taliban political office that opened briefly in June 2013. Qatar has pledged to prevent the five Taliban figures who were exchanged for Bergdahl from traveling outside Qatar at least until June 2015, although it is unclear how closely Qatar is monitoring the activities of the five. Karzai's two visits to Qatar in 2013, discussed above, were related to the opening of the Taliban office in Doha.

Aid and Economic Development

Experts have long believed that accelerating economic development is pivotal to Afghanistan's stability after 2014, at which time donors are likely to reduce their financial involvement in Afghanistan as their military involvement declines. In December 2011, the World Bank released a report warning that an abrupt aid cutoff could lead to fiscal implosion, loss of control over the security sector, the collapse of political authority, and possible civil war. The role of the economy in post-2014 Afghanistan is discussed in an Administration report released in December 2011, called the "U.S. Economic Strategy for Afghanistan."[75]

The Obama Administration has maintained relative optimism about the Afghan economy's ability to withstand the military and donor drawdown. Afghanistan's economy (Gross Domestic Product, GDP) has grown an average of 9% per year since 2001, although aid cutbacks and political uncertainty about the post-2104 security situation caused a slowing to 3.1% growth in 2013. U.S. officials say the government is increasingly able to execute parts of its budget and deliver basic goods and services—even though the government is working with very small amounts of domestically-generated revenue. Government revenues have increased steadily, but still totaled less than $2.5 billion for 2013—out of the total $7 billion budget adopted. Afghan government revenue comes mostly through taxation (68%), including through a flat 20% corporate tax rate, and most of the remainder from customs duties. The tax system has been computerized.

Donor aid accounts for more than 95% of Afghanistan's GDP. Because the government takes in so little revenue relative to its needs, donors provided at least two-thirds of total Afghan government expenditures (operating budget and development budget) in 2012.Afghan officials stated in December 2011 that Afghanistan will need at least $10 billion in donated funds per year from 2014 until 2025, at which time Afghanistan expects to be financially self-sufficient.

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

Since the international community intervened in Afghanistan in 2001, there have been debates over many aspects of aid to Afghanistan, including amounts, mechanisms for delivery, donor coordination, and distribution within Afghanistan. Some of the more stable provinces, such as Bamiyan and Balkh, complain that 80% of international aid has flowed to the restive provinces and ignoring the needs of poor Afghans in peaceful areas.

Adding to the complexity of strategy development is the analysis that some economic sectors in Afghanistan have been developed largely with private investment, including by wealthy or well-connected Afghans who have founded companies. Therefore, it is often difficult to determine the effects on Afghanistan's economy of aid, as compared to the effects of investment, trade, and other variables. In July 2011 then-Secretary of State Clinton and other U.S. officials articulated a post-transition vision of greater Afghan economic integration in the region and its role in a "New Silk Road" trading pattern that would presumably accelerate Afghan private sector growth and customs revenue receipts.

Further hindering Afghanistan is that its economy and society are still fragile after decades of warfare that left about 2 million dead, 700,000 widows and orphans, and about 1 million Afghan children raised in refugee camps outside Afghanistan. More than 3.5 million Afghan refugees have since returned, although a comparable number remain outside Afghanistan. As discussed, the literacy rate is very low and Afghanistan has a small, although growing, pool of skilled labor, middle managers, accountants, and information professionals. And, the widespread government corruption in Afghanistan, which is analyzed in greater detail in CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman, has caused some donors to withhold funds or to avoid giving aid directly to the Afghan government.

U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan

During the 1990s, the United States was the largest single provider of assistance to the Afghan people even though no U.S. aid went directly to the Taliban government when it was in power during 1996-2001; monies were provided through relief organizations. Between 1985 and 1994, the United States had a cross-border aid program for Afghanistan, implemented by USAID personnel based in Pakistan. Citing the difficulty of administering this program, there was no USAID mission for Afghanistan from the end of FY1994 until the reopening of the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan in late 2001.

For all of FY2002-FY2012, the United States provided about $83 billion in assistance, including military "train and equip" for the ANA and ANP (which is about $51 billion of these funds). The figures in the tables, which include aid costs for FY2012 and the request for FY2013, do not include costs for U.S. combat operations. Those costs were about $90 billion in FY2010, $104 billion for FY2011, $93 billion for FY2012, and $82 billion for FY2013. When those costs are included, the United States has spent about $647 billion on the Afghanistan effort during FY2002-2013. For further information, see CRS Report RL33110, *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11*, by Amy Belasco.

Aid Oversight and Conditionality

Some laws have required the withholding of U.S. aid subject to Administration certification of Afghan compliance on a variety of issues, including counternarcotics efforts, corruption, vetting of the Afghan security forces, Afghan human rights practices and protection of women's rights,

and other issues. All required certifications have been made and virtually no U.S. funds have been withheld from Afghanistan. Legislation proposed in the 113th Congress would have reduced U.S. aid to Afghanistan by a multiple of the amount of funds Afghanistan sought to charge the U.S. military to ship equipment out of the country. The U.S. outcry against the fines apparently caused the Afghan government to drop the levy in early August 2013. In July 2014, Administration officials indirectly threatened cuts in U.S. assistance to Afghanistan if either of the two presidential candidates takes steps outside Afghanistan's constitutional mechanisms to resolve their election dispute.

Some in Congress want to ensure independent oversight of U.S. aid to Afghanistan; the conference report on the FY2008 defense authorization bill (P.L. 110-181) established a "Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction" (SIGAR) modeled on a similar outside auditor for Iraq. Funds provided for the SIGAR are in the tables below. The SIGAR issues quarterly reports and specific audits of aspects of Afghan governance and security, with particular attention to how U.S.-provided funds have been used. The SIGAR, as of July 2012, is John Sopko. Some executive branch agencies, including USAID, have criticized some SIGAR audits as inaccurate or as highlighting problems that the agencies are already correcting. As an example, DOD took strong exception to a December 4, 2013, audit by the SIGAR that asserted that the U.S. military had failed to adequately manage risk accounting for $3 billion in DOD funds for the ANSF.[76]

Aid Authorization: Afghanistan Freedom Support Act

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

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

[76] David Zucchino. "Watchdog Faults U.S. Military's Oversight of Aid to Afghanistan." *Los Angeles Times*, December 5, 2013.

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

A bill in the 110th Congress to reauthorize AFSA, H.R. 2446, passed by the House on June 6, 2007 (406-10). It would have authorized about $1.7 billion in U.S. economic aid and $320 in military aid (including drawdowns of equipment) per year for several years. A Senate version (S. 3531), with fewer provisions than the House bill, was not taken up by the full Senate.

Direct Support to the Afghan Government

Currently, the United States disburses about 50% of its donated aid funds through the Afghan government. The Kabul Conference (July 20, 2010) communiqué endorsed a goal of 50% direct funding and for 80% of all funds to align with Afghan government priorities. USAID has approved 14 ministries to receive direct U.S. aid. However, a SIGAR report of late January 2014 assessed that auditors hired by the U.S. government to oversee the direct aid provided found substantial potential for the misuse of some of the aid in the form of kickbacks or payment of Afghan salaries in the form of cash.[77]

The United States channels much of its direct aid through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), run by the World Bank. Donors have contributed about $6 billion to the ARTF, the funds of which are about equally split between funding Afghan salaries and priority development investments. Through FY2012, the USAID has provided about $2 billion to the ARTF.

National Solidarity Program

Through the ARTF, the United States supports an Afghan government program that promotes local decision making on development—the "National Solidarity Program" (NSP). Donors have provided the program with over $600 million, about 90% of which has been U.S. funding. The program provides block grants of up to $60,000 per project to local councils to implement their priority projects, most of which are water projects. The program has given at least 20,000 grants to a total of 21,600 villages that participate in the program—participation requires setting up a Community Development Council (CDC) to help decide on what projects should be funded. The Afghan implementer is the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. It is widely hailed by many institutions as a highly effective, Afghan-run program. U.S. funds for the program are drawn from a broad category of ESF for "good governance." P.L. 111-32, a FY2009 supplemental, earmarked $70 million to defray a large part of a shortfall in that program. The FY2010 consolidated appropriation (P.L. 111-117) earmarked another $175 million in ESF for the NSP.

Afghanistan Infrastructure Trust Fund

The Afghanistan Infrastructure Trust Fund was set up in early 2013 to channel an additional percentage of U.S. aid directly to Afghanistan. The fund is managed by the Asian Development

[77] Matthew Rosenberg and Azam Ahmed. "Report Says Afghanistan Can't be Trusted to Prevent Misuse of U.S. Aid." *New York Times*, January 30, 2014.

Bank. An initial U.S. contribution of $45 million was made in March 2013, but is expected to be followed by tens of millions more to support a power grid project running north-south. (This is not the same program as the U.S. "Afghan Infrastructure Fund," which is a DOD-State program to fund Afghan infrastructure projects.)

Other Donor Aid

As shown in **Table 9**, non-U.S. donors, including such institutions as the EU and the Asian Development Bank, provided over $29 billion in assistance to Afghanistan from the fall of the Taliban until 2012. When combined with U.S. aid, this by far exceeds the $27.5 billion for reconstruction identified by the IMF as required for 2002-2010. Major pledges have been made primarily at donor conferences such as Tokyo (2002), Berlin (April 2004), Kabul (April 2005), London (February 2006), Paris (June 2008), and London (January 2010), and Tokyo (July 2012).

The Tokyo conference (July 8, 2012) focused on identifying sources of post-2014 assistance (2012-2022 is termed the "transformation decade").[78] At the conference, the United States and its partners pledged a total of $16 billion in aid to Afghanistan through 2015 ($4 billion per year for 2012-2015) and agreed to sustain support through 2017 at levels at or near the past decade. As part of that overall pledge, at the conference, then-Secretary Clinton said the Administration would ask Congress to sustain U.S. aid to Afghanistan at roughly the levels it has been through 2017. Among other major pledges, Japan pledged $5 billion over five years (2012-2017), and Germany pledged $550 million over four years (2014-2016).

The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework issued in concert with the final conference declaration lays out requirements of the Afghan government in good governance, anti-corruption, holding free and fair elections, and human rights. As an incentive, if Afghanistan meets the benchmarks, the Framework will increase (to 10% by 2014 and to 20% by 2024) the percentage of aid provided through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and other incentive mechanisms. The ARTF gives Kabul the maximum discretion in use of the donated funds. A senior officials meeting held in Kabul on July 3, 2013, to review the Afghan performance found that the Afghan government had met only a few of the stipulated benchmarks and was making slow progress on most of the others. (See CRS Report RS21922, *Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance*, by Kenneth Katzman, for more information.)

Among multilateral lending institutions, the World Bank has been key to Afghanistan's development. In May 2002, the World Bank reopened its office in Afghanistan after 20 years. Its projects have been concentrated in the telecommunications and road and sewage sectors. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has also been playing a major role in Afghanistan, including in financing railway construction. Another of its projects in Afghanistan was funding the paving of a road from Qandahar to the border with Pakistan, and as noted above, it is contributing to a project to bring electricity from Central Asia to Afghanistan. On the eve of the London conference on January 28, 2010, the IMF and World Bank announced $1.6 billion in Afghanistan debt relief.

[78] http://www.embassyofafghanistan.org/article/the-tokyo-declaration-partnership-for-self-reliance-in-afghanistan-from-transition-to-transf.

Development in Key Sectors

Efforts to build the legitimate economy are showing some results, by accounts of senior U.S. officials. Some sectors, discussed below, are being developed primarily (although not exclusively) with private investment funding. There has been substantial new construction, particularly in Kabul, including luxury hotels; a $25 million Coca Cola bottling factory (opened in September 2006); apartment and office buildings; and marriage halls and other structures. The bottling factory is located near the Bagrami office park (another private initiative), which includes several other factories. The Serena luxury hotel was built by the Agha Khan foundation, a major investor in Afghanistan. Phase one of a major, multi-billion dollar development near the Kabul airport, called "New Kabul City," is in the early stages of construction.

An arm of DOD, called the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations facilitated some of this private investment. Funding for the Task Force is included in the aid table at the end of this paper.

On the other hand, uncertainty about the post-2014 political and security situation is causing some Afghan businessmen to relocate outside the country, or to develop external components of their business in case the situation in Afghanistan deteriorates. Others say that private investment could have been healthier if not for the influence exercised over it by various faction leaders and Karzai relatives. The following sections outline what has been accomplished with U.S. and international donor funds, as well as with private investment.

Education

Despite the success in enrolling Afghan children in school since the Taliban era (8 million in school, of which about 40% are girls), continuing Taliban attacks on schools have caused some to close. Afghanistan's university system is said to be highly underfunded, in part because Afghans are entitled to free higher education (to the B.A. level) by the Constitution, which means that demand for the higher education far outstrips Afghan resources. The shortfall is impeding the development of a large enough pool of skilled workers for the Afghan government. Afghanistan requires about $35 million to operate its universities and institutes for one year; USAID spent about $20 million to help fund those activities in FY2012.[79] A substantial portion of USAID funds have gone directly to the Ministry of Education for the printing and distribution of textbooks.

Health

The health care sector, as noted by Afghan observers, has made considerable gains in reducing infant mortality and giving about 85% of the population at least some access to health professionals. Still, according to some outside groups, nearly 20% of all Afghans had a close relative or friend who died in 2013 because that person was unable to reach medical care or because of unaffordable cost—even though health care is free according to Afghan law and regulations.[80]

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

[80] Rod Nordland. "Aid Group Sees Daunting Obstacles to Health Care for Afghans." *New York Times*, February 26, 2014.

USAID funds for health have gone directly to the Ministry of Health to contract with international NGOs to buy medical supplies for clinics. Egypt operates a 65-person field hospital at Bagram Air Base that instructs Afghan physicians, and Jordan operates a similar facility in Mazar-e-Sharif. A SIGAR report of early September 2013 said that no further U.S. funding should be provided to the Public Health Ministry "until program costs are validated as legitimate"—a recommendation focused on a $236 million USAID program called "Partnership Contracts for Health" that provides immunizations, prenatal exams, and equipment and salaries in 13 provinces. However, USAID said no U.S. funds are directly provided to the ministry and that USAID had set up a unit in the ministry to monitor grants and contracts.[81]

Roads

Road building is considered a U.S. and international priority. At least 10,000 miles of roads have been built since 2001 by all donors, of which about half was funded by the United States. Road construction has been USAID's largest project category there, accounting for about $2 billion in U.S. spending since the fall of the Taliban.[82] Roads are considered key to enabling Afghan farmers to bring legitimate produce to market in a timely fashion, and former commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan General Eikenberry (later Ambassador) said "where the roads end, the Taliban begin." The major road, the Ring Road (including Highway One from Qandahar to Kabul), has been completely repaved using funds from various donors, including substantial funds from the Asian Development Bank, at a total expense of about $4 billion (all donors). Among other major projects completed are a road from Qandahar to Tarin Kowt, (Uruzgan province) built by U.S. military personnel, inaugurated in 2005; a road linking the Panjshir Valley to Kabul; a Khost-Gardez road; and a Salang Bypass Road through Bamiyan province. In several of the most restive provinces, U.S. funds, including CERP, have been used to build small roads linking farming communities to the markets for their products.

The Afghan government has committed to developing an East-West road across Afghanistan, from Herat to Kabul. However, funding only for a few segments (Herat to Chest-e-Sharif, and Maidany Shar to Bamiyan, and Bamiyan City to Yakowlang in that same province) has been identified, from Italy and Japan.

On the other hand, observers not that the Afghan government lacks the resources to adequately maintain the roads built with international funds. Many of the roads built have fallen into disrepair and are marked with major potholes.

Bridges

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

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[81] Pamela Constable. "Report: Millions in U.S. Assistance for Afghan Health Projects Being Wasted." *Washington Post*, September 6, 2013.

[82] Kevin Seiff. "A Crumbling Investment." *Washington Post*, January 31, 2014.

Railways

Afghanistan is beginning to develop functioning railways—a sector it lacked as a legacy of security policy during the late 19th century that saw railroads as facilitating invasion of Afghanistan. Rail is considered increasing crucial to Afghanistan's ability to develop its mineral wealth because it is the means by which minerals can be exported to neighboring countries. Three railway projects are underway. One, a 75 mile line from Mazar-i-Sharif to Hairaton, on the border with Uzbekistan, was completed in March 2011 with $165 million from the Asian Development Bank. It began operations in early 2012 and shortly thereafter began carrying its peak capacity of 4,000 tons of cargo per month. In September 2012, the government established the Afghan Rail Authority to maintain and regulate this sector.

Some planned rail lines might not get built if foreign investors believe they will not yield a significant payoff for their projects in the mining sector. In particular, China has committed to building a rail line from its Mes Aynak copper mine project to the northern border and it is conducting a feasibility study for that railway as of mid-2014. A spur to the Hajji Gak iron mine would be funded by India (about $1 billion) as part of its project there. However, there are indications India and China might opt instead truck their minerals out, a process that would slow full exploitation of these mines. There are also plans to build a line from Herat and Kabul to Qandahar, and then on to the border with Pakistan. The planned railways will link Afghanistan to the former Soviet railway system in Central Asia, and to Pakistan's railway system, increasing Afghanistan's economic integration in the region.

Electricity

This sector has been a major U.S. focus because the expansion of electricity proves popular with the Afghan public. The United States has pledged $340 million in direct aid to the national power company, Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkas (DABS), to generate revenue from power provision and manage the nation's electricity grid. Some of the U.S. funding comes from an "Infrastructure Fund" funded by DOD. That authority was provided in the FY2011 DOD authorization bill (P.L. 111-383). Actual funding is depicted in the aid tables below. However, the SIGAR reported in an April 2013 audit that DABS will require Afghan government subsidies beyond March 2014, at which time it was supposed to become self-sufficient financially.

The Afghan government set a goal for electricity to reach 65% of households in urban areas and 25% in rural areas by 2010—a goal that was not met—but USAID says that as of April 2013, DABS serves about 28% of the population. Power shortages in Kabul, caused in part by the swelling of Kabul's population to about 4 million, have been alleviated as of 2009 by Afghan government agreements with several Central Asian neighbors to import electricity, as well as construction of new plants such as that at Tarakhil in north Kabul. Kabul is now generally lit up at night. There has been some criticism of the 105 Megawatt Tarakhil plant, built at a cost of about $300 million, because of the high costs of fuel, the questionable need for it, and the possible inability of the Afghan authorities to maintain it. USAID has spent a $35 million to help the national electric utility—operate and maintain the plant. In January 2013, Afghanistan gained formal title to the Tarakhil plant as well as two less efficient power plants built by Iran in western Afghanistan. Russia has refurbished some long dormant hydroelectric projects in Afghanistan that were suspended when Soviet troops withdrew in 1989.

Kajaki Dam. Much of the U.S. electricity capacity effort has been focused on southern Afghanistan. The key long-term project is to expand the capacity of the Kajaki Dam, located in

Helmand Province ("Kandahar-Helmand Power Project," KHPP). Currently, two turbines are operating—one was always working, and the second was repaired by USAID contractors. This has doubled electricity production in the south and caused small factories and other businesses to come to flourish. As of December 31, 2012, USAID has obligated $140 million to the project. USAID had planned to further expand capacity of the dam by installing a third turbine (which there is a berth for but which never had a turbine installed.) In September 2008, 4,000 NATO troops (Operation Ogap Tsuka) delivered components of the third turbine to the dam. The third turbine was expected to be operational by late 2009 but technical and security problems delayed the project. In early 2013, USAID decided to instead provide these funds to DABS so that it could contract for completion of the work, and $75 million of the U.S. aid to DABS is obligated for the third turbine installation. Another $205 million is being spent by the Army Corps of Engineers to improve power lines and substations fed by the dam.[83] In early January 2014, the SIGAR issued an alert over a possible weakness in oversight of the funding for the third turbine installation.

Because the Kajaki Dam has not been at optimal capacity, since 2009 the U.S. military and USAID have implemented a plan ("Kandahar Power Bridging Solution") to build smaller substations and generator projects that can bring more electricity to Qandahar and other places in the south quickly. The initiative was intended at least in part to support the U.S.-military led counterinsurgency strategy in Qandahar during 2009-2013. Some of the power provided by additional diesel generators is being used to supply the Qandahar Industrial Park. However, the SIGAR reported in July 2012 that five of the seven projects of the Bridging Solution are at least six months behind schedule, and that many aspects of the project depend on progress on the Kajaki Dam and other projects that have completion dates beyond 2014. President Karzai has said in interviews, including on CNN on June 26, 2011, that he favors the longer-term Kajaki Dam project rather than the interim generator project. Other criticism centers on the cost of fuel for the diesel generators, for which the Afghans are dependent on continued U.S. funding.

The SIGAR also recommended that some attention be shifted to building up northern power distribution routes rather than focusing exclusively on the south and east. Some of the USAID funds provided to DABS, including through the Afghanistan Infrastructure Trust Fund above, are being used to build a north-south power grid.

There is also an apparent increasing emphasis on providing electricity to individual homes and villages through small solar power installations. A contractor to USAID, IRG, has provided small solar powered-electricity generators to homes in several districts of Afghanistan, alleviating the need to connect such homes to the national power grid. However, there are technical drawbacks, including weather-related inconsistency of power supply and the difficulty of powering appliances that require substantial power. The U.S. broadcasting service to Afghanistan, Radio Azadi, run by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, has given out 20,000 solar-powered radios throughout Afghanistan.

Agriculture

Even though only about 12.5% of Afghanistan's land is arable, about 80% of Afghans live in rural areas and the agriculture sector has always been key to Afghanistan's economy and stability. The late Ambassador Holbrooke, including in his January 2010 strategy document, outlined U.S.

[83] Michael Phillips. "Afghan Dam Saga Reflects U.S. Travails." *Wall Street Journal*, May 29, 2012.

policy to boost Afghanistan's agriculture sector not only to reduce drug production but also as an engine of economic growth. Prior to the turmoil that engulfed Afghanistan in the late 1970s, Afghanistan was a major exporter of agricultural products. From 2002 until the end of 2012, USAID has obligated $1.9 billion to build capacity at the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL), increase access to markets, and provide alternatives to poppy cultivation, according to the January 30, 2013, SIGAR report.

USAID programs have helped Afghanistan double its legitimate agricultural output over the past five years. One emerging "success story" is growing Afghan exports of high-quality pomegranate juice called Anar. Other countries are promoting not only pomegranates but also saffron rice and other crops that draw buyers outside Afghanistan. Another emerging success story is Afghanistan's November 2010 start of exports of raisins to Britain.[84] Wheat production was robust in 2009 because of healthy prices for that crop, and Afghanistan is again self-sufficient in wheat production. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has about 110 personnel in Afghanistan on long-term and priority projects; there are also at least 25 agriculture experts from USAID in Afghanistan. Their efforts include providing new funds to buy seeds and agricultural equipment, and to encourage agri-business. In addition, the National Guard from several states deployed nine "Agribusiness Development Teams" to help Afghan farmers with water management, soil enhancement, crop cultivation, and improving the development and marketing of their goods.

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

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

In terms of specific programming, USAID has a $150 million program for the relatively safe areas of Afghanistan to continue to develop licit crops. The Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East, and West (IDEA-NEW) program is planned to run through FY2014. In southern and eastern areas of the country where counterinsurgency operations are ongoing, USAID's $474 million Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Production in Agriculture (AVIPA-Plus) program ran through FY2011 and includes initiatives coordinated with U.S. counterinsurgency operations in Helmand and Qandahar provinces. The program provides vouchers for wheat seed, fertilizer, and tools, in addition to supporting cash for work programs and small grants to local cooperatives.

Telecommunications

Several Afghan telecommunications firms have been formed and over $1.2 billion in private investment has flowed into this sector, according to the DOD Task Force for Business and

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

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

Airlines

The 52-year-old national airline, Ariana, is said to be in significant financial trouble due to corruption that has affected its safety ratings and left it unable to service a heavy debt load. However, there are new privately run airlines, such as Safi Air (run by the Safi Group, which has built a modern mall in Kabul), and Kam Air. Another, Pamir, was ordered closed in 2010 due to safety concerns. In January 2013, the U.S. military ceased contracting with an Afghan airline, Kam Air, on the grounds that it was helping traffic opium; the U.S. military rescinded the ruling after Afghan complaints that questioned the allegation. The Afghan government agreed to investigate the allegations.

Mining and Gems

Afghanistan's mining sector has been largely dormant since the Soviet invasion. Some Afghan leaders complain that not enough has been done to revive such potentially lucrative industries as minerals mining, such as of copper and lapis lazuli (a stone used in jewelry). The issue became more urgent in June 2010 when the DOD Task Force for Business and Stability Operations announced, based on surveys, that Afghanistan may have untapped minerals worth over $1 trillion.[85] Although copper and iron are the largest categories by value, there are believed to also be significant reserves of such minerals as lithium in western Afghanistan—lithium is crucial to the new batteries being used to power electric automobiles. However, as noted above, some of the expected revenue from this sector might not materialize if investors decide not to build rail lines needed to export the minerals from Afghanistan in large volumes. An additional brake on investment is the lack of legislative action on a new Law on Mines. The Afghan cabinet approved a draft in February 2013 and sent it to the National Assembly in July 2013, but the Assembly has not acted on it to date.

Mes Aynak Copper Field. A major project, signed in November 2007, is with China Metallurgical Group for the company to invest $3.0 billion to develop Afghanistan's Mes Aynak copper field in Lowgar Province. The agreement, viewed as generous to the point where it might not be commercially profitable for China Metallurgical Group, includes construction of two coal-fired electric power plants (one of which will supply more electricity to Kabul city); a segment of railway (discussed above); and a road from the project to Kabul. Work on the mine reportedly has been slowed by various factors, including the need to clear mines in the area and to excavate ancient Buddhist artifacts that local activists insist be preserved. Actual extraction was expected to begin in mid-2012, but has not begun as of April 2013. U.S. forces do not directly protect the

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

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

Hajji Gak Iron Ore Project. In September 2011 seven bids were submitted for another large mining project, the Hajji Gak iron ore mine (which may contain 60 billion tons of iron ore) in Bamiyan Province. The bids—from Chinese, Indian, and other firms—were evaluated and, in late 2011, the Steel Authority for India Ltd. (SAIL) was awarded the largest share of the project. One of the four blocs of the project was awarded to Kilo Gold of Canada. As of the end of 2012, the contract had not been finalized. The project is expected to generate $200 million in annual government revenues when fully operational—expected by 2017—although this level might not be reached unless the associated rail lines are built to allow export in high volumes.

Other mining projects have been awarded (subject to finalized contract negotiations):

- The Balkhab coooper mine in Sar-i-Pol Province, awarded to Afghan Gold and Minerals Co.
- The Shaida copper mine in Herat Province, awarded to Afghan Minerals Group
- The Badakshan gold project, in that province, awarded to Turkish-Afghan Mining Co.
- Zarkashan copper and gold project (Ghazni Province), awarded to Sterling Mining/Belhasa International LLC.

Oil, Gas, and Related Pipelines

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

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

Among pending development, in November 2012 a consortium consisting of Kuwait Energy, Dragon Oil of UAE, Turkey's state-owned TPAO, and the Ghazanfar Group (see above) had bid to develop part of the "Afghan-Tajik Basin," estimated to hold 950 million barrels of oil, 7 trillion cubic feet of gas, and other gas liquids. A solicitation is to be offered later in 2013 to develop a large oil field in Balkh Province (Kasha Kari bloc), estimated to hold 1.8 billion barrels of oil.

Exxon-Mobil is reportedly weighting a bid on the project—an action that Afghan officials say would instill substantial confidence in the investment climate in Afghanistan.[86]

USAID has funded test projects to develop gas resources in northern Afghanistan. A key project is to build a 200 megawatt gas-fired thermal plant and associated transmission lines in northern Afghanistan ("Shehbergan Program"). The plant would be part of a plan to link Afghanistan's natural gas field in Shehbergan to the population center in Mazar-e-Sharif. The total cost of the project, targeted for 2016 completion, is estimated at $580 million, provided by USAID, the Overseas Private Investment Corp. (OPIC), the Asian Development Bank, and the Afghan government.

Another pilot project, funded by the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations, is to develop filling stations and convert cars to use compressed natural gas (CNG), which is produced in the gas field in Shehbergan and could provide an inexpensive source of fuel in the future.

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

Another long-stalled major energy project appears to be gaining momentum. During 1996-1998, the Clinton Administration supported proposed natural gas and oil pipelines through western Afghanistan as an incentive for the warring factions to cooperate. A consortium led by Los Angeles-based Unocal Corporation proposed a $7.5 billion Central Asia Gas Pipeline that would originate in southern Turkmenistan and pass through Afghanistan to Pakistan, with possible extensions into India.[87] The deterioration in U.S.-Taliban relations after 1998 suspended hopes for the pipeline projects. At a summit meeting in late May 2002, the leaders of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan agreed to revive the project. Sponsors held an inaugural meeting on July 9, 2002, in Turkmenistan, signing a series of preliminary agreements. On December 12, 2010, in the Turkmenistan capital Ashkabad, the relevant leaders reaffirmed their intent to complete the project. In late 2011, the Asian Development Bank has agreed to finance the project, removing what had been a major hurdle. U.S. officials view this project as a superior alternative to a proposed gas pipeline from Iran to India, transiting Pakistan.

Trade Promotion/Reconstruction Opportunity Zones

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

[86] Matthew Rosenberg. "As Exxon Mobil Weights Oil Bid, Afghans Move Closer to a Foreign Investment Goal." New York Times, July 6, 2012.

[87] Other participants in the Unocal consortium include Delta of Saudi Arabia, Hyundai of South Korea, Crescent Steel of Pakistan, Itochu Corporation and INPEX of Japan, and the government of Turkmenistan. Some accounts say Russia's Gazprom would probably receive a stake in the project. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (Moscow), October 30, 1997, p. 3.

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

Another initiative supported by the United States is the establishment of joint Afghan-Pakistani "Reconstruction Opportunity Zones" (ROZs) which would be modeled after "Qualified Industrial Zones" run by Israel and Jordan in which goods produced in the zones receive duty free treatment for import into the United States. Bills in the 110th Congress, S. 2776 and H.R. 6387, would have authorized the President to proclaim duty-free treatment for imports from ROZs to be designated by the President. In the 111th Congress, a version of these bills was introduced (S. 496 and H.R. 1318). President Obama specifically endorsed passage of these bills in his March 2009 strategy announcement. H.R. 1318 was incorporated into H.R. 1886, a major Pakistan aid appropriation that passed by the House on June 11, 2009, and was then appended to H.R. 2410. However, the version of the major Pakistan aid bill that became law (S. 1707, P.L. 111-73) did not authorize ROZs.

Table 7. Major Reporting Requirements

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

- P.L. 108-458, The Afghanistan Freedom Support Act Amendments required, through the end of FY2010, an overarching annual report on U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. Other reporting requirements expired, including required reports (1) on long-term U.S. strategy and progress of reconstruction; (2) on how U.S. assistance is being used; (3) on U.S. efforts to persuade other countries to participate in Afghan peacekeeping; and (4) a joint State and DOD report on U.S. counternarcotics efforts in Afghanistan.
- P.L. 110-181 (Section 1230), FY2008 Defense Authorization Act requires a quarterly DOD report on the security situation in Afghanistan; the first was submitted in June 2008. It was required by that law through FY2011. Section 1231 required a report on the Afghan National Security Forces through the end of FY2010. The FY2012 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 112-81) extended the reporting requirement—the reports entitled "Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan" cover a six month period—until the end of FY2014.
- Section 1229 of the same law requires the quarterly report of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR).
- P.L. 111-8 (Omnibus Appropriation, explanatory statement) required a State Department report on the use of funds to address the needs of Afghan women and girls (submitted by September 30, 2009).
- P.L. 111-32, FY2009 Supplemental Appropriation (Section 1116), required a White House report, by the time of the FY2011 budget submission, on whether Afghanistan and Pakistan are cooperating with U.S. policy sufficiently to warrant a continuation of Administration policy toward both countries, as well as efforts by these governments to curb corruption, their efforts to develop a counterinsurgency strategy, the level of political consensus in the two countries to confront security challenges, and U.S. government efforts to achieve these objectives. The report was released with a date of September 30, 2010.
- The same law (Section 1117) required a report, by September 23, 2009, on metrics to be used to assess progress on Afghanistan and Pakistan strategy. A progress report measured against those metrics is to be submitted by March 30, 2010, and every six months thereafter, until the end of FY2011.
- Section 1228 of the FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-84) required a report, within 120 days, on the Afghan Provincial Protection Program and other local security initiatives. Section 1235 authorized a DOD-funded study of U.S. force levels needed for eastern and southern Afghanistan, and Section 1226 required a Comptroller General report on the U.S. "campaign plan" for the Afghanistan (and Iraq) effort.
- Sections 1212-1226 of the FY2013 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4310, P.L. 112-239) contains several reporting or congressional notification requirements on Afghanistan, on issues such as women's rights, an independent assessment of the performance of the ANSF, negotiations on the bilateral security agreement, the political reconciliation and insurgent reintegration process, the U.S. campaign plan, insider attacks, any changes to U.S. troop levels, and other issues. These sections also contain authorities on use of some DOD funds in Afghanistan, such as CERP and funding for the reintegration process.

Table 8. Comparative Social and Economic Statistics

Population	28 million +. Kabul population is 3 million, up from 500,000 in Taliban era.
Ethnicities/Religions	Pashtun 42%; Tajik 27%; Uzbek 9%; Hazara 9%; Aimak 4%; Turkmen 3%; Baluch 2%.
Size of Religious Minorities	Religions: Sunni (Hanafi school) 80%; Shiite (Hazaras, Qizilbash, and Isma'ilis) 19%; other 1% Christians-estimated 500-8,000 persons; Sikh and Hindu-3,000 persons; Bahai's-400 (declared blasphemous in May 2007); Jews-1 person; Buddhist- small numbers. No Christian or Jewish schools. One church.
Literacy Rate	28% of population over 15 years of age. 43% of males; 12.6% of females.
GDP, and GDP Growth and Unemployment Rates	$33.55 billion purchasing power parity (PPP) in 2012. 109th in the world. Per capita: $1,000 purchasing power parity. 212th in the world. Growth has averaged about 9% per year every year since Taliban rule, but fell to 3.1% in 2013. Growth is forecast at about 5% for 2014 by the IMF. GDP was about $10 billion (PPP) during last year of Taliban rule. Unemployment rate is about 8%, but underemployment rate may be nearly 50%.
Children in School/Schools Built since 2002	8 million, of which 40% are girls. Up from 900,000 boys in school during Taliban era. 4,000 schools built (all donors) and 140,000 teachers hired since Taliban era. 17 universities, up from 2 in 2002. 75,000 Afghans in universities in Afghanistan (35% female); 5,000 when Taliban was in power.
Afghans With Access to Health Coverage	85% with basic health services access-compared to 9% during Taliban era. Infant mortality down 22% since Taliban to 135 per 1,000 live births. 680 clinics built.
Roads Built	About 3,000 miles paved post-Taliban, including repaving of "Ring Road" (78% complete) that circles the country. Kabul-Qandahar drive reduced to 6 hours. About 1,500 additional miles still under construction.
Judges/Courts	Over 1,000 judges (incl. 200 women) trained since fall of Taliban.
Banks Operating	17, including branches in some rural areas, but about 90% of the population still use *hawalas (*informal money transfer services). No banks existed during Taliban era. Some limited credit card use. Some Afghan police now paid by cell phone (E-Paisa).
Access to Electricity	15%-20% of the population. Much of its electricity imported from neighboring states.
Government Revenues (excl. donor funds)	About $2 billion in 2012 compared to $200 million in 2002. Total Afghan budget is about $4.5 billion (including development funds)—shortfall covered by foreign donors, including through Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund.
Financial Reserves/Debt	About $4.4 billion, up from $180 million in 2002. Includes amounts due Central Bank. $8 billion bilateral debt, plus $500 million multilateral. U.S. forgave $108 million in debt in 2004, and $1.6 billion forgiven by other creditors in March 2010.
Foreign/Private Investment	About $500 million to $1 billion per year. Four Afghan airlines: Ariana (national) plus at least two privately owned: Safi and Kam. Turkish Air and India Air fly to Kabul.
Legal Exports/ Agriculture	80% of the population is involved in agriculture. Self-sufficiency in wheat production as of May 2009 (first time in 30 years). Exports: $400 million+ (2011): fruits, raisins, melons, pomegranate juice (Anar), nuts, carpets, lapis lazuli gems, marble tile, timber products (Kunar, Nuristan provinces).
Oil Proven Reserves	3.6 billion barrels of oil, 36.5 trillion cubic feet of gas. Current oil production negligible, but USAID funding project to revive oil and gas facilities in the north.
Cellphones/Tourism	About 18 million cellphone subscribers, up from neglibile amounts during Taliban era. Tourism: National park opened in Bamiyan June 2009. Increasing tourist visits.

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

Table 9. Major Non-U.S. Pledges for Afghanistan 2002-2012

($ in millions)

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

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

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

Table 10. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY1978-FY1998

($ in millions)

Fiscal Year	Devel. Assist.	Econ. Supp. (ESF)	P.L. 480 (Title I and II)	Military	Other (Incl. Regional Refugee Aid)	Total
1978	4.989	—	5.742	0.269	0.789	11.789
1979	3.074	—	7.195	—	0.347	10.616
1980	—	(Soviet invasion-December 1979)			—	—
1981	—	—	—	—	—	—
1982	—	—	—	—	—	—
1983	—	—	—	—	—	—
1984	—	—	—	—	—	—
1985	3.369	—	—	—	—	3.369
1986	—	—	8.9	—	—	8.9
1987	17.8	12.1	2.6	—	—	32.5
1988	22.5	22.5	29.9	—	—	74.9
1989	22.5	22.5	32.6	—	—	77.6
1990	35.0	35.0	18.1	—	—	88.1
1991	30	30	20.1	—	—	80.1
1992	25.0	25.0	31.4	—	—	81.4
1993	10	10	18.0	—	30.2	68.2
1994	3.4	2.0	9.0	—	27.9	42.3
1995	1.8	—	12.4	—	31.6	45.8
1996	—	—	16.1	—	26.4	42.5
1997	—	—	18.0	—	31.9[a]	49.9
1998	—	—	3.6	—	49.14[b]	52.74

Source: Department of State.

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

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

Table 11. U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan, FY1999-FY2001

($ in millions)

	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001
U.S. Department of Agriculture (DOA) and USAID Food For Peace (FFP), via World Food Program(WFP)	42.0 worth of wheat (100,000 metric tons under "416(b)" program.)	68.875 for 165,000 metric tons. (60,000 tons for May 2000 drought relief)	131.1 (300,000 metric tons under P.L. 480, Title II, and 416(b))
State/Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via UNHCR and ICRC	16.95 for Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, and to assist their repatriation	14.03 for the same purposes	22.03 for similar purposes
State Department/ Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)	7.0 to various NGOs to aid Afghans inside Afghanistan	6.68 for drought relief and health, water, and sanitation programs	18.934 for similar programs
State Department/HDP (Humanitarian Demining Program)	2.615	3.0	2.8
Aid to Afghan Refugees in Pakistan (through various NGOs)	5.44 (2.789 for health, training—Afghan females in Pakistan)	6.169, of which $3.82 went to similar purposes	5.31 for similar purposes
Counter-Narcotics			1.50
USAID/Office of Transition Initiatives			0.45 (Afghan women in Pakistan)
DOD			
Foreign Military Financing			
Anti-Terrorism			
Economic Support Funds (E.S.F)			
Peacekeeping			
Totals	**76.6**	**113.2**	**182.6**

Source: CRS.

Table 12. Post-Taliban U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan

(appropriations/allocations in $ millions)

Fiscal Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2002-13	2014	2015 (req)
ESF	117	239	894	1280	473	1211	1400	2088	3346	2168	1837	1850	16903	1123	1225
DA	18.3	42.5	153	170	185	167	149	.4	.3	0	0	0	884		
GHCS	7.5	49.7	33.4	38	41.5	101	63	58.	92	70	0	0	554		
Refugee Accounts	160	61	63	47	42	54	44	77	82	65	99	13	807		
Food Aid	206	74	99	97	108	70	231	82	32	19	0.6	0	1017		
IDA	197	86	11	4	0	0	17	27	30	66	61	14	514		
INCLE	60	0	220	709	216	252	308	484	589	400	324	6.1	3567	(ESF)	325
NADR	44	34.7	67	38.	18.2	37	27	49	58	69	65	54	506	(ESF)	43.5
IMET	0.2	0.4	0.7	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.7	1.4	1.8	1.6	2	0.8	14	(ESF)	1.4
FMF	57	191	414	397	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,059		
Other	33	23	36	18	0.2	0.1	21	5	5.8	7.4	8	0	158		
DOD—ASSF	0	0	0	995	1908	7406	2750	5607	9167	10619	9200	5124	52777	4727	4109
DOD—CERP	0	0	40	136	215	209	488	551	1000	400	400	200	3639	30	15
Infrastructure Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	299	400	325	1024	199	
Business Task Force	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	59	239	242	179	733	64	5
DOD—CN	0	0	72	225	108	291	193	230	392	376	421	372	2679		
DOD—Other	7.5	165	285	540	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	998		
DEA Counternarc	0.6	2.9	3.7	17	23.7	20	41	19	0	0	0	0	128		
Total U.S. Assistance	909	970	2392	4712	3339	9818	5732	9292	14854	14800	13058	8084	87963	6143	4499

Sources and Notes: Prepared by Curt Tarnoff, Specialist in Foreign Assistance. P.L. 113-76 (FY2014 omnibus appropriation). Department of State budget; SIGAR reports, and CRS calculations. Does not include USG operational expenses (over $5 billion since 2002). Food aid includes P.L.480 Title II and other programs. "Other" = Office of Transition Initiatives, Treasury Assistance, and Peacekeeping. ESF = Economic Support Funds; DA = Development Assistance; GHCS = Global Health/Child Survival; FMF = Foreign Military Financing; NADR = Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, De-Mining, and Related: IMET = International Military Education and Training; INCLE = International Narcotics and Law Enforcement; ASSF = Afghan Security Forces Funding; IDA = International Disaster Assistance.

Table 13. Total Obligations for Major Programs: FY2001-FY2011

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

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

Table 14. NATO/ISAF Contributing Nations

(approximate as of July 1, 2014)

NATO Countries		Non-NATO Partners	
Belgium	147	Albania	72
Bulgaria	378	Armenia	121
Canada	0	Austria	3
Czech Republic	250	Australia	356
Denmark	165	Azerbaijan	94
Estonia	20	Bahrain	0
France	211	Bosnia-Herzegovina	53
Germany	2,695	Croatia	146
Greece	10	Finland	95
Hungary	100	Georgia	805
Iceland	3	Ireland	7
Italy	2,000	Jordan	1,069
Latvia	31	Macedonia	152
Lithuania	83	Malaysia	2
Luxemburg	1	Mongolia	40
Netherlands	200	Montenegro	25
Norway	67	New Zealand	2
Poland	968	South Korea	0
Portugal	66	Sweden	219
Romania	1,002	Ukraine	27
Slovakia	275	United Arab Emirates	35
Slovenia	4	Tonga	55
Spain	247		
Turkey	457		
United Kingdom	5,200		
United States	30,000		
Total Listed ISAF: 47,000 (approximate)			

Sources: ISAF "Placemat" of June 1, 2014; press reports; and country announcements.

Notes: *ISAF figures reflect Canada combat troop pullout in July-August 2011. Some countries might be contributing additional forces not under ISAF command.

Table 15. Provincial Reconstruction Teams

Location (City)		Province/Command
U.S.-Lead (all under ISAF banner)		
1. Gardez		Paktia Province (RC-East, E) (transferred to Afghan control September 2012)
2. Ghazni		Ghazni (RC-E). Now mostly run by Poland.
3. Jalalabad		Nangarhar (RC-E)
4. Khost		Khost (RC-E)(transferred September 2012)
5. Qalat		Zabol (RC-South, S). with Romania.
6. Asadabad		Kunar (RC-E) (transferred September 2012)
7. Sharana		Paktika (RC-E)
8. Mehtarlam		Laghman (RC-E)(transferred September 2012)
9. Jabal o-Saraj		Panjshir Province (RC-E), State Department lead Z(transferred September 2012)
10. Qala Gush		Nuristan (RC-E)
11. Farah		Farah (RC-SW)
Partner Lead (most under ISAF banner)		
PRT Location	**Province**	**Lead Force/Other forces**
12. Qandahar	Qandahar (RC-S)	Canada (seat of RC-S)
13. Lashkar Gah	Helmand (RC-S)	Britain. with U.S., Denmark, and Estonia
14. Tarin Kowt	Uruzgan (RC-S)	Australia (and U.S.) (Replaced Netherlands in August 2010)
15. Herat	Herat (RC-W)	Italy (seat of RC-W)
16. Qalah-ye Now	Badghis (RC-W)	Spain
17. Mazar-e-Sharif	Balkh (RC-N)	Sweden
18. Konduz	Konduz (RC-N)	Germany (seat of RC-N)(transferred in August 2013)
29. Faizabad	Badakhshan (RC-N)	Germany. with Denmark, Czech Rep. (transferred in September 2012)
20. Meymaneh	Faryab (RC-N)	Norway. with Sweden. (transferred in September 2012)
21. Chaghcharan	Ghowr (RC-W)	Lithuania. with Denmark, U.S., Iceland (transferred in September 2012)
22. Pol-e-Khomri	Baghlan (RC-N)	Hungary (transferred in September 2012)
23. Bamiyan	Bamiyan (RC-E)	U.S. and New Zealand (not NATO/ISAF). (transferred in April 2013)
24. Maidan Shahr	Wardak (RC-C)	U.S. and Turkey
25. Pul-i-Alam	Lowgar (RC-E)	U.S. and Czech Republic
26. Shebergan	Jowzjan (RC-N)	Turkey (transferred in September 2012)
27. Charikar	Parwan (RC-E)	South Korea (Bagram, in Parwan Province, is the base of RC-E) (transferred in June 2014)
28. Mahmud-i-Raqi	Kapisa (RC-E)	France

Note: RC = Regional Command.

Table 16. Major Factions/Leaders in Afghanistan

Party/ Leader	Leader	Ideology/ Ethnicity	Regional Base
Taliban	Mullah (Islamic cleric) Muhammad Umar (still at large possibly in Afghanistan). Umar, born in Tarin Kowt, Uruzgan province, is about 65 years old.	Ultra-orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Throughout south and east. Small numbers elsewhere.
Haqqani Network	Jalaludin Haqqani. Allied with Taliban and Al Qaeda. Said to be supported, or at least tolerated, by Pakistani ISI.	Same as above	Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Kabul
Islamic Society (leader of "Northern Alliance")	Yunus Qanooni (speaker of lower house)/Muhammad Fahim/Dr. Abdullah Abdullah (Foreign Minister 2001-2006). Ismail Khan, a so-called "warlord," heads faction of the grouping in Herat area. Former party head, Burhanuddi Rabbani, assassinated by Taliban in September 2011.	Moderate Islamic, mostly Tajik	Much of northern and western Afghanistan, including Kabul
National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan	Abdul Rashid Dostam. Was Karzai rival in October 2004 presidential election, then his top "security adviser." As of October 2011, reportedly has joined new opposition movement called "Truth and Justice Party."	Secular, left-leaning, Uzbek	Jowzjan, Balkh, Faryab, Sar-i-Pol, and Samangan provinces.
Hizb-e-Wahdat	Composed of Shiite Hazara tribes from central Afghanistan. Former members Karim Khalili is vice president, but Mohammad Mohaqiq is Karzai rival. Generally pro-Iranian. Was part of Rabbani 1992-1996 government, and fought unsuccessfully with Taliban over Bamiyan. Still revered by Hazaras is the former leader of the group, Abdul Ali Mazari, who was captured and killed by the Taliban in March 1995.	Shiite, Hazara tribes	Bamiyan, Ghazni, Dai Kundi province
Pashtun tribal/regional leaders	Various regional governors and local leaders in the east and south; central government led by Hamid Karzai.	Moderate Islamic, Pashtun	Dominant in the south and east
Hizb-e-Islam Gulbuddin (HIG)	*Mujahedin* party leader Gulbuddin Hikmatyar. Was part of Soviet-era U.S.-backed "Afghan Interim Government" based in Peshawar, Pakistan. Was nominal "prime minister" in 1992-1996 mujahedin government but never actually took office. Lost power base around Jalalabad to the Taliban in 1994, and fled to Iran before being expelled in 2002. Still active in operations east of Kabul, but open to ending militant activity. Leader of a rival Hizb-e-Islam faction, Yunus Khalis, the mentor of Mullah Umar, died July 2006.	Orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Small groups in Nangarhar, Nuristan, and Kunar provinces
Islamic Union	Abd-I-Rab Rasul Sayyaf. Islamic conservative, leads a pro-Karzai faction in parliament. Lived many years in and politically close to Saudi Arabia, which shares his "Wahhabi" ideology. During anti-Soviet war, Sayyaf's faction, with Hikmatyar, was a principal recipient of U.S. weaponry. Criticized the U.S.-led war against Saddam Hussein after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.	orthodox Islamic, Pashtun	Paghman (west of Kabul)

Source: CRS.

Residual Issues from Past Conflicts

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

Stinger Retrieval

Beginning in late 1985 following internal debate, the Reagan Administration provided about 2,000 man-portable "Stinger" anti-aircraft missiles to the *mujahedin* for use against Soviet aircraft. Prior to the ouster of the Taliban, common estimates suggested that 200-300 Stingers remained at large, although more recent estimates put the number below 100.[88] The Stinger issue resurfaced in conjunction with 2001 U.S. war effort, when U.S. pilots reported that the Taliban fired some Stingers at U.S. aircraft. No hits were reported. The danger of these weapons has become apparent on several past occasions. Iran bought 16 of the missiles in 1987 and fired one against U.S. helicopters in the Persian Gulf. India claimed that it was a Stinger supplied to Islamic rebels in Kashmir by sympathizers in Afghanistan, that shot down an Indian helicopter over Kashmir in May 1999.[89] Soviet-made SA-7 "Strella" man-portable launchers, which allegedly have been used in the past by Al Qaeda, including against an Israeli passenger jet in Kenya on November 30, 2002, were discovered in Afghanistan by U.S. forces in December 2002.

In 1992, after the fall of the Russian-backed government of Najibullah, the United States reportedly spent about $10 million to buy the Stingers back, at a premium, from individual *mujahedin* commanders. The *New York Times* reported on July 24, 1993, that the buyback effort failed because the United States was competing with other buyers, including Iran and North Korea, and that the CIA would spend about $55 million in FY1994 in a renewed effort. On March 7, 1994, *The Washington Post* reported that the CIA had recovered only about 50 or 100 at-large Stingers. In February 2002, the Afghan government found and turned over to the United States "dozens" of Stingers.[90] In January 2005, Afghan intelligence began buying Stingers back, at a reported cost of $150,000 each.[91] Any Stingers that remain in Afghanistan likely pose little threat, in part because of deteriorating components. No recent uses are reported.

Mine Eradication

Land mines laid during the Soviet occupation constitute one of the principal dangers to the Afghan people. The United Nations estimates that 5 million to 7 million mines remain scattered throughout the country, although some estimates are lower. U.N. teams have destroyed 1 million mines and are now focusing on de-mining priority-use, residential and commercial property, including lands around Kabul. Amounts contributed by the United States to the de-mining effort are shown in the tables above. Most of the funds have gone to HALO Trust, a British organization, and the U.N. Mine Action Program for Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Compact adopted in London in February 2006 states that by 2010, the goal should be to reduce the land area of Afghanistan contaminated by mines by 70%.

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

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

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

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

Appendix. U.S. and International Sanctions Lifted

Virtually all U.S. and international sanctions on Afghanistan, some imposed during the Soviet occupation era and others on the Taliban regime, have now been lifted.

- P.L. 108-458 (December 17, 2004, referencing the 9/11 Commission recommendations) repealed bans on aid to Afghanistan outright. On October 7, 1992, President George H. W. Bush had issued Presidential Determination 93-3 that Afghanistan is no longer a Marxist-Leninist country, but the determination was not implemented before he left office. Had it been implemented, the prohibition on Afghanistan's receiving Export-Import Bank guarantees, insurance, or credits for purchases under Section 8 of the 1986 Export-Import Bank Act, would have been lifted. In addition, Afghanistan would have been able to receive U.S. assistance because the requirement would have been waived that Afghanistan apologize for the 1979 killing in Kabul of U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Adolph "Spike" Dubs. (Dubs was kidnapped in Kabul in 1979 and killed when Afghan police stormed the hideout where he was held.)
- U.N. sanctions on the Taliban imposed by Resolution 1267 (October 15, 1999), Resolution 1333 (December 19, 2000), and Resolution 1363 (July 30, 2001) have now been narrowed to penalize only Al Qaeda (by Resolution 1390, January 17, 2002). Resolution 1267 banned flights outside Afghanistan by Ariana, and directed U.N. member states to freeze Taliban assets. Resolution 1333 prohibited the provision of arms or military advice to the Taliban (directed against Pakistan); ordered a reduction of Taliban diplomatic representation abroad; and banned foreign travel by senior Taliban officials. Resolution 1363 provided for monitors in Pakistan to ensure that no weapons or military advice was provided to the Taliban.
- On January 10, 2003, President Bush signed a proclamation making Afghanistan a beneficiary of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), eliminating U.S. tariffs on 5,700 Afghan products. Afghanistan had been denied GSP on May 2, 1980, under Executive Order 12204 (45 F.R. 20740).
- On April 24, 1981, controls on U.S. exports to Afghanistan of agricultural products and phosphates were terminated. Such controls were imposed on June 3, 1980, as part of the sanctions against the Soviet Union for the invasion of Afghanistan, under the authority of Sections 5 and 6 of the Export Administration Act of 1979 [P.L. 96-72; 50 U.S.C. app. 2404, app. 2405].
- In mid-1992, the George H. W. Bush Administration determined that Afghanistan no longer had a "Soviet-controlled government." This opened Afghanistan to the use of U.S. funds made available for the U.S. share of U.N. organizations that provide assistance to Afghanistan.
- On March 31, 1993, after the fall of Najibullah in 1992, President Clinton, on national interest grounds, waived restrictions provided for in Section 481 (h) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 mandating sanctions on Afghanistan, including bilateral aid cuts and suspensions, including denial of Ex-Im Bank credits; the casting of negative U.S. votes for multilateral development bank loans; and a non-allocation of a U.S. sugar quota. Discretionary sanctions included denial of GSP; additional duties on exports to the United States; and

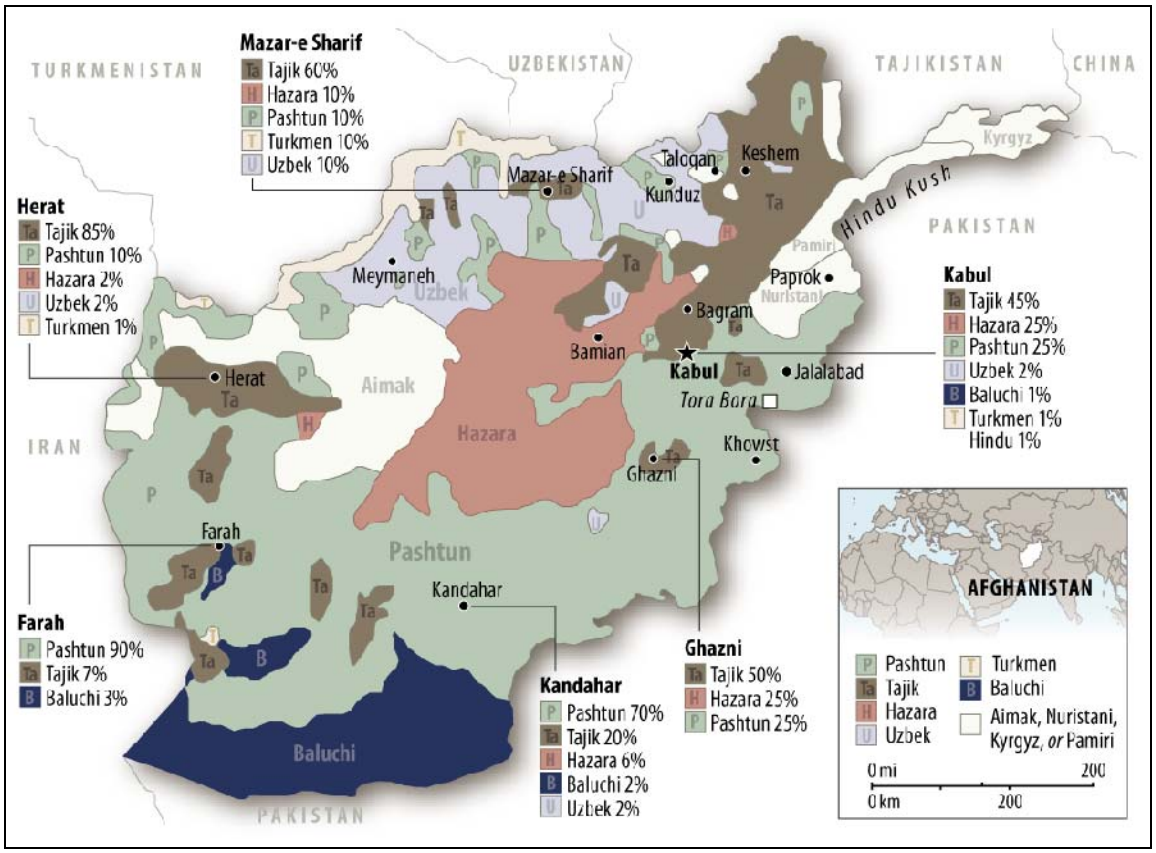
curtailment of air transportation with the United States. Waivers were also granted in 1994 and, after the fall of the Taliban, by President Bush.

- On May 3, 2002, President Bush restored normal trade treatment to the products of Afghanistan, reversing the February 18, 1986, proclamation by President Reagan (Presidential Proclamation 5437) that suspended most-favored nation (MFN) tariff status for Afghanistan (51 F.R. 4287). The Foreign Assistance Appropriations for FY1986 [Section 552, P.L. 99-190] had authorized the denial of U.S. credits or most-favored-nation (MFN) status for Afghanistan.
- On July 2, 2002, the State Department amended U.S. regulations (22 C.F.R. Part 126) to allow arms sales to the new Afghan government, reversing the June 14, 1996, addition of Afghanistan to the list of countries prohibited from importing U.S. defense articles and services. Arms sales to Afghanistan had also been prohibited during 1997-2002 because Afghanistan had been designated under the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-132) as a state that is not cooperating with U.S. anti-terrorism efforts.
- On July 2, 2002, President Bush formally revoked the July 4, 1999, declaration by President Clinton of a national emergency with respect to Taliban because of its hosting of Bin Laden. The Clinton determination and related Executive Order 13129 had blocked Taliban assets and property in the United States, banned U.S. trade with Taliban-controlled areas of Afghanistan, and applied these sanctions to Ariana Afghan Airlines, triggering a blocking of Ariana assets (about $500,000) in the United States and a ban on U.S. citizens' flying on the airline. (The ban on trade with Taliban-controlled territory had essentially ended on January 29, 2002, when the State Department determination that the Taliban controls no territory within Afghanistan.)

Figure A-1. Map of Afghanistan

Source: Map Resources. Adapted by CRS.

Figure A-2. Map of Afghan Ethnicities



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

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

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