

# per Concordiam

*Journal of European Security and Defense Issues*

■ **A SECURE NEIGHBORHOOD**

Building peace in Central Asia

■ **PARTNERS IN TRAINING**

Militaries go multinational

■ **AFGHAN INVESTMENT**

Europe must spend wisely

■ **CALL OF DUTY**

An Afghan policeman's story

PLUS

Protecting energy supplies

Counterterrorism policy

Missile defense

## A NEW ERA for Afghanistan



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*Welcome* to the 11th issue of *per Concordiam*. In it we address how our collective experience is shaping a new era for Afghanistan. After 11 years of stability operations led by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), there is a debate about how this type of operation will be approached in the future. Are countries still willing to engage in complex and potentially costly long-term stability operations or will they focus on conflict prevention with an early engagement approach toward fracturing governments and societies? If nations do undertake stability operations, effective whole-of-nation stability operations inside the country and regional cooperation among that country's neighbors will be critical to future endeavors by the international community.

Assessments of stability operations during the last 60 years have shown that building regional cooperation is an important factor in increasing chances of successfully stabilizing a fracturing nation. In the case of Afghanistan, regional cooperation toward long-term support and stability may be difficult to achieve because of tensions among neighboring countries. The Afghan government is in a precarious position: It must cooperate with Pakistan, India, Iran and its Central Asian neighbors while continuing to receive assistance from the United States, Europe and China. A further complication is whether contributing nations will maintain this support during these times of budgetary austerity.

The recent signing of a 10-year security agreement between the governments of Afghanistan and the U.S., along with pledges by European countries to continue financial support for institutional capacity building in Afghanistan, is encouraging. Most security officials would agree that it is crucial for the international community to remain engaged in Afghanistan during the ISAF transition from a combat to advisory role by 2014 and into the "transformation decade." International and regional support for the Afghan National Security Forces, democratic institution capacity building and infrastructure to increase trade, investment and business startups within Afghanistan will be vital to building popular confidence in the Afghan government.

Lessons learned by coalition forces in Afghanistan have shaped what today is called the comprehensive approach, which stresses the importance of multinational inter-agency cooperation in support of the ISAF mission of developing long-term peace and stability for the Afghan people. The coalition is still gleaned knowledge on how to simultaneously increase effective security capacity, build good governance and develop vital economic infrastructure to achieve long-term stability.

Historically, one critical step in any national peace process after a long internal struggle is reconciliation between warring factions. Reconciliation can play an important role in creating sustainable peace. Such a process, led by the Afghan government and supported by the international community, is starting to take shape. But its complexity has created skeptics, and ultimately it will be up to the Afghan people to accept or reject the inclusion of former fighting factions into the peace process, political structure and civil society.

We invite comments and perspectives on this subject. We will include your responses in our next two editions. The first addresses how energy policy shapes national decision-making, while the second focuses on countering violent extremism. Please contact us at [editor@perconcordiam.org](mailto:editor@perconcordiam.org)

Sincerely,

Keith W. Dayton  
Director



**Keith W. Dayton**

*Director, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies*

Keith W. Dayton retired as a Lieutenant General from the U.S. Army in late 2010 after more than 40 years of service. His last assignment on active duty was as U.S. Security Coordinator to Israel and the Palestinian Authority in Jerusalem. An artillery officer by training, he also has served as politico-military staff officer for the Army in Washington, D.C., and U.S. defense attaché in Russia. He worked as director of the Iraqi Survey Group for Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq. He earned a Senior Service College Fellowship to Harvard University and served as the Senior Army Fellow on the Council on Foreign Relations in New York. Gen. Dayton has a bachelor's degree in history from the College of William and Mary, a master's degree in history from Cambridge University and another in international relations from the University of Southern California.

## CONTRIBUTORS



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**Dr. Gregory Gleason** is a professor of security studies at the Marshall Center. He is a seminar leader for the center's Program in Advanced Security Studies and teaches course electives on "Central Asian Security" and "Security in the Caucasus." Dr. Gleason is serving at the Marshall Center while on leave from the University of New Mexico, where he has taught international relations and public policy since 1988. He has worked extensively in the field in Central Asia and is the author of, among other works, "Central Asian States: Discovering Independence" (1997). Dr. Gleason holds degrees from the University of California at Irvine and the University of California at Davis.



**Mohammad Shafiq Hamdam** is a social activist and founder and volunteer chairman of the Afghan Anti-Corruption Network, a leading group of volunteer civil society organizations fighting corruption. He is an advocate of youth and women's rights and a member of the Afghan Young Leader Forum. Mr. Hamdam is a writer, a media and political analyst and works as a country advisor at the Office of the NATO Senior Civilian Representative to Afghanistan. He is a 2010 graduate of the Marshall Center's Program in Advanced Security Studies and holds a bachelor's degree in health science.

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**Timothy A. Krambs** is a major in the U.S. Army serving as a Eurasian foreign area officer in the Central Asian region. His education includes a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the Milwaukee School of Engineering and a master's degree in international security studies from the Universität der Bundeswehr München, completed at the Marshall Center. Maj. Krambs' contributions in completion of this degree are pending publication in U.S. and Russian journals. He has also served two tours in the Middle East as an Army aviator in the capacity of a maintenance company commander and test pilot as well as a mission pilot and platoon leader.

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**Peteris Veits** has spent most of the past decade in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia that includes posting in Afghanistan as a political/development adviser. He also has served several stints as a European Union elections observer in Sudan, Afghanistan and other countries. He is a 2004 graduate of the Marshall Center course "Leaders of the 21st Century" and holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Vezime University College in Latvia and a master's of business administration from Riga Business School.

# *per* Concordiam

*Journal of European Security  
and Defense Issues*

New Era for Afghanistan

Volume 3, Issue 3

**George C. Marshall  
European Center for  
Security Studies**

### Leadership

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*Director*

Hermann Wachter  
*German Deputy Director*

Dr. James C. MacDougall  
*U.S. Deputy Director*

### Marshall Center

The George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies is a German-American partnership founded in 1993. The center promotes dialogue and understanding between European, Eurasian, North American and other nations. The theme of its resident courses and outreach events: Most 21st century security challenges require international, interagency and interdisciplinary response and cooperation.

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In this issue, we discuss the experience of the international community in Afghanistan. Over the past decade, International Security Assistance Force–led stability operations have resulted in the replacement of the Taliban regime with a freely elected democratic government, the disruption of al-Qaida and the death of Osama bin Laden. But there are still concerns over the ability of Afghanistan’s government to provide security to its population once Afghan security forces assume full responsibility across the country by the end of 2014. ISAF–Afghan partnering has been critical to the mission at all levels, from the NATO training mission to partnering with units in the field, and up to advisors in the ministries of Defense and Interior. Stability in Afghanistan may be difficult to achieve

and could impact regional cooperation in the long-term. The reconciliation process necessary for sustainable peace is starting to take shape, but it is a complex process of healing that will take time. This issue of *per Concordiam* focuses on these pertinent issues and possible future scenarios for the country and the region.

The issue starts with a viewpoint article by Mr. Friedel Eggelmeyer, political director and head of General Policy Planning and Communication at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). He explains that although critics remain skeptical about the long-term transformation in Afghanistan, the pace of economic and social progress over the last decade cannot be overlooked. This progress has resulted from a “comprehensive approach” that combines military and civilian contributions with efforts coordinated to ensure the best interests of the Afghan people.

Our first feature article is written by Marshall Center alumnus Mohammad Shafiq Hamdam, founder and volunteer chairman of the Afghan Anti-Corruption Network, a leading network of volunteer civil society organizations fighting corruption. He explains that Afghanistan is not the country it was 10 years ago. It is a country with a recognizable parliament, constitution and institutions. There is a long way to go; nation building does not happen overnight. The challenges ahead are not only terrorists and insurgents, but lowering corruption and encouraging counter-poppy cultivation programs. He concludes his article encouraging the international community to continue assisting Afghanistan during this transitional decade.

The next article is by Marshall Center alumnus Adrian Matei. In the context of future stabilization operations in Afghanistan he emphasizes that

the capacity to run successful conflict prevention, stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction operations is one of the essential tools of any relevant foreign action today.

In his article “Working with the Afghans,” Mr. Peteris Veits, Marshall Center alumnus, explains the shift in focus by the international community post-2014 towards engagement in governance capacity building and development cooperation. He argues this will set a significant milestone for the international community’s engagement in Afghanistan as well as require a sobering self-assessment of what has been actually achieved and what still needs to be done.

Finally, we feature a contribution from Dr. Gregory Gleason and Maj. Timothy Krambs, of the Marshall Center, which addresses the impact of post-conflict stability on Afghanistan’s neighbors.

The next issue of *per Concordiam* will focus on energy security, followed by an issue on countering violent extremism. We invite you and your colleagues to submit articles on these themes to enhance discussion of the issues addressed in *per Concordiam*.

We encourage feedback and look forward to emails on this ongoing dialogue on important security issues. Please email us at [editor@perconcordiam.org](mailto:editor@perconcordiam.org). Each issue is available online at the Marshall Center public website <http://www.marshallcenter.org>

— *per Concordiam* editorial staff



Please keep sending this [*per Concordiam*] journal because the information is interesting for us.

**Senior officer**

*Riga Border Control and Immigration Control Service  
State Border Guard, Republic of Latvia*

Hello! My name is Musa Gizatulin and I'm an alumnus and reserve colonel in the Uzbek Armed Forces and now judicial director and chairman of the Association of Court Directors of the Republic of Uzbekistan. I completed the Executive Program in Advanced Security Studies at the Marshall Center in 2004, and it was a useful and interesting experience. Having read the first issue of *per Concordiam*, I can say that is very topical and thoroughly addresses the issues of security.

**Musa Gizatulin**

*Tashkent, Uzbekistan*

Send feedback via email to: [editor@perconcordiam.org](mailto:editor@perconcordiam.org)

## ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

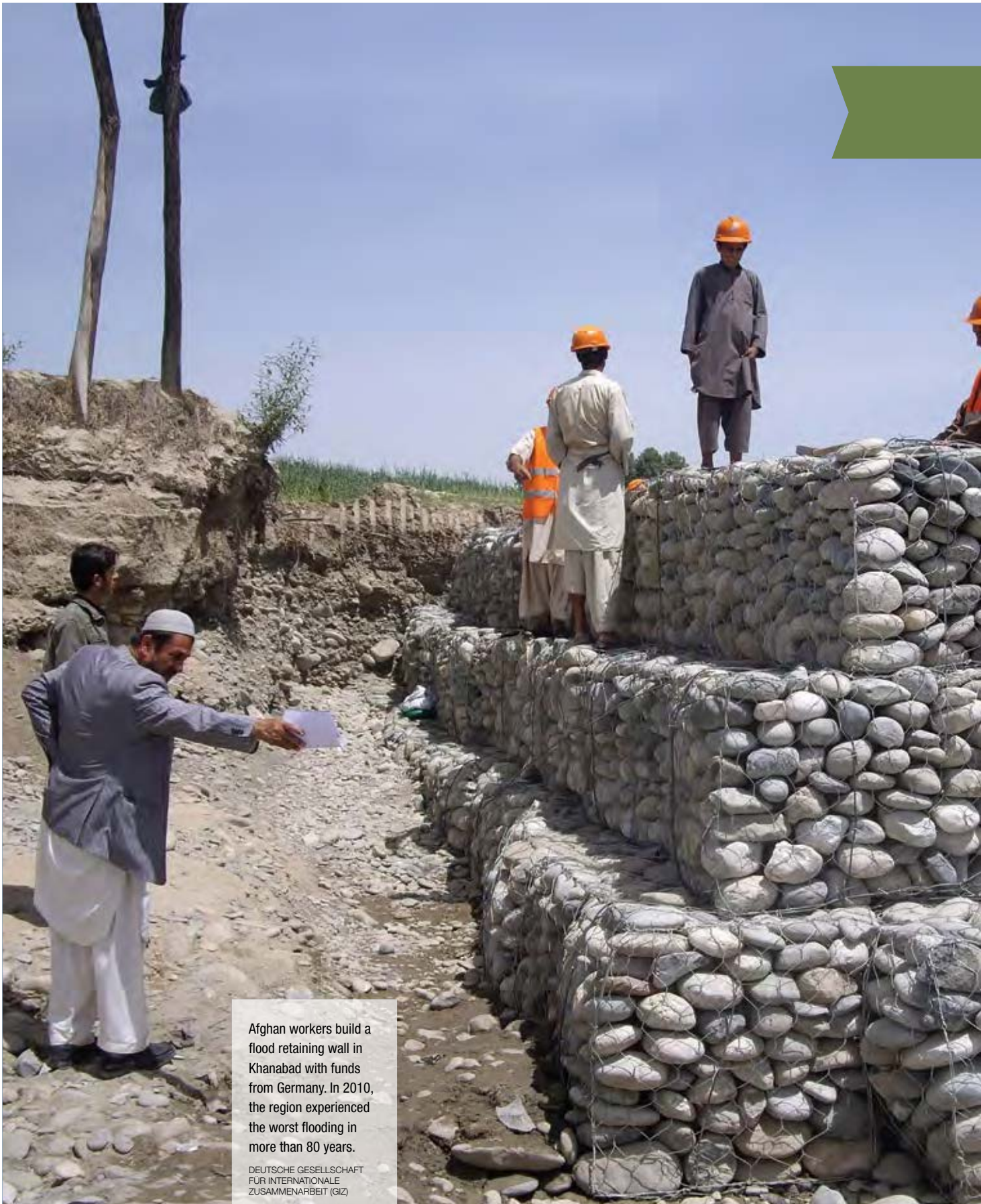
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- **Do not assume a U.S. audience.** The vast majority of *per Concordiam* readers are from Europe and Eurasia. We're less likely to publish articles that cater to a U.S. audience. Our mission is to generate candid discussion of relevant security and defense topics, not to strictly reiterate U.S. foreign policy.
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Afghan workers build a flood retaining wall in Khanabad with funds from Germany. In 2010, the region experienced the worst flooding in more than 80 years.

DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT  
FÜR INTERNATIONALE  
ZUSAMMENARBEIT (GIZ)



## INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR AFGHANISTAN:

# Taking Stock and Looking Ahead

By Friedel Eggelmeyer,  
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

The attacks on the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, and the swift reaction of the United States and its allies catapulted Afghanistan into the eye of the global public. Ever since, Afghanistan has been a hot-button issue. Today, more than 10 years after the fall of the Taliban regime, and notwithstanding the massive international military and civilian assistance to the country, critics of that support point to some solid evidence to back their skepticism. For example, corruption continues to be endemic, as indicated by Afghanistan's low rank on the most recent Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International — a low ranking exceeded only by North Korea and Somalia. In addition, security in most provinces continues to be problematic, despite some notable improvements in the province of Kunduz since 2009. Also, social and economic conditions remain among the poorest in the world. However, this is only part of the story.

On the other hand, we are witnessing progress. We see that basic health services, access to education and physical infrastructure for transportation, energy, drinking water and irrigation have improved tremendously. For example, while only 1 million children attended school in 2001, almost all of them boys, that number has increased immensely during the last 10 years. In 2011, more than 8 million children were enrolled in primary schools, almost 40 percent of them girls. It is fairly safe to say that Afghanistan's pace of economic and social progress during the past decade is unparalleled in the world.

To a large extent, this measurable progress is the result of a comprehensive approach that combines the coordinated contributions of military and civilian actors. The military provides security, which is



indispensable for civilian aid agencies to implement development projects on the ground successfully. The comprehensive approach includes cooperation on an equal footing and the regular exchange of information at an early stage, but also a clear division of labor and responsibilities between military and civilian players. Thus, civil-military cooperation is about the joint pursuit of common goals and efforts in the best interests of the Afghan people, rather than just about physically showing up together in the field.

Unfortunately, when we look at the media coverage of Afghanistan, the significant progress that has been achieved in civilian reconstruction and development in a relatively short period rarely gets the attention it deserves. Instead, the public perception and political discourse on Afghanistan are dominated by security issues and the military engagement of the international forces. This imbalance is reinforced by the ongoing process of “transition:” the handing over of full

responsibility to provide security in all parts of the country to Afghan authorities, along with the planned withdrawal of international combat troops by the end of 2014.

Last October, when Gudrun Kopp, parliamentary state secretary of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, visited Afghanistan in advance of the International Afghanistan Conference in Bonn in December 2011, key representatives of Afghan civil society highlighted what many ordinary Afghans thought: that transition of security responsibility also implies an end to international civilian aid to their country. Indeed, this widespread misperception is a major challenge to the joint efforts to stabilize Afghanistan. In fact, as the process of transition progresses, even more light is shed on the importance of civilian engagement in Afghanistan.

Commendably, the Bonn conference helped counter that misperception and the “vacuum of reliance” among



Girls kick a soccer ball outside a school in Mazar-e-Sharif in January 2012. About 2.7 million girls attend school in Afghanistan thanks to efforts like the Basic Education Program for Afghanistan.

DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT (GIZ)

the Afghan people, spelling out a clear political commitment to maintain substantial aid levels during what is now called the “transformation decade,” from 2015 until 2024. This commitment is even more important, considering the likely economic and fiscal fallout triggered by the scheduled International Security Assistance Force drawdown through the end of 2014. Even relatively optimistic forecasts by the World Bank suggest that Afghanistan’s annual economic growth rate might be cut in half, down to 5 or 6 percent, compared to the double-digit growth rates experienced on average since 2002. Hence, continued international assistance is necessary to safeguard the economic and social achievements of the past decade.

The NATO summit in Chicago in May 2012 and the donors’ conference in Tokyo in mid-July marked two crucial steps in the follow-up to the Bonn conference. A key issue in Chicago was defining a clear-cut way to cover the operating

costs of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) during the next decade. Continued international support for the ANSF is needed to avoid a severe underfunding of the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police and – equally important from a development perspective – to avert the further crowding-out of civilian expenditures by security sector issues.

While one might be confident that the international commitments made in Bonn will be met in one way or another, perhaps the more difficult undertaking – compared to helping fund Afghan public expenditures – will be to facilitate broad-based and long-term economic growth in Afghanistan. Such growth is imperative to reduce poverty and to lay the foundations for further economic and social progress, as well as for sustained stability in the country. Extractive industries have notable potential in this regard. However, despite some optimistic forecasts that the nation’s mineral wealth might increase state revenues by 20 percent and boost annual economic growth by 5 percentage points, it should not be considered a panacea. Extractive industries need to be managed skillfully to avoid environmental and social harm and to make sure that Afghan society as a whole benefits. In this regard, Afghanistan’s envisaged accession to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative is a promising step in the right direction.

Agriculture holds significant importance in securing the livelihoods of the rural poor who mainly depend on subsistence farming. Targeted support to the agricultural sector could help Afghans reconquer some of their former agricultural export markets through improved productivity, processing, storage and marketing. The international community would also be well-advised to pursue a long-term path when it comes to promoting the energy and education sectors in Afghanistan. Progress in both areas is a major prerequisite for economic growth and job creation for a predominantly young and rapidly growing population.

Perhaps the biggest rate of return in the long run may come from the continuous support given to the Afghan people to establish and expand their own capacities in all crucial areas of service delivery, and to do so at all levels of government, especially at the regional and local level. Localities are where the bulk of the Afghan people encounter their government, and where the increased legitimacy of the state and its institutions, due to improving public services, has the most immediate positive and sustainable effects.

Finally, any long-term strategy for civilian aid to a fragile state such as Afghanistan should encompass the strengthening of civil society. Civil society is an important bridge between the people and the government, and it plays a critical role in promoting transparency and accountability of government institutions. □

Information current as of July 2012.



Local workers build roads in Afghanistan using credit provided by Germany.

KREDITANSTALT FÜR WIEDERAUFBAU, THOMAS HERZBERG



# BUILDING SELF SUFFICIENCY

The international community will continue to play a role in stabilizing Afghanistan

By Mohammad Shafiq Hamdam, Afghan Anti-Corruption Network

Afghanistan entered a new chapter in its history in 2001 and has come a long way since. The Afghan people – together with their international partners – have made tremendous progress in education, freedom of speech and media, health care, economic growth, technology, regional cooperation and democracy in general. Of course, there are issues that should be addressed concerning security, good governance, rule of law, corruption and development. But a country that has experienced more than three decades of war cannot resolve its problems in a decade.

We started from scratch in 2001, and today we are fortunate to be talking about good governance

and stability. Ten years ago, there were talks about building Afghan government institutions, the Army, and police. But today we are talking about the rule of law, human and women's rights, and the sustainability and ability of the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. We are talking about development, economic growth, higher education and regional cooperation. That we are now talking about these long-term and strategic objectives is a sign of progress.

Afghanistan is not the same country it was 10 years ago when it was an international threat. It was a destroyed country torn by civil war and lacking a real government. Today it is a country

Afghan commandos stand in formation during a graduation ceremony in Kabul in April 2012. Troops such as these will play a key role in providing security for the country once NATO troops leave.

with a recognized elected government and parliament, a constitution and institutions. There is now a democratic system, where people talk about and debate social and political issues, which was not the case before. Afghanistan also possesses mineral and energy resources, which can help secure the nation's economic future. The mineral and energy wealth of the country is estimated at \$1 trillion, which could make Afghanistan one of the richest countries in the region. But, extracting this wealth from the earth and using it to benefit Afghanistan and the world will require good management. Afghanistan will continue to need the expertise and assistance of the international community.

Of course, there is a long way to go; Afghanistan is still not a perfect country, and nation building is a long-term process. Many things are new for this country. Democracy is not very mature in Afghanistan and concepts like human and women's rights are still not well-developed after more than three decades of dictatorship and extremist and communist regimes. So it will take time for the people of this country to adopt the new culture of democracy, peace and stability.

### INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the international community and NATO came to Afghanistan to fight terror and help the Afghan people rebuild their war-torn country. I am not sure if 10 years ago anyone could have imagined that Afghanistan would reach a stage where it would have powerful Western countries as partners. Afghanistan has signed partnership agreements with France, Italy, Germany, Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, India and NATO, and there are many other countries with which Afghanistan will sign bilateral agreements. These agreements clearly show the progress of the last 10 years, because before 2001, Afghanistan was not recognized by many countries in the world, but today is a partner in the fight against terrorism with countries that had been considered enemies. Afghanistan is no longer a failed state, but is recognized around the world. Afghanistan has achieved all this during the last decade, together with its international partners.

After the November 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon, Portugal, Afghanistan entered yet another chapter in its history. At the summit, the government of Afghanistan reached agreement with NATO to transition the leading security role to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by the end of 2014, marking another sign of progress. There was a lot of



Afghan artists discuss their work at a studio in Kabul in May 2012. Reforms have brought vast improvements in women's rights, allowing women to pursue professional and educational avenues previously closed to them.

debate and criticism when the Afghan government asked to take leadership in the country's security. Naturally, the decision to take on these responsibilities was not an easy one for a country that had relied for a decade on the international community. But today, many Afghans believe that they are ready to take responsibility for their own security by the end of 2014 or even earlier.

Afghans are confident in the strength and morale of their Army and police, which have successfully demonstrated that they are capable of assuming security responsibilities from NATO troops. The transition is successfully under way, and ANSF are providing security for the majority of the population. More than two years remain to complete the transition, and Afghans are confident that, if the process continues as is, the transition will be a success and Afghans will defend their land from terrorist and insurgent attacks.

For three decades, terrorists, extremists, warlords and communists have undermined the hopes and dreams of the Afghan people. Now, some again want to spread pessimism by trying to sabotage the transition process and spread fear about the process and the post-transition security environment. Their propaganda raises concerns among some people about the future of democracy in Afghanistan and the threat of civil war. But strategic ties with organizations such as NATO and countries like the U.S. will assure the security and political stability of the country.

The transition process also sends a good message to neighboring countries, which were concerned about the presence of large numbers of NATO troops in Afghanistan – numbers which will be significantly reduced during the next two years. Meanwhile, the transition process will take away the insurgents' false legitimacy, and the peace and

A UK Ministry of Defence police official conducts firearms training with an Afghan police officer in November 2011 at the Lashkar Gah Police Training Center.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



ISAF

A Turkish soldier talks with an Afghan civilian.

reintegration process and regional cooperation and trade agreements will ensure that anarchy does not return after the transition. To safeguard the success of the transition process, the Afghan government requested the support of the international community for a “decade of transformation” at the Second International Bonn Conference on Afghanistan in December 2011. This shows that Afghans are confident in the success of the transition and are looking forward to a decade of transformation. The current strategy is the right one, and things are going comparatively well in Afghanistan, now that people are thinking of building their nation and their future. The commitment of the international community and NATO during the transition period and beyond shows that a better future awaits Afghanistan. Though it won't be perfect, Afghanistan will be a substantially better place than it had been for the last three decades.

### FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

NATO held another successful summit in May 2012 in Chicago – another decisive summit for the future of Afghanistan. About 60 heads of state and UN and international organizations attended the summit and announced a clear commitment towards Afghanistan. Despite much effort, Afghanistan still lacks a strategic plan for its future – a plan which would bring the support of the international community under an organized framework, such as Europe's post-World War II Marshall Fund program.

The program need not be similar, but the aid and support of the international community should come together in an organized mechanism based on priority, accountability, transparency and efficiency. The Conference on Afghanistan, held in Tokyo in July 2012, collected further pledges and donations to aid the country.

The stakes are high. Terrorists and insurgents are not the only challenges facing Afghanistan. Corruption, poppy cultivation and drug trafficking are also serious problems affecting the stability and security of Afghanistan. Afghanistan will need assistance from the international community to tackle these problems.

To strengthen democracy and good governance, and to stabilize the achievements of the last ten years, the Afghan government and international community should work together on a joint strategy and framework. Defining the engagement of the international community in Afghanistan is an important

issue that needs to be addressed. The U.S. carries a large share of responsibility in Afghanistan, but other international partners of the U.S. and United Nations should define and commit to their roles and participation as well.

The Afghan government has frequently asked for help building a strong Army and police, and for aircraft and training for the Afghan Air Force, but this request has often been interpreted wrongly. Western allies of Afghanistan and neighboring countries worry that Afghanistan might use a strong military against Pakistan, but this is not a realistic scenario. After the transition process, Afghanistan will require a midsize air force and a strong army to fight terrorists and insurgents. A strong and capable ANSF means a safe Afghanistan and a safer world.

Nor should the international community and the Afghan government forget about civil society, political parties and the civilian side of government. Everyone agrees that Afghanistan needs more than military solutions. It needs political and civil solutions, as well. Therefore, the international community should balance support of military and civilian institutions.

In conclusion, if the international community makes a unified, sustainable and long-term strategic plan for the support of Afghanistan and fulfills its commitments, and if the Afghan government fulfills its responsibilities appropriately, the achievement of the last 10 years will be secured and Afghanistan will not only have a prosperous future, but will be able to contribute to international peace and security. □

# AFGHANISTAN: FACING THE FUTURE



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AFGHANISTAN AND NATO WORKING TOWARD TRANSITION  
FROM BATTLEFIELD SUCCESS TO LONG-TERM STABILITY



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By per Concordiam Staff

The typical bustle of a spring afternoon ended abruptly when explosions ripped through the air and the sounds of automatic weapons fire echoed through the streets and bazaars of central Kabul. After six months of relative peace in Afghanistan's capital city, insurgents had returned with their trademark brand of death and destruction. A few years ago, attacks were frequent and NATO troops did most of the fighting, but this time things were different. Afghan security forces successfully turned back an enemy offensive with minimal casualties and very little support from international troops, and according to *The Economist*, "News footage of brave, bloodied Afghan commandos caused a swell of national pride in a country unused to government heroes."

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the coordinated attacks of April 15, 2012, on Afghan government buildings, Western embassies, and International Security Forces (ISAF) bases in Kabul and three regional capitals, calling it the beginning of their "Spring Offensive." The rapid and effective Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) response quickly contained the Taliban fighters, preventing them from reaching their targets, and limiting civilian casualties. ISAF commander, U.S. Gen. John Allen, was impressed with how quickly and effectively Afghan security forces reacted: "They were on the scene immediately, well-led and well-coordinated. They helped protect their fellow citizens and largely kept the insurgents contained." Allen also noted that ISAF helped only with helicopters and advisors, calling their success, "a testament to their skill and professionalism."

Only one week before, the United States and Afghanistan signed an agreement transferring control of most special operations missions and the management of the prisoner detention and interrogation process to Afghan forces. NATO is scheduled to end combat operations by the end of 2014, with all security responsibilities handed over to the ANSF, and this agreement was a major step in the transition.

The transition to Afghan self-sufficiency is well underway. By December 2011, ANSF had assumed security responsibility for eight of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, and parts of 12 more, including most of the larger cities and encompassing more than half the population. Afghan government institutions are progressively more competent and Afghans are increasingly taking the lead from international partners in reconstruction and development projects and a wide range of non-security operations. Democracy is taking root and Afghan women have emerged from virtual confinement to reclaim their places in public life.

This progress is also testament to the dedication and sacrifice of military and civilians from the 50 nations contributing to ISAF who have worked diligently in that decade, first to re-establish a basic foundation of security and stability, and then to build on that with development and reconstruction efforts, aided by funding from at least 16 non-Alliance nations. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), ISAF's principal tool in this field, tie everything together by bridging the gaps between military and civilian capabilities – working with Afghan officials, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and aid agencies.

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Misconceptions abound as to what role the Allies will have after 2014, as many believe that January 2015 will arrive with all Alliance and partner troops out of Afghanistan and the security commitments made by Allied nations fulfilled. After more than 10 years of combat operations in Central Asia, public support is waning in the West, especially given austerity budgets caused by economic problems at home. Progress has been made in Afghanistan, though at times it's been painfully slow. But the job is not finished and the fact remains that creating a stable and prosperous future for Afghanistan should remain a priority for Europe and NATO for many years. Our political leaders will need to effectively take this message to reluctant voters at home. Though the NATO combat mission ends in 2014, the Allies will stay in Afghanistan in the form of advisors, aid agencies, trainers and even businessmen.

### A STABILIZING PRESENCE

Afghanistan has been at war for more than 30 years. Millions of Afghans are still refugees, mostly in neighboring countries. Investment is difficult to attract without security. Poor economic prospects and the country's weak institutions and lack of security have helped make Afghanistan the world's primary supplier of heroin, feeding violence, organized crime, corruption and addiction in the region and globally.

Since Operation Enduring Freedom began in October 2001, defeating al-Qaida and establishing a free and stable Afghanistan have been the primary goals of the Allied mission. Afghanistan was chosen by al-Qaida as its base of operations and training largely because the country's anarchic, war-torn society – and sympathetic Taliban government – provided fertile soil in which to operate free from the prying eyes of Western intelligence agencies. Failure to stabilize the country and rebuild the infrastructure would leave a void likely to be exploited again, following the withdrawal of Alliance forces, by al-Qaida or a similar extremist group. “The aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan is a warning against abrupt departures, leaving ill-resourced governments behind,” *The Economist* wrote in March 2012. “NATO's strategy is designed to prevent a repeat of that disaster by providing the Afghan government with adequate security forces and encouraging political reconciliation between it and its enemies.” A stable Afghanistan is critical to the security of its people, the region and, as shown by numerous terrorist attacks planned and coordinated from within its territory, the rest of the world.

After months of difficult negotiations, the U.S. and Afghanistan signed a strategic partnership agreement in May 2012 that lays out the structure of U.S. involvement through 2024 and, according to *The New York Times*, “covers social and economic development, institution building, regional



A midwife counsels new parents on child care at a basic health center in Badakhshan.

USAID

cooperation and security.” A few days later, at NATO’s 2012 meeting in Chicago, countries in the coalition committed to “continuing financial contributions to Afghanistan’s security forces and to training and equipping them,” the *Times* said.

As noted in the 2006 Afghan development strategy report “The Afghanistan Compact,” security and development are two sides of the same coin. “Genuine security remains a fundamental prerequisite for achieving stability and development in Afghanistan. Security cannot be provided by military means alone. It requires good governance, justice and the rule of law, reinforced by reconstruction and development.” Development is impossible without security, but deep and lasting security cannot be achieved when basic needs are not met.

The Alliance partners recognize this duality and have committed to continued military and civilian support for Afghan development and security after ISAF’s combat mission ends. Despite substantial improvements in ANSE, according to the BBC, “many observers question how it would fare against the Taliban without help from NATO.” So, on the military side, the Allies will continue to train and provide intelligence support to Afghan security forces and Allied special operations teams will remain in a counterterrorism capacity to prevent the return of al-Qaida and its ilk.

On the civilian side, numerous nongovernmental and humanitarian organizations, from the United Nations Development Program to privately funded aid groups, such as the International Rescue Committee, are active. They provide food, shelter and medical care and are working to build schools, hospitals, roads, water treatment systems and all other infrastructure damaged and long neglected during the decades of war. For instance, much of the irrigation infrastructure was destroyed by the Soviet troops in the 1970s and never replaced through years of war, but Afghanistan has a largely arid climate and agriculture is highly dependent on irrigation. Afghanistan has always had a primarily agrarian economy and almost 80 percent of the population works the land, though most are engaged in subsistence farming. Irrigation infrastructure projects and introduction of more efficient agricultural techniques have already vastly improved agricultural output. In addition to feeding people, this has the added benefit of helping fight narcotics trafficking by reducing dependency on opium production.

## KEY TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT

PRTs will continue to play an important role in development. There are currently 26 PRTs spread throughout Afghanistan and NATO leadership views them as an important and effective tool, moving forward, in the development and rebuilding of the country. PRTs are a blend of military and civilian experts in engineering, agriculture and foreign

affairs that work together with Afghan partners to support development projects and help coordinate and provide security for projects of NGOs and aid agencies. A PRT from the Czech Republic operating in Logar province in south-east Afghanistan has been heavily involved in agricultural development projects, including training and seed distribution. The Czechs funded and facilitated the construction of four milk collection and cold storage facilities, which allow small farmers a centralized place to sell their milk, reducing spoilage and increasing production. A Lithuanian-led PRT in Ghor province, consisting of team members from Croatia, Denmark, Georgia, Japan, Romania, Ukraine and the United States, operates a police training center.

One purpose of the PRTs is to extend the authority of the Afghan central government while mentoring and facilitating local ownership of development projects. “The concept behind that is to help train, educate and create an environment within which governance can self-sustain,” UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan Representative Mark Ward said. The importance of Afghan ownership of all aspects of the processes cannot be overstated, as the building of a sovereign, peaceful and stable country – the primary goal of Allied operations in Afghanistan – would not be possible without determined Afghan leadership. “A paradigm shift is underway; the aim is sovereignty – empowering Afghanistan to take charge of its own destiny and turning direct military and civilian action of the international community into a supporting role,” Zahir Tanin, Afghanistan’s representative to the United Nations told the UN Security Council in March 2012.

The Afghan economy has been growing rapidly, at an average annual rate of 8.9 percent from 2002 to 2010, according to World Bank data. The Bank expects strong growth to continue; however, it underlines that most recent growth has been the result of foreign aid and security expenditures and warns that longer-term growth will depend on the effectiveness of economic development projects in areas such as mining and agriculture. The country has made huge improvements in key development indicators. The mortality rate for children under five has been almost halved since 2006. School enrollment is up by 600 percent and enrollment of girls is up more than 1,300 percent since 2001. Democracy is taking root, as well. Elections are still flawed, and official corruption is a serious problem, but average Afghan people, including women, have a voice in their government after years of repression. Women not only can vote, but 69 were elected to parliament in 2010. They have been freed to return to work, to go to school and to pursue professional lives, including service in the military and police. In early 2012, the Afghan National Army began training female commandos to serve with special operations units conducting counterinsurgency “night raids.”

## NEED FOR GOOD NEIGHBORS

Stability in Afghanistan will help breed stability in the entire region. To the north, Afghanistan is bordered by former-Soviet Central Asia, a region struggling to transition to democratic governance and integrate into the world economy. To the south is nuclear-armed Pakistan, still hosting almost 2 million Afghan refugees. Iran, also host to multitudes of Afghan refugees, lies to the west. A peaceful and stable Afghanistan could allow over 2 million Afghan refugees to return, alleviating their neighbors of the burden, and spur widespread economic growth in the region as security brings new industries and opens up trade corridors closed for decades.

Pakistan, the most important neighbor, has a complicated relationship with Afghanistan. The countries' border splits the large Pashtun ethnic group. Pakistan was one of only three countries to recognize the Taliban government in Afghanistan, yet it signed on early as an important regional ally in the NATO undertaking to oust the Taliban and destroy al-Qaida. Pakistan benefits from a stable Afghanistan, as unrest increases the flow of refugees and the threat of Islamist militancy spilling over and contributing to Pakistan's own militancy problems.

Pakistan worked with the West to provide a base of support for the mujahedeen's fight to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan in the 1970s and the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency maintained close links with the Taliban in the decades that followed. According to the 2010 Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) Independent Task Force report, Pakistan also has a complex relationship with Islamic militants within its own borders. Associations and loyalties have blurred. It is clear that Pakistan would like an Afghanistan that is nonthreatening to its interests and one that is stable enough not to export radicalism and refugees.

Though some Central Asian countries are rich in energy and other natural resources, the region has suffered from corruption and organized crime, fed by narcotics trafficking out of Afghanistan; violent extremism, influenced by the proximity of the Taliban and its extremist ideology; and ethnic discord. Peace and stability in Afghanistan would lessen the strain on these countries, while creating economic benefits for all. Indeed, a stable Afghanistan could link Central Asia to the India's booming markets.

Russia, China and India also have interest in stabilizing Afghanistan. Russia has been battling a domestic drug addiction epidemic, fed largely by Afghan heroin, which, like in Central Asia, cultivates organized crime and corruption. All of the regional players would accrue economic benefits from increased trade and economic activity integral to peace and stability. The CFR report hopes that, moving forward, "the reduced NATO commitment to Afghanistan could lead states like China, Iran, and Russia

– which contribute little to security efforts and pursue self-serving agendas – to think more seriously about issues of regional security," leading to a regional initiative that could spark a workable Afghan peace settlement.

## SPREADING THE WORD

Allowing for the obvious difficulties of nation-building thousands of kilometers from home, NATO's plan is working. Progress has been slow and hard to achieve, but Afghanistan is becoming increasingly stable and a lasting peace seems achievable. The population is war weary and yearns to be sovereign and free of foreign soldiers. But for success to continue, the Alliance needs to win the battle of public opinion and make the case to the Afghans that NATO can continue to help the country move forward; to build on the fragile progress already made.

The International Council on Security and Development (ICOS) did a survey of students at Kabul University in 2011. The study found that this elite group of young Afghans generally looked favorably on the international military presence and the international community's political and security goals that are supportive of democracy and women's rights, but are often hostile towards ISAF's actions. ICOS says this indicates that "the international mission has won their minds but not their hearts" and points to a failure in strategic communications.

Even more troubling, the survey revealed a "widespread lack of knowledge of the 9/11 attacks," indicating that after 10 years of military intervention, the international community has failed to make understood, even to an educated segment of the Afghan population, what provoked the intervention in the first place.

Political leaders in NATO countries will also need to win the battle of public opinion at home. It's been more than 11 years since NATO intervened in Afghanistan, a period twice as long as World War II. The war is increasingly unpopular in NATO countries. Almost 3,000 Alliance troops had been killed as of April 2012, and hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent. NATO has made a commitment to support Afghanistan's development and reconstruction and to defend her fragile democracy, but to fulfill that commitment, NATO leaders will need to persuade the voters that the Afghanistan project remains a good investment, not only in Afghanistan's future, but in world peace. The CFR report "U.S. Strategy for Pakistan and Afghanistan" sums up what's at stake:

"All of Afghanistan's neighbors may already be hedging their bets in anticipation of a return to Afghan civil war. Renewed competition for influence in Afghanistan has the potential to rip the country apart, despite the fact that each state in the region would benefit far more from a period of peace and stability. Afghans would again suffer



Afghan children sit in a classroom in Kabul. The number of children enrolled in school has increased more than sixfold since 2001.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

the most, with millions of refugees streaming across the borders into Pakistan, Iran, and elsewhere. Pakistan and the Central Asian Republics, already fragile, would be especially threatened by the turmoil of a renewed proxy war in Afghanistan. Moreover, the world would suffer if Afghanistan's internal conflict permits a return of al-Qaeda and other international terrorists."

### STICKING AROUND

The Taliban, while not defeated, have been reduced as an effective military force and, given the great strides in capabilities made by the ANSF, with assistance from NATO, are probably no longer an existential threat to the government. U.S. Adm. James Stavridis, NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, told The Associated Press that a third tranche in the security transition would soon begin, placing over 75 percent of the population under the protection of the ANSF.

Evidence of Afghanistan's increasing stability was evident in the aftermath of the April 2012 attacks. Though somewhat

hysterical early reports in the Western media compared the attacks to Tet Offensive from the Vietnam War, the attackers failed to breach any secure areas and casualties were relatively light. Observers in Kabul noted that life had returned to normal just a few hours after the attack. Despite these signs of progress, continued success isn't guaranteed and a premature withdrawal would put all of the accomplishments in jeopardy. "It's important that all ... ISAF nations and other nations involved in international effort contribute to Afghan security forces post 2014," Stavridis said.

As British Prime Minister David Cameron told Parliament in March 2012: "Our mission in Afghanistan remains vital to our national security. Our task is simple," he said. "It's to equip the Afghan government and forces of Afghanistan with the capability and the capacity to take care of their own security without the need for foreign troops on the soil." Continued success to meet the goals stated by Prime Minister Cameron will require a recommitment by the Allies and the government and people of Afghanistan. □



A young Afghan girl waits to receive a blanket from Afghan National Police during an ISAF reconstruction team visit to an orphanage in Khost City.

MASTER SGT. MATTHEW LOHR/U.S. AIR FORCE

# Lessons FROM AFGHANISTAN

*Adherence to key principles can aid stabilization  
and reconstruction operations*

BY ADRIAN MATEI, TRANSATLANTIC DIPLOMATIC FELLOW, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The ever increasing pace of change in the world is not only producing shifts at the strategic level but also has the potential to impact our human domestic environment more and more directly. The challenges we face on the world stage intermingle and overlap, generating composite risks whose implications and effects are not always easy to understand and foresee. The stakes are raised ever higher as increasingly parsimonious budgetary policies have become the norm and national policymakers' agendas have been increasingly overtaken by domestic priorities. To play a relevant role on the world stage, a nation must thoroughly rethink its approach and reconsider the instruments available for external action. There is an urgent need to reassess and modernize some of the major pillars of traditional foreign action, especially in the area of civilian crisis management.

As we are all aware, nowhere has the interdependency between NATO member countries' defense and global security trends been more clearly highlighted and the solution more plainly acknowledged than in the Afghan theater of operations. As stated in the declaration by the heads of state and government of nations contributing to the UN-mandated, NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan issued at the Lisbon Summit: "Afghanistan's security and stability are directly linked with our own security." The declaration emphasizes the essential role of civilian power, stating that "success cannot be achieved by military means alone" and "increased coordination among key international stakeholders in Afghanistan, working in a comprehensive approach involving both civilian and military actors" is to be pursued. More recently, at the Chicago Summit, the Allies acknowledged that "a number of vulnerable, weak or failing states, together with the growing capabilities of non-state actors, will continue to be a source of instability and potential conflict" while, at the same time, reaffirmed their commitment to support Afghanistan in its Transformation Decade beyond 2014.

The Afghan experience provides us with empirical arguments for asserting that one of the essential tools of any relevant foreign action today is the capacity to run successful

conflict prevention, stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction operations. There are two major reasons why this emerging toolkit for external action is increasingly gaining prominence. First, the epicenters of most of the major security challenges we face today are to be found within fractured societies or failing states, and the only adequate remedy is to deal with the root causes of these failures comprehensively. Faced with most of today's conflicts, the military can deliver quick solutions in a short time, but the military is not designed to deal with the diffuse and sensitive nature of the sources of most crises. Additionally, domestic public opinion will not support an exclusively military resolution. Therefore, to achieve credible, equitable and sustainable results, we must lean more and more on diplomacy and development aid. Second, civilian crisis management stands out because the capacity for conflict prevention, stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction may be the best force multiplier there is in any soft power tool kit. One can hardly think of a more effective way of using the resources at our disposal than the ability to stabilize and prevent a crisis from breaking out. Thus "smart power" has become the name of the game, and conflict resolution has become one of the main drivers for streamlining and reforming modern diplomacy.

International efforts at reconstruction, particularly post-conflict reconstruction, are not, however, an invention of our age. An outstanding earlier example is the Marshall Plan, the post-World War II program that helped rebuild Western Europe. By laying the groundwork for sustainable structural and economic recovery within a secure political architecture based on democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights, the Marshall Plan is arguably the most successful reconstruction operation in modern history. With such an illustrious success in our not so distant history, it would appear that Europe has a ready-made blueprint for any post-conflict situation. Although this approach might seem to be the answer, it only fits the patterns of previous crises, while the questions have, in the meantime, almost completely changed. More recent cases, from the Balkans to Afghanistan, have shown that local culture and history,

economic trends and, most importantly, increasing interdependencies and the networking of our globalized world are examples of variables that must be factored in when searching for a solution to a crisis. There is no “one size fits all” answer, and the key to success is to keep an open mind, constantly questioning one’s own conceptual status quo and expressing a willingness to change course at any time.

Given the ongoing nature of such efforts, the domestic political implications for all involved, the investments in material resources required, the length of time dedicated, and the uncontroversial and worldwide accepted end-goals of international stabilization and reconstruction efforts, Afghanistan is a most appropriate case study for trying to identify challenges and lessons relevant to other stability and reconstruction operations of our age.

Before getting to strategic and operational considerations, one last jab at the conceptual framework: the need to dispel the myth of military primacy. While “the cavalry” will probably always get the headlines (military deployments get most media coverage and excite public interest) it is this author’s opinion that civilian assets are best positioned to mitigate post-conflict challenges. Despite the dominant narrative, it is the bland and inconspicuous civilian functionaries who are almost always the first in and last out. Diplomats and consular officers, international organizations’ representatives, businessmen and NGO activists are the first to enter the theater after a crisis (that is, if they ever left) and they continue to be present and engaged long after the media and political decision-makers have lost interest in that story. More than just being present, by being more flexible and responsive to local nuances they are better positioned to observe and act without creating unintended consequences or offending the locals.

## OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Several crosscutting benchmarks can be taken into consideration when conducting operations. These relate to diplomatic engagement, crisis communication, team security and the legal “compass.” All of these are useful, but none is perfect:

**Diplomatic engagement:** Regardless of the intensity of the crisis, moral controversies, legal challenges or logistical difficulties, as long as a reconstruction team is deployed in a theater, it and/or the diplomatic representatives of the state or organization for which it acts should try to engage fully with as many actors in that environment as possible. It is of paramount importance to understand their capabilities and communicate them to the decision-makers back in the national capital as early as possible because this is key to the mission’s crisis contingency planning.

**Crisis and strategic communications:** In coordination with the operational headquarters, a strategic communications plan targeting host nation, international, and contributor state based audiences should be developed. All involved need to understand the scope and limitations of the kinds of assistance that can be provided and ensure that commitments can be met. Managing the expectations of both the

recipient of assistance and the contributor plays a pivotal role in the mission, as both can veto the end-goal of the operation, and, ultimately, determine how success is defined.

**Taking care of the team:** The mission’s staff can also be victims, and security is the top priority. Flexibility in deployment is a virtue in itself and reconstruction teams must always be ready for draw downs and evacuations. It is important that leadership understand the full range of options available when operating in what might be an extremely sensitive environment. (In Afghanistan, this has amply been illustrated by the murder of eight UN personnel in Mazar-i-Sharif in April 2011 or the dozens of casualties recorded in nationwide riots in early 2011, both instances triggered by the unpredictable circumstances of alleged Quran desecration.) When considering authorized or ordered departure, one must also ponder what would constitute realistic and attainable reverse tripwires for returning the mission to normal status. Being part of a network, teams should always be attuned to changing circumstances in neighboring areas as they may be summoned to support evacuees, operations, rescue efforts or humanitarian assistance.

**Clear enunciation of legal (and moral) benchmarks:** In the long term, it is almost always counterproductive to let a pseudo-pragmatic, Machiavellian and lawless approach take over the agenda. Despite short-term setbacks, the typical engagement should have a predictable, law-based vision that will ensure that the overall operational narrative keeps the moral high ground.

## STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

While usually possible only in ideal situations, preparing for contingencies is always preferable to spontaneous responses when a crisis occurs. It is unlikely that a general approach can be developed with universal applicability, but some of the following suggestions may be useful when defining planning guidelines or developing policies:

**Avoid setting ambitious but vague targets as well as falling for the magic of the holistic approach:** The risk of overstretch is all too real as, on one side, the host nation risks being overwhelmed by projects it has limited capacity to deal with, while, on the other hand, programs seem to start responding more to the domestic concerns of the contributing nation than to the needs encountered in the field (“ghost in the machine” projects, etc).

**Focus on building strong, sustainable, free-standing institutions:** These have a high probability of generating and transmitting benign influences on the rest of the normative set-up (justice and home affairs, media, small- and medium-size businesses, education, women’s empowerment, etc.). The goal is not nation building – a vague and overambitious aspiration – but institutional consolidation. Planning for transition and transfer of responsibilities should be envisaged as early as possible. Ideally, no deployment should start without a feasible exit-strategy at hand. This does not necessary link with the concept of withdrawal but rather with flexibility and the ability to engage repeatedly when circumstances are favorable. This also emphasizes the role of



strategic planning and cooperation with the host country, as even the most brilliant assistance operation will fail without a reasonable follow-up.

Emphasize structural prevention, accountability, truth and reconciliation and transitional justice: The linchpin of most stabilization and reconstruction efforts is getting the local parties to acknowledge that fundamental change is necessary. To break the cycle of violence, the affected population has to break with the past, as tragic history has to be recognized and assimilated. The obvious way to avoid a relapse to the crisis-prone paradigm is to come to terms with history, learn its lessons, and incorporate them as solutions in the new dominant normative architecture of the host nation.

Shun overreliance on technology: Technology is simply a tool that can't by itself generate positive evolution. It is not a silver bullet. In fact, most of the world, and especially the man-made crisis-prone areas, are technologically underdeveloped and rely mainly on human interactions.

Examine the profile of the contributor's human resources, especially of deployed personnel: Given the novelty of these operations and the way the media usually report on them, they tend to appeal more to those, among contributor nation professionals, with a penchant for adventure.

Operations, however, have turned out to be both grizzlier and more inspirational than just a typical, colonial-style escapade. People operating in the theatre, where success and failure occur routinely without headlines and fanfare, need to have outstanding self-discipline, a moral "gyroscope" and an affinity for clockwork detail and precision. They also need to be prepared, intellectually and physically, for the kaleidoscope of scenarios and ferocious experiences they will encounter. In our globalised world, with no place left untouched by modernity, this is as close as our generation gets to stare into its very own "heart of darkness."

Build host nation ownership and capacity: Too overt foreign backing of any particular person or movement will compromise them in the eyes of their local supporters. In addition, since any authentic democracy is built on local ownership, foreign support should steer clear of anything interpreted as lecturing and be based instead on the idea of

equal partnerships. Similarly, recruiting human resources from the communities in which the mission is deployed and operates is priceless. Crisis-hit societies breed specific political cultures in which the spirit of civic responsibility wanes and people draw on tightknit tribal and ideological support and on networks mostly built on relationships and trust that

are notoriously difficult for outsiders to influence. Besides injecting social capital and slowly allowing for dividing and moderating bellicose factions, local engagement also has the advantage of balancing and managing the security risks faced by the reconstruction team, respecting the dignity of the engaged locals and building local capacity.

## CONCLUSION

Even if no feasible operation is capable of establishing a Western-style democracy in Afghanistan, the mission was and is well justified. However, whether it will be a success, in terms of preventing the export of terrorism from Afghanistan and the nation's security forces managing the domestic status quo, can only be ascertained years from now. A general observation is that political progress is falling behind military and security developments, a trend that is unlikely to be sustainable.

Recognizing the context, mapping the circumstances and planning in advance

helps to assess how a crisis is likely to evolve in the future. Clearly there will be variables, but a focus on some of the key factors provides a good starting point, especially when the price of failure is increasing the risk of having to come back and/or face metastasis of the crises. This article has tried to evaluate a deliberately brief but broad range of considerations aimed more at starting a debate than at framing a conceptual paradigm. By the time these words are published, readers will be able to add their own postscript as to which of these suggestions are appropriate and why. But whatever the range in terms of the significance of actors and issues, crisis management and reconstruction operations will continue to represent one of the most substantive areas of present day foreign policy. □

*Afghanistan is a most appropriate case study for trying to identify challenges and lessons relevant to other stability and reconstruction operations of our age.*



Afghanistan's new parliament is sworn in on January 2011. Establishing rule of law will help stabilize the country.

Information in this article is current as of May 2012. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. State Department or the U.S. Government.

A pair of hands, one on the left and one on the right, are shown from the wrist down, holding a small, vibrant green plant seedling with several leaves. The hands are positioned over a dark, rich soil surface. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the skin and the soil.

WORKING  
*with the*  
AFGHANS

*By*

PETERIS VEITS  
MARSHALL CENTER ALUMNUS, LATVIA

International donors need to improve the way  
they deliver assistance to Afghanistan

## *In the 20th century,*

the international community repeatedly failed to facilitate the stabilization of Afghanistan at crucial stages of its development. This failure has caused a boomerang effect, making subsequent re-engagement by international actors more costly for both the Afghans and the international forces involved. The United States and the United Kingdom did not support the reforms of Afghan King Amanullah Khan back in the 1920s, and similar opportunities were wasted in the 1950s by ignoring then Prime Minister Mohammad Daud's cooperation inquiries and his drive for Afghan modernization. As a result, Afghanistan drifted into the Soviet sphere of influence. Later on, the international community did not engage and effectively manage the post-Soviet-Afghan war chaos in the 1990s, a perfect example of how sudden departures can leave behind poorly equipped governments.

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Darulaman Palace, built in 1923 by reformist King Amanullah Khan to house the Afghan parliament, was destroyed in the civil war. The Afghan government has proposed rebuilding it but lacks money for the project. REUTERS



2014, the deadline set for NATO withdrawal, is approaching fast. However, there are strong indications that NATO-led military operations might end even sooner. After that, the primary focus of international assistance will be “civilian boost,” or engagement in governance capacity building and development cooperation. This shift sets a significant milestone for the international community’s engagement in Afghanistan, as well as inviting a sober self-assessment of what has been achieved and what still needs to be done. Civilian-led efforts have been ongoing in Afghanistan since the beginning of the current war, but have not been as successful as desired. Bearing in mind the tight drawdown schedules currently on the table and predicted reductions in international aid, there is little hope that civilian efforts will succeed. The success of these efforts can only be achieved as a result of serious self-critical evaluation, in which shortcomings are acknowledged and appropriate changes pursued.

### GOVERNANCE, RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Since the early years of NATO engagement in Afghanistan, there seems to have been a basic understanding of what needs to be done to develop well-functioning institutions and basic infrastructure that would allow for a successful exit strategy. However, those requirements have not found their way into a clearly defined and universally agreed strategy implemented through cooperative development policies. If we take a look at the pillars of the International Security Assistance Force, *security* has received most of the Allies’ attention; *reconstruction and development* have brought some progress but at the perceived waste of donors’ funds; while strengthening *governance* has performed the lowest so far.

For various reasons, too much focus has been placed on quick-fix solutions. Many existing Afghan institutions are facing serious professionalism and public confidence issues, making it even harder to reform and achieve desired performance outputs within desired deadlines. The Afghan National Police is a good example: The international community, at the cost of sustainability, chose to establish parallel mechanisms that seemed to address issues much more efficiently, such as the creation of the much debated Afghan Local Police in Afghanistan’s rural areas. Although this is a short-term solution to urgent problems, it takes resources away from capacity building of original law enforcement institutions that will have to operate long after ad-hoc units are incorporated into the Afghan police force structure.

Few will argue that governing can be based on the army and police alone, even if these forces are functioning well. The government’s legitimacy will depend on its ability to provide services, the most urgent being justice and the rule of law. While the national government is not capable of providing justice around the country, the Taliban are more than happy to provide these services in their own distorted way. Thus, to prevent Afghanistan from transforming from a criminalized war economy to a criminalized and unstable peace economy, one of the most urgent requirements is building a relevant judiciary and other law enforcement structures.

If measured by treasure and promises, investments in development cooperation and governance building have yet to yield matching results. Measuring inputs, rather than outputs, has created an illusion of current or impending success. This provides a distorted picture to the decision-makers and disillusion the Afghans, who do not see the promises and well-advertised enormous expenditures materializing into improvements in their own well-being. Throwing money at a problem as soon as it arises seldom delivers the desired outcome. A more realistic and result-oriented approach is needed.

### ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

A large part of the blame should be shared by the international donor community. An extremely fragmented and nontransparent decision-making system for development cooperation projects has made a truly strategic approach to nation building impossible. The result is an almost annual shifting of priorities and contribution levels that depend on donors’ domestic considerations. Since the early years of engagement in Afghanistan, the ambitions of international donors – in terms of achievable goals – have been constantly shrinking. The Afghanistan National Development Strategy, approved at the Paris Conference for Afghanistan in 2008, has much lower and realistic objectives than the Afghanistan Compact, adapted at the London Conference in 2006. Both documents acknowledge the need to channel a much larger portion of development and reconstruction funding through the Afghan government. Nevertheless, in 2010, when the Kabul Conference took place, 80 percent of international assistance went directly to projects in the field without first passing through Afghan ministries. Commitments made by the international community at the Kabul Conference aim to reduce this amount to 50 percent by 2012. Donors still prefer to manage assistance programs themselves or allocate



Children attend a ribbon cutting to celebrate the reopening of a school in Herat Province. The school was damaged during fighting but rebuilt with foreign aid.

referenced aid to projects they are more comfortable with. However, this also increases fragmentation of aid, making assistance much harder to coordinate and choosing which programs to support much more dependent on shifts in donor countries' domestic policies.

Even with a coherent strategy for stabilizing the country and developing governance, it would be a utopian task to implement it with the current donor-driven management system in place. Donor agencies and officials often do not even communicate among themselves. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has not been allotted any real authority, making real-world coordination of civilian assistance impossible. Donor coordination has not been systematic – it more often than not depends on individual initiatives and personal relations. In the end, the system does not look much different from the Afghan-style patronage networks that foreign donors criticize so extensively.


Development assistance and governance strengthening efforts, of both Afghan government and donor agencies, are also hampered by overreliance on centralized Kabul-oriented organizational structures. Strong and centralized government rule has never been successfully implemented in Afghanistan, despite its 250-year-old history as a unified state. Instead, the most important skill of successful leaders has been the ability to balance various regional and tribal interests. Therefore, the fates of governments and their legitimacy are decided in the regions, not in the capital.

Right now the limits of governance are most obvious in the provinces and districts where executive branches are underfunded and lack capacity, while the legislative ones are insignificant. As a result, services remain undelivered and the population is kept disillusioned about the capabilities of the Kabul government. Nonetheless, many donor agencies and organizations still rely on the expertise of their comparatively populous Kabul headquarters instead of expanding staff into the provinces. This often results in a rather limited understanding of what is really going on in the country and, most importantly, an obscuring of the needs and results of the assistance programs under their administration.

On the other hand, it becomes increasingly difficult to explain the costs of governance and development assistance to the citizens of donor countries, especially those struck by economic hardships. Donor fatigue is increasing, although there are practical considerations that might interest countries in continued engagement in development assistance exercises: Afghanistan, if it achieves administrative and economic self-sustainability, will be a great business partner. Because of its geographical location, it used to be a vital transit crossroads and has the potential to regain this status. It also possesses enormous mineral wealth, which would become available to global markets.

## THE CHALLENGE OF 2014

Afghanistan is approaching a time of change, and this important transition to Afghan sovereignty should benefit both Afghans and their international allies. However, as previously discussed, transitioning without sufficient preparation and care would risk wasting the international community's investment in Afghanistan. Therefore, a number



An Afghan telecommunications worker repairs telephone cables in Kabul. Despite progress, basic services and infrastructure are frequently unavailable outside major cities.

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Middle: Afghan President Hamid Karzai, right, and NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen speak at the presidential palace in Kabul in April 2012. Rasmussen renewed NATO's commitment to Afghanistan once combat troops withdraw in 2014.

Bottom: Afghan police officers graduate from a six-week Provincial Reconstruction Team police training program run by Canadian soldiers in Kandahar in February 2010.

of transition-related challenges need to be considered and addressed, each of which requires different inputs to provide satisfactory results.

The first challenge is building capacity in the entire rule-of-law sector, not just security institutions. Direct links between crime and security make issues such as drug trafficking, high crime rates, corruption and the involvement of criminal organizations in politics primary concerns for future stability in Afghanistan. As a result, developing a functional rule-of-law sector may be among the most crucial milestones in achieving long-term peace in Afghanistan.

Nation building is an effort that requires the cooperation of many varied actors. However, there has never truly been donor cooperation in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, trust between Afghans and the international community seems to be at the lowest ebb ever. The recent series of incidents involving international troops resulted in public relations disasters, adding fuel to the fire. On the other hand, increased attacks on international personnel – both military and civilian – by rogue or dissatisfied locals put the whole notion of development cooperation at risk. The killing of advisors in the Ministry of Interior in the winter of 2012, resulting in a significant reduction in civilian activities in Kabul, has already shown the threat that security incidents pose to the “civilian surge.” Upcoming reductions of international troops may place even more limitations on international development workers, without whose advice and oversight many donors may not be willing to entrust money to Afghan institutions.

According to the World Bank, withdrawals of international troops from conflict-affected areas tend to be followed by reductions in civilian aid, with negative implications for economic growth and governance service delivery. Considering the weight of donor contributions in Afghanistan’s budget and their importance to the economy in general, diminishing foreign aid could reduce Afghanistan’s growth rate by 50 percent or more, a factor that could cause the Afghan economy to collapse.

In addition, there are serious problems with efficiently allocating funds from the capital to the provinces and considerable weaknesses in government capacity at subnational levels. With aid levels decreasing and Provincial Reconstruction Teams wrapping up their work, many regions will face economic hardship. It is important not only to sustain development cooperation and governance support levels for many years to come, but also to pay close attention so that this assistance actually reaches intended recipients beyond Kabul.

The challenges faced by the current Afghan government and the international community are no less than before the military operation began. In some sectors, particularly governance and development, the challenges are even greater for the simple reason that these issues were not addressed during the reign of the Taliban and were of secondary importance during the military phase of NATO operations. However, not addressing these challenges

risks throwing Afghanistan back into despair and chaos. Therefore, it is crucial to focus all of the international community’s attention on developing Afghanistan after the troop withdrawal and avoid the temptation to declare victory, leave and forget.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Civilian assistance, although desperately needed, has not achieved the desired goals in Afghanistan, especially in the crucially important fields of developing operational governance and justice systems. However, success here will determine the outcome of stabilization in Afghanistan. Therefore, previous assistance setbacks must be reviewed and acknowledged to build upon those valuable lessons. All involved parties can use the last years of international military presence in Afghanistan to set the stage for improved UNAMA-led civilian assistance mechanisms, including more centralized donor coordination and security provisions for civilian personnel:

- Build development cooperation and governance under the auspices of joint Afghan-UN supervision, using a plan that is long-term oriented. Commitments should be evenly distributed over many years, even if a reduction in annual contributions is initially required. Just as rushing a transition to full Afghan control over security could be catastrophic for stability, sudden and large influxes of nonmilitary assistance could damage development, leading to more waste, corruption and public resentment.
- Channel a much larger proportion of aid through the Afghan government budget to mitigate the adverse economic impacts of declining aid. A transition to Afghan leadership in implementing development projects should be pursued and greater involvement of officials from respective Afghan ministries in management of aid programs should be practiced. However, this should be done with preparation and caution by engaging in concerted efforts to build local capacity and ownership.
- Manage the allocation of resources to the provinces and avoid large differences in spending among them. Development cooperation projects and technical assistance programs should deploy more personnel in the provinces instead of maintaining the current Kabul-centered presence in Afghan government ministries and the headquarters of donor organizations.
- Protect civilian aid workers through increased trust building and provision of security. That will help keep development programs running effectively after 2014.
- Maintain smaller numbers of international forces in the country even after the transition of responsibility to Afghan institutions. An international presence will be required for many years until Afghanistan develops the capabilities to stand alone. Rebuilding a country requires time and patience. □

# CALL OF DUTY

## Professional policeman Mohammad Agha puts his life on the line to protect the Afghan people

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. BENJAMIN WATSON/INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE–AFGHANISTAN



*“My purpose has always been to protect as many people in Afghanistan as I can.”*

~ Mohammad Agha

While serving as an Afghan policeman, Mohammad Agha has been shot multiple times and beaten almost to death for doing his job. Despite hardships Agha has never considered leaving his country or the people he spent nearly three decades protecting.

Lt. Col. Agha commands nearly 200 elite Afghan policemen who are helping to secure Highway 1, a road that cuts through Kandahar province and feeds one of the country’s primary economic hubs, Kandahar city.

In October 2010, Kandahar provincial Gov. Tooryalai Wesa toured the highway to showcase the progress made by Afghan security forces like Agha’s 2nd Battalion, 3rd Afghan National Civil Order Police Brigade, or ANCOP.

Agha is a calm and generous 47-year-old from Parwan province. He is married, has six children and lives in the home he inherited from his father’s father. Country is important to Agha, and protecting Afghan citizens has been his focus since he was a student in high school.

### EARLY YEARS

The early 1980s were difficult and dangerous, Agha said, and few schools were open then. The Russian army had come into Afghanistan, but the Afghan police still protected the neighborhood around his school, located near what is now Bagram Air Field.

“When I was a school student,” he said, “our high school was close to the district center. So when I would see the police, they were very nice and very professional.” The demeanor and professionalism of those police had a lasting impact on Agha. At the age of 20, in 1983, he joined them.

Over the years, that decision would earn him numerous enemies and cost him dearly in terms of physical pain. But it



ANCOP Maj. Nahmattullah, left, and Lt. Naqib, center-right, talks with villagers during a morning patrol in Zhari district, Kandahar province, Afghanistan.



is a decision that Agha said he does not regret. He always wanted to be a kind and professional policeman, like those he knew as a youth in Parwan. Those police kept their poise, he said, even in the face of the Russian army.

### FRACTURED HISTORY

Keep in mind, Agha explained, that Afghanistan has had a rough and fractured history in the past 30 years. “First there was Afghanistan, then there were the Russians, then the mujahedeen and now the Taliban. But I am not about ideology,” he said. “My purpose has always been to protect as many people in Afghanistan as I can.”

During Agha’s tenure he has worked with Americans, the mujahedeen, the Afghan government, and, because of his fluency with their language, even the Russians.

But for everyone in Afghanistan with whom he has worked, there was always one group he could never stomach. It is the same group that beat him to within an inch of his life: the Taliban.

The government was essentially dissolved at that time, and he was protecting his home village with policemen he’d known and trusted for more than a decade. “Fourteen years ago, the Taliban came to our homes in Parwan and told everyone to leave,” he said. “They came to our villages and spread word that they were taking over.”



An ANCOP policeman sets up a security position during a joint Afghan–Coalition patrol in Zhari district, Kandahar province.

*“The ANCOP come right in here and start talking to the kids like old friends, like they’ve always known each other.”*

~ Mohammad Agha

For more than two weeks in 1996 the Taliban left the villagers alone, Agha said. It was a move intended to convince citizens that the Taliban would respect their way of life and not harm them. “The 17 days of calm were meant to win us over,” he said.

But once the 17 days passed, they were all forced out of their homes and subjected to the brutal and strict Taliban way of life. Those who resisted, like Agha, were beaten severely. But the worst was losing his home: “It is very offensive to force an Afghan citizen out of their home without their consent,” he explained.

In short, the Taliban made a lifelong enemy of policeman Mohammad Agha. For the next five years, he resisted Taliban rule with any and every Afghan policeman that would join him.

“The front lines of this battle happened where Bagram Air Field is now,” he said. “During one attempted ambush, I was shot in my left hip protecting Afghans in Parwan.”

Five years later, Agha said, he was recognized by the new government of President Hamid Karzai for his loyalty to the Afghan people. In 2001, he was promoted to police lieutenant colonel.

#### **NEW GOVERNMENT, NEW LIFE**

From his years in the 1980s as an entry-level policeman to his time as an ANCOP commander, Agha has been to every province and almost every district in Afghanistan. All the while, he said, his personal and professional philosophy has remained the same: “I have tried to protect as many people of Afghanistan as I can.”

One of his latest missions as police commander has taken him to Kandahar province, where tribal loyalties run deep. But he hopes those loyalties are not so deep that they cannot be overcome with the professionalism of his policemen.

“We’ve got an entire battalion of policemen coming into a district to provide security for a people none of them have ever met before, and many don’t even speak the same language,” said the U.S. Special Forces team leader whose detachment was partnered with Agha’s battalion.

A majority of Agha’s policemen are from provinces whose primary language is Dari. Kandahar residents, on the other hand, speak primarily Pashto. “Yet the ANCOP come right in here and start talking to the kids like old friends, like they’ve always

known each other,” the team leader said. So far they’ve been doing very well, he added.

None of Agha’s policemen have left the ranks, they have lost no property and none of his men have even been seriously harmed. All of them still report to duty.



ANCOP police watch for threats while partnered with U.S. Special Forces, left, on a joint patrol in Zhari district, Kandahar province.

Afghan children greet an ANCOP policeman during a patrol in Zhari district, Kandahar province.



“A lot of these guys don’t even want to leave their checkpoints,” said the Special Forces team leader. “They inherited these checkpoints from various other [Afghan National Security Forces] units while those guys retrain; and since the ANCOP have started working the checkpoints, they’ve beefed up the fortification with sandbags and dug-in trenches. They’ve basically adopted the checkpoints as their very own.”

Agha’s men seem to be adopting the same model of policing that motivated him almost 30 years ago. “They’re a solid group of guys,” said a Special Forces weapons sergeant working with Agha’s men in Zhari district. “It’s good stuff when you see them sitting down with the kids and the guys in a village they happen to be patrolling through that day.”

“Of course, nothing is so perfect that it doesn’t need fixing,” he added. “But they’re well on their way to operating independent of any partner force. At the end of the day, that’s the ultimate goal.”

“I know it’s not feasible, but I wish that every [Afghan National Security Forces] unit could have the same partnership with Special Forces as we have had,” Agha said. “We’re really proud of them and they should be proud of themselves.” □



PAMELA SMITH/INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE-AFGHANISTAN

Gen. David Petraeus, former commander of ISAF and U.S. Forces in Afghanistan, right, shakes the hand of an ANCOP patrolman. Petraeus praised ANCOP as “a critical pillar” in the Afghan National Security Forces.

# SECURING THE *Neighborhood*

## STABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN REQUIRES GREATER INTEGRATION WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

BY DR. GREGORY GLEASON AND MAJ. TIMOTHY A. KRAMBS, MARSHALL CENTER

Successful war strategies conclude with successful peace strategies. Afghanistan's transition from armed conflict to a stable, secure and developing society depends on its capacity to overcome a fundamental conundrum: Economic development cannot take place in the absence of a secure environment. At the same time, a secure environment cannot long be sustained without progress in economic development. Overcoming this fundamental challenge will define Afghanistan's success in the years ahead. The drawdown of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is a phased aspect of the transition to national authority and the stabilization of Afghanistan. International coalition troops are scheduled to be reduced in number at the same time as Afghan security forces assume responsibility for the country's security.

During the transitional period, Afghanistan will continue to be heavily dependent upon foreign partners. Although the relationship with Pakistan will likely continue to be troubled for the foreseeable future, Afghanistan must endeavor to build and maintain stable and secure relations with as many neighboring countries as possible. Afghanistan also will need continued international assistance to protect itself from foreign threats and also from insurgents acting within its borders and from abroad. Afghanistan's relations with its neighbors will continue to be a high priority. The modern world requires secure borders, but it does not require closed borders. In the 21st century, international trade, international investment and the cross-border movement of ideas, people, goods and services are necessary components of both economic and political development in any country. In landlocked Afghanistan, relations with neighboring countries define in many respects the interactions with the outside world as a whole.

### *Overcoming Afghan Isolation*

More than three decades of armed conflict in Afghanistan have taken a heavy toll on the country's ability to interact with the outside world. Afghanistan, at the time of the attacks launched by al-Qaida extremists on the United States in September 2001, was one of the world's least globally integrated countries. Road, rail and air linkages were backward, small in number and limited to connections with only a few countries. In October 2001, the first international coalition forces entered Afghanistan to deny al-Qaida sanctuary. The December 2001 Bonn conference, held under United Nations auspices, sketched the basic outlines of Afghanistan's new national government. In 2003, under UN mandate, the ISAF assumed





An Afghan farmer reaps wheat outside Kabul. ISAF reconstruction teams are helping Afghan farmers increase yields by rebuilding irrigation infrastructure and teaching modern farming techniques.

UNITED NATIONS

Afghan President Hamid Karzai and U.S. President Barack Obama sign a strategic partnership agreement in May 2012 at the presidential palace in Kabul. The agreement provides U.S. military and financial support to Afghanistan through 2024.

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responsibility for supporting the newly established Afghan government. NATO led the effort to establish security conditions for Afghanistan's reconstruction while international organizations, multilateral donors and private business began the process of reconstruction. During this time, the bulk of freight movement for both military and economic purposes went through Afghanistan's southern transportation routes passing through Pakistan.

Afghanistan's southern transport routes, however, were limited in number and vulnerable to disruption by insurgents in such key bottlenecks as the Khyber Pass and were therefore inadequate for the demands of Afghanistan's reconstruction. From the earliest days of the U.S. presence in Afghanistan, there has been an effort to sponsor and facilitate greater regional cooperation in Afghanistan's stabilization and reconstruction efforts. In 2005, the U.S. State Department reorganized its bureaus, establishing a Central Asia and South Asia department, with the goal of linking the U.S. diplomatic and humanitarian assistance programs to promote better relations between Afghanistan and its northern Central Asian neighbors. In 2008, the U.S. Department of Defense undertook an effort to shift transport routes to the northern part of Afghanistan, creating new corridors for transport through the countries of Central Asia and Eurasia. The international coalition also shifted a large proportion of its freight movement from the southern routes to the northern routes. This "northern distribution network" promised to reduce the vulnerabilities of reliance on southern routes. At the same time, the northern routes offered a number of other very important advantages. For instance, NATO partners are deeply committed to promoting regional development. Increased reliance on the transportation infrastructure in these Eurasian countries offers an important commercial multiplier effect for private sector development.

The linkage of Afghanistan to its neighbors in the north and south is not a new idea. It is a very old one. Central Asia's "silk road" was a conduit of trade and interaction even before the time of Marco Polo. Recent conflict and extremism have isolated Afghanistan, but the country has real potential to once again become a transit route for commerce. As U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in a speech in Chennai, India, on July 20, 2011, "the 'new silk road' is a long-term vision of an international economic and transit network that links Central and South Asia, with Afghanistan at its heart." The emphasis on northern transportation routes creates new opportunities for greater mutual interaction with Afghanistan's northern neighbors. Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan share immediate borders with Afghanistan, but the movement of economic and military supplies through the transportation infrastructure of roads, railroads, ports and air routes also involves a number of other actors throughout Eurasia, including the Caucasus and the Russian Federation. Afghanistan's other neighboring countries, China and Iran, also possess transportation routes, but these do not play a role in the northern distribution network.

### *Drawdown: Perspectives after the Bonn+10 Conference*

Facilitating Afghanistan's reintegration into its regional neighborhood requires a shift in the leadership of military operations from the international coalition to Afghanistan's national forces. In his December 2009 address to West Point cadets, President Barack Obama announced the U.S. plan for building Afghan capacity to allow for the transition of military responsibilities to Afghan authorities. President Obama announced a temporary surge in military capacity to promote conditions needed for the transition to Afghan military authority, beginning in July 2011. In May 2010, President Obama and Afghan President Hamid Karzai

agreed to update the 2005 “Joint Declaration of the United States-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership.” The declaration is expected to be a mutual statement of common interests but will also define parameters of the partnership by affirming the U.S. commitment to retain a sufficient presence as long as necessary while also demonstrating that the U.S. “does not seek any permanent American military bases in Afghanistan or a presence that would be a threat to any of Afghanistan’s neighbors.”

At the Lisbon Summit in December 2010, NATO announced that the drawdown in ISAF combat troop strength would take place in coordination with a transfer of lead responsibility to Afghan forces. President Karzai, speaking in Kabul on March 22, 2011, outlined the first stage of the transition plan to Afghan military responsibility. The transition continued in stages throughout 2011. A coordination meeting hosted by Turkey took place on November 2, 2011, in Istanbul. A larger, more comprehensive diplomatic meeting, hosted by the German government, took place in Bonn on December 5, 2011. The meeting was called “Bonn +10” because it was held a decade after the Bonn meeting of 2001 that originally outlined the framework of Afghanistan’s post-Taliban political development. The Bonn +10 Conference was considered the most important international summit to date concerning Afghanistan’s future. Many of the delegates who assembled in the Afghanistan-chaired conference arrived with optimistic expectations regarding the possibility of an Afghan-Taliban reconciliation that might bring an end to overt discord and pave the way for future normalization. This conference was attended by 85 national delegations and 15 international organizations. The conference focused on three main areas:

- the transfer of responsibility for security to the Afghan government by 2014;
- further international commitment to Afghanistan after the hand-over;
- the political process, i.e., national reconciliation and the integration of former Taliban fighters.

Those expecting a diplomatic breakthrough were disappointed. In the wake of an errant NATO airstrike in Pakistan’s territory, Pakistani diplomats used the incident as an opportunity to remonstrate with the NATO coalition, finally withdrawing from participation in the Bonn conference literally hours before the assembly convened. Pakistan resisted entreaties from the U.S. and other countries to use the conference as an opportunity, rather than squander the chance for discussion and negotiation. Taliban Leader Mullah Mohammad Omar, addressing a large public audience in the context of his Eid-ul-Fitr (Muslim holiday) message, averred that the conference was merely “symbolic.” With two key parties boycotting the conference, the potential for developing a comprehensive plan for reconciliation and normalization was diminished.

President Karzai pleaded for international aid as he laid out his vision for Afghanistan’s future as “a stable,

democratic, and prosperous country, a country that is the peaceful home of all Afghans, and that enjoys friendly, mutually rewarding relations with all its near and extended neighbors and beyond.” In April 2008, President Karzai solicited continued support for his key political priorities: to strengthen the rule of law, fight corruption, and counter the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of narcotics. To attain these goals and sustain developments in security and reconstruction, he requested \$10 billion annually during the upcoming years that he called the “transformation decade.” He also called for a new deadline, requesting political and military support until 2024 and financial assistance until 2030. The conference ended with the participants agreeing on the publication of rather vague “conference conclusions.” They established international assistance to Afghanistan following the 2014 NATO drawdown, “broadening and deepening their historic partnership ‘From Transition to the Transformation Decade of 2015-2024’ ” in the areas of governance, security, the peace process, economic and social development, and regional cooperation.

### *Partner Strategies*

Regional cooperation throughout Central Asia is important. Regional cooperation, however, is not merely a disinterested and mechanical economic process, but one that takes place within the framework of a specific set of cultural institutions. It is important to note that politics in Central Asia are heavily based upon circles of influence and cooperative relationships based on political exchange. These circles of influence cross many borders. Afghanistan itself is a mosaic of groups with strong ethnic and regional identification. Pashtuns are the largest ethnic group, followed by Tajiks, then Hazaras and Uzbeks, as well as a number of smaller groups, including the Aimak, Baluchi, Turkomen and Nuristani. The groups are regionalized, with the Pashtun and Baluchi predominantly in the south, the Uzbeks and the Tajiks in the north, the Hazaras in the northwest, the Turkomen in the north and the Nuristani in the east. Pashto and Dari are the two official languages of the country. Dari is spoken by at least half the population. Links between Afghanistan and its neighboring countries to the north are primarily cultural, but they can be expected to become increasingly commercial as infrastructural connections pull the countries closer together. There are particular interests that incline these states and communities toward some forms of cooperation while disinclining them toward others. The following brief overview of the Central Asian states illustrates the array of interests and objectives and gives insights into their relationships with Afghanistan.

**Kazakhstan:** Emerging as Central Asia’s economic powerhouse, Kazakhstan possesses a domestically cohesive political leadership that has shaped a “multivector” diplomatic strategy in which it attempts to play the role of a major balancing actor throughout Eurasia. Kazakhstan is a small state in terms of its 16 million population, but it is vast in terms of geographical stature; it is the ninth largest country in the world. Kazakhstan has passed through two decades of wrenching

economic reform and has emerged as one of the most economically successful post-Soviet states. Kazakhstan's ability to maneuver diplomatically through the numerous foreign policy trials it has encountered is in large part a testimony to the ability of Kazakh diplomats to exert political leverage. Diplomats have leveraged the country's pivotal position by persuading other states to also pursue the same objectives that Kazakhstan seeks. Kazakhstan avoids direct confrontation itself while steering others toward what it regards as beneficial counterbalancing policies. In July 2010, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced a \$50 million aid package to help educate a new generation of Afghan leaders. In June 2011, President Nazarbayev announced "it is possible that the SCO [Shanghai Cooperation Organization] will assume responsibility for many issues in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of coalition forces in 2014."

**Kyrgyzstan:** At the time of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Kyrgyzstan was among the most promising prospects for the emergence of post-communist democracy and market reform in the entire post-Soviet space. But after two decades of unstinting international financial support for its ambitious, pro-reform democracy and market programs, Kyrgyzstan continues to teeter on the edge of financial collapse and has survived successive convulsive changes of political power. Kyrgyzstan has complicated political relations with its neighbors concerning water and energy, as well as border disputes, and struggles to deal with the influence of political extremists. Kyrgyzstan's economic conditions and political vulnerabilities have inclined the leadership toward securing foreign development and security assistance. Kyrgyz authorities often discuss the necessity of choosing between an Eastern or Western orientation. In practice, they tend to choose both. Russian military forces were allowed the use of Kant Air Base not far from Bishkek, while U.S. forces were given permission to operate the Transit Center at Manas International Airport on the other side of Bishkek. Kyrgyzstan's East-West formula was balanced only in the sense that it represented a dynamic tension between two continually contending influences on the Kyrgyz government. This tension continues to be the most salient feature of Kyrgyzstan's foreign policy. It profoundly influences expectations regarding the Afghanistan drawdown.

**Tajikistan:** Afghanistan's domestic travail has sometimes been described as a war of a divided state in conflict with insurgents emanating from Pakistan's ungoverned territories. Deep ethnic and regional fissures in Afghanistan along ethno-cultural lines among the Hazara, Tajiks, Pashtun, Uzbeks and other peoples continue to complicate stabilization. The Afghan-Tajik populations have played a pivotal role in Afghanistan, occupying key positions in the previous Northern Alliance. The large and influential Afghan-Tajik population – in areas contiguous to the Tajik border and the Panjshir Valley – may play an important role in Tajikistan's future contribution to stabilization efforts.

**Turkmenistan:** Turkmenistan's foreign policy posture of "positive neutrality" emphasizes the country's national self-reliance strategy, which is based on natural gas revenues. In

theory, positive neutrality is based on autarkic commercial relations, implying mutually beneficial political relations with all and conflicting political relationships with none. In practice, positive neutrality meant maintaining as much distance as possible from hegemonically inclined countries without giving up access to Western gas markets that, by virtue of the possession of the fixed pipeline system, a few states continued to control. Turkmenistan was one of the few states to indicate an intention to diplomatically recognize the Taliban in the 1990s. It has pursued a very restrained foreign policy with respect to Afghanistan's stabilization, extending only discreet cooperation to ISAF in transportation measures.

**Uzbekistan:** In April 2008, President Islam Karimov announced a major initiative to improve international cooperation on reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. At the Bucharest NATO summit, Karimov stated that "Uzbekistan stands ready to discuss and sign with NATO the Agreement on providing for corridor and transit through its territory to deliver the nonmilitary cargos through the border junction Termez-Khayraton, practically the sole railway connection with Afghanistan." Karimov's "6+3 policy," which refers to close cooperation among the six Afghanistan "contact states" as well as Russia, the U.S. and NATO, was a significant breakthrough in stalled cooperative relations in the region. Karimov's policy was motivated by his government's desire to play a greater role in Afghan reconciliation and normalization. This also allows Uzbekistan to reposition its policies with respect to Russia, the United States and the European Union. A large and influential Afghan-Uzbek population in areas contiguous to the Uzbek border can also be expected to affect decisions about Uzbekistan's future contribution to stabilization efforts.

Afghanistan's stabilization is of exceptional importance to the countries of Central Asia. As the drawdown proceeds, these countries are likely to realize that Afghanistan's stabilization requires greater effort in terms of partner strategies. The withdrawal of international forces is not likely to lead to an abrupt and complete halt of fighting, but rather a reconciliation of disputes carried out in such a way that the strategy integrates societal segments into a progressively more stabilizing configuration of local actors. Confrontational, frontal combat operations at some point segue into awakenings of resourceful local factions that become positive agents of stabilizing change through counterbalancing, countervailing and counterpoising.

## *Future Perspectives*

In complex insurgency situations, such as those faced in Afghanistan today, the conclusion of a war strategy is not to press for a victory and unconditional surrender, nor is it to negotiate a bargain that would be a minimally ignominious withdrawal. The withdrawal of U.S. and ISAF forces in what is perceived as defeat would only lead to a Taliban resurgence and to greater peril for the Central Asian countries. It would also lend credence to the mythical impermeability of Afghanistan, dating back to the time of Alexander the Great, through the British experience in the 1830s and the 1870s and finally to the experience of the Soviets in the





Salang Pass in Parwan province, connecting northern Afghanistan and Central Asia to Pakistan, could once again become a key international trading route.

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1980s. It would badly damage America's image abroad and would lead to troubles rather than opportunities. The goal of policy should be neither provocative confrontation nor shrinking from challenges. The goal should be to reposition to take advantage of naturally occurring countervailing forces in the region. The best strategy for stabilization in Afghanistan includes measures for regional stabilization.

The drawdown of combat forces in Afghanistan is interacting with increasing regional cooperation. The Istanbul Process that followed the November 2011 Istanbul conference on Afghanistan is supporting greater regional cooperation. The Chicago NATO Summit Declaration in May 2012 reaffirmed the enduring NATO commitment to Afghanistan's stabilization and recovery, stating: "Afghanistan will not stand alone: we reaffirm that our close partnership will continue beyond the end of the transition period." The "Heart of Asia" conference in June in Kabul was another example of the continuing international cooperation.

There are other optimistic trends as well. The rising economic tide of the "Asian Century" is already having a profound impact on defining the connections between Afghanistan and its neighboring countries. Afghanistan's isolation from the world community—a major factor in the high-jacking of power by political extremists and terrorists leading to the events of 9/11—has largely been reversed by the US and ISAF forces. The next stage in Afghanistan's normalization may be marked by a transition fueled by the pull of commercial and political forces toward closer relations with its neighbors. Trends toward a normalized Afghanistan are building even as forces are beginning to withdraw. Trend is not destiny. But if these trends continue to build and are supported by greater regional cooperation, Afghanistan may return to the path that it was denied by the descending spiral of political extremism.

The U.S. is shifting away from its lead role in Afghanistan and is now emphasizing partnership capacity building and

shared resources. The administration and Congress, facing substantial debt and budget adjustments, are reluctant to continue funding a war without an easily identifiable conclusion. Still, there remains concern, not only among Afghanistan's neighbors and the international community, but also within the country itself, that militant groups might push Afghanistan back to violent conflict if insufficient foreign troops remain or if local security forces are incapable of successfully quelling insurgency. As the drawdown in the ISAF commenced in summer 2011, questions were raised in neighboring countries regarding the speed and scope of drawdown and the psychological effect it would have on insurgents and reconstruction "spoilers." The imminent reduction in combat force strength underscored the importance of renewed efforts at regional diplomatic coordination.

Whatever the goals established for Afghanistan's long-term development, the speed and scale of the drawdown of the ISAF have direct implications for Afghanistan's northern neighboring and partner countries. The reduction in foreign combat forces raises important questions for Afghanistan's northern neighbors as they anticipate shifts in the political atmosphere throughout Central Asia. What is the expected speed and scope of the reduction of combat force levels? How is the reduction of coalition forces coordinated with the increase in authority of Afghanistan's security forces? Will force reductions be conditioned upon political and military success even if the withdrawal of Western influence is perceived by Afghanistan's adversaries as an opportunity to exacerbate the current weakness of security forces? How do Afghanistan's neighbors share commitments in a common strategy toward regional stabilization? What specific strategies would lead to partner cooperation among Afghanistan's neighbors? These questions require informed and insightful responses. □

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Participants from Afghanistan, China, Germany, India, Russia, the United States, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan attend the March 2012 conference: "Afghanistan and Regional Security: Current Trends and Future Challenges."

## Afghan Conference at Marshall Center Channels Regional Security

By Jason Tudor, Marshall Center public affairs  
Photo by Marshall Center

**The future of Afghanistan after 2014 took center stage during a three-day conference held by three U.S. Department of Defense regional centers at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies on March 13-15, 2012.**

"Afghanistan and Regional Security: Current Trends and Future Challenges" included 17 participants from 11 countries including Afghanistan, China, India, Russia and the United States. Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan also sent representatives.

Providing keynote addresses were James Dehart, director of the office for Afghanistan at the U.S. Department of State, and Dr. Florian Reindel, deputy for the task force for Afghanistan/Pakistan at the German Foreign Office. Dehart said that having Afghanistan's regional neighbors in the room was vital to any discussion.

"With everything that we're trying to do with Afghanistan – support them through transition, trying to help them get an actual peace negotiation going with the Taliban – there is a very strong regional component to this," Dehart said. Dr. Reindel raised one of the guiding questions in

his keynote address: "What do we actually want to achieve in Afghanistan? The overarching goal of the international community is creating a sufficient, stable Afghan state that respects fundamental human rights and that is democratically organized, pluralistic and inclusive. Afghanistan must never again become a haven for international terrorism."

The co-sponsored event included seven participants from the Marshall Center, four from the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies and one from the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies. The Army's Foreign Military Studies Office at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, also provided a representative.

Over the course of three days, participants discussed topics such as "Afghanistan's development and its impact on bilateral relations with neighboring countries" and "National interests and roles in Afghanistan's neighbors and regional powers."

## AFGHAN TROOPS SHINE IN INTERNATIONAL SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES COMPETITION

By Samantha Krolkowski, U.S. Air Force

The Afghan National Army Special Operations Command (ANASOC) team placed 14th out of 32 international teams during the 4th Annual Warrior Competition in Amman, Jordan, in May 2012.

The competition was hosted to provide a global forum for the exchange of Special Operations Forces (SOF) and Counter Terrorism (CT) tactics and techniques. It also allowed soldiers to network, test new equipment and practices and engage in a challenging combat oriented competition.

In 2011, competing for the first time, the Afghans ranked last. This year's team was made up of men from the ANA Commandos and Special Forces, and their improvement can be attributed to weeks of training and mentoring from Canadian Special Operations Forces (CANSOF).

"Our feeling was that we were very proud, by bringing the Afghanistan Army, which is new, and participating against countries that have had a lot of time for training and development," said Capt. Abdull Matin, team leader for the ANASOC.

The event, broken into five days, was comprised of 32 international teams from North America, Europe, Africa and Asia. Each team participated in basic and advanced precision rifle events, methods of entry, precision pistol, a CT obstacle course and a tower run.

"Obviously the competition played a significant role for us. We were able to learn from the experience and the new equipment," Matin said. "Also, we were able to learn and exchange experiences with all of the NATO countries. It meant so much for us to represent our country and show that we really could keep up."

The ANASOC team trained 52 days for the event with equipment that most of their competitors would consider basic. "If they carry on with this same type of training next year and continue to evolve and prepare for this, then there's no reason they can't be in the top 10, or better, top 5," a CANSOF mentor said.

NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan is a coalition of 38 troop-contributing nations charged with assisting the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in generating a capable and sustainable Afghan National Security Force ready to take charge of their country's security by 2014. More information is at <http://www.ntm-a.com/>

Organizers pointed out that the conference was less a teaching session and more a listening session to "feel out" what was in the minds of regional neighbors. For instance, participants expressed concern over the announced withdrawal of U.S. combat troops by 2014 and how that could create an "atmosphere of strategic uncertainty" in the region.

"The panels and the working groups discussed ways bilateral or regional cooperation could ease uncertainty and bring greater stability," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Joe Matthews of the Marshall Center's plans and strategy division.

Having Russia participate in the discussion marked a significant step in the discussion process, Matthews said. Dr. Vadim Kozyulin, director of the program for conventional arms at the Russian Center for Policy Studies, said the United States and Russia have a vested interest in a post-2014 Afghanistan.

"It's very important to understand where we can find common ground. Obviously, different neighbors have different interests. We talk about what unites us – the stability in the region – but we look at this stability from different points of view. It's very important to collect knowledge about how people estimate the situation," Kozyulin said.

Another panel discussed the implication of a drawdown of the International Security Assistance Force. Other panels dealt with bilateral and regional cooperation, improving stability in the region, enhancing regional security and cooperation to counter narcotics.

"The energetic discussion in working groups outlined the diverse national approaches, but the overall consensus was that a regional approach would be beneficial," Matthews said.

At the end of the conference, working groups were given 15 minutes to summarize progress. They were asked to pass along what had been discussed as well as recommendations. Dehart said much of this discussion hinged on quick cooperation and trust by the members, which he believed the conference achieved. "The challenge in conferences like these is that the participants will fall into old habits. They'll focus on the shortcomings of one of the other governments, and get into a bilateral thing. Trying to draw them out and get them to talk about regional cooperation is always a challenge. I think it went very well," he said.

"It's pretty clear that there are some differences in perceptions, particularly from some of the participants from the Central Asian countries. It was helpful for them to hear straight from the Afghans and some other participants."

Kozyulin agreed with his colleague's assessment. "In the next couple of years, I feel that might become a place where we should unite to improve our relations. It's my belief that this is a field where the United States needs Russia. We have a long history here. A lot of our people know about Afghanistan, have been to Afghanistan, and have good feelings about Afghanistan," he said. □

A similar version of this article first appeared at [www.marshallcenter.org](http://www.marshallcenter.org)





## Unity through Training

Multinational troops prepare for Afghan deployment at training centers in central Germany

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By *per* Concordiam Staff

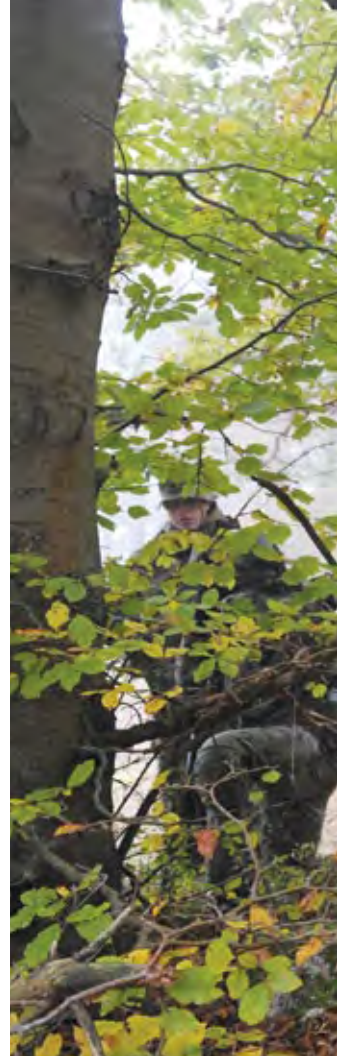
Romanian soldiers participate in Operational Mentor and Liaison Team training at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, a 2012 exercise to prepare troops for Afghan deployment.

SPC. KIRK EVANOFF/U.S. ARMY

A Georgian infantryman trains for a mission to Afghanistan at the U.S. Army's Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Germany. Georgian soldiers partnered with U.S. Marines to prepare for joint deployment.



GUNNERY SGT. ALEXIS MULERO/U.S. MARINES



**S**gt. Maj. Vladimir Smilianov was patrolling a dusty Afghan lane when his unit was confronted by an unarmed but irate villager complaining about the presence of coalition troops. “You are in my village,” the Afghan raged. “You don’t tell me where I can go.” Then Smilianov, a 20-year Bulgarian army veteran with a shaved head and the barrel chest of a wrestler, observed something he didn’t want to observe: A soldier in his unit started apologizing profusely to the Afghan civilian.

Wrong. All Wrong.

Fortunately for all parties concerned, Smilianov and his counterparts were engaged in a multinational simulation in the rolling hills of central Germany meant to mimic the atmosphere of a real Afghan deployment. The village was a reproduction, the Afghan an impersonator. The way Smilianov saw it, his American training partner provoked the Afghan by entering the village with his rifle leveled menacingly but forfeited his authority by apologizing too much after the fact.

“Some of the soldiers are so young,” said the Bulgarian infantryman, a veteran of countless multinational training exercises since the 1990s. “They should learn how to respect the locals from the beginning. If they don’t, there will be trouble.”

Such skill sharing – between old hands and new recruits, Europeans and Americans, NATO members and partner nations – is the main reason that the 7th U.S. Army’s Joint Multinational Training Command (JMTC) exists. Based in Grafenwoehr, Germany, on hundreds of square kilometers of converted swampland once used by the Kaiser’s imperial army, the JMTC uses a combination of live-fire training, readiness exercises, computerized battle simulations and classroom cramming to familiarize troops with upcoming missions.

The multinational forces flocking by the thousands to JMTC’s northern Bavarian training grounds have been heavily focused on Afghanistan in preparation for deployment to the International Security Assistance Force’s counterinsurgency effort in that country. “We always say we replicate, not duplicate,” said Lt. Col. Drew Brown, deputy director of computer simulations at Grafenwoehr, which trained 16,000 soldiers from 39 nations in 2011. “You give them a flavor of the tribal environment in Afghanistan, make it as real as possible.”

A rainbow of patches and uniforms representing more than 8,000 multinational troops thronged barracks, fields and classrooms in March 2012 for simultaneous exercises at Grafenwoehr Training Area and at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, the maneuver center, near the town of Hohenfels. About 2,000 of the soldiers participated in battle command training called Unified Endeavor meant to prepare headquarters staff, mostly mid-ranking officers, for impending deployment to ISAF and ISAF Joint Command headquarters in Afghanistan. The JMTC, in cooperation with NATO’s Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) in Stavanger, Norway, sponsored Unified Endeavor. Soldiers from Croatia, Germany, Latvia, Poland, Spain, the United States and two dozen other nations converged on JMTC’s simulation center wired with thousands of phone and computer lines linking Grafenwoehr with locations in Norway, Poland and the United States.



Polish soldiers paired with the U.S. Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team scan for targets during a simulated engagement hosted by the Joint Multinational Training Command in Grafenwoehr, Germany.

STAFF SGT. JOEL SALGADO/U.S. ARMY

Hundreds of training and simulation experts used “dynamic scripting” to ratchet up crises levels to test the skills and mettle of the soon-to-deploy headquarters staff. For realism’s sake, the JMTC and the JWC gathered input from seasoned personnel from Afghanistan. Their scenarios plugged in not only military movements on the ground but simulated political unrest that played off current events. “What we use is real world data,” said Lt. Col. Markus Beck, a Bundeswehr officer attached to the NATO training center in Stavanger. “We send our guys into Kabul to collect data we can work with.”

Maj. Eric Vercammen of Belgium, tasked in Afghanistan with procuring fuel for the ISAF mission, was happy for the opportunity to bond with his soon-to-be headquarters colleagues before shipping out. The 24-year veteran, attached to Eurocorps in Strasbourg, France, had already served in Lebanon and the Balkans. “The first objective is simply doing my job effectively as a staff officer,” Vercammen said a day before Unified Endeavor was scheduled to “go live” after months of planning. “The second main objective is team building. We train together and we deploy together.”

A few kilometers down a tree lined highway from Vercammen, the pop of sniper rifles echoed

through the glades of Grafenwoehr. Rows of Dutch Royal Marines were taking target practice, watched over by a noncommissioned officer in a spotting tower. “You have to train. You have to feel it. You have to smell it,” said Sgt. Maj. Peter Laurier, peering through the tower window towards the firing range as marines squeezed off shots at targets as far away as 1.7 kilometers.

In Afghanistan, the Dutch marines have helped train Afghan police officers, part of the transition and stabilization plan designed to make Afghans responsible for their own security. Preparation for that mission wasn’t lost upon Laurier. He and his colleagues planned to practice shooting and simulations at Grafenwoehr for three weeks. “The young marines, they want to be part of a mission,” he said. “If you want to be part of a multinational force, you have to be ready. That’s why we’re here.”

Readiness is what brought Sgt. Przemysław Jakubczak to Grafenwoehr. The Polish air force sergeant was stationed at Pápa Air Base in Hungary, home to the multinational Heavy Airlift Wing that has hauled thousands of tons of cargo and ferried more than 23,000 passengers to six continents. Jakubczak’s story encapsulates the essence of the JMTC: He’s a Pole training in Germany for service in Hungary in support of Afghanistan.

French Maj. Gen. Jean Fred Berger at the Unified Endeavor exercises in Germany in March 2012.



JOINT MULTINATIONAL TRAINING COMMAND

**F**rench Army Maj. Gen. Jean Fred Berger was appointed commander of NATO's Joint Warfare Centre in 2011, where he has helped knit together a multinational staff of more than 70. The Stavanger, Norway-based JWC is dedicated to training and war gaming. As such it took the lead in developing a training scenario aimed at the Horn of Africa called "Cerasia" and followed that up with a simulated exercise dubbed "Skolkan" that replicates a high intensity conflict in and around the Baltic Sea.

Trained at France's famed Saint Cyr military academy, Berger spent many years as chief engineer at Eurocorps, the rapid deployment force based in Strasbourg that can serve under both EU and NATO command. In that role he served with multinational peacekeeping forces in Bosnia and Kosovo. These days, Berger focuses mainly on the International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan.

The JWC prides itself on providing much of the training for staff officers bound for Afghanistan. Berger estimates that 60 percent of them have passed through Stavanger or its subsidiaries. "Priority one is Afghanistan," he said of his work. "It is first in line."

During joint training exercises in March 2012 in Grafenwoehr, Germany, Berger established a command post during the mission readiness exercise at Grafenwoehr. It was the first time the JWC and the JMTC had integrated training so thoroughly, and it represented for Berger a triumph of international military integration.

"We are not blind to the complexities of being together but what we want to do in the exercise is

overcome them," the general said as a multinational staff of Italian, French, German officers created a hive of activity in his office. A Norwegian flag, indicative of the JWC's Nordic headquarters, hung in the background.

Berger recalled the days of the Cold War, when Grafenwoehr would host 200,000 troops on maneuvers to defend against the potential Soviet threat. Today, high quality intensive training, much of it occurring at computer terminals, substitutes for those massive troop movements. While the JWC handles "strategic" training, its NATO partner in Poland, the Joint Force Training Centre, handles training more at the tactical level.

The link-up of Norway and Poland highlights for Berger the successful assimilation of NATO members that once belonged to the Warsaw Pact. "It has been achieved," Berger said of the Alliance's Eastern European integration. "I don't see any difference between an officer from Latvia, Croatia or Hungary. They are all absolutely at the same level of knowledge."

Troop training is no longer strictly a military affair. Just as militaries have carved out responsibilities in civilian reconstruction and peace keeping, training exercises have incorporated roles for national ambassadors, the United Nations, the European Union and aid agencies. Even during maneuvers in the field, it's not unusual to see nonmilitary advisors offering guidance.

"We replicate the picture of the international environment and the reality that the soldiers are not alone on the ground," Berger said. "The use of force is only one factor."

## NATO'S Man in the North



## A RAINBOW OF PATCHES AND UNIFORMS REPRESENTING MORE THAN 8,000 MULTINATIONAL TROOPS THROGGED BARRACKS, FIELDS AND CLASSROOMS

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Sitting among rows of computer terminals with a multinational class that included Bulgarian airmen, Jakubczak learned the most effective ways to load and unload NATO's giant C-17 and smaller C-130 transport planes. "It's always better to learn from those who have more experience. In Poland we don't have these planes to train on," said Jakubczak, who noted that it was his first stay on an American military base. "Coming here is well worth it. All experience is a plus."

The textbook-based curriculum wasn't easy. By midweek, Jakubczak noticed that as many as five students had dropped out of his class, which was taught in English. Classroom instruction for multinationals is a growth industry at Grafenwoehr. More than 2,200 international soldiers, sailors and airmen took deskbound courses there in 2011, up from 362 in 2009.

While the ISAF headquarters staff polished its skills in Grafenwoehr, combat troops massed 45 minutes away at the Hohenfels-based Joint Multinational Readiness Center. JMRC is one of three U.S. Army Combat Training Centers, the other two being the National Training Center (California) and the Joint Readiness Training Center (Louisiana). JMRC observer/controller-trainer teams provide analysis and feedback and teach, coach and mentor rotational units.

Of the 5,800 troops conducting mostly counterinsurgency maneuvers in March 2012, nearly 700 formed a multinational contingent consisting of Albanians, Bosnians, Bulgarians, Czechs, Serbs and Slovenes. They were training in support of the U.S. Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) and Romanian Special Operations Forces, both deploying to Afghanistan.

The "mission readiness exercise," spread out over Hohenfels' nine replicas of Afghan villages and staffed mostly with Germans playing the part of locals, is meant to acclimate troops to the reality on the ground in Central Asia. Though Serbia isn't a member of NATO, it lent troops to the exercise. They portrayed Afghan police and soldiers and accompanied American troops as they patrolled the German countryside. No live ammunition was used during this phase. Casualties were scored using guns equipped with lasers. Marching alongside an American squad, Serb infantry Capt. Goran Roganović was set upon by a hostile "mullah" in one of the villages. The troops' counterinsurgency training clicked into place, and the situation was defused with some calming words. "It was a great realistic experience for me," Roganović said. "It was so realistic I was impressed."

Though no deployments to Afghanistan are planned, the Serbian unit also used the occasion to learn counterinsurgency tactics from the Americans and Romanians: How to deal with suicide bombers, booby traps and improvised

explosive devices. In another successful pre-mission exercise at Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels in early 2012, Georgian soldiers trained with the U.S. Marines they would ultimately serve alongside in Afghanistan. The Georgian and Serbian examples highlight NATO's determination to build partnerships with non-NATO nations. "Their experience in Iraq and Afghanistan was very useful for us," Roganović said of his U.S. and Romanian counterparts. "We will try to transfer our knowledge to other personnel in our unit back home."

Staffers at the JMTC noted that multinational troops aren't just supporting their American partners but providing expertise central to the mission. They cited the Hungarian and Belgian helicopter pilots flying for the ISAF, the Bulgarian medical staff helping the sick and wounded, the Turkish reconstruction teams rebuilding northern Afghanistan, and the Italian and French gendarmes training the country's paramilitary forces. "There are certain skills the Afghans need that we Americans can't supply," JMRC media advisor Mark Van Treuren said.

The Bulgarian presence was heavy across the JMTC training grounds. Not only did they role-play as Afghan soldiers during patrols with Americans from the 173rd ABCT, they brushed up on small arms skills on the firing range and took part in Humvee simulations in which soldiers climbed into mock-ups of the military truck while surrounded by projections of an Afghan landscape that shifted along with the steering of the Humvee driver. At certain points in the war games, computerized insurgents took shots at the Humvee occupants.

Smilianov, the Bulgarian sergeant major, considered the Humvee exercise good practice for the real thing. Not only did it provide basic preparation for negotiating Afghan terrain, but it saved on fuel and vehicular wear and tear. JMTC trainer Daniel Feazelle, who watched Smilianov's team turn its Humvee swivel gun on enemy insurgents, singled them out for praise. "The Bulgarians are awesome," Feazelle said. "They take it seriously. It's not a computer game to them."

After nearly four weeks spent in the hills and valleys of northern Bavaria, Smilianov, his captain Stoyan Seneliev and hundreds of other comrades were loading up trucks for the 36-hour return trip to their base in Karlovo. It was a radical change from the days when some of these soldiers joined the Army. At that time, Bulgaria, freshly emancipated from the Soviet bloc, was geared not to cooperating with Americans but combating them.

Seneliev wasn't sure if his unit would put the recent training to use in Afghanistan. Some of his men had been there already. Some had not. "We won't know until we're called," Seneliev said as soldiers in the background rolled up battlefield maps and stowed gear. "But we're prepared." □

# Counterterrorism after bin Laden

Despite recent successes, it's too early to declare victory in the "war on terror"

By *per Concordiam* Staff  
Photos by Agence France-Presse

**For Jamie Shea, deputy assistant secretary general for NATO's emerging security challenges division, the success of unmanned drones in suppressing terrorism has been obvious. "If you're al-Qaida, you're filling the No. 2 and No. 3 spots every week," Shea said without much exaggeration at the Global Counter Terrorism Conference in London in April 2012.**

The changing nature of security threats after the death of bin Laden has encouraged some analysts to proclaim the cessation of the "global war on terror." But more cautious observers, well represented at the London conference, suggested the threat has merely morphed from a conspiracy, centrally controlled in Afghanistan and Pakistan, to a loose confederation of independent operators motivated more by regional grievances than a violent attachment to global jihad. "It's terrorism inspired by al-Qaida but not directed by it," said Charles Farr, director of the United Kingdom's Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism.

Violent extremists have failed so far to co-opt the Arab Spring, the mass uprisings that forced leaders of Tunisia, Libya and Egypt from power. But all is not well in a part of the world where Islamist movements are gaining democratic strength. Josef Janning, director of studies at the European Policy Centre in Brussels, said that religiously oriented reformist governments taking charge in places such as Egypt will be hard-pressed to deliver the jobs and dignity demanded by their citizens. "That's where governments will have to deliver," Janning said. "That's where they will fail." Turkey is worth emulating, but Janning casts doubts on whether its model of democracy and economic growth will take root successfully in places such as Egypt, where recent public opinion polls show strong support for Saudi Arabia's theocratic-style government.

A frustrated citizenry in the Middle East is likely to have repercussions for Europe. Since children still make up more than a third of the populations in most Arab-speaking countries, Europe will likely face increasing migratory pressure from the South. In Janning's view, the situation calls for increased cooperation within

the European Union, where individual nations, despite the abolishment of border control across much of the continent through the Schengen agreement, still cling to independent immigration policies. Janning called European security a "common good" whose burden should be shared across member states, but expressed dismay that the continent seemed to be heading in the opposite direction toward "unbundling."

As evidence of changing attitudes toward migration, he noted that as recently as the late 1990s, Germany accepted hundreds of thousands of non-EU refugees from the Balkans without provoking complaints from nations with which it shared open borders. But when about 15,000 North Africans arrived in Italy in 2011 to escape turmoil in Libya, Egypt and Tunisia, at least one Schengen country temporarily reinstated border controls with its neighbors. To help reassure Schengen signatories, Janning proposed the creation of a common border control policy that would allow German and Dutch guards, for example, to monitor the Black Sea coast.

But will Europe have the means to defend itself? Military downsizing in the eurozone has called forth critiques that European states are not only "free riding" on their North American NATO partners but reducing forces to the point that they would struggle to repel an attack on their territory. With Europe immersed in budgetary crises, most countries can no longer afford military extravagance.

Shea emphasized that smart defense – the theory of doing more militarily with less money – does not have to mean expensive defense. As an example, he mentioned how NATO has spent billions of dollars on manpower and technology to thwart improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, in Afghanistan. At the same time, a little-noticed



The mother of murdered French paratrooper Imad Ben Ziaten carries a memorial portrait of her son in Morocco in March 2012. Ziaten was killed by a self-proclaimed al-Qaida terrorist in Toulouse, France, one of the country's worst attacks in years.



program costing a couple of hundred thousand dollars achieved striking results by confiscating nitrogen-based IED components moving across the Pakistani-Afghan border. “The big, expensive military intervention is not always the best,” Shea said.

Nevertheless, Shea cautioned against economizing too much. He warned that the very success of remote-controlled weaponry and unmanned aerial vehicles could give rise to a “permanent state of hostilities.” NATO and its partners would no longer have to declare war but could harry adversaries perpetually from afar. Not only would it expose innocent civilians to greater risk, but it might make NATO less willing to disentangle itself from what it views as cheaper, low-intensity conflicts.

At the end of 2014, with the withdrawal of most forces from Afghanistan, NATO will be in the unique position of having no main adversary or international mission for the first time in about 60 years. The Soviet Union, the violent breakup of Yugoslavia and the

Taliban in Afghanistan successively filled those roles for most of the Alliance’s existence. In Shea’s opinion, one of the greatest dangers is that NATO members, who have learned to operate together in the hostile conditions of Afghanistan, will become preoccupied with domestic concerns. “How do we preserve all of that hard-won interoperability?” he asked before a crowd of security professionals in London. Janning went further, warning that without the contributions of stronger NATO members such as the U.S., Europe couldn’t defend its territory on a future battlefield. He suggested the continent economize by, among other measures, unifying Europe’s myriad independent military staffs.

In the end, the aim of Western counterterror policy isn’t the total elimination of violent extremists, but the reduction of the problem so that it can be managed largely by police and intelligence officers instead of Soldiers, Shea said. That’s no longer out of the realm of possibility. For all the fears of “lone wolf” or



“self-starter” terrorism, casualties have been lighter than initially feared. Shea cited the example of the U.S., where among 96 recently uncovered terror plots, only 11 had become operational and just two produced victims. On the other hand, two recent European terrorist attacks – one in Norway, the other in France – proved that even solitary fanatics employing little more than bullets can create deadly havoc.

Benoit Gomis of International Security Programme at the UK’s Chatham House credited the International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan with much of the decline in terror attacks, but also cited the unpopularity of the extremist agenda in the Arab world, an agenda that speaks little to the political and economic aspirations of most Middle Easterners. For American historian Michael Rubin, another speaker at the London terrorism conference, the fight against terrorism and extremism hasn’t

ended but has reached the “end of the beginning.”

NATO will have its hands full with a series of new security challenges like those in cyberspace that Shea suggests will ultimately be policed by international tribunals and governed by treaties similar to those used to limit and ban nuclear and biological weapons. The Alliance has also grown apprehensive over energy security and is committed to stopping the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. But despite recent allied victories on the battlefield, terrorism seems likely to remain a front-and-center threat. Said Shea: “Terrorism is going to be with us, regrettably, even after NATO’s mission in Afghanistan will end.” □

Left: Egyptians mark the first anniversary of the uprising that toppled President Hosni Mubarak in 2011. Many experts suspect turmoil in North Africa could have implications for European security as democratically elected governments struggle to deliver economic and social change fast enough for a restless electorate.

Right: Spanish Crown Prince Felipe, center, looks at an unmanned drone while visiting Camp Arena in Afghanistan. Although drones have been effective counterterrorism tools, some military experts worry European militaries will shortchange other defense spending.



## Supporting Missile Defense

Europe plays a key role in thwarting threats from weapons of mass destruction

*By per Concordiam Staff*

**More than five decades after World War II and two decades since the end of the Cold War and its corresponding threat of nuclear annihilation, existential security concerns seem far from the minds of average Europeans. This sense of safety, combined with tight government budgets in a time of economic crisis, makes costly weapons systems and other defense expenditures seem less essential to citizens and policymakers alike. But despite the impression of security, Europe cannot afford to be complacent to continued threats in a still-dangerous world. While the Cold War danger of global nuclear war has receded, the risk of missile-borne nuclear attack remains.**



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A sailor stands by a weapons control desk aboard the USS Monterey. The ship, which carries AEGIS ballistic missile defense technology, is currently conducting Phase I screening.

At the 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon, Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) was designated a core element of NATO's collective defense requirements and the Alliance committed "to expand NATO's current system to protect NATO-deployed forces to also protect NATO European populations and territory." And at the 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago, the Alliance confirmed its strategic and financial commitment. NATO defense and intelligence communities consider the ongoing ballistic missile and nuclear weapons development efforts of regional actors such as North Korea to be legitimate security threats. Many NATO and European Union officials are concerned that the ongoing economic crisis may deter European nations from fulfilling their basic obligation to protect their people and territories from nuclear attack.

### Missile defense evolves

In 2006, based on the conclusions of a NATO feasibility study, former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates recommended building a BMD system in Europe. The original plan was intended to protect both the United States and NATO allies from intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBM) and intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM). However, in 2009, the plan was revised with the transition to the Phased Adaptive Approach (PAA) after a new threat assessment indicated that short- and medium-range missiles from the Middle East could pose an "increased and more immediate threat to allied forces and populations on the European continent," according to a report from the Atlantic Council think tank.

The first of the four-phase PAA employs Aegis-guided missile cruisers with ship-based interceptors on the Mediterranean Sea, supported by ground-based early detection radar systems to be located in Central Europe. In May 2012, the Alliance announced that the first stage of its European missile defense shield was "provisionally operational." The U.S. transferred control of its missile defense radar sites in Turkey to NATO command and authorized a similar command structure for U.S. ships engaged in the PAA. Three additional phases, incorporating more advanced

interceptors and radars, are to be deployed through 2020, incrementally improving area of coverage and intercept capabilities, and will provide security for all NATO territories against potential missile attack from a rogue country.

### "Arc of instability"

If the commitment made in Lisbon, to achieve an integrated European BMD system by 2020, is to be met, BMD research and development must continue to receive sufficient resources. As missile defense technology evolves, so does the threat. The U.S. Department of Defense September 2010 "Ballistic Missile Defense Review Report" (BMDR) states: "The ballistic missile threat is increasing both quantitatively and qualitatively, and is likely to continue to do so over the next decade." The BMDR states that several states are improving the quality and accuracy of their missile systems and defenses, and numerous states are also developing nuclear, chemical and/or biological weapons capabilities.

At the 10th Congress on European Security and Defence in Berlin, held in November 2011, Edward Hanlon, a retired U.S. Marine Corps general and president of Raytheon International, Europe, pointed to the development of an "arc of instability across North Africa and the Middle East." Advanced missile technology wedded to unstable and potentially hostile regimes is a dangerous combination.

Critics of BMD consistently argue the continuing validity of the Cold War concept of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) as a nuclear deterrence strategy, contending that no hostile regional power would assure its own destruction by launching a nuclear missile at Europe. However, nuclear deterrence works both ways. NATO can also be deterred from acting in its own interests by a nuclear-armed hostile state, be it in operations to support democracy, aid refugees, or defend friendly nations. Panelists at the Berlin conference questioned how operations in Libya might have differed if the "rogue regime" of Moammar Gadhafi had possessed nuclear weapons and the means to deploy them.

The premise of MAD also relies on the assumption of rationality. NATO can't rely

on potential adversaries to be rational, retired Col. Hans-Hinrich Kühl, former commander of the German Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defence School, said in 2011. An adversary who feels there is nothing to lose may strike out against his enemies. Kühl also pointed to technological advances that increase the chances of chemical and/or biological weaponization outside the scope of Western verification regimes.

Russia is among the strongest critics of NATO's BMD policy – and a staunch proponent of MAD doctrine. Russia's concern is founded primarily on the fear that NATO could use BMD systems to counter Russia's arsenal of nuclear weapons. Russia worries that if its nuclear arsenal were to be neutralized, it would be vulnerable to political coercion or even

military intervention. While these anxieties are based on outdated Cold War assumptions, NATO needs to establish a better climate of trust with Russia, former NATO Military Committee Chairman and retired German Gen. Harald Kujat told the Berlin conference. Through cooperation on BMD, NATO and Russia can more effectively defend against a threat to which both are vulnerable.

### Budgets threaten missile defense

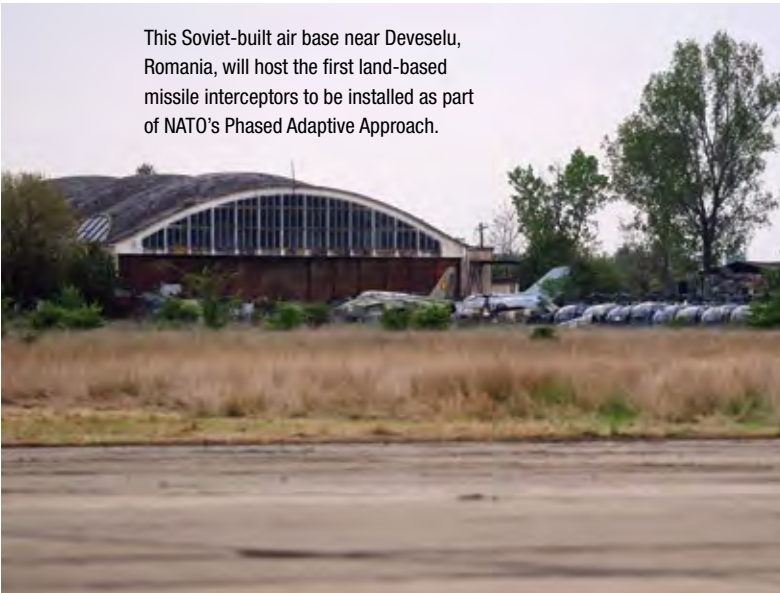
The ongoing financial crisis has resulted in substantial cuts to already frugal European defense budgets. Defense analysts at Europe's World say that NATO European defense spending had fallen to 1.6 percent of GDP in 2011, well below the suggested 2 percent

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, left, former Minister of Defense Bogdan Klich, right, and Gen. Mieczysław Stachowiak visit Redzikowo air base in 2008 in northern Poland, where a missile shield base will be located.





This Soviet-built air base near Deveselu, Romania, will host the first land-based missile interceptors to be installed as part of NATO's Phased Adaptive Approach.



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commitment, and project cuts of 10 to 15 percent more. “The current defence budgets of many NATO countries are already ‘austerity budgets,’ additional cuts look set to magnify the problem at a time when more funds are needed,” the policy journal noted.

But Europe must have credible military power to advance its interests on the world stage. And it's not as if Europe can't afford to do more if priorities were readjusted. The European Union (\$14.82 trillion GDP in 2010, or 11.55 trillion euros) has a larger economic output than the United States (\$14.66 trillion, or 11.43 trillion euros). But cooperation is crucial for Europe. As Hanlon said, limited economic resources need to be rebalanced toward priority requirements while existing resources are refocused to meet new missions. Finally, the concept of “pooling and sharing” needs to be implemented to create an effective and affordable BMD system.

Credible defense requires collective action. Separately, Europe is a group of mostly small countries with limited resources, but together it's a world power with extensive human, technical and economic resources. As Lt. Gen. Markus Bentler, commander of Germany's Response Forces Operations Command said at the 2011 security conference in Berlin, multinationality is imperative; there is no alternative if Europe is to have meaningful military structures.

### Science fiction to reality

Once, the idea of a BMD shield, capable of shooting nuclear-tipped missiles from the sky and terminating their deadly missions, was thought to belong to the realm of science fiction. After the Strategic Defense Initiative – the forebear of today's BMD technology – was proposed by U.S. President Ronald Reagan in 1983, detractors derisively dubbed it “Star Wars.” Almost three decades and hundreds of billions of dollars later, a limited system is in place in Europe and development of more comprehensive and effective technology continues.

Former Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev once said about nuclear war: “The survivors would envy the dead.” But many argue that full deployment of technology capable of placing the threat of nuclear war into the dustbin of history requires a commitment of time, energy and resources. Collective action, cooperation and contributions by all NATO members are essential to meet the commitment made by NATO heads of state in Lisbon. As Hanlon said at the Berlin security conference, NATO needs to find the same “determined resolve to protect the interests and people” of Allied nations that it displayed in the Cold War to defend free Europe against communist totalitarianism. □

# Talking to the Islamic World

## NATO must communicate its pro-Muslim support

By Col. Marty Z. Khan, U.S. Air Force Reserve

**NATO will continue to face daunting challenges in the fight against terrorists who use Islam as an ideology. The terrorists' claims that NATO is at war with Islam, while disingenuous, have implications for NATO's reputation. To avoid tarnishing its reputation in the Islamic world, the Alliance must vigorously refute such assertions and show they are contrary to NATO's values.**

Nearly a year after the successful conclusion of military operations in Libya, now is a perfect time to emphasize to the Islamic world that NATO's strategy in Afghanistan is altruistic. The good will earned in Libya should be used to point out some of NATO's achievements and counteract the terrorists' communications strategy.

In Afghanistan, terrorist messages that focus on Islamic themes are often effective. This strategy connects the terrorists with communities. That increases the likelihood that these terrorists will succeed in their objectives because, in their eyes, religious ideology justifies their actions. Some community religious leaders are unwilling to question the scholarly validity of the terrorists' claims out of fear for their lives. Those who immediately reject such messages are subject to intimidation and threats.

The elimination of terrorism that uses Islam as an ideology is not attainable. The financial and moral support terrorists receive from some factions of Muslim communities throughout the world will blunt strategies to defeat them. To some degree, terrorists have successfully asserted that the war against terror is a war against Islam. As a result, it will be important to chip away at this communication strategy and undermine their credibility.

No group reserves sole authority to speak for its religion or its adherents. In Islam, this also holds true. Knowledge of Islam may gain one a certain degree of authority, but purposeful misinterpretation is contrary to basic Islamic principles. When this happens, the misinterpretation must be exposed. NATO may not have an absolute advantage in getting its message to the audience in every case, but in some areas it may have a comparative advantage. Financial resources, technological capabilities and Muslims in uniform from Alliance countries should be employed intelligently. But religion can be an emotional matter and

utmost respect must be taken in crafting messages so they are not perceived as misleading.

The Islamic world is not homogenous. It comprises a vast range of cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity from Morocco to Southeast Asia. Muslims, however, hold basic universal convictions about their religion. They expect Islam, to which they express unquestioned devotion, will be respected. This belief cannot be overemphasized. In Afghanistan, NATO's strategic communication must stress respect for Islam. Highlighting accomplishments in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Libya would show that NATO is not at war with Islam. Equally important, it should be pointed out that terrorist misinterpretation of Islam is contrary to the religion's true values.

U.S. Adm. James G. Stavridis, in his 2007 *Joint Force Quarterly* article "Strategic Communication and National Security" (<http://www.ndu.edu/press/joint-ForceQuarterly.html>), explored the issue of communication to diverse cultural groups within U.S. Southern Command's geographical area of responsibility. His articulation of USSOUTHCOM's challenges is indicative of some of the challenges NATO faces in communicating with the Islamic world. The admiral's article was insightful because it offered specific and valuable guidelines to communicate with cultures different from that of the United States, guidelines that have applications beyond the U.S. Southern Command.

The two most important guidelines Stavridis recommended are: Tell the truth and understand the audience. As with all audiences, telling the truth is of paramount importance. Telling the truth will establish one's credibility with the targeted audience and, as such, must always be the overriding principle in strategic communications. Additionally, to undermine terrorists' charges that NATO is at war with Islam, it is necessary to avoid labels that give the slightest hint of any linkage of terrorism to Islam.



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Muslims generally show antipathy to such a linkage because they believe it denigrates their religion. When, for example, a terrorist organization uses Islam in its name (such as Islamic Jihadist – a hypothetical example), strategic communicators can reasonably say: “An Islamic Jihadist conducted a horrendous attack on innocent civilians and, in so doing, disparaged Islam.” The rationale is that when a terrorist organization uses Islam in its name, its members want to highlight their Islamic identity. Additionally, they are trying to show their religious fidelity, but are most likely acting contrary to mainstream Islamic views. That misinterpretation must be exposed.

Terrorists do not have an absolute monopoly on the use of Islamic themes and principles in their messages. Issues such as suicide attacks, improvised explosive devices, killing innocent people, illegal/illicit activities and violence toward women are potential areas for exploitation. The Quran and Hadith (documented sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad) are the primary foundations of Islamic law. When terrorist organizations cite these sources,

their interpretations are likely to contradict respected scholars’ views. Analyses show that terrorists intentionally craft their messages to fit their ideology to achieve their objectives.

To affirm that it is not at war with Islam, NATO’s fight against terrorists who use Islam as an ideology will require flexible techniques. In principle, such views and dogmatic thinking generate emotions that overwhelm pragmatic discourse. As a result, adherence to values that respect religious sensitivities is difficult to achieve because religious-held beliefs are impervious to logical arguments. Despite this, NATO must still get its messages through to the Islamic world while respecting Muslim sensitivities. Continuously re-emphasizing that NATO’s actions are not anti-Islamic, while highlighting achievements in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Libya, will be key to undermining the terrorists’ credibility. Considering the terrorists’ threats and capabilities, the Alliance must prevail in its mission. □

The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the author’s employer.

Asmaa Mahfouz of Egypt, left, and Ahmed al-Zubair Ahmed al-Sanusi of Libya, right, receive the 2011 Sakharov Prize from Jerzy Buzek, then president of the European Parliament, in December 2011. The prize was given to Arab Spring activists who exemplified freedom of thought.



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Akademik Lomonosov, Russia's floating nuclear power station, is launched at St. Petersburg in June 2010. The portable power station can provide power to remote areas, but environmentalists are concerned about safety.

## Guaranteeing Energy Supplies

Europe is building partnerships to protect pipelines, tankers and power plants

By *per Concordiam* Staff

**Pipelines that carry much of the world's oil and gas snake through the depths of the Black Sea, the frigid waters of the Russian Arctic and cross some of the world's most dangerous conflict zones. The value of these pipelines, oil and gas installations, and nuclear power plants makes them attractive targets for hackers, pirates and extremists. An attack on critical energy infrastructure could have a substantial effect, not just on the health, safety and security of surrounding communities, but on the world economy. Protecting energy resources is particularly important as Europeans become more dependent on imported oil and gas and generate much of their electricity from nuclear energy. Energy infrastructure is uniquely border transparent, and cooperation to ensure European energy security is vital.**

"A terrorist attack against a critical energy infrastructure may happen in one country, but it would have a disruptive impact on all countries and stakeholders along the energy supply chain," Kazakh Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov warned at a February 2010 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe conference.

### New Centre of Excellence

Energy security is a NATO strategic priority reiterated in its 2010 Strategic Concept, the road map for the Alliance's future. More recently, in November 2011, NATO and the government of Lithuania agreed to establish a NATO Centre of Excellence for Energy Security in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius and, according to Lithuanian Ambassador Andrius Brūzga, could open as early as 2013. The centre will provide protection of critical energy infrastructure and help militaries become more energy efficient. This is an increasingly important goal, considering troops are using more technology on the battlefield and the world's militaries are large consumers of energy. Lithuanian Foreign Affairs Minister Audronius Ažubalis said in January 2011 that the centre will address "not only regional and theoretical energy security issues, but also the 'tough' energy security issues, such as energy infrastructure protection. This is very important, given the situation, the large number of attacks by terrorist organizations."

The centre is an extension of the smart defense approach that aims to increase military effectiveness and efficiency, NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen noted at the February 2012 Energy Security Conference in Vilnius. Lithuania, a NATO partner and contributor of troops to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, is home to many energy experts in the public and private sector, universities and institutes. It is frequently referred to as an "energy island."

### Source diversification

NATO's energy security approach includes military cooperation and information sharing among partner countries. Some security experts suggest that energy source diversification should also be a goal, so that supplies won't be subject to severe disruption with the loss of a single exporter. Disagreements between Russia and Ukraine in both 2008 and 2009 resulted in natural gas supply disruptions to 21 European nations. Securing additional sources would diminish the impact of such disruptions. Past and present European Union energy commissioners Günther Oettinger and Andris Piebalgs have supported measures to ensure that energy producers don't monopolize energy infrastructure such as pipelines.

A plethora of solutions has been proposed to diversify Europe's energy sources, including pipelines that import gas from the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East. Azerbaijan is a key player in this scenario because it is a major source of gas in the Southern Corridor and will likely open a

## Marshall Center Alumni Conference Addresses Energy Security in the Balkans

By Barbara Wither, Alumni Relations Specialist, Marshall Center

In an attempt to forge an energy policy for Bulgaria that stresses multinational cooperation, the Marshall Center's Bulgarian alumni association recently hosted a two-day event titled "Energy Security – National, Regional and Euro-Atlantic Frameworks."

Held in Sofia on June 21 and 22, 2012, the gathering brought together 68 participants from Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine and the United States, as well as representatives from the Bulgarian government, universities and non-governmental organizations.

Bulgarian energy production is at a crossroads owing to the 2012 cancellation of plans to build the Belene nuclear power plant. Older nuclear plants had been decommissioned to satisfy conditions for the country's membership in the European Union.

Participants adopted a regional perspective in discussing how to satisfy energy demand without falling into dependence on unreliable providers. Topics included the feasibility of nuclear energy, shale gas exploration, natural gas pipelines, energy market liberalization and the protection of critical energy infrastructure.

One participant, Peter Popchev, Bulgaria's ambassador at large for energy security and climate change, noted that Southeast European energy security has implications for both the EU and the transatlantic alliance. Gas and oil distribution networks – both existing and proposed – crisscross that corner of Europe.

Vladimir Urutchev, Bulgarian member of the European Parliament, highlighted three goals of energy policy: Stronger partnerships, diversification and improved coordination abroad. "The EU needs integrated markets with common goals and regulations," Urutchev said.

new gas field by 2018. In 2012, Azerbaijan is also expected to decide which of three proposed pipelines would carry its gas to Europe: the Nabucco West, which would run from the Caspian Sea to central Europe; the South-East Europe Pipeline, from eastern Turkey to Austria; or the Trans Adriatic Pipeline, slated to transport gas via Greece and Albania across the Adriatic Sea. Ukraine is also working to diversify by reversing the flow of some of its existing pipelines to enable it to receive gas from the EU. A plan reportedly is under way for the German energy company RWE to sell spot gas, designed for immediate payment and delivery, to Naftogaz, Ukraine's national oil and gas company.

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) is another way European countries are branching out. When cooled to minus-162 degrees Celsius, the gas shrinks to 1/600 of its former volume, making it easy to transport by tanker ship. The United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, Greece and Norway have sprouted LNG terminals, and Lithuania and Poland plan to build their own. LNG is produced mainly in Qatar, Algeria, Nigeria, and Trinidad and Tobago. The Ukrainian government plans to invest about 790 million euros (U.S. \$1 billion) in the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline. The pipeline would transport LNG into Ukraine from Azerbaijan through Georgia and would give Ukraine a bargaining chip in price negotiations with Russia. Because LNG shipments often originate in politically unstable regions, they are a target for pirates and extremists. While maritime experts believe a successful explosion of an LNG carrier is unlikely, they are concerned with the security of the ship's crew. Pirates threatened such a ship in the north end of the Strait of Hormuz in February 2012. This is of particular concern to the LNG industry because about a third of the world's LNG and 70 percent of the UK's is shipped through the strait, according to a *Bloomberg Businessweek* article in February 2012.

## Pipelines expand

New pipeline projects should help Europe. The Nord Stream pipeline, which will transport natural gas across the Baltic Sea, from Russia to Germany, is expected to be completed at the end of 2012, and the South Stream Pipeline, from Russia to Bulgaria, is expected to commence operations in 2015. Yet another, the Trans Adriatic Pipeline, will transport gas via Greece and Albania across the Adriatic Sea to southern Italy and farther on to the rest of Western Europe. The fate of the Nabucco pipeline, which would supply Europe with Turkmenistan gas, is uncertain, as a route has yet to be finalized and funding is fickle.

Pipelines face challenges. Jurisdiction over construction, operation and maintenance can be problematic because of their transnational nature.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nuclear scientist Adlene Hicheur was found guilty in May 2012 of conspiring with an extremist group to blow up a French oil refinery.

In April 2012, a pipeline transporting oil from Kirkuk in Northern Iraq to the Turkish port of Ceyhan was sabotaged. Pipelines have also been attacked in Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Yemen and Egypt.

Attacks have broadened to include computer networks that regulate gas pipelines. In May 2012, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued a

security alert regarding an ongoing, coordinated cyber attack on U.S. gas pipeline control systems. The hackers used a technique called spear-phishing to try to steal passwords by sending an email that appears to come from a friend or associate. When opened, malware infects computers. It is unclear to U.S. officials whether a foreign power was attempting to infiltrate the gas systems, as some previous oil and gas sector attacks revealed, or if hackers were to blame.

## Insider threats

In July 2011, a DHS intelligence report warned that al-Qaida planned to attack an oil or chemical refinery through the use of insiders to gain access to computer networks within the facilities. The report stated that "violent extremists have, in fact, obtained insider positions." Evidence collected from

Osama bin Laden's compound revealed that al-Qaida was actively working to repeat another 9/11-scale attack, and some experts say that attacking critical infrastructure would accomplish that. In 2011, using its online magazine *Inspire*, al-Qaida called on the assistance of those who work in "sensitive locations."

Corrupt insiders are a particular concern. In October 2009, nuclear scientist and al-Qaida suspect Adlene Hicheur was accused of borrowing money and "technical expertise" from extremists to blow up two oil refineries in France. Hicheur was sentenced to five years in prison in May 2012, according to *The New York Times*. Sabotage at a U.S. water treatment plant in Arizona was attempted in April 2011. A night shift worker tried to create a methane explosion that would have destroyed part of a neighborhood. The largest nuclear power plant in the U.S. is only 69 miles (111 kilometers) from the water plant.

The world has focused much attention on securing nuclear power plants. Since 9/11 and Japan's 2011 earthquake and tsunami, nuclear power plants in Europe have been tested to ensure they can endure a plane crash like the 9/11 attacks. Europe has 186 nuclear power plants and 18 more under construction, according to the European Nuclear Society, but Japan's natural disasters have brought the safety of nuclear facilities into question. The colossal earthquake and tsunami in March 2011 caused Japan's Fukushima plant to leak radioactive fallout. Shortly after, in May 2011, Germany agreed to shut down its nuclear reactors by 2022. One side effect of that decision is that Germany will likely grow more reliant on imported fuels such as gas.

### Innovations

Technology will play a role in warding off assailants set on disrupting energy supplies. Unmanned aerial vehicles are being used to patrol offshore gas fields;

Flames rise from a pipeline explosion in El-Arish, Egypt, in March 2012. Militants repeatedly sabotaged gas pipelines in Egypt in the past year.



underwater cameras, first used to monitor potential oil spills, are now being used to deter sabotage.

Some nations are even exploring deep-sea fission. The French government is working to build a nuclear power plant offshore and underwater. It believes that the underwater reactors are safer and less vulnerable to extremist attacks and natural disasters. The first reactor, Flexblue, is scheduled to open by 2016, according to *Forbes* magazine. Russia had a similar idea and is building a prototype of a floating nuclear power plant it hopes to sell around the world. Because of its mobility, the platform could theoretically be navigated away from turbulent weather. Anti-nuclear activists are not convinced of its safety and recommend the project be scrapped. Another approach is illustrated by Iraq, where coalition forces created defensive security rings around oil terminals near Basrah to thwart terror attacks. Ships approaching or entering the no-go zone are warned off.

The opening of the new NATO Centre of Excellence for Energy Security in Lithuania raises energy security as a top NATO priority and encourages the collaborative exchange of expertise and experience. As extremists continue planning attacks against critical infrastructure – by the brute force of explosives, cyber attack or corrupt insiders – the need for protection grows. Preventing disruptions to the world's oil, gas and electricity supplies is a goal worth embracing. □

*The theme of the next issue of per Concordiam is energy security.*

# Afghanistan in the Balance

## Counterinsurgency, Comprehensive Approach, and Political Order

Book authors: Hans-Georg Ehrhart, Sven Gareis and Charles Pentland, Queen's Policy Studies/McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012; 250 pages

Reviewed by Alessandro Scheffler, Bundeswehr University Munich



The upcoming withdrawal from Afghanistan is commonly seen as marking the end of a decade of security, stability, transition, reconstruction and counterinsurgency operations. If interventions are to occur at all, the Libya mission seems to have provided the template for a much easier future. But while it is certainly improbable that the political or military leadership – let alone the population – will be overly keen to enter into another mission of this kind, another lesson of the past decade is that even missions planned as “easy in/easy out” have often turned into long and painful commitments.

To assure an organized withdrawal and to avoid having to relearn the lessons of the past 10 years, an assessment of what went wrong in Afghanistan, what is the way ahead and what can be learned for future interventions is direly needed. In their book *Afghanistan in the Balance*, Hans-Georg Ehrhart, Sven Gareis and Charles Pentland have assembled a broad range of German and Canadian authors to look at the experiences of international, national and nongovernmental actors in Afghanistan and to chart a way ahead – both in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

The book points out two major lessons in Afghanistan: First, in adding to the current stream of counterinsurgency-critical scholarship, it argues that such campaigns cannot succeed without several preconditions. Most important is a locally acceptable government inclusive enough to lead to an enduring

settlement of underlying political conflicts. Without it, any counterinsurgency, or COIN, campaign is doomed. The last chapter also makes a good point in showing the need for this solution to be regionally acceptable, leading to a settlement that “integrates numerous actors in a process of a multilateral balancing of interest.”

A second major point of the book is the challenges countries and institutions have faced in the implementation of the comprehensive approach. Much of the problem entails a lack of civilian capabilities and the consequent militarization of the comprehensive approach, which prevents coordination “among equals.”

The book is divided into three parts. In the first, counterinsurgency concepts and the experiences of individual actors are assessed, while the second part deals with international and national variants of the comprehensive approach. The third part is devoted to the regional context and general implications of the Afghanistan operation for the future of liberal intervention.

In the first essay, Ehrhart and Roland Kaestner assess the NATO/U.S. approach to COIN. The authors argue that NATO's basic mistake was the idea to build state structures in a country that does not fulfill the elementary preconditions for them. The modern concept of counterinsurgency is therefore judged presumptuous, as it aims at the transformation of an entire society and its political structures. Decisions to engage in COIN should therefore not be taken lightly. While the authors do a



good job outlining the basic mistakes made in the post-intervention settlement, one struggles to agree on conceptual terms when they speak about “COIN and the related school of liberal interventionism.”



The next two essays focus on the national experiences of Germany and Canada in COIN. Richard Roy argues that Canada has learned much about counterinsurgency and the comprehensive approach in Afghanistan. Most importantly, the country shared a vision about what was necessary to defeat the insurgency and validated a local population support theory. Regarding the German experience, Philipp Münch takes a more critical look at COIN. Using Bourdieu's theory of formal organizations, the author argues that COIN is not a real concept but simply a way in which the military uses its existing elements in non-state conflicts. In his contribution, Münch nicely points out a logical gap in modern COIN doctrine: Without control over civilian elements, the military is necessarily driven to conduct classic operations.

The next two chapters take a look at the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Robert Lindner and Citha Maass lay out the problems that NGOs face in COIN, particularly with regard to maintaining neutrality. While Lindner stresses

the limits of civil-military cooperation and the importance of human rights for a stable peace in Afghanistan, Maass lays out a framework for such cooperation that establishes a relationship respecting the needs and limits of both sides.

The book then turns to security sector reform: Marc Sedra demonstrates that the orthodox concept of (SSR) needs to be amended for conflict areas, while Eva Gross concentrates on the experiences of the European Union in SSR.

Further on, Gareis explores “Networked Security,” the German version of the comprehensive approach. Main focus is given to efforts to interconnect players and resources that form part of the German decision making process and domain of action. He argues that conceptual deficits and administrative hurdles – in combination with a strong reliance on the military – have prohibited networked security from developing into a comprehensive framework for the coordination of the various actors and capabilities.

Part three deals with the regional dimension. Julian Schofield, Jose Saramago and Brent Gerchicoff deal with the challenges of Afghan development through trade. They argue that Afghanistan, as a landlocked state, will depend on political arrangements with its neighbors. Christian Wagner then does a fabulous job showing how the apparent paradox of Pakistan being both a victim and a supporter of the Taliban is explained by the fact that Afghanistan-Pakistani relations are only a variant of Pakistan's relationship to India. In an excellent analysis, Diana Digol then assesses the role of Central Asian states with regard to Afghanistan. She argues that although all of these countries would certainly profit from an improvement in Afghanistan, the variety of sometimes conflicting interests is unlikely to lead to cooperation.

Tobias Bunde, Timo Noetzel and Adrian Oroz conclude the book with a discussion of the impact on the “liberal moment” of a potential defeat in Afghanistan. They conclude that Afghanistan has shattered the belief in the exportability of democratic values and see a very limited appetite for “liberal interventions” in the future, be they political or military.

Overall, the book brings together a variety of viewpoints on a very important topic. Particularly noteworthy is the chapter on regional relations, which remain a seriously understudied issue. The major conclusions of the book constitute a good guide for future interventions: Think twice before getting involved, do so only after an assessment of all important factors and aim for modest, locally acceptable improvements toward a more liberal system. □

# Resident Courses

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### PASS 12-9

Sept. 21 –  
 Nov. 29, 2012

September							October							November						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31	25	26	27	28	29	30				
30																				

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The five-week, twice-yearly program addresses the different aspects of threats to nations and is for mid- and upper-level management, military, government and police officials in counterterrorism organizations. The focus is on combating terrorism while adhering to the

basic values of a democratic society. The five-module course provides a historical and theoretical overview of terrorism, the vulnerabilities of terrorist groups, the role of law, the financing of terrorism and security cooperation.

### PTSS 13-4

Mar. 1 –  
 Apr. 5, 2013  
 (Nominations due  
 Jan. 11, 2013)

March							April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
31													



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The three-week Seminar on Regional Security provides national security professionals throughout the world a comprehensive insight into the complex shape of regional conflict patterns, typical traps of crisis management as well as realistic possibilities for constructive crisis response.

### SRS 13-2

Feb. 1-22, 2013

(Nominations due  
Dec. 28, 2012)

February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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### SCWMD/T 13-5

Mar. 8-22, 2013

(Nominations due  
Jan. 18, 2013)

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## SEMINAR ON TRANSATLANTIC CIVIL SECURITY (STACS)

The seminar is a three-week, twice-a-year class that provides civil security professionals from Europe, Eurasia and North America an in-depth look at how nations can effectively address domestic security issues with regional and international impact. Organized into four modules — threats and hazards, prepare and protect, response and recover, and a field study — it focuses on the development of core knowledge and skills.

### STACS 13-3

Feb 5-22, 2013

(Nominations due  
Dec. 17, 2012)

February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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## THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SEMINAR (SES)

The seminar is a forum that allows for the in-depth exploration of international security issues. Participants in winter and fall sessions include high-level government officials, general officers, senior diplomats, ambassadors, ministers and parliamentarians. The SES format includes presentations by senior officials and recognized experts followed by discussions in seminar groups.

### SES 12-8

Sept. 5-13, 2012

“Beyond Al Qaeda: How to Understand  
and Counter Violent Extremism”

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

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