

UNITED STATES POLICY IN AFGHANISTAN

HEARING
BEFORE THE
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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS
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UNITED STATES POLICY IN AFGHANISTAN

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 2004

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:35 a.m. in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Henry J. Hyde presiding.

Chairman HYDE. The Committee will come to order. The purpose of today's hearing on the United States policy in Afghanistan is to examine the Administration's implementation of the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002, and to better understand our Government's strategies to assist the people of Afghanistan as they prepare for elections this September. Today, we will hear from Administration officials on how this goal might be achieved.

In December 2002, Congress sought to establish the framework to guide reconstruction efforts through the passage of the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act. That act authorized over \$3 billion in economic and military assistance through fiscal year 2006. The purpose of the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act is to help ensure that Afghanistan becomes a viable and independent nation-state that is secure and free from terrorism.

Thanks to the efforts of Coalition forces, United States civilians, humanitarian workers, and the Afghan people, Afghanistan is far less of a haven for international terrorists and is doing far better now than it was under the misrule of the Taliban.

However, Afghanistan still faces serious challenges to its security and stability. Violent attacks continue against U.S. forces, international aid workers, and Afghan citizens. In fact, according to the GAO, security for Afghans has gotten worse over time.

The continuing influence of local commanders, more commonly known as warlords, undermines the ability of the central government to implement the rule of law. Again, according to GAO experts, they function as "judge, jury, and executioner" within their territory, undermining the rule of law. Their continued influence is due in large part to the consequences of high levels of poppy production, which are putting Afghanistan on the road to becoming a narco-state. As a result, there has been very little progress to date in U.S. and Coalition efforts against drug trafficking. Despite these challenges there are remarkably positive developments evolving that deserve our attention.

The government of President Karzai is working to implement the final stages of the Bonn agreement. In January of this year the Constitutional *Loya Jirga* approved a final constitution, and the

people of Afghanistan are now paving the way for presidential and parliamentary elections this September. This past week, President Karzai signed a new electoral law outlining the framework for elections.

For these to take place serious questions need to be addressed and answered. So far a little over 2.5 million voters have been registered out of 9 to 10 million eligible persons. First, will the voters registered by September be representative of the population? Second, will it be necessary for the U.S. to widen the military objectives of Operation Enduring Freedom in order to ensure that elections will be free and fair? Last, what is being done to assure that unyielding warlords won't hijack the elections to consolidate their own hold on power?

Today, we will examine how the U.S. and the international community are coordinating their activities to give the Afghans the ability to freely determine their own political future and lead the way to stability.

Last month, international donors met in Berlin to show their commitment to securing Afghanistan's future. A total of \$8.2 billion was pledged through 2006. The Afghan government says their reconstruction needs over the next 7 years will be \$27 billion. I agree with a recent policy brief from Barnett R. Rubin of the Center on International Cooperation, which observed that,

“While the price tag for a more stable Afghanistan may appear high, it is nothing compared to the potentially astronomical costs of failure.”

It is the responsibility of this Congress to uphold our commitment to Afghanistan. Today's release of the General Accounting Office's investigative report into this reconstruction process in Afghanistan is one step in this direction. By detailing areas where there is a need for improvement in United States strategy, we can begin to bridge the gap between the reality of the challenges that Afghanistan faces and the ideal that it seeks to become.

We have a distinguished panel representing the Administration today, and I warmly welcome you to the Committee. We look forward to hearing from you about our country's commitment to Afghanistan and other important issues, but first I have the pleasure of yielding to my friend and colleague, the Ranking Democratic Member, Tom Lantos, for any opening remarks that he may wish to make. Mr. Lantos.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hyde follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE HENRY J. HYDE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, AND CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Committee will come to order.

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Thanks to the efforts of Coalition forces, U.S. civilians, humanitarian workers, and the Afghan people, Afghanistan is far less of a haven for international terrorists and is doing far better now than it was under the misrule of the Taliban. However, Afghanistan still faces serious challenges to its security and stability. Violent attacks continue against U.S. forces, international aid workers, and Afghan citizens. In fact, according to the GAO, security for Afghans has gotten worse over time.

The continuing influence of local commanders, more commonly known as “warlords,” undermines the ability of the central government to implement the rule of law. Again, according to GAO experts, they function as “judge, jury, and executioner” within their territory, undermining the rule of law. Their continued influence is due in large part to the consequences of high levels of poppy production, which are putting Afghanistan on the road to becoming a narco-state. As a result, there has been very little progress to date in U.S. and Coalition efforts against drug trafficking.

Despite these challenges, there are remarkably positive developments evolving that deserve our attention.

The government of President Karzai is working to implement the final stages of the Bonn Agreement. In January of this year, the Constitutional *Loya Jirga* approved a final constitution, and the people of Afghanistan are now paving the way for presidential and parliamentary elections this September. This past week, President Karzai signed a new electoral law outlining the framework for elections.

For these to take place, serious questions need to be addressed and answered. So far, a little over 2.5 million voters have been registered out of 9–10 million eligible persons. First, will the voters registered by September be representative of the population? Second, will it be necessary for the U.S. to widen the military objectives of Operation Enduring Freedom in order to ensure that elections will be free and fair? Last, what is being done to assure that unyielding warlords won’t hijack the elections to consolidate their own hold on power?

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We have a distinguished panel representing the Administration today, and I warmly welcome you to the Committee. I look forward to hearing from you about our country’s commitment to Afghanistan and other important issues.

I will now yield to my friend and colleague, Ranking Democratic Member Tom Lantos, for any opening remarks he may wish to make.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to commend you for holding this hearing. Some 2½ years ago, the United States and coalition forces liberated the people of Afghanistan from the brutal and repressive rule of the Taliban and its al-Qaeda supporters, who were using Afghanistan for the base of their terrorist activities.

While this victory has brought the people of Afghanistan a desperately needed respite from civil war, and oppressive rule, I fear that we may be on the verge of losing the long-term battle for a peaceful and safer future for Afghanistan.

Perhaps most disturbing for the long term future of the country is the lack of security and international funding for reconstruction which have severely impeded the development of moderate political

forces, successful voter registration efforts, and serious disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants.

Now, we have plenty of American soldiers sacrificing their lives for the freedom and security of Afghanistan, and it has not escaped the attention of any of us, and *The Washington Post* today provides a beautiful, and moving, and sad portrait of the scores and scores of American servicemen who gave their lives in this battle.

What Afghanistan needs, however, are dramatically more European and NATO forces on the ground. Mr. Chairman, this is a broader topic than just Afghanistan, but I would like to spend a moment expanding on this.

We liberated Europe twice in both the First and Second World Wars, and the Memorial Day weekend, and the June 6th commemoration of the landing on Normandy Beach, is a vivid reminder of this. We saved Europe from the Soviet Union during two generations.

And Europe today is on a free ride. Much of Europe and many of our NATO allies are shirking their responsibility globally, and Afghanistan is an outstanding example of this. NATO and Europe are not doing enough to bring security to Afghanistan, and we must say this loudly, however unpleasant that sounds, and however difficult it makes our relationship with our NATO allies.

They are not contributing enough troops or resources, and I am beginning to suspect that despite their encouraging and solemn words to our officials, they do not really have the will to really participate in bringing peace to Afghanistan, or even to participate in a significant way in the global war against terrorism.

Last October, NATO expanded its mandate to go beyond Kabul, but it has not increased the size of its forces or provided sufficient equipment to deploy effectively outside of the capital.

Nor has NATO sent its forces to the insecure areas of the country that most desperately need greater presence. It is highly unlikely as we meet this morning that NATO will field the five additional provincial reconstruction teams by this summer.

And none of those teams will ultimately be in the most dangerous areas of the south and the east. We must increase the size of NATO forces in Afghanistan, and we must establish more teams in more dangerous areas.

NATO must extend its mandate to provide security along major highways, and to end banditry, human rights abuses and drug operations. Spain should send the troops that it preemptorily pulled out of Iraq to Afghanistan. Turkey should send the troops that it intended to send to Iraq, over 10,000 of them, to Afghanistan.

And we must do more to convince our allies to participate and to provide whatever logistical support may be necessary. Afghanistan cannot wait any longer. We must do more to ensure that the upcoming parliamentary elections are not hijacked by the warlords and the Islamics.

The warlords in Afghanistan, some of whom would welcome the return of the radical oppressive policies carried out by the Taliban, are increasing their political power with each passing day given the dreadfully slow pace of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of their militias. There is also a surge in poppy cultivation in areas that they control.

Their power intimidates moderate Afghans from participating in the political process. As a result, today the Islamics are the only groups in Afghanistan well positioned to dominate the outcome in parliamentary elections.

The prospect that President Karzai may have just cut a deal with the warlords in advance of the elections is a further demonstration of the political box in which he finds himself.

The civilized world, Mr. Chairman, must increase its funding to help Afghans develop moderate political movements, and educate Afghans on the political process, human rights, and elections.

Mr. Chairman, the future of the Afghan people continues to hang in the balance. Increasing the number of NATO troops and ensuring the legitimacy of the electoral process may yet save Afghanistan from once again falling into chaos and ruin. Thank you very much.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Mr. Lantos, for your usual excellent statement, with which I find myself in total agreement. Without objection, any further opening statements will be made a part of the record, and we will proceed with our witnesses.

Ambassador William Bill Taylor, Junior, is the Afghanistan Coordinator in the U.S. Department of State, where he is responsible for overseeing all aspects of United States policy toward Afghanistan. Ambassador Taylor served as the Executive Branch's Coordinator of United States assistance to Europe and Eurasia.

Ms. Mary Beth Long is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counternarcotics, reporting to the Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict. Ms. Long oversees and controls the Department's counternarcotic efforts in the United States and throughout the world. Ms. Long worked in the Central Intelligence Agency's Directorate of Operations from 1986 to 1999 and, more recently, she was a litigation attorney with Williams & Connelly.

Mr. James Kunder is the Deputy Assistant Administrator in the Bureau for Asia and the Near East at the U.S. Agency for International Development. Mr. Kunder was previously Director for Relief and Reconstruction in Afghanistan. He has been nominated to be the next Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Near East.

Ms. Ponticelli is the Senior Coordinator for the Office of International Women's Issues at the Department of State. She will not have a statement, but is prepared to answer questions pertaining to women's issues in Afghanistan.

We are honored to have you appear before the Committee today, and Ambassador Taylor, we will start with you. If you encapsulate your statement to 5 minutes, give or take, and your full statement will be made a part of the record. Ambassador Taylor.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE WILLIAM B. TAYLOR, COORDINATOR FOR AFGHANISTAN, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ambassador TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure and honor to be here. I listened carefully to both opening statements and the support from those two statements and your Committee for our work in Afghanistan is both appreciated in the past, and is sought again for the future.

This Committee has been—and this Congress indeed—has been very supportive of our work in Afghanistan, and we will continue to need that.

Mr. Chairman, the Afghans have a proverb which they use. It is actually an optimistic saying. They say there is a path to the top of the highest mountain. So there is a way to get to the top.

The top of the highest mountain for Afghanistan is a stable, and democratic, and prosperous Afghanistan that can secure its own boundaries, and can serve its own people, can deliver services to its people in terms of health and educational.

That is the top and they can get there. We need to support them as they move in that direction, as they move up that path. Afghanistan is right now, Mr. Chairman, in the midst of three major activities that you both have referred to.

Any one of these three would be a challenge for any mature government around the world, and for this government to take on all three at the same time is a major effort. The three of course as you have described are reintegrating militias that have been disarmed and demobilized into the civilian economy. That is the first one.

The second one is a major effort that we are starting on to eradicate poppy from Afghanistan. It is going to be a long term one, but we are starting. I am sure that we will talk about that later on today.

The third one you have mentioned is a move toward elections for a first time in a generation. In order to have these elections in September, we are going to need—we, the international community, we, the U.N., we, the Afghan government—need to register somewhere in the 7, 8, 9 million eligible voters.

The Taliban have vowed to disrupt that effort. The Taliban have vowed to disrupt both the registration effort, as well as the polling effort that will take place in September.

All three of these efforts are being pushed by the government of Afghanistan, and supported by the international community, and indeed supported by financing which you have provided, and the international community has come forward with.

Let me just say a little bit about the elections, because the elections reflect different aspects of what you asked us to address in this hearing, Mr. Chairman, and the first of course is security.

The security for these elections will be a major challenge as I indicated, not just for the registration where we need to send small teams to register voters all over the country, into over 4,000 places where people have been lining up to register.

There are now over 2.8 million people registered in Afghanistan, and over a third, or about a third of those 2.8 million have been women. Congressman Lantos mentioned the challenge of a legitimate election, and ensuring that people can vote, and that people that do vote reflect the full range of people in Afghanistan, and that is happening.

The registration is moving forward on this, and it has a long way to go. I mentioned that we are at about 2.8 million, and we have somewhere around 7, 8, or 9 million that should be registered. That is a long way to go and the elections are in September.

So that is a major challenge, and security for these elections will be an effort, a major effort. The first line of defense in securing

these elections will be the police. The local police will provide joint security and will ensure the security of the people as they vote, as well as the ballot boxes that are going to be important as they move back to the national government to be counted.

We are training, with the Germans in the lead, and Congressman Lantos rightly pointed out the need for the international community, and not just the Americans, to step forward on this kind of support.

And the Germans are leading the effort on training the police. We are supporting them, but the Germans have moved forward on that police training, and we are helping with 10,000 police trained so far, and we hope that by the election time that we will have 20,000 police trained.

We will still need more. We will still need more equipment. There is a lot to be done on the police. The second line of defense for the election security will be the Afghan National Army.

And, Mr. Chairman, you have asked in the past about this, and we have talked about this in the past. This is an emerging success is the way that I would put it. We hope to have 10,000 soldiers trained this summer.

We hope to have the Central Corps. The Central Corps is basically set up. The battalions of the Central Corps has been deployed both in patrols around the country, but also in an attempt, a successful attempt, to put down disturbances in other parts of the country; in Herat, in Maimana, in Lazar.

These deployments have generated a lot of support from the people of Afghanistan. They have noticed the professionalism of their army, and they are proud of it, and they are signing up to join them.

The third line of support for security of the elections, and again Congressman Lantos has mentioned it, and that is NATO in charge of ISAF. They are in charge of security in Kabul, and they have moved out in the first phase, and which we fully agree, to be a broader expansion out into other parts of the country.

They have moved out of the first phase to Kanduz, and they do have one of their provincial reconstruction teams out of the capital, and we are hopeful that they will be able to provide additional security for the elections in September.

And the NATO military command is working on the coordination of exactly that. The final stage in the defense and security for the elections will be the coalition forces, our coalition forces, and they do take security for the elections very seriously.

The Constitutional *Loya Jirga*, which you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, finished up successfully in January with the Constitution, coalition forces will keep the Taliban, and al-Qaeda, and other anti-Afghanistan, anti-coalition forces, on the defensive by mounting a campaign during that time. And coalition forces will do the same kind of thing as we approach the elections in September.

You both mentioned the importance of fundings. The international community has stepped up. You mentioned the Berlin conference. In addition to or as part of the \$8.2 billion over 3 years that you mentioned, the international community has stepped up and come with about two-thirds of the necessary funding so far for the elections.

The international community, with the Americans in the lead, has about fully funded the current effort to register these voters that I mentioned before. That is nearly funded.

What we are now looking at, and what we have two-thirds of the money for, is for the actual conduct of the elections, and at Berlin, the donors stepped up with about \$66 million worth of pledges for those elections as they are moving forward.

Mr. Chairman, my colleague, Jim Kunder, will talk more about the reconstruction effort, but that is going well. Do we need to go faster, and are we in need of additional funds? Yes.

Our request is in for this year, and I am sure that we will have another request for next year. We continue to work with our allies to provide additional funds both from individual donors, as well as the banks.

That is going to be a long term effort as you have indicated, and the government of Afghanistan did calculate their needs over a 7 year period and it is large. We need to stay there. We need to maintain our commitment as you have both indicated.

Mr. Chairman, I mentioned that the Afghans have an optimistic saying that there is a path to the top of the mountain. The way that we translate that is where there is a will, there is a way.

Our will needs to be firm. Our will needs to be long term. Our will needs to be there so that not only the Afghan people know that we are going to be there for the long term, but also those enemies of the Afghan people.

They need to know that they can't wait us out. They need to know that we are going to maintain our commitment. I don't have to remind this Committee, Mr. Chairman, that 15 years ago we didn't stay the course. We abandoned Afghanistan 15 years ago.

And the Afghan people and the American people paid the price. Mr. Chairman, we need to stay the course. I am sure that your Committee will continue to provide that leadership, and I appreciate being able to be here today. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Taylor follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE WILLIAM B. TAYLOR, COORDINATOR FOR
AFGHANISTAN, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to discuss with the Committee today our current policy in Afghanistan and our vision for the birth of a new democracy in the world community.

Mr. Chairman, the Afghans have a proverb that captures our efforts: "There is a path to the top of the highest mountain." For Afghanistan, the "top of the highest mountain" is a prosperous, sustainable, constitutional democracy in the Islamic world.

For the past two and a half years, the United States has helped Afghanistan proceed along this path, but the crucial driver will always be the Afghan people, who must have the desire and the determination to make progress. And they do. Mobilization and participation at the grassroots level has brought Afghanistan a long way since the Taliban regime, and will soon allow the country to experience a historic moment: democratic elections scheduled for this September.

DDR, COUNTER NARCOTICS AND ELECTIONS

Mr. Chairman, right now the Government of Afghanistan and the international community are doing three big things at the same time. First, we are moving into the main phase of disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating major parts of the militia forces around the country. President Karzai has set an ambitious goal of demobilizing 40% of the militias and cantoning 100% of the heavy weapons this summer.

His government and the international community are fully engaged in this historic and difficult effort.

Second, the Afghan government with the help of the international community is executing a three-pronged counternarcotics strategy, which includes an eradication campaign in several provinces, alternative development efforts, and the training and fielding of drug interdiction units. This year's harvest could be even larger than last year. Eradication and interdiction efforts need to go forward, despite the logistical and security challenges.

Finally, we are preparing for the first elections in Afghanistan in a generation. Registering voters, providing election information to those voters, and planning to secure thousands of voting places are enormous challenges.

Any one of these three tasks would test more mature governments anywhere in the world. Attempting all three at once is a monumental undertaking. We must support President Karzai's government politically, financially and with Coalition forces.

This morning I will focus on Afghanistan's upcoming election because it pulls together prospects and obstacles that illustrate all three components of our support to the Afghan government and people—governance, security, and reconstruction.

BERLIN: FUNDS FOR ELECTIONS AND RECONSTRUCTION

The international community gathered in Berlin this past April to reaffirm its commitment to create a stable and secure political and economic future, and to support the Afghan people's own integral and active role in the reconstruction process. Upon the conclusion of the conference, the sixty-five delegations signed a declaration articulating a clear vision and framework for Afghan ownership of the reconstruction process. In addition to pledging over \$8 billion for reconstruction projects over the next three years, donor countries also committed to provide an additional \$66 million for funding the upcoming elections. Of the \$66 million, the United States pledged \$25 million, clearly showing our desire to see an election that will fulfill goals established by the Bonn Agreements.

The international community has essentially fully funded the UN's current voter registration plans. As of today, about 2.8 million voters have been registered across Afghanistan, out of an estimated eligible seven to nine million. Nearly a third of the people registered so far are women. The U.N. is deploying voter-registering teams to over 4,500 places in small villages and in difficult terrain. It is imperative to have a balanced cross-section of registered voters to ensure a legitimate election. Even though the number of registered voters has been increasing, the country's tenuous security environment, which is my next point, could threaten its viability.

THE NEED FOR SECURITY

The elections present an immediate security challenge and highlight the ongoing security task before us. The Taliban and other anti-Karzai elements have explicitly vowed to disrupt the elections—just as they vowed to disrupt the Constitutional Loya Jirga last winter. Afghan and international forces thwarted them then. The challenge is even bigger now.

The first line of protection is the police. We are working with the Afghan Minister of the Interior, Ali Jalali, in ensuring that well-equipped and well-trained Afghan police forces will be securing polling places and ballot-transport convoys across the country.

While elections will be one of the major tasks for the police in September, a well-developed force is also crucial for other day-to-day operations and larger law-enforcement needs in Afghanistan's future. Along with lead-nation Germany, the Afghan Ministry of Interior and the United States have made progress toward building and providing long-term institutional capacity and equipment and infrastructure support. We have completed construction of a Central Police Training Center in Kabul, as well as Regional Police Training Centers in seven locations across the country. Since the inception of our training program last year, we have trained approximately 10,000 police officers, and are committed to reaching our goal of training 20,000 by the end of this month.

The second line of security for the upcoming elections is the Afghan National Army. Along with the British and the French, we have trained 10,000 ANA troops so that they will be ready to address security needs during the election process, such as disruption or attacks on voting places. However, our ultimate goal is to help build an ANA that can assume, along with the police, responsibility for the maintenance of security within Afghanistan and the means to secure its own borders and citizens. As of late last month, U.S. and coalition forces have conducted individual basic training for nineteen battalions and have completed initial fielding of the Central Corps. Two more battalions are expected to graduate over the course of the next two

months. While U.S. Foreign Military Financing funds, Defense Department expenditures under the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act, and international donations are being used to equip and sustain the Central Corps, crucial in our efforts are supporting battalions that are continuing unit training and rebuilding military infrastructure. We are also ensuring the permanence of the Afghan National Army by diversifying recruitment procedures, seeing that each battalion has a mix of ethnic groups in Afghanistan.

The third component of Afghanistan's defense line is the International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF, now led by NATO. ISAF troops represent a multilateral effort in stabilizing the security environment in Afghanistan. ISAF has grown to 6,500 soldiers. NATO has also set a goal to establish five provincial reconstruction teams this summer in northern and western Afghanistan.

Finally, as they did during the Constitutional Loya Jirga, Coalition forces will keep Taliban, Al Qaeda and other anti-government forces off balance and on the defensive.

RECONSTRUCTION IN AFGHANISTAN

The upcoming election represents a short-term goal within a larger strategy to help Afghanistan establish the institutions of a democracy.

Once the government is elected, the country will need adequate infrastructure and a well-organized civil society to function and grow. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) have begun to forge such relationships within Afghanistan's society, and are expanding to help manage reconstruction efforts for the future. PRTs expand the reach of the central government into the provinces, enhance security, and facilitate reconstruction projects. Each team has a security section, including military and security observers; a representative of the Afghan Ministry of Interior; a civilian section, including State and USAID officers; and a headquarters element, including force protection and support elements. These teams, which range from sixty to 250 personnel, patrol, survey and assess the security environment daily and often diffuse potential problems by informing government officials of potential violence or arranging for parties to meet to discuss problems. Quick impact projects have been completed in various sectors, including agriculture, bridge and road projects, hospitals, schools and water wells. PRTs continue to enjoy the confidence of the Afghan government and the support of the Afghan people. The Coalition and NATO have thirteen PRTs today, expect to have sixteen by the election, and hope NATO will come through with its promised five more, so that PRTs will be working in twenty-one of the thirty-four provinces by the end of the year.

The United States is also heavily involved in rebuilding Afghanistan's infrastructure, particularly national roads, electric power, irrigation and communications. Reconstruction remains an essential element of U.S. strategy to meet the long-term security needs of the country. My friend and colleague Jim Kunder will further describe our reconstruction efforts.

PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

As you can see, the upcoming election is the crossroads of our short- and long-term strategies in Afghanistan. Our short-term tasks to provide elections safety, build needed infrastructure, and support democratization, represent long-term endeavors of democracy and governance, security, and reconstruction. When millions of Afghans go to the polls this September, it will represent a milestone in our strategy in Afghanistan. It will take us closer to the top of the mountain.

However, serious difficulties remain. The country still needs stronger links between provincial regions and the national government, and most importantly, a stable security environment. Fighting the ever-increasing illicit drug trade, overcoming the influence of local commanders and fighting a Taliban insurgency still require much work. The path is very steep.

A LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP

Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned, the Afghans say, optimistically, "there is a path to the top of the highest mountain." The American version of the proverb is—"where there is a will, there is a way." As the Afghan proverb applies to Afghan cooperation with our efforts, the American version squarely applies to *our* commitment and our will. U.S. government agencies, civilian and military, are demonstrating their commitment in helping Afghanistan become an example of democracy in the Islamic world. The September elections will not mark the end of our efforts; rather, its success will be another milestone in our long-term commitment to Afghanistan.

This long-term relationship will be strengthened on June 15, when President Bush welcomes President Karzai to the White House and Sea Island. Presidents

Bush and Karzai will discuss a wide range of issues, including the war on terrorism, and bringing peace, security, and prosperity to the Afghan people. President Karzai will also visit Chicago, Los Angeles, and Davis, California, meeting with various actors in the commercial, private, and agricultural sectors. This visit will demonstrate the “will” of both nations, working together for a safer and more prosperous future.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, President Dwight Eisenhower visited Afghanistan on December 9, 1959. After passing through the country, President Eisenhower wrote in his memoir, “[f]ew, if any, women were present.” Much has changed now. Life for women under the current government represents an improvement over the past, as they are receiving literacy training, vocational education, health-care programs, and increased opportunities in public and civic life. After decades of war, instability, and insecurity, Afghans are now beginning to enjoy a more dynamic and open civic life. While much has changed since President Eisenhower’s assessment, his comment upon departing the country does stand true: he considered the Afghans “the most determined lot he had ever encountered.”

Mr. Chairman, we abandoned Afghanistan fifteen years ago. That was a tragic mistake for Afghans and for Americans. The Afghan people are worried we will abandon them again. The enemies of democracy are hoping we will. We must not.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Ambassador. Ms. Long.

STATEMENT OF MARY BETH LONG, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR COUNTERNARCOTICS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Ms. LONG. Chairman Hyde, Representative Lantos, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is my distinct pleasure to be here today to discuss with you the problem of illegal narcotics trafficking in Afghanistan and the Department’s efforts toward that problem.

The Department appreciates the support that Congress has provided as it demonstrates your awareness of this problem, and it is indeed critical to our efforts to address the problem of illegal narcotics trafficking in Afghanistan.

As this Committee already knows, we expect the poppy product in Afghanistan this year will be substantially increased over last year’s crop. At this point, we are unable to estimate the precise size of that increase.

However, available information suggests that the poppy crop this year will be large. This not only the bad news. We believe that the increased cultivation and the resulting expansion in narcotics trafficking helps local Afghan commanders who resist efforts to expand the authority of the centralized Afghan government throughout the country.

And we are certain that the narcotics industry benefits the extremists and terrorist groups, including the Taliban, the Hizb Islami or Gulbuddin, or commonly known as the HIG, and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, sometimes referred to as the IMU, to undermine the stability of a central representative government in Afghanistan, and that many of these groups sometimes work with al-Qaeda.

At this time, we can’t precisely estimate how much these groups rely on the narcotics trade for financial or logistical support, but we suspect that they receive substantial benefits from the trades.

In addition, we are beginning to see signs of direct involvement by some members of these groups in narcotics trafficking. This is a new development that concerns us. We are also concerned that

some of the key traffickers may be able to apply their increased profits to strengthening the military capabilities of the forces that they control.

This development may undermine our efforts to promote long term stability in Afghanistan. These developments underscore the fact that narcotics trafficking not only hinders our efforts to defeat extremists and terrorist forces in Afghanistan, but also our efforts to support the stability and legitimacy of the Afghanistan central government, and to protect the security of the United States.

The drug trade tempts Afghan government officials to pander to crime rather than to protect the Afghan citizens. It creates a hidden economy that is separate from the informal and formal taxation system, and it distorts the investment decision making of the Afghan people.

In addition, it undermines the functioning representative and centralized Afghan national government, and it provides cover under which unaccountable groups, including the groups that I just mentioned, including al-Qaeda and its allies, operate.

These are developments that the United States clearly cannot allow. I believe all can agree that the narcotics problem in Afghanistan is serious and that action is required. The difficult issue is to determine the right response, and the timing of that response.

The Department of Defense is engaged in building the Afghan Government's capacity to attack the narcotics problem. The Defense Department also supports coalition members and other United States Government agencies, like the DEA, in their efforts to attack the Afghan narcotics problem.

In general, the Department's counterdrug Afghan program focuses in three ways; enhancing border security, intelligence capability and sharing, and support to interdiction efforts.

For example, the Department will be building infrastructure and providing equipment to the Afghan police in the south and southeast border regions, as well as the Afghan interdiction forces, including a new DEA-sponsored interdiction force.

In addition, the Department has provided a communication system for the border police and establishing an intelligence fusion center that will assist the combined forces in Afghanistan to address narcotics trafficking problems.

The Department is also providing hopefully through its fusion center an intelligence database that will be a capability for the Afghan Ministry of Interior. These efforts are now coming on-line.

We have provided funds to the affected commands, and the Army Corps of Engineers elements in Afghanistan are preparing to conduct site surveys for the infrastructure of these projects, and contracts with the border police, communications systems, and the intelligence fusion center should be awarded in July.

We realize that our initial efforts to build the Afghan government's capacity to deal with the illegal narcotics trafficking in Afghanistan may not bear significant results in the next few months.

We are, however, convinced that this approach is the right one. The counternarcotics effort in Afghanistan will take time, and it must be sustained over many years, perhaps as long as a decade.

By way of comparison, it took Pakistan a long time to eliminate most of its poppy production and narcotics processing. I am pre-

pared to discuss in closed session additional details and developments in our thinking about the appropriate military role in the overall United States Government programs, and the approach to counternarcotics in Afghanistan.

I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Representative Lantos, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to be here today, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Long follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARY BETH LONG, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
COUNTERNARCOTICS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Chairman Hyde, Representative Lantos, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is my honor to appear before you today to discuss the problem of illegal narcotics trafficking in Afghanistan, and our approach to defeat this problem. We appreciate the support the Defense Department has received from Congress in this area. That support was very forward-leaning and has been critical in our government's response to this problem.

THE PROBLEM—AND THE RIGHT RESPONSE

We believe that this year's estimate for poppy cultivation in Afghanistan will show a substantial increase over last year's. At this point, we are not in a position to estimate the precise size of the increase, but data available now suggest the increase will be large.

That is not the only bad news. We believe that the increased cultivation, and the resulting expanded trafficking in narcotics, helps local commanders who want to resist our efforts to expand the authority of the Afghan government throughout the country. In addition, we are certain that the narcotics industry benefits various extremist and terrorist groups such as the Taliban, the Hizb Islami (Gulbuddin faction) (or "HIG"), and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (or "IMU") that undermine stability in Afghanistan. We cannot precisely estimate how much these groups rely on the narcotics trade for financial resources or logistical support, but we suspect that at least some in these groups receive substantial benefits from the trade. Some or all of these groups may provide support to al Qa'ida.

Moreover, we are beginning to see greater signs of direct involvement by some members of these groups in actual trafficking. This is a new development that obviously concerns us.

We are also concerned that some of the key traffickers will be able to funnel their increased profits into stronger military capabilities directly under their control. This also is a situation that should be of great concern.

Narcotics trafficking not only poses challenges to our efforts to defeat extremist and terrorist forces; it also is a threat to the stability and legitimacy of the Afghan government, and to the security of the United States. The drugs trade tempts Afghan government officials to obey hidden masters rather than the people of Afghanistan. It creates a hidden economy and a separate informal taxation system that distorts investment incentives, undermines the authority of the Afghan Government, and provides cover for unaccountable groups, including al Qa'ida and its allies, to wield power and to secure protected sanctuaries. This is a situation that the United States clearly cannot allow.

I believe all can agree that this problem is serious and that action is required. The difficult issue is to determine the right response, and the timing of that response. The Defense Department is engaged in building the Afghan Government's capacity to attack this problem. The Defense Department is also supporting other government agencies, like the Drug Enforcement Administration, in their efforts to attack this problem.

We recognize that our approach—building the Afghan Government's own counterdrug capacity—will not produce many results in the next four months. However, we are convinced that this approach is the right one. The counternarcotics effort in Afghanistan must be sustained over several years, perhaps for as much as a decade. As a point of comparison, that is how long it took Afghanistan's neighboring Pakistan to eliminate most of its poppy production and narcotics processing.

I am prepared to discuss in more specifics, in a closed session, recent developments regarding our thinking about the appropriate military role in the overall U.S. Government counternarcotics approach in Afghanistan.

THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE—BUILDING CAPACITY FOR COUNTERNARCOTICS
AND COUNTERTERRORISM

The Defense Department's approach to this problem has undergone significant discussion and refinement, within USCENTCOM and in Kabul, between CFC-A and the Embassy. The approach is now decided, however. The Ambassador has endorsed a plan, and we are beginning to assist in the implementation of that plan.

This plan has three principal thrusts. The first two thrusts—improving border security and the sharing of intelligence with law enforcement—are specifically assigned to the Defense Department by the U.S. Counternarcotics Strategy for Afghanistan. The third thrust—interdiction—a task that the Defense Department believes it should support.

The Defense Department's counterdrug approach in Afghanistan is designed to achieve counternarcotics objectives, but it is also a counterterrorism tool designed to provide payoffs in the war against al Qaeda and other terrorist groups. The following chart illustrates the Department's approach in using counternarcotics programs in Afghanistan in ways that provide benefits to its counterterrorism and national stability objectives.

In general, the Department views its programs in Afghanistan to fall within three general categories: 1. Border Security; 2. Intelligence Sharing and Support; and 3. Support to Interdiction Efforts.

Counternarcotics Objectives	Counternarcotics Programs	Counterterrorism Payoffs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve border security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide infrastructure and equipment for National and Highway Police • Improve border crossing points • Provide communications for Border Police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve controls over border • Build Afghan law enforcement • Interdict smuggling routes used by terrorists and traffickers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve intelligence sharing with law enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create intelligence fusion centers in CFC-A and in Afghan Ministry of Interior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolster Coalition intelligence capability against traffickers that support movement of terrorists • Build Afghan law enforcement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support direct interdiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve mobility of Afghan interdiction force • Provide infrastructure and equipment for Counter Narcotics Police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destroy drug labs/facilities that generate funding for terrorists

1. Border Security

The Department intends to bolster border security, not just along the actual border, but in border regions, especially in areas bordering Pakistan.

Specifically, two Border Police Brigades will receive infrastructure and equipment support, enabling better security along the border in Paktika, Kandahar, and Zabol provinces. The Corps of Engineers elements in CFC-A will oversee the construction of brigade, battalion, and company headquarters facilities. Since Border Police operate almost like light infantry that patrol sectors where heavily armed militants sometimes move, they need additional equipment beyond the requirements of normal policemen. CFC-A will also oversee the issuance of specialized equipment, beyond the equipment that police receive when they complete U.S.-sponsored or German-sponsored police training. The specialized equipment list is still being finalized, but it will include some additional protective gear and equipment for bad weather.

In addition, the Department will fund a communications system for the Border Police that will link them with the existing National Police communications backbone—procured through Department of State funds—and that will extend from the command to the tactical level. The plan is to provide these communications systems to Border Police units as they are deployed and as they replace the existing Border Guard forces that have traditionally operated on Afghanistan's borders.

Away from the borders, the Defense Department will improve, or in many cases, construct, police facilities and other infrastructure for National Police headquarters in provinces stretching south, along the Pakistan border, from Nangahar to Nimruz. CFC-A will coordinate with various international efforts that are ongoing, and with the State Department. The Defense Department also will supplement existing equipment provided to the National Police in these provinces.

The National Highway Police also will receive Defense Department assistance in this general region. The Department will fund construction and the refurbishment of Highway Police facilities for the battalion that operates on the ring road between Kabul and Gardez. Again, the Department also will assist in providing needed equipment. For the Highway Police, that equipment will include refurbishing a helicopter belonging to the Afghan Ministry of Interior, which is intended for use in responding to problems along the ring road south of Kabul.

Finally, the Department is funding two projects in Uzbekistan: construction of a set of moorings for small maritime patrol vessels on the Amu Darya River, across which substantial amounts of narcotics are shipped; and infrastructure for an Uzbek Special Investigative Unit established by the DEA.

2. Intelligence Sharing

To improve the flow of information between intelligence and law enforcement organizations, the Defense Department will establish counter-narcoterrorism intelligence fusion centers (IFCs) within CFC-A and the Ministry of Interior. The IFC within CFC-A will augment, with counternarcotics and counter-narcoterrorism expertise, the military intelligence support provided to the Commanding General. It also will integrate its analysis with the military and with counterinsurgency intelligence efforts within CFC-A.

The IFC in the Ministry of Interior will have several functions. It will consist of a database, provided and operated initially by a contractor. This data base will be the first step in reconstructing Afghanistan's criminal justice records, which were destroyed by the last two decades of war. It will also enable Afghan police to focus their investigative efforts on narcotics traffickers. Defense Department and DEA personnel working in the CFC-A IFC and in Embassy Kabul will help the Ministry of Interior to begin to populate this data base.

The Afghan IFC also will be a focal point for the MoI's own counternarcotics intelligence analysis. The Defense Department believes and expects that some information developed by the Afghans utilizing this fusion center will then be made available to CFC-A and to U.S. law enforcement agencies.

3. Interdiction

The Defense Department will provide up to two refurbished helicopters for use by the existing interdiction force within the Ministry of Interior, and will also provide a base of operations and equipment for a new interdiction unit established by the DEA. The existing interdiction force is conducting effective operations, but needs greater mobility to extend its reach and to increase its force protection capability. The DEA-run interdiction unit will have a stronger law enforcement focus than the existing unit, which is relatively well armed and capable of conducting light infantry combat operations. As the Afghan Government re-establishes the rule of law in the country, expanding interdiction operations that result in criminal prosecutions will be an important goal. The DEA-run unit will have that kind of focus.

FUNDING DEFENSE DEPARTMENT PROJECTS

Funding requirements for each of these projects are currently only initial estimates, as described in the table below:

Program Area	Millions \$
National Police Facilities and Equipment	13.00
Counter Narcotics Police Facilities and Equipment	3.00
Border Police Brigades (2)	27.90
Border Police Communications System	9.00
National Highway Police Battalion Facilities and Equipment	5.90
Intel Fusion Center	4.00
Helicopters for Afghan Interdiction Force	6.50
Uzbekistan Maritime Infrastructure and Special Investigative Unit Facilities	3.75
Total	73.00

STATUS OF DEFENSE DEPARTMENT PROJECTS

The Department of Defense's implementation of Afghan counterdrug programs is now in its initial stages. The Department has transferred the funding for so that contracts can be approved. We anticipate contract approval in the coming weeks.

We expect that facility construction will begin this summer and that equipment for the police will be arriving in Afghanistan in September. The helicopters for the interdiction force and various police units (e.g. the 2 helos for interdiction force, the 2 helos for the Border Police, and the 1 destined for the Highway Police) probably will arrive early next year. The Statements of Work (SOWs) for the intelligence fusion centers and the communications system for the Border Police have been drafted and are being reviewed by CFC-A. We expect both SOWs will be approved within the next weeks, and contracts will be awarded no later than early July. Equipment for these projects will probably begin arriving in Afghanistan in early September.

At this time, CFC-A is developing a plan to receive and distribute this equipment, and to support its fielding and proper safeguarding by the Afghan authorities. CFC-A also is working with State Department officers and German representatives in Kabul to ensure that police facilities and equipment provided by different agencies and countries are compatible.

The Department recognizes that the pace of our work building a program to counter narcotics-related activities in Afghanistan needs to be as brisk as possible so that Afghan authorities can build their capacity, as quickly as possible, to begin to counter the narcotics threat growing in their country. We appreciate the congressional support we have received to date toward this important goal.

I would like to thank you, Chairman Hyde, Representative Lantos, and the Members of the Committee for the opportunity to discuss these issues with you. I look forward to answering your questions.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Ms. Long. Mr. Kunder.

STATEMENT OF JAMES KUNDER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. KUNDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, read the paper today and saw that sad article on the first page about the Army PFC who was killed in Afghanistan and talking about a forgotten war.

And I do very much appreciate the interest of the Committee in making sure that this isn't a forgotten reconstruction effort. I do keep a copy of the Afghan Freedom Support Act in my office, and we look at it frequently, and it has been a help and guide to us.

I think that the Committee showed some real wisdom in anticipating what some of the issues were going to be, and so we very much appreciate your continued interest in this topic, which certainly is not a forgotten war or forgotten issue to us.

I also want to take the opportunity to report to the Committee on what I think the status of the reconstruction effort has been in Afghanistan, and from where I sit at least I would report that the overall reconstruction process has been a success thus far.

This process started in the winter of 2001–2002 with the fall of the Taliban. I think it is critical to remember that Afghanistan was one of the poorest places on the face of the earth before the Russian invasion.

Stop and think about the massive investment that was required to rebuild our country after the Civil War, a 4-year war, and then think about the level that Afghanistan found itself in 2001 and 2002, after 23 years of conflict, in which virtually the entire infrastructure of the country and virtually every institution in the country—the army, the police, the government, the customs service—was destroyed.

I would report to the Committee that the reconstruction success that has taken place in the last 2½ years has been nothing short of phenomenal. Rather than cover it in a brief opening statement, I have appended to my statement, Mr. Chairman, reports in each of the sectors in which USAID is working; economic reconstruction, education, health infrastructure, economic governance, and so forth.

And in each of these areas, I have tried to provide indicators to show the level of success that has been accomplished today. And I make that statement with a full recognition of the ongoing security problems, and as Ambassador Taylor said, how steep the hill is in front of us.

But my report to the Committee today would be that the reconstruction effort has been a success thus far. I would also try to respond to the Committee's request in my statement for information on lessons learned by USAID in Afghanistan, and I listed seven such lessons learned for post-conflict reconstruction environments.

And I would just touch on three in this brief opening statement. First, we have had to pay close attention to making sure that the reconstruction effort is essentially an Afghan-supported and Afghan-owned process.

We like to talk about our foreign assistance, but the Afghans have made tremendous strides on their own. This government has made heroic efforts to hold the country together and advance the reconstruction agenda. A lot of Afghans have been killed along projects like the Kabul-to Kandahar Highway Project that was just completed.

And the Afghans have taken full ownership of this reconstruction effort, and I think that is an important lesson for us to remember. A second lesson that I would point out is to remember the gender implications of what we are doing.

There has been an awful lot of writing, of course, and reporting, on the horrible conditions in which Afghan women found themselves under the Taliban, but we have tried to make sure that in all of our projects, and not just the projects specifically designed for

women, in all of our economic reconstruction and infrastructure reconstruction, and health and education programs, to recognize what impact we are having on Afghan women, and how we can be of assistance to ensuring gender equality in Afghanistan.

The third point that I would make, or the third lesson learned, is that again going back to the Afghan Freedom Support Act, it was a useful initiative on the part of the Committee to tell us as a government to appoint an overall interagency coordinator.

And we have worked well with Ambassador Taylor and his predecessor, and that effort has helped us make sure that the entire U.S. Government is working together on complex areas like counternarcotics.

And finally you asked us to take a look at the status of provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan. From the USAID perspective, we have worked well with our military colleagues in the field, and we have a good relationship on these PRTs.

The military personnel help us identify what some of the projects are while they are out doing their patrolling, and we then take those project ideas, and we make sure that they are consistent with the Afghan government's plan.

So a soldier or a patrol might be approached by a group of villagers, and they might say we need a school in this village. They bring that idea to the USAID and State Department personnel at the provincial reconstruction team.

We then run that up the flag pole at the Afghan Ministry of Education, and make sure that school and that village is on their priority list, and make sure that it makes sense to them.

So we have worked out a pretty good synthesis with our military colleagues, and I think those PRTs in our estimation are doing good work in the countryside. I would just like to touch in closing on this issue of counternarcotics, which I know is of great interest to the Committee.

We have attempted in our economic reconstruction effort to focus on the overall economic growth that is going to be necessary to provide a viable economy that is going to be the only long term alternative to poppy growing in Afghanistan.

We need the interdiction, and we need the law enforcement, but in the long term what is going to convince those Afghan farmers is other alternatives. And I just want to leave the Committee with a couple of facts that I think are critical to understanding this problem.

Wheat is the primary agricultural commodity in Afghanistan. We have had enormous increases, over 100 percent, of production increases in wheat by the hardworking Afghan farmers since the fall of the Taliban.

But today what the farmer can realize from planting a hectare of wheat is about $\frac{1}{30}$ of what a farmer can gain by planting a hectare of poppy. So those are the kinds of economic factors you are looking at.

To us it is astonishing that the percentage of Afghan farmers who actually are growing poppy is well under 10 percent. In a desperately poor country, where the nutritional standards are where they are, and where 1 in 4 Afghan children even today dies before

the age of five, the economics of this are desperate and rough for the average Afghan farmer.

So our goal is to get the credit programs in place, and get the alternative crops, like olives, and peanuts, and cotton, and almonds, working in the countryside, and get the market centers and distribution centers running so that those farmers are not faced with quite as grim an economic choice as they are faced with today.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the Committee for its ongoing interest in this topic. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kunder follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES KUNDER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairman: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

I would like to start by thanking you and the Committee for your strong support to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. By passing the Afghan Freedom Support Act, and thereby providing sound guidance on the structure of the reconstruction process, and by ongoing interest in and support for the overall reconstruction effort, the Committee has contributed significantly to the reconstruction effort.

Second, I would like to give an overall assessment of the reconstruction effort. In short, Mr. Chairman, the reconstruction process has been, thus far, a success. I say this with a full recognition of the serious security issues that still persist, and with a full recognition of the serious reconstruction challenges that remain ahead. But, when I recall the condition of the country in January of 2002, just after the fall of the Taliban, when 23 years of warfare had driven the country to almost total collapse of its physical and institutional infrastructure, then consider the state of the nation today, the amount of progress has been very significant.

Rather than take the time of the Committee now to recount those many advances, I have appended to my testimony a fact sheet USAID has prepared illustrating the reconstruction situation in the following sectors in which U.S. taxpayer assistance has helped the Afghan people: (1) restoring infrastructure; (2) rehabilitating agriculture, the lifeblood of the Afghan economy; (3) improving health; (4) enhancing education; (5) empowering women; (6) growing the economy; and (7) promoting democracy and restoring the media. A review of the progress in these seven areas suggests just how far Afghanistan has come in 30 months, after 23 years of war.

Of special importance now, on the eve of elections in Afghanistan, is the development of the political process—an inclusive political process—in Afghanistan. The introduction of legitimate political processes in Afghanistan contributes to the development of democracy and stability in the country. The United States has been a major donor for all the major political process benchmarks mandated by the Bonn Accord. USAID has supported and played an integral role in all the preliminary steps required for Afghanistan's national elections this fall. These steps included the Emergency Loya Jirga; the Constitutional process, the Constitutional Loya Jirga, and the resulting constitution; and finally the national election registration process and voter education.

SUPPORT FOR THE EMERGENCY LOYA JIRGA

USAID provided \$6 million in logistical and technical support for the election of delegates and their assembly at the June 2002 Emergency Loya Jirga, which ended with the announcement of 14 ministerial appointments and the swearing in of President Karzai and his colleagues.

SUPPORT FOR THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS

U. S. Government support for the constitutional process totaled approximately \$13 million. USAID's partners included the United Nations Development Programme, The Asia Foundation, Internews, the Institute of War and Peace Reporting, Management Systems International, the International Organization for Migration, and several Afghan organizations. USAID assistance provided technical advisers and funding for Afghanistan's Constitutional Commission and printing the draft constitution for distribution to the Afghan people as part of a nation-wide public consultative process.

USAID support included identification and election of representatives to the Constitutional Loya Jirga (CLJ) in December. USAID, working with the UN, helped to meet the CLJ's logistical, transport, media and security requirements. USAID-funded advisors helped to develop the CLJ's rules of order and procedure. Currently, USAID is supporting the establishment of a CLJ archive and the physical rehabilitation of the convention site.

Finally, USAID supported public information and debate regarding the draft constitution and the CLJ. USAID funded training for journalists and ensured that regional journalists could travel to Kabul to cover the proceedings. USAID's partners produced a provincial radio talk show and a mobile cinema project that explained the constitutional process in Dari and Pashto, Afghanistan's two most widely spoken languages. USAID also funded a consortium of NGOs that trained community leaders to provide information and civic education on the constitution in their communities.

SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS

The United States is the largest contributor to the national elections—\$78 million in 2004. USAID direct support for the national elections includes funding for the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), The Asia Foundation (TAF), the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI). USAID provides technical assistance, training, logistical and organizational support to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the new Afghan electoral body that oversees the legal framework, voter registration, voter education and election administration.

USAID support is essential to the election and long-term democratic development in Afghanistan, to build a politically active citizenry by helping citizens and political elites develop a shared system of democratic norms through civic education, election oversight, focus group research, polling and training to political parties and civic activists.

After the elections, the government will no longer be considered transitional but democratically elected. Although the elections will be over, the democratic process within the country will have just begun, and USAID plans to provide support to help establish the necessary foundation to make the new Afghan parliament a viable, functioning democratic institution.

Lessons learned since the establishment of USAID activities in post-Taliban Afghanistan and what improvements can be made to providing assistance to the people and Government of Afghanistan:

Beyond the democratic governance issues, and in response to the Chairman's questions, I would like to address more broadly USAID's key lessons from Afghanistan.

First, the process of developing democracy in any war-torn country must view security as priority one—every other development objective is, to a greater or lesser degree, negatively affected by poor security. We have developed a number of innovative techniques—working with our military colleagues, working with our civilian partners, and working with the Afghans themselves—to facilitate work in high-risk environments, and these techniques are paying dividends in the reconstruction program.

Second, there must be local ownership of the reconstruction process, and thus unique country-specific approaches and institutions must be incorporated. In Afghanistan, the use of the Loya Jirga as a mechanism for determining the transitional government's responsibilities and leadership, as well as for ratifying the Constitution is a good example.

Third, the process must incorporate the capabilities of international organizations, including the United Nations. These international organizations can play an important leadership role, especially in countries like Afghanistan with little electoral experience and with a population that is largely illiterate.

Fourth, the process of developing democracy in a war-torn country is a long-term endeavor and is not over when the last ballot is cast. It takes time to change traditional norms and approaches, and to design and build new norms and institutions. It will be many years before democracy takes full-hold in Afghanistan. The USG will need to commit long-term resources to assist the Afghans to ensure that it does take hold.

Fifth, an interagency coordinator, an idea advanced in the Afghan Freedom Support Act, was a useful idea. This approach provides the government one point-person to focus the efforts of several agencies. This concept should be used in other situations as well. We have worked well with Ambassador Taylor and his predecessor, while maintaining the initiative to take on unforeseen developmental challenges.

Sixth, flexibility in funding is critical to operating in wartime environments like Afghanistan. The combination of International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account funds, and reasonable waiver authority is essential to operating in a place like Afghanistan.

Seventh, we need to continue to pay careful attention to gender issues in conflictive environments like Afghanistan. It is widely recognized that Afghanistan's women have paid a high price in suffering and lost opportunity during the decades of war and Taliban oppression. Not only must we develop women's opportunity programs in such environments, but the gender aspects of all of our reconstruction efforts must be considered.

Effectiveness of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and their ability to respond to the needs of Afghans involved in rebuilding their communities:

Afghanistan is transitioning to a functioning democracy and an economically progressive country. Stability is the biggest obstacle to development. Taliban insurgents, warlords, drug-financed groups, corruption and lawlessness in various parts of the country threaten investment and reconstruction efforts. They also hamper the ability of the government and donors to implement social, economic and political development priorities throughout the country.

PRTs are joint civil-military units deployed throughout Afghanistan. They are an interim mechanism to strengthen the reach and enhance the legitimacy of the central government in outlying regions through improved security and the facilitation of reconstruction and development efforts. As such, they are a useful way for USAID to gather information from the provinces to make informed program decisions, and they are a mechanism for improving program monitoring. However, information gathering and program monitoring are partially dependent on the availability of support from the military—vehicles, security guards, etc.—for the civilian USG employees “embedded” within the PRT structure. Otherwise USAID officers are confined to the PRT compound.

PRTs are also a useful mechanism for identifying small, quick impact projects in the surrounding area to demonstrate goodwill and tangible benefits. \$52 million in U.S. Government resources has been programmed this year to support such small scale community reconstruction activities managed by the PRTs.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide this information to the Committee, and will be pleased to answer questions.

USAID ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN

June 2004

Since late 2001, the United States Agency for International Development has responded swiftly and continuously to help rebuild Afghanistan, providing over \$2 billion in humanitarian and reconstruction assistance from 9/11 through the end of the current fiscal year. The first stage of assistance was humanitarian, averting famine in the winter of 2001 and 2002 through food aid, and restarting the economy through cash-for-work and food-for-work programs which also began the rebuilding of the country's infrastructure. As the humanitarian programs continued throughout 2002, USAID started programs to bring a sense of normalcy to the long-suffering Afghan people, rebuilding government offices, printing textbooks for the March 2002 school year opening, and converting the devalued currency to a new Afghani currency, among many examples. During this period, USAID worked with the respective Afghan government ministries and coordinated with other donors to design longer-term development and reconstruction programs to help Afghanistan start on a path toward stability, prosperity, and self-sufficiency.

Those longer-term development and reconstruction programs are now well underway. Below are the accomplishments and upcoming goals for those programs, organized by sector:

INFRASTRUCTURE AND AFGHANISTAN'S RING ROAD

Years of unrest in Afghanistan, followed by Taliban rule, has left public infrastructure in ruin. All sectors of the economy struggle when poor roads prevent the transport of goods, or a shortage of clean water affects a community's health.

USAID is working to bring back the basics to Afghanistan. The beginning of the reconstruction of the Kabul-Kandahar-Herat Highway (Ring Road) revitalized entire villages. The reopened Salang Tunnel, high in the mountains, has cut more than two and a half days off common trips. These projects are key to the redevelopment of Afghanistan.

The Ring Road—The journey from Kabul to Kandahar was an arduous trip that required two days to travel; much of the road (surface) and several bridges suffered considerable deterioration, damage and lack of investment over the years, particularly during two-and-a half decades of civil war and hostilities. President Karzai stated that reconstruction of the country's principal road system is key to Afghanistan's economic recovery, as more than 35% of Afghanistan's population lives within 50 kilometers (31 miles) of the highway.

Today, the first step toward reconstruction of Afghanistan's national road system is complete. Phase I of the highway linking Kabul to Kandahar is open to traffic. As a result, people from Kabul to Kandahar enjoy better access to markets, healthcare, schools and jobs. At the national level, the highway has already begun to contribute to Afghanistan's improved economic growth, security and national unity.

The entire length of the Kabul-Kandahar highway is 482 kilometers (300 miles). USAID reconstructed 389 kilometers (242 miles) of the highway; the government of Japan funded the reconstruction of 50 kilometers (31 miles) of highway, and the remaining 43 kilometers (27 miles) did not require resurfacing.

Sector Objective: Reconstruct Afghanistan's major and rural roads, and improve economic growth, security, and political integration along the corridor linking Afghanistan's two largest cities—Kabul and Kandahar.

Accomplishments:

- The first layer of pavement for the Kabul-Kandahar Highway was completed on December 15, 2003

Current Activities and Goals:

- Constructing/repairing 36 bridges along the Kabul-Kandahar Highway
- Reconstruct/construct 1,000 kilometers of rural roads; contracting underway
- Begin construction of the Kandahar-Herat Highway in summer 2004
- Providing emergency diesel fuel to Kabul
- Providing emergency generating plants for Kandahar, Lashkar-Gah, and Qalat

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL ECONOMY

Agriculture is a way of life for 70 percent of Afghanistan's people. However, instability, coupled with the region's four-year drought, devastated the country's food production capacity and impoverished farmers.

USAID is helping farmers re-establish production and become more profitable and efficient, by rehabilitating irrigation systems and providing tools, agricultural equipment, fertilizer, and seeds. Revitalizing agriculture is key to the growth of the Afghan economy.

Sector Objective: Enhance the food security and incomes of Afghanistan's rural population by increasing agricultural productivity and facilitate effective linkages between producers, processors and markets.

Accomplishments:

- Provided 5,000 metric tons of seed and 9,000 metric tons of fertilizer to 100,000 farmers in 13 provinces
- 7,000 kilometers of rural roads have been repaired
- Nearly 8,000 irrigation/water works projects have been completed

Current Activities and Goals:

- Revitalizing (Afghanistan's) Agricultural Markets Program (RAMP):
 - Irrigation projects affecting 301,000 hectares initiated since fall 2003; of these, projects affecting 150,000 ha now complete
 - Training Afghan women and farmers in poultry production and in using new technologies in 250 villages
 - Microfinance program underway; as of April 2004, loans disbursed to 675 borrowers and 1,050 loan officers trained
 - Vaccination/treatment of 350,000 head of livestock in spring/summer 2004
 - Constructing 140 market and collection centers by June 2004

HEALTH

One of every four Afghan children dies before the age of five, and adults face an average life expectancy of only 46 years. The health status of the Afghan people is among the worst in the world.

USAID is working to improve the basic health and nutrition of Afghans, particularly women, children, and displaced persons. It is bringing basic services and health education to under-served communities, focusing on maternal and child health, hygiene, water and sanitation, immunization and control of infectious diseases. These programs, women are the primary recipients of services, as well as providers of healthcare.

Sector Objective: To increase access to health care across the country and rebuild Afghanistan's health care infrastructure.

Accomplishments:

- Rehabilitated 140 health facilities (clinics, birth centers, feeding centers, and hospitals)
- Provided funding to UNICEF to treat 700,000 cases of malaria
- Vaccinated 4.26 million children against measles and polio, preventing some 20,000 deaths
- Surveyed all health facilities and services—survey results provide key information for expanding basic health services and locating new clinics
- Funded NGOs to provide basic health services to more than 3.8 million people in 21 provinces starting in July 2002 through October 2003; program continues with basic health services now being provided to over 4.7 million people.
- Provide one-quarter of Kabul's water supply, focusing on the poorest districts
- Rehabilitated the water systems of Kandahar and Kunduz, which provide water to 700,000 people
- Increased access to safe water through sale, distribution, and advertising of benefits of Clorin, the water purification product (over 5,000 bottles sold by October 2003)

Current Activities and Goals:

- 72 new clinics currently under construction—first completed April 2004
- REACH—Rural Expansion of Afghanistan's Community-based Health Care: REACH is a three-year program to improve the health of women of reproductive age and of children under the age of five by providing the Ministry of Health's basic package of health services to an estimated 11,000,000 people

EDUCATION

In 2000, only about 32 percent of school-age children were enrolled. An overwhelming 97 percent of the country's girls did not attend school, and eighty percent of existing schools were either severely damaged or destroyed at the end of Taliban rule.

USAID is working to bring Afghan children and teachers back to school with textbooks, school supplies, and training materials in hand. Pent-up demand for education is so great that more than two times the projected number of children showed up for school in March 2002. To meet this demand, 1,000 schools are being rebuilt or rehabilitated over the next three years.

Sector Objective: To provide primary education to Afghanistan's children through school reconstruction, teacher training, accelerating learning programs and textbook production.

Accomplishments:

- Built/Rehabilitated over 200 primary and secondary schools and teacher training institutes
- Supported the 2002/2003 Back-to-School campaign by printing 25 million textbooks
- Trained over 7,000 teachers
- Produced and distributed 30,000 teacher instructional material kits
- Provided a curriculum development workshop for the Ministry of Education, NGOs involved in the education sector, and critical donors

- Established an accelerated learning program to address the problems of retention of over-aged students and lack of access for out-of-school youth—130,000 students enrolled to date

Current Activities and Goals

- Providing food salary supplement to 55,000 teachers, valued at 26% of monthly income

EMPOWERING WOMEN

Despite 23 years of war, Afghan urban women enjoyed a long history of freedom before the Taliban assumed power. Women were government ministers and members of the country's highest legislative body. Under the Taliban, Afghan women were shunned from public life, often prohibited from working outside the home, and punished for showing their faces. Education was forbidden.

USAID is giving Afghan women the education, skills, and tools they need to obtain jobs, support their families, and integrate into the political and public life of this new stage in Afghanistan's history. The situation for women has improved markedly, but much work remains.

Sector Objective: A focus on Afghan girls and women has been integrated into our sector programs (education, health, agriculture, democracy and governance).

Accomplishments:

- Rehabilitated the Ministry of Women Affairs' building and established MoWA's first Women's Resource Center in Kabul
- Kindergartens constructed in 9 ministries—providing safe care for working women in Kabul

Current Activities and Goals

- Building 17 multi-service Provincial Women's Centers (5 complete or currently under construction)
- Accelerated health-focused literacy program underway in 13 rural provinces to enable 5,500 women to train to become community healthcare workers and community midwives

ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

For years, Afghanistan had a dysfunctional economy based on illicit drug trade and the business of war. A concerted effort must be made to re-establish a legitimate economy based on agriculture.

USAID is strengthening Afghanistan's economy by creating jobs in a variety of sectors, enabling Afghans to support their families and help rebuild their country. The private sector economy must begin to grow and offer people opportunities, or reconstruction will not succeed.

Sector Objective: Provide support to the TISA to formulate and implement economic governance measures that will lead to the sustained financing of public services and enhanced levels of private investment.

Current Activities and Goals:

- Strengthening Afghanistan's economy by creating jobs in a variety of agricultural, processing and micro-enterprise sectors, enabling Afghans to support their families and help rebuild their country.
- Working with the Ministry of Finance in developing a national budget, implementing streamlined customs reforms in Kabul and 4 other provinces, and in tax administration and the issuance of Tax Identification Numbers (TINs). TINs are now required in order for imports to enter the country
- Working with Afghanistan's Central Bank to establish national and international money transfer services; create and implement commercial banking regulation and licensing (three commercial banks established in Afghanistan to date); implement monetary policy (currency has maintained its value since introduction); and continue work with relevant ministries in trade reform and public utilities

DEMOCRACY AND INDEPENDENT MEDIA

Years of corruption, brutality, and tyranny imposed upon Afghanistan by the Taliban reduced the country to political, economic, and social ruin.

USAID is funding programs that enhance the nascent government's credibility and provide it with the tools and technical assistance to govern effectively. Institu-

tional strengthening will contribute to improved civil-military relations and the emergence of a robust civil society.

USAID is also working with the Afghan people and international organizations to rebuild communications and journalistic capacity. The goal is to inform and unite Afghanistan's people to help produce a peaceful, stable, and viable political transition and administration.

Sector Objective: USAID is funding programs that enhance the nascent government's credibility and provide it with the tools and technical assistance to govern effectively.

Accomplishments:

- Provided critical financial and logistical assistance for the emergency Loya Jirga.
- Supported the Constitutional Loya Jirga (CLJ) through international advisors, registration of electors of delegates, printing/distribution of draft constitution, CLJ logistical support (CLJ site, civic education campaign, etc.)
- Rehabilitated four provincial courthouses, work beginning on an additional seven courthouses.

Current Activities and Goals

- Working with the United Nations to support voter registration for the June 2004 presidential elections
- Ongoing financial support to Judicial Reform and Human Rights Commissions.
- More than 325 local journalists trained and 31 radio stations supported with equipment and training

Chairman HYDE. Well, thank you, Mr. Kunder, and now we will turn to the question period. I am going to ask the first question, because I am interested in the answer very much.

During the Soviet area occupation of Afghanistan, we heard from some ex-KGB officers who were stationed there, that the Afghans used heroin as a tool of war to destroy the Russian army. So much so—and this is a startling statistic, and I assume its true—that at least half their army left addicted to heroin. In the end they were providing arms and intelligence to the Afghan resistance in order to support their heroin habits. Is that situation persisting, and what are we doing to avoid the same threat to our troops? That is directed at anybody who wants to answer.

Ms. LONG. Chairman, I will answer that question. Our office is aware of the real problem that the Soviet army suffered when they left Afghanistan with abuse and indeed addiction for its troops.

And in fact we are aware of press reporting indicating that there may be similar problems in our forces. We have checked into these things, and our followup has indicated that these are not a problem with the military forces.

And indeed indications are with the testing being done that there is no difference between the testing of our personnel either in or returning from Afghanistan than the testing results from our general population.

However, this is something that we are highly focused on, and in fact we have gone out to the area commands and asked them to keep monitoring.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you very much. I am informed that Ms. Ponticelli would like to make a few comments, and therefore forgive me for passing you by, and we will come right back to you now. Ms. Ponticelli.

STATEMENT OF CHARLOTTE PONTICELLI, SENIOR COORDINATOR, OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S ISSUES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. PONTICELLI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for not having a written statement, but it is such an honor to be before you today, and to have a chance just to mention very, very briefly a few of the things that we are working on at the U.S. Department of State in our office, which is the Office of the Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues.

If the women of Afghanistan were emblematic of the brutal repression and denial of fundamental human rights during the Taliban regime, we believe that they certainly have become emblematic of the vision, the determination, and the courage of the Afghan people as they forge that path to the top of this very high mountain.

Our office is involved in the preparation of the annual report to Congress, which you all will be getting soon, and this is pursuant to the Afghan Women and Children Relief Act of 2001, and every year for the past 3 years, we have been submitting a report—this will be the third one—on United States Government efforts to assist Afghan women, and children, and refugees.

So this is very timely to be here today. It is also timely because another major initiative that our office works on very hard is the United States-Afghan Women's Council. This was established by President Bush and President Karzai in January 2002.

It is headed by my boss, Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, Paula Dobriansky, along with the Minister of Women's Affairs, Habiba Sorabi, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Afghanistan, Abdullah.

We just had our fourth meeting of the council in Kabul at the end of February, it was amazing what our delegation was able to observe, particularly not only looking at where Afghan women were 2 years ago, but including just a year ago when the council had last visited Kabul.

For example, we saw women in literacy centers who were learning to hold a pencil for the first time, getting basic literacy classes. We met women who had been very active in the Constitutional *Loya Jirga*, and actually took an active part in the drafting of Afghanistan's very progressive constitution.

We met with midwife trainees, classes which will go far to teaching other midwives in the provinces to try to tackle the tragically high maternal mortality rate in Afghanistan, which is the second highest in the world.

We also met some Afghan women who were training and being trained by our troops in the PRT in Bagram to take part in the security forces. So this is an exciting time for Afghan women.

In just a few minutes, I will leave to join the Secretary of Agriculture, who is hosting a delegation of 12 Afghan women, representing six provinces in Afghanistan, who are here under the Cochran Fellowships, which is a women in agriculture training program.

A few weeks ago I met with a young Afghan journalist, Maria Azizi, who participated in the filming of the documentary, entitled, *Afghanistan Unveiled*.

Just a month or so ago I met with a group of Afghan women teachers who were here at a program at the University of Nebraska, and in just a week or 2, we are going to have a small contingent of Afghan women judges, who are coming to our training program under the auspices of the International Association of Women Judges.

So I wanted to mention these as emblematic of our efforts. I want to particularly refer to Congressman Lantos' very eloquent referral to the portrait of our troops who have been lost.

And I feel obliged as I sit here today to convey the voice of many women in Afghanistan who have said to me, please, please, convey when you go back how grateful we are to the American people, and how we in Afghanistan, the mothers of Afghanistan, pray for the mothers of America, and express our gratitude for the great sacrifice that they have made on our belief.

So thank you again, Mr. Chairman. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you all might have.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you. We understand that you must leave at 11:30. Is that correct?

Ms. PONTICELLI. At least by a quarter-of-12, so that I can be over at USDA for the Afghan delegation.

Chairman HYDE. You are going to press the envelope a little there.

Ms. PONTICELLI. I will.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Lantos.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank all four of our witnesses, and I want to thank through them all of the remarkable people of our own government who are doing such an outstanding job in Afghanistan in a civilian capacity, and of course to all of our military in Afghanistan who are fighting terrorism with such extraordinary courage.

I want to return to the question of burden sharing in 2004, because unless and until we tackle that issue, and I realize that is above your pay grade, as it is a job for the President and the Secretaries of State and Defense, and those of us in Congress to push for it.

But I want to underline some profound inequities in dealing with the enormous problems of Afghanistan. Now, Afghanistan and Iraq are different in the sense that NATO has accepted the responsibility for Afghanistan.

So the psychological, the political, the ideological, threshold has now been achieved there. They are technically responsible for security, and I want to just mention a couple of statistics as to the appalling inequality in accepting responsibility.

As of last month the Country of Norway, with a population of under 5 million, had 241 troops in Afghanistan. Spain, with a population of 40 million, had 118 troops in Afghanistan. And Turkey, with a population of 65 million, had 151 troops in Afghanistan.

Now, Norway, Spain, and Turkey, are all members of NATO. Spain and Turkey have large military forces. Yet, their willingness to assume the responsibility that they have accepted by being members of NATO is not reflected in troop strength.

With respect to Spain, as I mentioned in my opening observations, they removed their 1,500 troops from Iraq. There is no earth-

ly reason why they should not be redeployed in Afghanistan. They are sorely needed.

Turkey was ready to put 10,000 to 12,000 troops into Iraq, which for political reasons never materialized. They now have 151 troops in Afghanistan. This is inexcusable. Let me move on to the financial contribution area.

Since 1951, Norway has pledged a quarter-billion dollars to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. This year, Norway's contribution is \$43 million. Austria's contribution this year is \$2 million.

This incredibly wealthy country, which since the State Treaty of 1955, has enjoyed the protection of NATO, while not being a member of NATO, has seen fit to contribute \$2 million to the reconstruction of Afghanistan, which I think is a disgrace.

My suggestion to you is, because this is about your pay grade, that you take back to your respective chiefs the message that Congress is sick and tired of the lack of burden sharing in Afghanistan.

At a time when the American people and the American taxpayer, and most of all our troops, are bearing such an enormous burden in Iraq, now that NATO has accepted full responsibility for security in Afghanistan, those with troop contributions and the financial contributions of both NATO members and other wealthy and developed countries not members of NATO, is appallingly insufficient.

It is embarrassingly insufficient, and I think it will undermine all of our efforts unless we put at the top of our to do list burden sharing in Afghanistan. The big political, strategic, and psychological breakthrough is behind us. Iraq is our burden, but in Afghanistan, we have NATO. I hope in Iraq, we will have NATO soon.

But Iraq, which absorbs enormous resources from this country, has been basically our responsibility. Afghanistan is a collective responsibility, except we still carry the bulk of the load. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Mr. Lantos. Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First and foremost, I think that we all owe a great big congratulations to the Bush Administration for what it has accomplished already in Afghanistan.

And having followed Afghanistan for many years in very intricate details about what was going on, I was aware of things that were happening, and I am aware of the tremendous challenges that have already been overcome by commitment, by both politically and economically, and militarily, by this Administration.

And I think that when all is said and done, and especially the political bringing together the various anti-Taliban forces in Afghanistan, and getting them to work together, has been a tremendous accomplishment.

And one that I did not think that you would accomplish that much, because I knew how difficult it was. Second of all, I just note that several years ago Afghanistan was the turf of a radical Islamic sect, and was a terrorist base camp for operations against the United States.

And we now have driven the Taliban out of Afghanistan, and we have eliminated that international terrorist base camp, a base of

operations that al-Qaeda had. We did so with a minimal loss of life, both in terms of Afghan loss of life and American loss of life.

Compared to what price could have been paid in death and destruction, our people did a tremendous job and continue to do a tremendous job there. So let us not forget that. Let us then put that in perspective when we talk about the challenges ahead.

And let me get to the flip side of the challenges ahead, which let me note that I don't believe that until we have faced the heroin problem, and I do not believe that problem—I think that problem has been put on the back burner.

Every time we have asked the Administration about it, they said, well, the British are going to handle it. Well, it is time. The time has come for the United States Government, and for the government of Afghanistan, to face up to the challenge of heroin production, opium growth of opium poppies, in Afghanistan.

And I don't believe that Congress will be as tolerant of the Administration next year if we come back and do not have from the Administration facts and figures that back up a major accomplishment in this area.

I mean, I don't know if we can eliminate the whole problem, because that would be impossible. But there have been some major successes. Congress is not going to put out billions of dollars in aid to help build a country which is itself the major source of heroin for the world.

So let us put the Afghan people, and put our government on notice, our people over there, that this is the year to come to grips with that challenge. And I understand, and we have given people a lot of leeway, that we were fighting a war, and that we did not expect everything to be done at once.

But we expect that challenge to be met, and we expect to have major progress in that area in the next year. I never expect to hear the words that the British are in charge of that again.

Let me note that unless we eliminate the heroin production, Mr. Chairman, and unless we make some major progress in this area, that money that is produced by that heroin production and the opium growth there in Afghanistan, will continue to supply the revenue needed by terrorists to attack our friends, and to undermine stability and democracy in that entire region, all the way from Chetzi, and all the way down through Central Asia.

Those billions of dollars coming from that, from the opium production in Afghanistan, are providing terrorists with that kind of revenue. So let us just put it right on the table, that we expect that to be taken of.

Let me note women. You mentioned that women had a great success there. We also need to note that when we are trying to analyze what has happened. I was touched deeply by the progress made by women in Afghanistan.

For example, we have made women the owners of several of the bakeries that provide bread for the people of Afghanistan, and that widows and orphans are now being able to provide for themselves.

And we should make sure that we never backtrack on a demand for equal rights of the women, and I am very proud that during the negotiations for the constitution that we have made sure that we have maintained that demand, and we have maintained a demand

that there be freedom of religion, and I know that it is tough to get that point across politically.

So, Mr. Chairman, I have just a statement, but if they have any comments, I would be happy to let the panel comment on my comments.

Chairman HYDE. Ms. Long, do you have any comment on the narcotics aspect of his comments?

Ms. LONG. The only thing I would mention is that some successes have been made, and I have had the opportunity to speak to General Barno, and also had the opportunity to speak with our colleagues from the U.K., and they are keenly aware that in the next year that we have to do better, and I expect that we will, sir.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Blumenauer.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have been listening to the comments from my friend from California, and I must confess that I have a slightly different take based on what I have heard from independent observers, from people in my community who have done work on the ground, news accounts, that this hasn't been a terrific success.

We did topple the Taliban regime, but the last 2 years, at least from what this Member has heard, have not been that encouraging; with the rise of narcoterrorists, warlords, and an inability to extend the security footprint so that we can do a better job on the ground with assistance.

I have appreciated the work that has been done with limited resources, and I personally think, Mr. Chairman, that this is something that our Committee could play a very significant role in, while giving deference to Mr. Lantos' concern about burden sharing.

It would be nice if some of our allies were doing more on the ground with resources and with troops, but I have been struck by the disparity between what we are doing in Iraq and what we are not doing in Afghanistan.

I think the record indicates that Afghanistan is more seriously damaged, it is a larger country, it is more populous, and it is a greater challenge.

Our resources are somewhere in the neighborhood of about 20 times as much for the country that is less damaged, that is smaller in population, and which has not been the haunting problem that Afghanistan has been historically.

I really appreciate your willingness to zero in on this subject for our Committee, and I would hope that our Committee would spend more time testing whether my version of reality, or Mr. Rohrabacher's version of reality on how great a success Afghanistan has been is correct.

I think we will hear people, and there may be some here today, certainly in the NGO community, that take exception to that. We could help pin down what the situation is, but more important than that reality, I think we have to acknowledge that we have got challenges.

As Ambassador Taylor was talking about, we have got a long way to go in discerning what is the appropriate role of our resources between Afghanistan and Iraq. Should we be putting 20

times as much in terms of assistance, resources, and in terms of the security footprint, in Iraq than in Afghanistan.

I would think that any objective view would be that we are not doing enough in terms of security, that we are not doing enough in terms of putting money behind the excellent programs that we have with USAID, with the NGO community, and in providing the support for this government that we have helped install.

I would hope that this would be the first of several conversations, Mr. Chairman, that we could have as a Committee. I hope that we could hear more evidence about what is happening, and what is working, and that we could help the House as we move in the months ahead to make again a substantial investment in this region.

I hope that we would help the House be able to strike the right balance between Iraq and Afghanistan. The question is not whether we are going to spend money, we are, but whether we can spend it more appropriately for the country that is so seriously damaged, that has a greater population.

We walked away in the past, and helped by our inaction create a problem that we ultimately had to go back and solve militarily. I don't know that I have so much a question, Mr. Chairman.

I, too, am interested in pursuing it, and I hope that this is something that you can have our staff and our Members work with you on so that we have a better picture when the House is making this important resource question that will be facing us in the weeks ahead.

Chairman HYDE. Well, I thank my friend for his helpful comment. I would rephrase the statement that you made about we are not doing enough to not enough is being done. I think we are doing plenty when you add up the obligations, global obligations that we have.

And that makes the point that Mr. Lantos made all the more salient; that our burden would be more easily borne, and it would never not be onerous, but more easily borne with the cooperation of what is laughingly known as the United Nations.

In any event, we are going to have another hearing on this in 2 months or 3 months, I guess, and we have one scheduled. Now, next, Mr. Royce.

Mr. ROYCE. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to second your observation. There was even talk at one point of NATO assuming full responsibility for the entire country of Afghanistan. However, all we have seen is continued foot-dragging on the part of our NATO partners, and the United Nations. I think we are all concerned about this.

I want to talk about something Ambassador Peter Tomsen stated at this Committee about a year ago. Former Ambassador Peter Tomsen indicated great concern about the role that the Pakistani ISI was playing in Afghanistan.

We also heard criticisms that the CIA is over-reliant on Pakistani intelligence. That was a year ago. I have talked to him since then and he still has the same concerns. Ambassador Taylor, do you have concerns about that? Is the picture different than it was a year ago, in terms of where we are getting our information, and in terms of our reliance on ISI?

Ambassador TAYLOR. Congressman Royce, this is probably not the best forum to go into that in any fair amount. We would be happy to have another conversation on that with you.

Mr. ROYCE. All right. Very good. We will do that. This winter, the head of United States forces in Afghanistan, Lieutenant General Barno, announced that he was going to shift tactics along the border region and set up a "classic counterinsurgency strategy."

Part of that was to get small units into the villages, where they would forge these ties with tribal elders and be able to glean better information about the location and the activities of the enemy.

It is now June. That was February when he said that. What has been the result of that approach so far, and what specific or general information did they get out of that strategy?

Ambassador TAYLOR. Congressman, General Barno has taken the steps that he described to you several months ago. I visited one example of that about 4 weeks ago in Ghazni. General Barno has deployed his infantry battalions alongside of these provincial reconstruction teams that several of us have mentioned here today.

In Ghazni, there is an infantry battalion commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel, and a PRT, a provincial reconstruction team, commanded by another Lieutenant Colonel, who work very closely together on exactly what General Barno suggested he would do.

That is, that he would have his squads, his platoons, his companies, out in the villages where they get to know the village elders, and where they get to know the terrain, and where they get to know who normally is in these villages and who is not.

And the answer to your question about what the result has been, the result has been an increase in information coming in through both the infantry battalions, and that has resulted in a much larger number, a dramatically increased number of caches, weapons caches, being identified and destroyed.

It has also just in Ghazni, and just in using that as an example, the combination of provincial reconstruction teams and the infantry battalion, with its much larger capabilities, has been to improve the security in that part of a very difficult province.

You will probably recall that in December that Ghazni was where the U.N. worker was killed by the Taliban. They pulled up beside her car. Since the PRT and the battalion have co-located in Ghazni in January, which is when Colonel Barno said he was getting started on this, there have been no such incidents.

Now, that is something that could change tomorrow. But the past 4 or 5 months have been a dramatic improvement over the previous time. So I believe that Barno's counter-insurgency strategy is having a good effect.

Mr. ROYCE. Let me finalize with one last question. As Congressman Lantos said, NATO was to have established five PRTs across the north and west of the country by the time of the NATO summit, which is at the end of this month.

They have been unable to supply what seems to be base equipment: A few helicopters, communications equipment, and a medical support team. At this point, we would be lucky if those got in place in time.

At the same time, we hear from the EU this criticism about PRTs. As I recall, there was a Commissioner at the EU that said that PRTs are blurring the line between military and aid activities.

This seems off the mark. Aid agencies from Europe have repeatedly asked for more security assistance in the countryside. When the PRTs come forward to do that, and are deployed to help the Afghan people, they are then criticized by the EU.

Ambassador Taylor, is one of the reasons why the Europeans at this point are dragging their feet, or at least why NATO is not putting the PRTs in place, because of this criticism from the EU?

I would like to give you a chance to answer the criticism that the EU Commissioner made about the use of PRTs.

Ambassador TAYLOR. Congressman, I saw that comment by the Commissioner. I was surprised by it, and disagreed with it. The PRTs have provided security the way that I have just described for the Afghan government and local governments to operate and exert their influence, and provide services. They have also helped non-governmental organizations to provide the reconstruction work that we have been describing. So we also disagreed with that. You are right. NATO has committed to five PRTs by the end of this month, by the NATO summit.

There is a lot of work going on, both within NATO, and pushing on NATO to make good on that promise. I have not given up on that yet. I fully expect that they will come up with that, and we expect them to come up with those five in that part of the country.

They do have time to do that. I don't believe therefore that the explanation for why they are going slowly is the same sentiment that—

Mr. ROYCE. It wasn't a criticism. I just wondered if that was the excuse. I really encourage you—all of us—to redouble our efforts, and not just with NATO. Turkey, in particular, bears a certain responsibility to keep its commitments in this regard.

So far the country that is keeping its commitments to Afghanistan is the United States. None of our allies have, to the extent that we would like to see. Thank you, Ambassador.

Chairman HYDE. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Berman.

Mr. BERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like Ambassador Taylor, or anyone on the panel, to respond to a broad policy critique from the International Crisis Group.

They recognize the success of what we are doing in Afghanistan, but they also note the serious resurgence of radical Islamic extremism in Afghanistan, and sort of go through that process. Initially our swift defeat of the Taliban created a political and military vacuum that gave other Islamic conservatives an opportunity to regain influence.

At the Emergency *Loya Jirga*, the Tajiks used their control of the security apparatus to coerce delegates to consolidate to their own standing, and to exclude their main ethnic rivals, the Pashtuns, from government.

Since the Pashtuns homelands are the south and east and are also the major staging grounds of the coalition military operations, the Taliban was thereby given an opportunity to further their cause by exploiting the resulting in Pashtun alienation.

Almost 2 years later, attacks by the Taliban and their allies against Kabul's representatives, against coalition forces, and against international and local non-governmental organizations, have made the south and east a no-man's land, deprived of the fruits of political or economic reconstruction.

At the *Loya Jirga* in December 2003, Karzai decided to use the ethnic card to counter his perceived rivals within and outside the government, but the allies that he chose were among the most undesirable of the Pashtun Islamic radicals, and included Pashtun Mujahedin, from Psyhef, Ilihad e-Islamic, as well as those associated with the forces, the radical Islamic forces controlled by Younis Khalis and Haq Qadir.

The end result was a constitution that creates a strongly centralized form of government and a powerful President, at the cost of alienating powerful ethnic minorities, including the Tajiks, the Uzbeks, and the Hazaras, who are represented by their warlords and continue to reject the central government's writ.

He then points out that the constitution advances the interests of Islamic radicals, and while the civil and political rights are guaranteed, Islamic law is supreme. The constitution allows Islam to be invoked to limit political organizations by requiring that the charter of a political party be consistent with Islamic principles.

Since the Afghan Supreme Court is packed with hard line Islamic clerics, the conversion of Islamic conservative groups, such as Bahranroden, Rabinas, Jiads, and political parties will be acceptable, but curves will be placed by the Judiciary and the Administration on democratic liberal forces.

And Afghan's conservative mujas and judges, who believe in the enforcement of a conservative Islamic code, not that different from the Taliban, continue to dominate the supreme court, even as the country's political transition takes place under the guidance of the international community.

Now you get to the elections that are coming up, and you have talked about lines of defense, but we know how small our forces really are there, and how difficult this training process is, and how many of the training programs have gone on.

And under the electoral law that Karzai signed, there is a requirement for a census by a certain deadline, and the elections can only go forward after those deadlines are met. The census has not been initiated, let alone been completed in the Afghanistan provinces.

How can the elections for parliament go ahead when no census has been completed? What happens to the legitimacy of these elections if certain deadlines are not met, and are we really in a situation where in the scenario that you outlined is going to be able to pull this off in a way that creates legitimacy, long term legitimacy in Afghan institutions?

Ambassador TAYLOR. Mr. Berman, let me address several of those items, and let me know if I missed any of the important ones that you have outlined. Just starting at the top, you asked about the ICG's analysis.

First of all, about the Taliban resurgents. We would agree that in part of the country, that is, the south and southeast as several people have indicated, there is more evidence of Taliban in dis-

tricts, pushing on district headquarters, district capitals, moving in and shooting up the place, and being there for a day, and then withdrawing as soon as government forces arrive to reestablish order. That has been happening in certain districts of certain southern provinces, southern and eastern provinces, over the past several months.

That is a problem, and it is not a problem around the country. It is a very localized problem, but it is a serious problem. The U.N. has a map that identifies the specific locations of the problems.

And they have blue areas where they have no difficulty going, and they have yellow where people have to be cautious, and then they have a red area. So the pattern is very clear.

Right along the Pakistan border is red, and that is where the districts in those southern provinces and eastern provinces are where we have the greatest difficulty with Taliban resurgents. That part is certainly true.

I would not agree, however, that this was the result of any of the actions taken or not taken at the emergency *Loya Jirga* that you mentioned in June 2002, where the international community worked with the government of Afghanistan as it was then to come up with a government, with a cabinet.

It was a coalition cabinet. You are absolutely right. And it did draw on all of the ethnic groups in Afghanistan. It did draw from the Tajiks, and it did draw from the Pashtuns, and the Pashtuns have a good number of ministers in that government still.

It did draw on the Uzbeks, and it did draw on Hazaras. We have talked about several of the ministries already today that are headed up by these various groups. It was a coalition essentially.

The way to think of this government is a coalition that had to be pulled together in order to get over the instability, the factionlessness, the forces that were there right after the Taliban were eliminated and pushed out of the country.

So I don't believe that the resurgents or the Taliban now in some of these districts in the south and southeast is a result of that, nor do I believe that it is as a result of the Constitutional *Loya Jirga*.

The constitution as you have recognized, and as the ICG recognizes, does guarantee rights. It does as we have already talked about have an unprecedented role for women. It is in the Islamic world, and it is recognized as a good example of a constitution that provides for these rights.

You mentioned that it calls for a powerful national government. It is true, it does. Several Members of this Committee have actually thought about whether it was a good idea or a bad idea to have a powerful national government, or as some people have suggested, to have a decentralized government, a Federal Government as we know it.

And that was considered, and for some of the reasons that you described, the ICG describes, that is, the powerful local commanders, or governors, or police chiefs, who had their own source of income as we have talked about, and their own source of power, of military power as we have talked about, the militias.

And whether it was a good idea to devolve power in a Federal way to those local commanders, and President Karzai, and indeed

more broader than that, the entire Constitutional *Loya Jirga*, decided no.

They decided that for now that in Afghanistan it is better to pull people together, to try to unite the country, rather than to devolve the power in that direction. So that again I believe that was the right decision for Afghanistan. They made it and so it doesn't matter what we think. That was their decision. But objectively and looking at it from the outside, it probably makes sense from our standpoint to have that.

You mentioned the Supreme Court. After the elections, as we have talked about, there are presidential elections, parliamentary elections, at least lower House of Parliament elections, in September. The upper House will require other local elections in order to establish that upper House of the Parliament.

But after September, we will have a President elected by all the people in Afghanistan, and the beginnings of a Parliament. There will be appointments to a range of organizations, including the Supreme Court. So a newly elected President and a newly elected parliament will be able to examine the makeup of the Supreme Court at that time so as to interpret the constitution.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Berman's time has long since expired. Mr. Paul.

Ambassador TAYLOR. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. PAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on the elections and the census.

Ambassador TAYLOR. I was going to come back to the elections. I can do it very quickly, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. I guess if the other Members don't mind waiting.

Ambassador TAYLOR. Very quickly on the elections. I think this is an important point. Mr. Berman is correct that the census, the full census has not taken place. What the Afghans call and the U.N. calls a pre-census has taken place in over half, or well over half of the provinces.

They anticipate being able to finish most, and with a couple of exceptions in a couple of provinces where again as I mentioned, in the south and southeast, may have difficulty. Even there they have sampling that they will be able to use to allocate the number of seats by province in the parliamentary elections.

So it won't be perfect. This election won't be perfect, and the pre-census won't be perfect. It will require additional work in anticipation of the following election.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Paul.

Mr. PAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, I would like to say thank you for the memorandum from the staff. I thought that the memorandum was very helpful, and did not go out of the way to try to paint a rosy picture that really does not exist.

So there is every reason to believe that there is a lot of work to be done in Afghanistan. I also would like to try to categorize how I see what is happening over there. A lot of times if there is a controversial program that people say, well, whether it is half-full or half-empty, which way are we going.

I think to be generous I think we could probably say that our program there is about 5 percent full, and about 95 percent empty,

and we have committed about \$3½ billion. So it gives me room for a little bit of concern.

I would like to ask one rhetorical question that has always bothered me when we get involved in a situation like this, is where in the world does the Congress and the Administration get the moral authority to impose our will on other people, on other countries, and in this case in Afghanistan.

I have heard all of the goals that we all seek. I have no problems with that. It is just our methods. I find it sort of entertaining about this struggle for women's rights over there.

So we help them write a constitution, and the President is going to appoint a third of the senators, and then the President is instructed that he must appoint one-half women. It just does not seem to jive with our general understanding of what democracy is all about, but that is probably a minor point.

But I do appreciate the comments by Ms. Long about the drugs, and how terrible it is, and how the situation has been turned where there were no drugs, and there are a lot of drugs now, and it is actually helping the al-Qaeda, and she does not hide from this, because it has been one of our complaints and concerns.

My big concern is that whether it is Afghanistan, Columbia, or here in the United States, we have pursuing a war on drugs for 30 years, and we have never changed the policy. We always just want more money, and more guns, and we are going to root them out, and we are going to solve this problem.

So I can't get any hope that that is going to be accomplished, because there is no evidence whatsoever in the last 30 years that more money and a tougher war on drugs ever helps people reduce their demand for drugs.

We know that the Taliban is reorganizing, but I am amazed at how the authority to go in and get the al-Qaeda has morphed into a quagmire and moved ahead of rebuilding Afghanistan.

I mean, we voted for the authority to go after Osama bin Laden in October. By May of the next year, here we are with the Afghan Freedom Support Act, which is your responsibility to carry out, and now there is nation building, and we don't even talk about Osama bin Laden. That is somebody else's problem.

Osama bin Laden, the odds are great that he is in Pakistan, and Pakistan isn't a democracy. It is a military dictatorship, and we just promised them \$800 million, and we step a foot over their property line and then they are after us.

I mean, the whole thing makes no sense whatsoever, and it is so discouraging. You know, I thought that Mr. Lantos' point was pretty good. He was outraged by the fact that our allies don't help us, and he has a right to be outraged.

But what he does not understand is that they are not going to help us. It is pie in the sky dreaming if we think they will, and he says that if we don't get it that our efforts will be undermined. We ought to be prepared for that, because that is likely to happen.

My question comes from an article written this week by Robert Novak. I am sure that you have seen it, and that has to do with Afghanistan. Now, Robert Novak is not a left-wing Democrat. He is a very conservative Republican, and he supports the Administration, who would like to see this go better.

So he talks, and his inside information is from the military, and this is what he says, and if this is true, we need to know it; and if it is true, we ought to be changing our policy in Afghanistan.

The situation in Afghanistan, as laid out to me, and this was by military people, looks nothing like a country alleged to be progressing toward representative democracy under American tutelage.

Hamid Karzai is the United States sponsored Afghan President, and is regarded by the U.S. troops as hopelessly corrupt, and kept in power by U.S. forces of arms. Now, is that true or not, and if it is true, and if you don't know, what are we going to do about it?

Ambassador TAYLOR. It is not true, Congressman.

Mr. PAUL. So Robert Novak has written something absolutely incorrect?

Ambassador TAYLOR. It is not true that the United States military believes that the President of Afghanistan is hopelessly corrupt.

Mr. PAUL. And there is no chance that he is involved with corruption?

Ambassador TAYLOR. There is no chance that he is involved in the kind of corruption that that suggests. Now, it is certainly true that Afghanistan is a difficult place, and Afghanistan's families, the families of individuals go all over.

I certainly can't speak for any member of an extended family. I had many conversations with people in Afghanistan, with ministers of Afghanistan, and I can remember one, whose name I won't use. I was sitting beside him, and we were at some meeting, and I told him that I had met his cousin a couple of days before.

And he said, "Oh, which one," and I told him the name, and he said, "Oh, that is my good relative." He has other relatives. So I am not speaking to that, but I will tell you that President Karzai is widely respected, not just by the Afghan people, but also by the Americans, by the American military, by the international community.

We are lucky that we have a President Karzai in Afghanistan. We would like to have, and we hope we see emerging a President Karzai like person in Iraq. But, no, I would say very strongly that we are very lucky to have him, and he is someone who can lead his country forward.

Mr. PAUL. Thank you.

Mr. KUNDER. Mr. Chairman, could I respond just briefly to one point that Mr. Paul made, sir? On your point that Mr. Lantos raised earlier about whether our allies should be giving more. It is a fair point, and I am glad that he said, the gentleman, that it was well below our pay grade, which I appreciate.

But I think of the time that you made the comment about they're not doing anything. I do want to point out that a number of our allies—I mean, the Japanese, the Germans, the British—those are three that hit me—certainly on the reconstruction side have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in that country, and are working very closely with us on the ground.

And so I just wanted to make sure that we make a distinction between a fair issue, which was how much each country should

contribute, but it is certainly not a question that they are not doing anything. A lot of folks out there are doing a lot of good besides ourselves. Thank you, sir.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, let me say that I want to very, very, very strongly associate myself with the remarks of Mr. Paul. I thought that they were very much on the money, and we have really been diverted, not just as a Committee, but as a nation, on these issues of absolutely critical importance that we have to be addressing, namely the war on terror, which you are right, has morphed into quicksand, and then quagmire, in each of the two countries that you just referenced.

I have a question for—and I am not sure who on the panel, but that given the restriction on the number of forces in Afghanistan that they had to concentrate on counter-terrorism operations and not counter-narcotics.

It was my belief, and correct me if I am wrong, that the narcotics trade and terrorism in Afghanistan are inseparably linked, and is General Barno right that there are not enough troops in Afghanistan to deal with the narcotics-terrorism link?

Ms. LONG. Thank you for the question. I believe that I would not want to mischaracterize what General Barno was trying to convey, but I believe what he was trying to state was that the priority right now for our military forces in Afghanistan is the missions that they have against the insurgents, and those include terrorists, and those include religious insurgents, and those include counternarco terrorists, who are involved in destabilizing the central government, and who are involved in an attack mission against not only our troops and coalition forces, but against the Afghan people.

Mr. ACKERMAN. One would logically think that in order to reduce the effectiveness of those terrible things that you reduce the source of funding. And he says that he does not have the troop strength to do that. Is that accurate?

Ms. LONG. I am not sure, and I haven't seen exactly what General Barno said, but I believe that what he was trying to convey was that as a matter of priority—but first let me say that our intelligence concerning the linkage between traditional counternarcotics or narcotics efforts and the insurgents in Afghanistan is nascent.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Is what?

Ms. LONG. Nascent. We are just beginning to develop our understanding of exactly what kind of support traditional terrorists and insurgents in Afghanistan—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Where did we think they were getting their financing to feed their warlords and their terrorists, and everybody else?

Ms. LONG. That is something that we can discuss in detail in a closed session, but what I can say is that—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Was it other than narcotics?

Ms. LONG. Yes. Yes.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Is narcotics a large part of it?

Ms. LONG. Quite frankly, sir, I don't believe we could say at this point that we know in fact that narcotics is a large part of certain terrorist organizations that operate in Afghanistan.

Now, certainly narcotics derive support, and is a large part of the instability that we are going to have to address long term in Afghanistan. But I believe what General Barno was trying to convey was that given the priority of missions and getting that country stable in the near term so that September elections can operate in an environment where people are enthusiastic and willing to participate, that it is his first priority to stabilize, and conduct, and dedicate his people and resources toward security missions that contribute toward that capability.

Mr. ACKERMAN. But you are not sure of the strength of that link is certainly intriguing, given that there is currently no distinctive—no disincentive, excuse, no disincentive to farming poppy in Afghanistan, and no lucrative alternatives, opium provides farmers 10 times the income of wheat or other crops, how do you propose to convince Afghans to move away from poppy and participate in alternative development efforts? And what are the state of those efforts today?

Ms. LONG. I am going to defer the eradication questions to my colleagues. However, I wouldn't agree entirely with the comment that there is no disincentive. As a matter of fact, there are substantial disincentives to poppy growth at this time. Ambassador Taylor, would you like to pick that up?

Ambassador TAYLOR. Congressman, if it were true, as it has been in the past, where there is no risk to growing poppy, and great reward as you have indicated, and as Ms. Long has indicated, and as Jim Kunder has indicated, that it is 30 times more lucrative to grow poppy than wheat, and if that were true, that is, that the rewards were very high and no risk, then we would continue to fail.

So exactly what Secretary Long has indicated is true, and that is that we have begun, but only begun, an eradication program, and an interdiction program, to go along with an alternative livelihood program that can show to farmers, and can show to other—

Mr. ACKERMAN. If I can just ask you on that point.

Ambassador TAYLOR. Sure.

Mr. ACKERMAN. If the General says that he is not doing that because he does not have the troops to do that, who do you have there that is doing that? Is the Embassy doing that?

Ambassador TAYLOR. No.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Volunteers, the Red Cross?

Ambassador TAYLOR. No, it is the Afghans, sir. It is the government of Afghanistan, and the Minister of the Interior who is responsible for the police, with support from both us, and with support from the British.

The British are funding an interdiction force, and an eradication force, and we are also doing that. Right now, Mr. Ackerman, we have Afghans in the field who are turning over and plowing under fields of poppy.

Is it enough? Is it large enough to have an effect on this year's crop? Probably not. Is it large enough, however, to send a signal to that farmer, and other farmers around the country, that next year these eradicators, these Afghans that are going to come and eradicate their poppy fields, are going to be back.

And therefore there is a risk, and therefore it can be risky for them to invest their time, and their money, and their season of fer-

tilizer, and their land in growing poppy when they know that it might be eradicated next year, and they know that it might be interdicted on the way to the labs.

Mr. ACKERMAN. And you are confident that is—

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Flake. Your time has elapsed, Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I was hoping that I would be able to get an answer to the question.

Ambassador TAYLOR. I am sorry, sir, but what was the last question?

Chairman HYDE. I am sorry.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Are the efforts on the Afghans effective? Their efforts, are they effective? You said it has no measurable result.

Ambassador TAYLOR. It is having a small effect this year. Our hope is that that signals, and that it sends—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Is hope a plan?

Ambassador TAYLOR. We have a plan and we are hopeful of that plan, yes, sir.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Flake.

Mr. FLAKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the testimony. Mr. Kunder, I am concerned about long term development and being able to see the Afghans stand on their own economically. I am wondering if you are familiar with the writings of Peruvian economist Hernando DeSoto?

Mr. KUNDER. Yes, sir.

Mr. FLAKE. To what extent are we trying to ensure that the Afghans have structures in place where they can access capital, and where they can leverage their assets? What specifically are we doing along those lines working with the new government to make sure that there is property registration assistance?

Because as we all know, we don't have enough money in our budget or in our treasury over the long term to help that country, or give that country the capital that it needs. They have to access it on their own. So what specifically are we doing?

Mr. KUNDER. Yes, sir. We see that very much the way that you do, and we are not going to finance through United States taxpayer dollars a significant growth of the Afghan economy. We can do some things in the short term to facilitate economic growth in the long term.

It is going to have to be private investment, and it is going to have to be foreign investment, and it is going to have to be domestic Afghan investment. The situation that we encountered when we arrived in January 2002 was an almost complete breakdown of the financial and monetary systems.

The Central Bank was not functioning and there was no commercial banking system except for the informal cash transfer on the economy. There was no investment code, and there was no good property record keeping system. There was not a judicial system in place.

We have tried to take a look at each one of those components. The problem is as I think the Chairman said earlier, when everything is broke, you have to try to do everything simultaneously.

So we have got the Central Bank up and running, and we have got a new currency in place, and we are starting to get the customs

and duties collection, and support the Afghan government to get that under control.

We have gotten an investment law passed now, and we have commercial banks starting to operate in the country. We are starting to facilitate some small and microenterprise lending on our own.

The Afghan Freedom Support Act called for an investment fund, and we are now beginning to take a look. We didn't think that the building blocks were in place to do a full-fledged enterprise fund at that point.

But we are now taking a look at whether we shouldn't support at least an initial venture capital fund in Afghanistan.

Mr. FLAKE. If I may, that isn't getting to the root here. What DeSoto talks about is people being able to leverage their own property, their own assets, their businesses.

What are we doing specifically to make sure that at whatever level of government—municipal, central government, wherever in between—that they have those systems in place to register property?

Do people have access to a deed when they have a farm, for example? What are we doing specifically there? I know that you are talking about microenterprise, but that is us lending or encouraging other lenders to lend to them. We want them to be able to mortgage their own capital, and free up capital that way. What are we doing specifically there?

Mr. KUNDER. We have assisted the Afghan government in doing the property registration. By the way, it is a complex land tenure in the country. There is some private ownership, and there is some community ownership, and so forth. So it is a complex system, even by Hernando DeSoto's standards.

We have by the way consulted with Mr. DeSoto specifically on the situation in Afghanistan. The first thing we have tried to do is help with the property records system, and try to get that system computerized so that we can at least get the basic record keeping. And we have started working on that path as well.

Mr. FLAKE. And how is that going?

Mr. KUNDER. It is going well, but I am going to have to tell you that it was in an absolute shambles. It was an antiquated, non-computerized system of paper records that we found, and so we have begun that process, and we have a long way to go.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Taylor, do you want to comment on that at all?

Ambassador TAYLOR. I would agree with Mr. Kunder. The only other thing I would say is that there are some plots of land that have three deeds on them. One is from the King, one from the Taliban time, and one from the interim, the sort of civil war time.

So it is very difficult to establish property rights which Hernando DeSoto and the titling work that Jim Kunder just described. It essentially takes courts, and a judge has to decide which of these three claimants on a piece of land gets to go forward.

Mr. FLAKE. I just hope that is a priority of ours. I know that it takes a long time. I know that it is a difficult process there, with different types of arrangements for ownership of property, but I hope that we are making every effort, because long term that is how we get out from under our own commitment there.

Ambassador TAYLOR. Yes, sir.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Welcome, Ambassador. The reports that are coming in via the media, I think the bottom line is that it looks like a real mess, and that does not in any way mean to denigrate your valiant efforts.

But my own sense is that you are outgunned and you are overwhelmed, and you need more resources. I listened earlier to the Ranking Member when he talked about burden sharing and of course I agree with him on that. It would be welcome to see additional security forces, as well as substantial non-military resources devoted to Afghanistan.

I don't know if that is feasible or not. As I reflect back on my own position, in terms of the resolution authorizing intervention in Iraq, I remember being concerned "are we going to forget about Afghanistan?"

And it appears that the international community has, and one only has to look at the attendance here today from the media. I would say that it is lacking, and yet it all began there.

That is when we had world opinion on our side. That is when we had a nearly unanimous vote from the House. My own sense is that we could probably use 100,000 troops, or 138,000 troops in Afghanistan rather than Iraq. But that unfortunately is not the case.

Very rarely do I ever read or quote rather Robert Novak. But he did a recent piece and I would like for you to respond, Ambassador. Let me just read you some excerpts and tell me your opinion.

He is referring to American soldiers, and:

"They are undermanned and feel neglected, and lack confidence in their Generals, and disgusted by the Afghan political leadership. . . . Mostly the overlooked war continues with no end in sight.

"Narcotics trafficking is at an all-time high. If U.S. forces were to leave the Taliban or something like it would regain power. The U.S. is lost in Afghanistan, bound to this wild country, and unable to leave.

"Hamad Karzai, the U.S.-sponsored Afghan president, is regarded by the U.S. troops as hopelessly corrupt and kept in power by the force of the U.S. arms."

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Delahunt, if I may intervene briefly. We have five votes pending on the Floor, and so I am going to dismiss this panel and close the hearing. If you wish to proceed, Ambassador Taylor will answer you, I am sure. You go ahead. I am going to go over and vote.

Mr. DELAHUNT. While you are leaving, Mr. Chairman, I will be happy to listen to Ambassador Taylor's comments.

Chairman HYDE. You can act as Chairman Pro Tem.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I defer to my colleague, Mr. Paul, because I know that he will stay here with me. You will leave me, Mr. Chairman, and I know that. You didn't like me quoting Mr. Novak, Mr. Chairman, and I know that.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Novak has been skeptical of the war in Iraq and brings those ideas to his very interesting columns. Anyway, the Committee stands adjourned, except for Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador TAYLOR. Congressman, your colleague, Congressman Paul, also asked and quoted, but let me—

Mr. DELAHUNT. We share the same brilliance.

Ambassador TAYLOR. I agree on the brilliant part. However, I would say first of all that it is not a real mess as far as the media is concerned. Sometimes you get a good story, and sometimes you get a bad story.

CBS recently did a good story, and they addressed exactly that. They said when good news comes, and I think their quote was “no news is good news,” and they said the opposite is true in Afghanistan; that good news is no news.

But they went through a very good piece, which I can send to you, and you will see some of the media that is—

Mr. DELAHUNT. Can I just ask you a series of quick questions?

Ambassador TAYLOR. Absolutely.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Because we have some time here, and I might as well take advantage. I understand that President Karzai, and in this column, he is being described as corrupt. I don't accept that.

But I understand that he has entered into discussions with moderate elements of the Taliban. Can you describe to me what a moderate Taliban is?

Ambassador TAYLOR. I think a moderate Taliban is a contradiction in terms. But I think there are such things as ex-Taliban, and low level Taliban who had no responsibility for the policies and actions taken by the Taliban government.

So therefore I can understand if President Karzai wants to get into a discussion with low level Taliban, ex-Taliban, former Taliban, who want to distance themselves, and who will put the past behind them and rejoin the Afghan society, rejoin the move toward a constitution that if they swear allegiance to, and if they acknowledge the constitution as the law of the land, and if they are willing to move forward under this new Afghanistan, and put the old one behind them, I could understand President Karzai wanting to have conversations with them to bring them into the Afghan society.

There also have been discussions on the other side recently, with President Karzai having discussions with Jihads who fought against the Taliban. And here again this is politics in Afghanistan, and this is a political season, just like it is here.

They are moving toward presidential and parliamentary elections, the first time in a generation in September. President Karzai is dealing with those issues in a way that tries to bring the country together.

Mr. DELAHUNT. In other words, you are satisfied with the bonafides, if you will, and the efforts of President Karzai?

Ambassador TAYLOR. I am very satisfied, and in response to Mr. Paul's question, I disagree fully with the characterization that he described, and that you quoted from that column.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, what concerns me is the snail's pace of this arment of the militias. What concerns me is the delay, in terms of the election, and what concerns me is the failure to meet progress, in terms of the registration of voters.

I think the bottom line, and so that I understand the restrictions that you are all under as members of the Administration, we are not committing the level of resources to Afghanistan that are necessary to salvage, and accelerate if you will, over a period of years, and I understand that—

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Delahunt, would you consider in our last moments before the vote allowing me to ask a question, and Mr. Wexler, you can ask a question.

Mr. DELAHUNT. You can respond to me in writing, Mr. Ambassador.

Ambassador TAYLOR. Or if you have time afterwards, sir.

Mr. SMITH. I guess my question, and I guess my concern, is that if you relate the 14,000 estimated troops that we have in and around Afghanistan, as opposed to 2,000 troops contributed by NATO and other countries, number one, are we carrying the equivalent load in the reconstruction organization effort?

Are we carrying 88 percent of the financial load? What percentage would you guess, Ambassador Taylor?

Ambassador TAYLOR. I would guess half, sir. We can take a look at the Berlin conference that several people have mentioned here today. In Berlin, the international community came up with about \$4 billion just for this year.

Our contribution, the U.S. Government, thanks to the Congress for which we are greatly appreciative, the United States was able to pledge about \$2 billion, a little over \$2 billion.

Mr. SMITH. Is the ambition trying to make Afghanistan something it has almost never been, in terms of an economically viable country?

Ambassador TAYLOR. The ambition is to make Afghanistan economically viable, and politically viable, and able to secure—

Mr. SMITH. Have they ever been economically viable other than—

Mr. KUNDER. I said earlier that it was one of the poorest countries in the world before the Soviets invaded, but certainly by some measures Afghanistan was self-sustaining in food before the Soviet invasion.

There were certainly some standards that they can get to that are very important economically.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Wexler.

Mr. WEXLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The memorandum prepared by the Congressional Research Service and attached to the memo to the Committee from Mr. Hyde, points out in reference to the Afghanistan National Army, which I think we would all agree is the key to long term stability, points out that American officials leading the training say they lack enough resources to build the ANA at a more rapid pace.

Would you agree with that, that we lack the resources? As I understand it, it is about a 9,500 strong Army at this point, of which about 30 percent of that is still in basic training. The goal is 10 times that?

Ambassador TAYLOR. The goal is 70,000. We are approaching 10,000 as you indicate. Those 10,000, nearly 10,000, have all graduated from the training center. There are more trainees in the training center now, and so that will continue to grow.

And I would say—and if I could answer your question about resources. We have identified, the military has identified, the U.S. Government has identified the requirements for fiscal year 2004, the current fiscal year, and we admit those.

I would be willing to bet that the military, who are concerned about resources, are not concerned about current resources. In fiscal year 2004 we do have a big request in to the Congress for fiscal year 2005, but you have not acted on that yet, and have not had an opportunity to act on that yet.

We are here to hope that you will act favorably on that request so that we can continue the good progress that we are making the Afghanistan National Army.

Mr. WEXLER. So under this analysis when will we reach 70,000 strong?

Ambassador TAYLOR. Congressman Wexler, I don't know the exact date, but I would imagine that it wouldn't be before 2008.

Mr. WEXLER. So you would take a different view of at least the comment in the Congressional Research Service that cites American officers saying that they lack resources in order to complete the task? What would be inferred would be a more brisk pace?

Ambassador TAYLOR. I would say that we have the resources that we have identified that we need today. We have a request to the Congress for additional resources next year, and we will come back the following year for additional resources. So do we have them in-hand? No, we do not have them in-hand.

Mr. SMITH. If the gentleman would yield.

Mr. WEXLER. Sure.

Mr. SMITH. My understanding is that you have not asked for an authorization of funds?

Ambassador TAYLOR. I am sorry, sir, what is the question?

Mr. SMITH. For authorizing funds for Afghanistan, that request has not been made by the Administration; is that correct?

Ambassador TAYLOR. In our budget, in the President's budget that is before you now, we have a fully funded—we would ask you to fully fund the training of the Afghan National Army. Now if you are asking about the—

Mr. SMITH. I am asking about the authorization bill that apparently you have refused to give your recommendation of what should be authorized for Afghanistan. But I don't want to take your time to—

Mr. WEXLER. No, please. No, thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Is that correct or not correct?

Ambassador TAYLOR. I don't know. I know that what we have requested in the President's budget, Mr. Chairman, but I don't know about the authorization bill.

Mr. SMITH. My staff is pointing out that, no, you haven't.

Ambassador TAYLOR. Fine.

Mr. WEXLER. If I could just speak very quickly. We have to run and vote. Are you satisfied with the amount of money available to American officers on the ground today, in terms of training for the Afghan Army?

Ms. LONG. Last year for the Afghan Army? I honestly could not answer that question. I would have to get back out you on that. As you know, as far as counternarcotics is concerned, we received a

\$73 million supplement, and we have programmed that out, and it is going to be disbursed.

Mr. WEXLER. Okay. Thank you.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If the Committee has not been adjourned previously, thank you very much for your testimony, and the Committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:22 p.m., the Committee meeting was adjourned.]

