

AFGHANISTAN: PROGRESS REPORT

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AND CENTRAL ASIA
AND THE
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AFGHANISTAN: PROGRESS REPORT

THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2006

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST
AND CENTRAL ASIA, AND
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:37 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (Chairwoman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Our joint hearing will come to order. I am so very pleased that Mr. Ackerman and I are holding this joint hearing of our Middle East and Central Asia Subcommittee with Congressman Rohrabacher's Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee. So thank you to all the staff, who have done a great job in this great meeting of the minds.

A few weeks ago, as all of us know, the President submitted to Congress a multi-billion dollar emergency supplemental request, which called for funding for a number of efforts in Afghanistan. It will be on the Floor next week, and it was marked up in the Appropriations Committee yesterday.

This is in addition to the regular budgetary request for the next fiscal year. It is therefore incumbent upon us as the authorizing Committee to, 1) evaluate the status of developments across all priority areas, and 2), exert oversight over United States assistance programs to Afghanistan.

As part of that effort, I recently led a congressional delegation to Afghanistan, where I was struck by the progress that the Afghan Government is making toward establishing a fully democratic society.

It is difficult to imagine that a mere 5 years ago the Taliban regime was thriving in this nation, exporting terrorism, and calcifying archaic extremism. Today, media, cultural, business, and political leaders, are free to meet, to discuss, to demonstrate, and guide policies that are reforming their nation's economy, are opening up the political process, and liberating society from the fundamentalist laws which enslaved their nation.

And to ensure that Afghanistan continues along this trajectory, the government is seeking to implement the Afghan Compact, a commitment to achieve specific goals relating to security, the rule of law, human rights, economic development, and narcotics trade, within 5 years.

Some of the critical benchmarks include systematic and far-reaching reform of judicial institutions, legal practices and laws. Secondly, rural development, including road development and sanitation, rapid expansion of fiscal infrastructure as a basis for economic growth and political stability, enhancement of government financial management, and domestic revenue collection, and implementation of the national action plan for women are also of high importance.

And on this point, I would like to highlight an experience that I had during my trip to Afghanistan, because it clearly shows the progress of our efforts at capacity building.

The members of our delegation witnessed the signing ceremony where USAID (United States Agency for International Development) transferred authority to the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs for the accelerated learning program. And it was a very emotional meeting. It was a momentous occasion to be with the women of Afghanistan in that ceremony.

And this compact also includes efforts to address the counter-narcotics problem, which has had such a destabilizing impact on security and is an impediment to real and enduring progress.

On this issue, our delegation conveyed our concerns to the Afghan tribal leaders concerning the ongoing narcotics trade, which supplies almost 90 percent of global opium and heroin. And we must not only address the involvement of some Afghan officials in the narcotics trade, but also urge our NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) allies that are very present in that area to do more to address this problem. This is all tied into the economic and political reconstruction of Afghanistan, and we should not and we must not look at narcotrafficking, or the security situation, in a vacuum, devoid of other considerations.

And to achieve success on these fronts, we have got to follow up with a multi-dimensional strategy that integrates other aspects of the Afghan Compact. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today on our plans to implement such an approach.

Afghanistan was the first foreign front in our campaign to eradicate terrorism, and the success that we have had in fighting the Taliban and establishing the democratic government there is so undeniable. But our job is not complete.

It will require sustained commitment from the international community, not just from the United States, but all donor nations. A fully democratic, stable, secure, and prosperous Afghanistan is necessary, just, and obtainable. And as such, we must ensure that our programs and our assistance are carefully crafted to ensure this positive outcome.

And I would like to turn to if I might, Mr. Ackerman, to the Chairman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, Congressman Dana Rohrabacher. As I said, this is a joint hearing of our Middle East and Central Asia Subcommittee, along with the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. Chairman Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, thank you very much, Madam Chairman, and welcome to all of you. This is not just a hearing, but a hearing of great importance, because Afghanistan still remains a

pivotal country to the future of the United States of America, and to the Western world.

And so often in the past, this has been ignored or forgotten, and we have done that at our peril. During the Cold War, of course, when the Soviet Union saw Afghanistan as a weak point in, let us say, the line of defense against the expansion of Communism, we paid an awful price, and the Afghans paid an awful price, for that miscalculation on the part of the Soviets.

In fact, the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan led to a horrific cost of human life, but it also lent itself to the end of the Soviet Union, and the end of Soviet Communism. So we have gratitude and appreciation that we need to express to the people of Afghanistan, because after that horrific battle against the Soviet Union, the United States basically walked away from Afghanistan.

And after a period of chaos and confusion, the United States acquiesced, if not partnered, with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, in the creation of another monster, the Taliban. And here again our destinies were linked to that of the Afghan people and the Cold War.

And as the Taliban took over Afghanistan, again with our acquiescence, I was one of the few people here at that time spreading the alarm that this would come back to hurt us, and it did in a big way.

And let us note that after 9/11 that our greatest ally in the war against terrorism is often overlooked. Who was our greatest ally in the war against terrorism after 9/11? It was the people of Afghanistan.

The people of Afghanistan—too many Americans make the mistake of saying that Americans liberated Afghanistan from the Taliban. We did not. There were maybe 200 troops in the country at that time. The people of Afghanistan, perhaps some of the most religious people in the world, threw off radical Islam, and joined with those people who had wanted to be friends of the Western world and the United States of America, and we defeated this evil force.

And that was pivotal to our success in the war against terrorism. Now it is up to us, just as after the war with the Soviets when we walked away, to learn from that mistake, and never consider walking away from the Afghan people again before we do our duty and help them rebuild their society so that they can have a prosperous and a secure future.

If we do not, it will come back again to hurt the United States of America. The job that we are doing there is the subject of this hearing. So this hearing is vital, vital to an understanding of how we are doing in the war with radical Islam, or the war on terrorism, however you want to describe it.

So I am looking forward to today, Madam Chairman, and thank you very much for holding this hearing, and let us commit ourselves, as we did during the Cold War, to victory over our enemies, and making a better world; and in this war against terrorism, victory over our enemies, and helping our allies, especially the people of Afghanistan, to make a better world for them and their families. Thank you very much.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Amen, Dana. Thank you so much. And now I am pleased to recognize the two Ranking Members of the Middle

East and Oversight and Investigations Subcommittees, starting with Mr. Ackerman, and then Mr. Delahunt. Gary.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Let me thank both Subcommittee Chairs for their great work that they have been doing, especially in this area, and for having this hearing jointly.

You, Madam Chair, my Chair, have worked so diligently on this and so many other issues in a series of hearings that we have had, and Chairman Rohrabacher, I think we all owe you a debt of gratitude, and recognize the hard dedicated work that you have done over a very long period of years on the issue of Afghanistan specifically.

I remember quite well when I chaired the Committee and you were a young Member on it, pounding away at this issue, and being a lonely voice through several Administrations, and being critical of policies, and raising those issues.

So I am very pleased today, I have to say, that we are at this moment exercising our oversight responsibilities over the Administration. And I can only hope that the Subcommittees next turn our attention from an oversight point of view to Iraq, where the Special Inspector General has found tens of millions of dollars in waste, fraud, and abuse, in the reconstruction project.

And with that country teetering on the brink of a full-scale civil war, I think that we must from a policy perspective examine what is going on—that investigation is also long overdue.

Turning to the subject of today's hearing, I think one can fairly say that the political process in Afghanistan has been successful. Two elections, where the vast majority of Afghans risked death in order to vote, is both inspiring and a measure of how much they want the democratic process to work.

But before we dig out the final mission accomplished banner, I think there is still some serious, important, and dangerous work yet to be done. Last week's testimony by Lieutenant General Maples, the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, states, "insurgents now represent a greater threat to the expansion of the Afghan Government and its authority than at any point since late 2001."

That is a very sobering reminder of just how far Afghanistan is from being a safe, secure, and stable nation, and more importantly, that the trajectory of the conflict is heading in the wrong direction.

2005 was the deadliest year for United States troops in Afghanistan since the war began. Insurgents have regrouped, reorganized, and modified their tactics to go after soft targets instead of confronting coalition forces directly.

Given the resurgence of the Taliban and its al-Qaeda allies, I think we should question whether expanding the role of NATO in Afghanistan at this point is wise. I believe that NATO still lacks the will and capacity to take the fight to the insurgents.

I fear that they see themselves much more about stabilization and security, rather than counterinsurgency. That leaves a gap to be filled that I am not certain can or will be filled by the newly minted Afghan army.

For example, coalition forces have recently been operating across the Pakistani border in an effort to root out insurgent bases there.

Will NATO forces pursue the insurgents across the border? Will Afghan forces do that?

Along with the renewed insurgency, there is the ever growing problem of drug trafficking, as the Chair points out. But both the United Nations and the United States estimate that narcotics trafficking is equal to almost 60 percent of Afghanistan's GDP (Gross Domestic Product).

As our witnesses, who I am anxious to hear, know, last year's international narcotics strategy report described Afghanistan as "on the verge of becoming a narcotics state."

Since this is a clear source of funding for the insurgents and others who oppose the Government in Kabul, it is well past time for the international community and the Afghan Government to get on the same page regarding an effective way to combat a menace every bit as grave as the Taliban.

All this obviously has an impact on the reconstruction in Afghanistan. The first order of business for governments is to provide law and order. That is the second order of business, and the third order of business as well.

After that everything that governments should do can be undertaken. The deteriorating security environment in Afghanistan puts at risk everything else that we and the Afghans are trying to accomplish.

Again, I thank both Chairs, and I look forward to hearing from our distinguished witnesses.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much. Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Yes, thank you. I will try to be brief, and I want to commend Chairman Rohrabacher for an earlier hearing. We began at 8 o'clock in the morning, but it was worth getting up for.

We had an impressive group of panelists. I noted that Mr. Kunder was here listening. I am sure that he was taking notes. It was a very, I think, unvarnished assessment of the realities that exist.

It was clear that we have considerable challenges ahead of us. I think there was uniform opinion among the panelists that we are at a crossroads now, and a crossroads that will either allow Afghanistan to revert to a failed state, which would bring us back to the same conditions that existed prior to 9/11—or we can choose to again work in a multilateral fashion to secure improvement, with a recognition that it will take a long term, sustained commitment on the part of this Administration, succeeding Administrations, and this Congress, as well as future Congresses.

In the testimony of one of the panelists, he makes the observation that some Afghan officials say the world thus far has put Afghanistan on life support, rather than investing in a cure.

He suggested that we tally up the current conditions. Let me read some of them into the record, because these are our challenges:

"An ever more deadly insurgency, with sanctuaries in neighboring Pakistan, where leaders of al-Qaeda and the Taliban have found refuge. . . ."

We have to address with the Pakistani Government that tragic reality.

“. . . a corrupt and ineffective Administration, without resources, and a potentially dysfunctional Parliament; levels of poverty, hunger, ill-health, illiteracy, and gender inequality, that puts Afghanistan near the bottom of every global ranking.

“Levels of aid that have only recently expanded above a fraction of that accorded to other post-conflict countries. An economy, an Administration, heavily influenced by drug traffickers.”

He concludes by saying that by making aid more effective, as agreed by the United States and other donors in London, is the key to addressing those challenges. I am sure that we all concur that the compact, which I have not had an opportunity to examine or analyze, is most likely a blueprint for where we are to be going, and I am sure, and I hope, that the Administration had considerable input.

It was also mentioned that, in conversations with the Administration, that others, donors, Afghan officials, were told that the United States Congress can be problematic in terms of supporting aid or increasing aid, or increasing, or advocating for world multilateral financial institutions.

Well, let me assure you, and I know that I am confident that I speak for Congresswoman McCollum, that is not the case, and you are all representatives of the Administration. We want to know what you need to make the blueprint of the compact a reality, because that appears to be the best possible scenario if we all hope to see a new reality in Afghanistan.

Let us know what you need, and I am confident that you will find a favorable response from the United States Congress. And I yield back.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, and now I am pleased to yield time for his opening statement to Congressman Ed Royce of California, who is the Chair of the Subcommittee on Terrorism and Nonproliferation.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you very much. This Committee has had an opportunity to follow over the years the situation in Afghanistan, and we have certainly had some bright spots; the elimination of the Taliban and its regime, and that has given Afghans a chance to live in freedom.

There has been a dramatic improvement in women’s rights. One of the experiences that I certainly remember in Afghanistan is a little school that the Afghan-American community had helped fund for orphans, that managed to stay up in existence throughout the reign of the Taliban clandestinely.

The headmaster and some of the teachers had, in fact, been caught and tortured for teaching the kids, but it was an operation when I was in Kabul. I had the address and I just wondered since we had been writing checks for a long time in the community, was it there?

I went into the school and I found that in one of the classrooms that they were teaching math, and they were teaching different disciplines, but one of them was English-speaking, and so I had a chance to ask the students some questions.

And this one young man stood up, and I said, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” He said that he wanted to be a farmer.

And then I asked for other hands, and one young woman raised her hand, and said, "I want to be a physician," and she looked like she was about 9 years old.

Now these are all orphans. She said I want to go to Kabul University, and train to become a physician. I said, "Why do you want to do that?" She said, "I want to help my people."

Now, this was given the fact that we had seen Afghanistan transition from a country where most doctors were women, to one where no doctors were women, and having gone by the Kabul soccer field where women were in fact shot and killed there.

And since it was a felony to teach your daughters, I do think that regardless of the challenges that it is worth our while to make sure that the resources are there, and that we are engaged there, because in this Committee, we heard testimony from Afghans some 3 or 4 years ago that warned us—4 or 5 years ago, that warned us that because of the terrorist training camps, we would face, and we would ultimately pay a price because of what they were engineering—and what the Taliban and what Osama bin Laden were engineering in preparing people to commit terror in this country. I remember in this Committee stating that we faced a real risk in terms of attacks in the United States given the preparations in Afghanistan.

We have that responsibility now to see that Afghanistan is put back on a road that is going to be very, very difficult, given what the Taliban did to that society. Very troubling in all of this are reports that Afghanistan could be reverting to its former status as a failed state.

That government is still plagued by corruption. The economy is still largely based on drug trafficking. The agricultural sector frankly is heavily dominated by the poppy trade.

So I am interested to hear from our witnesses just how much progress has been made in the country. I know that we still have a long way to go, but I am curious just how far off we are according to the Administration, and I will close by mentioning that I have long advocated having Afghan-Americans play a role in rebuilding Afghanistan.

They understand that culture, and they have the skills, and the experience, and they are certainly motivated to help there. So I think their advice should be listened to as we work to stabilize Afghanistan. Thank you very much.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Absolutely. Thank you, Congressman Royce. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. McCollum.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Madam Chair, and it is with great interest that I look forward to hearing the reports from the panelists. I am concerned about not fulfilling what the expectations were for the Afghan people after they helped, as Mr. Rohrabacher said, rid themselves and helped the United States on the war on terrorism.

The lack of clean potable water, the lack of electricity, the lack of access for maternal child health improvements, those are basic heart and mind statistics, and if we get that right, they will give us time to get other things right.

But if we don't get that right, and if people don't see improvement in that, if they don't see improvement in the economic struc-

ture, and if they don't see the politics really making a difference in their lives immediately, then we have not gained the strong foothold that we need in order to have a foundation to move forward on in Afghanistan.

There are many challenges ahead of us, but what we need to have from this panel is clarity, and not anything cloaked in what we wish is going to happen, and what we think could happen, and what appears to be happening.

We need to have clarity so that we can move forward together in a positive way with our other government partners, the World Bank, and other partners, in order to really have sustainable, long term, success in Afghanistan. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Ms. McCollum. We have two votes, but we would like to finish with the Members' opening statements. Mr. Fortenberry.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Madam Chair, for holding this hearing, and in the interest of time, I will defer any statements.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much. Mr. Issa.

Mr. ISAA. I will pass.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you. Mr. Chandler.

Mr. CHANDLER. I yield.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you. Mr. Chabot.

Mr. CHABOT. I will pass.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you. Mr. Cardoza.

Mr. CARDOZA. I pass.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you. Then let me just introduce the panelists and then we will adjourn for a little bit and come right back to hear your testimony. We will be hearing from the Honorable James Kunder, the Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Near East, at the United States Agency for International Development, USAID, where he manages the Agency's Middle East and Asia programs.

Previously from January to May 2002, he was the Director for Relief and Reconstruction in Afghanistan. Mr. Kunder has extensive government and private sector experience in international development.

Then Rear Admiral Robert Moeller, who serves as the Director of Plans and Policy at the United States Central Command. Previously, he served as Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group I, Ronald Reagan Strike Group. From May 2001 through August 2003, he served as Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans, Policy, and Training, and as Director of Operations, Joint Task Force, for the Commander, United States Pacific Fleet. He is a decorated officer, having received numerous accommodations for his distinguished service to our Nation.

And then Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Thomas Schweich. Effective November 28, 2005, Mr. Schweich became the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, and in this capacity, he plays a key role in the management of an annual budget of \$2.5 billion, and more than 4,000 people around the world.

His bureau is responsible for the international drug interdiction and eradication; police, judge, and prosecutor training; fighting cybercrime, money laundering, and international organized crime

syndicates, and negotiating international crime conventions, among many other activities. Tom is the author of several books and numerous articles on law, business, economic history, and personal finance.

And then we have Ambassador Maureen Quinn. Ambassador Quinn is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, and joined the State Department's Bureau of South Asian Affairs as Coordinator for Afghanistan in August 2004.

Ambassador Quinn previously served as Ambassador of the United States for the State of Qatar from 2001 to 2004. At the United States Embassy in Morocco from 1998 to 2001, she served first as Deputy Chief of Mission, and then as Charge L'Affairs.

Ambassador Quinn was a Deputy Executive Secretary in the Department of State from 1997 to 1998; Executive Assistant and Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Economic Business and Agricultural Affairs from 1994 to 1997; and Economic Counselor at the United States Embassy in Panama in 1991 to 1994.

We will consider your testimony as part of the record, without objection, and when we come back, we look forward to hearing from you. So the Subcommittees are temporarily adjourned.

[Recess.]

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. The joint hearing will start, and we will hear testimony from the Honorable James Kunder, Assistant Administrator, Bureau of Asia and the Near East for USAID. Thank you so much.

Mr. KUNDER. Thank you, Madam Chairman. I will be glad to go in whatever order the Chair wants. I had assumed that Ambassador Quinn, who is the Interagency Coordinator, and has sort of the capstone testimony, would go first.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. That would be the right thing to do wouldn't it?

Mr. KUNDER. Yes, Madam, from my own perspective.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. What a gentleman. Ambassador Quinn, who is the Coordinator for Afghanistan, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, United States Department of State. Thank you so much, Madam Ambassador.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MAUREEN E. QUINN, COORDINATOR FOR AFGHANISTAN, BUREAU OF SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. QUINN. Well, thank you. Madam Chair, and Mr. Ackerman, and Members of the Subcommittees, thank you for this opportunity to speak today about our progress in helping the nation of Afghanistan become a secure, thriving, and stable democracy.

Afghanistan's success in the implementation of the political process outlined in the Bonn Agreement from 2001 to 2005, and the establishment of a constitutional, representative, and effective government are noteworthy achievements.

Afghanistan's progress to date demonstrates that the sacrifices of the Afghan people, the commitment of the new leaders of Afghanistan, and the contributions of the United States and the international community, are advancing us toward our goals.

In late January 2006, the international community renewed its security, political, and financial commitments to Afghanistan by

launching with the Government of Afghanistan the Afghanistan Compact.

At the London conference, the Government of Afghanistan also launched its interim National Development Strategy, and its updated National Drug Control Strategy. These three documents commit the Government of Afghanistan to reconstruction of the country and improving the lives of the Afghan people, while aggressively fighting the narcotics problem.

We worked in close collaboration with the Afghan Government and other partners to develop the compact. In London, Secretary Rice announced that since the last donor conference in Berlin, the United States had committed \$5.9 billion in reconstruction and security assistance to Afghanistan.

The Secretary also announced the Administration's \$1.1 billion budget request for Afghan reconstruction for Fiscal Year 2007. These significant sums, alongside other examples of United States-Afghan cooperation, such as our strategic partnership, reflect our long-term commitment.

The international community strongly supports these efforts as well. In London, the international community pledged multi-year commitments of over \$10.5 billion. The Afghanistan Compact states that genuine security remains a fundamental prerequisite for achieving stability and development in Afghanistan.

In the last few months, we have seen an increase in the use of improvised explosive devices and suicide bombs. While we expect that violence may increase further, we are ready to face these challenges. As Afghanistan succeeds in strengthening its democracy, its institution of governance, and its security forces, Afghanistan will create a secure environment and be a major positive influence on the region.

Afghanistan stands with us and our coalition partners in the war on terrorism. One of those significant security challenges in Afghanistan is the illicit narcotics trade. President Karzai and the Afghan Government have recognized the gravity of this challenge, as demonstrated by the National Drug Control Strategy, and the new Afghan anti-narcotics law that was enacted in December 2005.

The United States is supporting the Government of Afghanistan's efforts to eradicate opium poppy cultivation. We are also working with the international community to pursue opportunities for cooperation in areas such as trade, border management, and regional infrastructure integration, which can help stifle the drug trade, and promote sustainable economic development across borders.

We cannot ignore the importance of the regional context. Afghanistan's future economic growth and prosperity is contingent on successfully integrating with its neighbors. Today, the men and women of Afghanistan are governing their own country, and charting their course to the future.

The National Assembly has just finished forming legislative Committees and refining procedural rules. The Government of Afghanistan, with the cooperation and assistance from the United States and other partners, is rebuilding and reforming permanent justice institutions, and expanding civil and criminal capabilities of the Afghan judicial system.

The challenge of strengthening a legal economy, with opportunities for all Afghan people, should not be underestimated. Good governance begins with a transparent legal framework. A transparent set of laws that are equitably implemented is also one of the best weapons against corruption.

The United States supports the development of a vibrant private sector as an engine of growth for Afghanistan. Afghanistan has already made great strides in this area. As a result of reforms and sensible economic policies, the IMF (International Monetary Fund) estimates real Afghan GDP growth of 13.6 percent from 2005 to 2006, while Afghan exports are expected to increase from an estimated \$300 million last year, to approximately \$500 million this year.

The accomplishments in Afghanistan can be directly attributed to strong United States and international support, to the courageous and determined Afghan people. Our many achievements aside, Afghanistan has more work ahead.

This includes taking the next steps necessary to create a sustainable secure environment, strengthen democratic institutions, educate its people, respect and enforce the rule of law and human rights, and develop relations further with its neighbors.

We thank Congress for its support on Afghanistan. With your future support, the United States will follow through on its commitment to building a secure and democratic Afghanistan, and I would be glad to take your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Quinn follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MAUREEN E. QUINN, COORDINATOR FOR AFGHANISTAN, BUREAU OF SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Madam Chairman, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committees, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to speak today about our progress in helping the nation of Afghanistan become a secure, thriving and stable democracy.

The Department of State is working with Afghan leaders and our partners in the international community to establish an Afghan government that is moderate and democratic, represents the responsible political elements in the country and formed through the participation of the Afghan people, capable of effectively controlling and governing its territory and borders, capable of implementing policies to stimulate economic and social development, and willing to contribute to a continuing partnership with the coalition in the global war against terrorism. We are contributing to the development of an Afghan society that is supported by vigorous and enlightened civil institutions, that respects the rights of all citizens, including minorities and women, and that has a thriving, legal private-sector economy. The United States is working to ensure that Afghanistan is never again a haven for terrorists, a major source of narcotics, a source of instability in the region or a major violator of human rights.

Afghanistan's success in the implementation of the political process outlined in the Bonn Agreement from 2001 to 2005 and the establishment of a constitutional, representative and effective government that embodies the aspirations of all Afghans are noteworthy achievements. Afghanistan's progress to date demonstrates that the sacrifices of the Afghan people, the commitment of the new leaders of Afghanistan, and the contributions of the United States and the international community are advancing us toward our goals.

In late January 2006, the international community renewed its security, political and financial commitments to Afghanistan by launching, with the Government of Afghanistan (GOA), the Afghanistan Compact. At the London Conference, the Government of Afghanistan also launched its Interim-Afghan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS) and its updated National Drug Control Strategy. These three documents commit the Government of Afghanistan to reconstructing the country and improving the lives of the Afghan people while aggressively fighting the nar-

cotics problem. We worked in close collaboration with the Afghan Government and other international partners to develop the Afghanistan Compact.

In London, Secretary Rice announced that since the last donor conference in Berlin, the United States had committed \$5.9 billion in reconstruction and security assistance to Afghanistan. The Secretary also announced the Administration's \$1.1 billion budget request for Afghanistan in FY 2007. These significant sums, alongside other examples of US-Afghan cooperation, such as our Strategic Partnership Agreement, are reflective of the long-term commitment the United States attaches to Afghanistan's future development. The U.S. has a direct national security interest in ensuring that Afghanistan is never again allowed to return to its former status as a sanctuary for terrorism, and the Afghanistan Compact is a blueprint designed to keep the country on the path to stability and self-sufficiency.

The international community strongly supports these efforts as well. In London, the international community pledged multi-year commitments of over \$10.5 billion over the five-year (March 2006–March 2011) Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS).

Major new pledges from other donors include: UK (\$885 million), Japan (\$450 million), Asian Development Bank (\$1 billion), and World Bank (\$1.2 billion). Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, France, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Australia, South Korea, New Zealand, China, Turkey, India and Pakistan also made significant new financial pledges. These commitments, which exceeded the amounts pledged at the last donor gathering in Berlin two years ago, signal a deep commitment and a robust expression of international confidence toward Afghanistan's future.

Improving aid coordination, effectiveness and efficiency by both the Government of Afghanistan and the international community is also an area of renewed emphasis as we move forward. Through the Afghanistan Compact, Afghanistan, with the underlying support of the international community, has a blueprint outlining benchmarks and timelines for progress in security, governance, economic and social development and counternarcotics. The Compact establishes a Joint Monitoring and Coordination Board that strengthens the coordinating role of the UN and aims to improve coordination and accelerate civilian assistance.

SECURITY

As the Afghanistan Compact states: "Genuine security remains a fundamental prerequisite for achieving stability and development in Afghanistan." In the last few months we have seen an increase in violence, particularly the use of improvised explosive devices and suicide bombs. While these incidents are alarming and we are concerned that the violence may increase further, we are ready to face these challenges. As Afghanistan succeeds in strengthening its democracy, its institutions of governance and its security forces, Afghanistan will create a secure environment and be a major positive influence on the region. Afghanistan stands with us and our coalition partners in the war on terrorism.

The Government of Afghanistan has committed to ambitious, but in our view achievable, security targets in the Afghanistan Compact, including continued growth of the Afghan National Army and Police, the disbandment of illegally armed groups, and increased law enforcement capacity in counternarcotics. The Afghan National Army (ANA) is steadily coalescing into a national defense force and an important tool for President Karzai in his efforts to extend the reach of the national government and curb the power of local warlords and commanders. At about 26,500 strong, the ANA is an ethnically balanced force from all areas of Afghanistan. The force has successfully deployed to quell factional fighting in the north and the west, and has won praise for its capabilities fighting alongside Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) troops against insurgents in the east and the south.

Operation Enduring Freedom, a multinational coalition military operation, continues to counter terrorism and bring security to Afghanistan in collaboration with Afghan forces. OEF involves troops from over 19 nations.

National, border, and highway police are being trained by the U.S. and Germany to provide day-to-day security throughout the provinces and in Kabul. Over 60,000 have now completed at least basic training programs, and thousands more have gone through more advanced training courses in areas such as firearms, crowd control, criminal investigative skills, and domestic violence. Afghanistan and the international community are also committed to enhancing border security, which was highlighted in Doha, Qatar last week. Improved border security will reduce the illegal flow of people, arms, and narcotics. It will also increase the flow of customs revenues for the national government.

NATO leads the U.N.-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). By fall 2006, ISAF is expected to assume responsibility for security in southern Af-

ghanistan. ISAF currently assists in maintaining security in Kabul, and operates nine Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in the north and west: Konduz (German-led), Feyzabad (German-led), Mazar-e-Sharif (UK-led), Maimana (Norway-led), Herat (Italy-led), Farah (US-led), Qaleh-ye-Now (Spanish-led), Chaghcharan (Lithuanian-led) and Baghlan (Dutch-led). ISAF currently numbers about 8,500 troops from 36 NATO and non-NATO troop contributing nations.

The formal Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) process disarmed and demobilized more than 63,000 former combatants. In addition, about 97% of known heavy weapons have been collected and secured. Afghanistan, with international community support, embarked on the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) program in spring 2005. DIAG builds on the DDR process by seeking the disbandment of the remaining illegal armed groups. In addition, the Taliban reconciliation program, launched by President Karzai, continues throughout the country, offering amnesty and reintegration into society for Taliban fighters who have not committed serious crimes. Similarly, several key warlords have chosen to pursue political careers, including becoming members of the parliament, or have been weakened by President Karzai's increasingly assertive moves to marginalize them.

COUNTERNARCOTICS

One of the most significant challenges to progress in Afghanistan is the illicit narcotics trade. As a political challenge, it undermines Afghanistan's growing democratic institutions, fueling corruption and criminal and anti-government activities. As an economic challenge, it diverts agricultural land and labor from more beneficial uses and undercuts the prospects for developing more sustainable livelihoods. As a social challenge, it sows the seeds of addiction, disease, and discord.

President Karzai and the Afghan Government have recognized the gravity of these challenges, as demonstrated by the National Drug Control Strategy presented at the London Conference and the new Afghan Anti-Narcotics Law that was enacted in December 2005. U.S. Department of Justice senior federal prosecutors worked with Afghan criminal law experts and coalition partners to draft this comprehensive counter-narcotics legislation that builds upon the former criminal law and adds a new regulatory structure for licit and illicit drugs, defines new crimes and a revised sentencing structure, authorizes the use of modern investigative techniques, and confirms the use of the 1988 UN Convention against Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances as an appropriate instrument for extraditions. A few months prior to passage of the legislation, the Government of Afghanistan applied the 1988 Convention as the basis for the extradition of major Afghan trafficker Haji Baz Mohammad to the United States. In addition, President Karzai signed a decree mandating that a Central Narcotics Tribunal have national jurisdiction over all significant narcotics cases. These cases are now being transferred to Kabul for adjudication. The Department of Justice prosecutors, along with our coalition partners, are providing advice and assistance to Afghan prosecutors and investigators working on these cases. The United States strongly welcomed these developments, and was also encouraged by the significant decline in opium poppy cultivation in 2005.

We are working hard with our Afghan partners to improve interdiction and law enforcement capacity. DEA, working with the Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA), seized 42.9 metric tons of opium and 5.5 metric tons of heroin in 2005. They also shut down 247 clandestine conversion labs and arrested or detained 32 individuals on charges related to these seizures. An additional 100-plus metric tons of opium and 30 metric tons of heroin were destroyed during operations of the Afghan Special Narcotics Force (ASNF), a group trained by the UK within the CNPA that has conducted some joint operations with the National Interdiction Unit (NIU). In addition, the NIU and DEA are targeting the command and control structures of the highest level narcotics traffickers. Just a few months ago the GOA extradited its first heroin drug kingpin to the United States. The U.S. is also working on elimination and eradication programs which seek to reduce the level of poppy cultivation by convincing farmers not to plant poppy and by eradicating crops that have been planted. These programs have been substantially redesigned in 2005–2006. The U.S. and UK are deploying new Poppy Elimination Program (PEP) teams, which combine international advisors and employees of the Afghan Ministry of Counternarcotics, to the seven major poppy producing provinces (Kandahar, Nangarhar, Uruzgan, Farah, Badakhshan, Helmand, and Balkh). PEP teams will work with provincial officials to discourage poppy cultivation, monitor and assess levels of cultivation, conduct early eradication at the provincial level, and call in eradication teams when necessary. In order to provide Afghan farmers with opportunities outside of poppy cultivation, the U.S. has contributed \$321 million to support alternative livelihoods programs that support immediate needs and promote long-term rural development.

These programs have generated more than 4.5 million workdays of employment for nearly 200,000 Afghans and have repaired 6,200 kilometers of irrigation canals benefiting 290,000 hectares of agricultural land.

The U.S. is supporting the Government of Afghanistan's efforts to eradicate opium poppy so that valuable agricultural land is not diverted to illegal crops. We welcome reports that governor-led eradication programs have already begun this season, and we encourage redoubled efforts by officials at all levels to ensure that Afghan soil yields produce that benefits both the Afghan people and their neighbors. We are also working with the international community to pursue opportunities for cooperation in areas such as trade, border management, and regional infrastructure integration, which can help stifle the drug trade and promote sustainable economic development across borders.

GOVERNANCE AND RULE OF LAW

Today, the men and women of Afghanistan are governing their own country and charting their own course to the future. The United States strongly supports the newly inaugurated Afghan National Assembly, Afghanistan's first elected legislature since 1969 and an institution which is absolutely central to the establishment of democracy, stability and independence for Afghanistan.

The Assembly has just finished forming legislative committees and refining procedural rules. Thus far, the tone of the National Assembly's debates are largely constructive, with members open to debate and to new ideas. The Assembly's first challenges as it gets down to business include votes on the executive decrees promulgated by President Karzai before the Assembly was seated, a vote of confidence on President Karzai's cabinet and consideration of the Afghan budget for the coming year.

The United States is providing training for Parliamentarians and their staff in media and constituency services, public finance, ethics, administration, executive branch oversight, computer literacy, and other areas vital for legislators. The United States is also sponsoring programs to facilitate dialogue between the national government and leaders at the provincial level. We are designing workshops in financial management, information collection and planning for the Provincial Councils.

Democratic governance is the cornerstone to political progress in Afghanistan. The Government of Afghanistan, with cooperation and assistance from the United States and other partners, is rebuilding and reforming permanent justice institutions, expanding civil and criminal capabilities of the Afghan judicial system, and supporting public demand for the rule of law.

Our civil law program: provided for construction or rehabilitation of 27 judicial buildings in 18 provinces with eight more under construction; provided court administration training; improved the capacity of the Ministry of Justice to draft laws; assisted the Supreme Court with computerization of personnel records, improvements in personnel and court organization, rehabilitation of Court premises, and technical assistance to enable the Court to manage judicial training; investigated the customary/shura system in order to inform programming decisions; and developed public service campaigns to educate the public about the constitution, their rights under it, and the court system.

The challenge of strengthening a legal economy with opportunities for all Afghan people should not be underestimated. Good governance begins with a transparent legal framework, where all entrepreneurs—men and women—can compete in a flourishing private sector. A transparent set of laws that are equitably implemented is also one of the best weapons against corruption.

Democracy, good governance and human rights reinforce each other. The Afghanistan Compact lays out a blueprint of measures in these areas that responds to the demands of the people and lays the ground work for justice, security, and opportunity. The Compact starts with strong measures for public administration reform, an area where the United States plans to expand its assistance over the next few years. The Compact outlines measures to promote human rights, especially women's rights, and calls for the implementation of the Transitional Justice Action Plan for Afghanistan adopted by the Afghan Cabinet in December 2005.

We are also supporting an emerging independent media—32 independent radio stations have been established and are broadcasting programs to 52% of the Afghan population. Forty thousand radios have been distributed to hard-to-reach populations including rural women. Our programs provided training to almost 2,000 media professionals. An example of the impact that this program is having is Salaam Watandar, a national radio production unit, which is now generating 75% of its operating expense from incoming revenue. Salaam Watandar supported the September 2005 parliamentary and provincial elections by providing nationwide, 24-

hour radio coverage with accurate, fair and unbiased reporting. Many projects have focused on women, such as the development of Women's Resource Centers in 17 provincial capitals, where 8,200 women are being taught to read and write, of which 300 have qualified to date for further training as community healthcare workers or midwives.

Our commitment to a democratic Afghanistan is firm. The success of the Afghan people in laying the groundwork for a stable, constitutional and democratic government will have lasting implications for Afghanistan, for the region and for the United States.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan has made progress in developing and managing its financial resources and reconstruction funds. The USG will continue to encourage and assist the Government of Afghanistan to increase its domestic revenues, especially through improved border management and customs collection.

The U.S. supports the development of a vibrant private sector as an engine for growth in Afghanistan. A strong, growing private sector is needed to provide jobs, a sustainable source of government revenues, and a legitimate alternative to the narcotics economy. The Afghan government's commitment, set out in the interim Afghan National Development Strategy, to fight corruption, streamline regulatory and tax policy, maintain a stable macroeconomic environment, and develop a regulatory framework to support business and investment sets exactly the right agenda for attracting much needed private sector investment and spurring economic growth.

Afghanistan has already made great strides in this area. For example, the World Bank's new report "Doing Business in 2006" states that over the past year, Afghanistan has reduced the number of steps to start a business from 28 to one, and the time to complete that process from 90 days to seven.

The Government has established a relatively stable currency, worked to control inflation, and steadily advanced sound economic policy with new laws, development of the banking sector, customs and tax reform, and increasing government fiscal accountability. As a result of these reforms and sensible economic policies, the IMF estimates real Afghan GDP growth of 13.6% from 2005 to 2006, while Afghan exports are expected to increase from an estimated \$300 million last year to approximately \$500 million this year. Active sectors include construction, telecom, hotels/services, and new growth in agriculture.

Secretary Rice launched the "Businesses Building Bridges" (BBB) initiative in London which will partner high-profile U.S. business leaders with Afghanistan's private sector. The "Businesses Building Bridges" initiative will demonstrate the private sector commitment through training for Afghan entrepreneurs by the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (via a \$500,000 grant) and attract future foreign investment by helping to improve the Afghan investment climate and enhance commercial and economic linkages.

The Afghan government wants to ensure that international assistance resources are used in the most equitable and efficient manner throughout the country, and therefore wants to increase its role in managing these resources. We will work with the Afghan Government on mechanisms to ensure accountability, and are prepared to provide capacity building assistance to those ministries taking more control of project implementation.

With U.S. leadership, the international community is rebuilding war-torn Afghanistan piece-by-piece. In total the USG has reconstructed 1,195 km of secondary as well as national and provincial roads and 635 km of regional highway, for a sum of 1,830 km of roads nationwide.

Lack of infrastructure is also a real obstacle to economic growth. The U.S. is devoting significant resources to this issue, including by working with other donors on power transmission grids in the north and south. Refurbishment of two hydro-power units at Kajakai dam is also underway. The goals for infrastructure development set out in the interim Afghan National Development Strategy are ambitious, but important. Realistically, the costs of these infrastructure investments will exceed the ability of the Afghan government to finance for some time to come. Afghanistan will require donor involvement for at least several more years and expanded private sector investment in infrastructure.

Afghanistan has some of the lowest levels of literacy and worst health and mortality indicators in the world. In the interim Afghan National Development Strategy, the Afghan Government has set some ambitious goals for improvement in these areas. The Afghan strategy for education involves simultaneously improving the quality and expanding access to primary, secondary and higher education, while developing new vocational education programs. Teacher training is a limiting factor

that merits particular attention. We have built or refurbished 477 schools and 454 clinics nationwide. Nearly 170,000 students are currently enrolled in school under the Accelerated Learning program and over 75,000 teachers have received initial or supplemental training under the same program. The U.S. Government has printed and distributed over 48.5 million textbooks throughout the countryside.

The health strategy has four main components: extending the basic health care package; improving access to hospitals; fighting communicable diseases; and developing the nation's healthcare workforce. In collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), USAID provides health services by working through community-based volunteer health workers at all levels in the health care system—from basic health centers at the village level to provincial hospitals. Over 7 million people in 14 provinces now have better access to quality health services. Approximately 70% of patients served are women and children. The U.S. has also supplied \$1.8 million worth of essential drugs since 2003. We also continue to work with the MoPH to develop and advance policies and guidelines in diverse health areas such as basic health services, pharmaceutical standards, and emergency obstetrics care. In addition, the USG helps the MoPH to develop and maintain essential public health management systems.

We cannot ignore the importance of the regional context. Afghanistan's future economic growth and prosperity is contingent on successfully integrating with its neighbors. This means developing cross-border energy sources, regional trade zones, and transport links that extend from Central Asian centers to the warm water ports of Karachi and Gwadar. Afghanistan has already taken a number of steps to improve cooperation with its neighbors, including hosting a Regional Economic Conference this past December. We are encouraging Afghanistan's Central and South Asian neighbors to look for the mutual advantages that improving regional integration can bring.

Of note, in February 2006, the United States, Germany and Russia each made separate public statements regarding their intention to seek, through the Paris Club process, cancellation of all outstanding bilateral debt with Afghanistan accumulated prior to 2001, thereby removing a major impediment to the normalization of Afghanistan's economic relations with the rest of the world. Seeking debt relief through the Paris Club mechanism will also trigger debt cancellation from the multilateral institutions, and enable Afghanistan to move ahead on comparable debt relief agreements with its remaining bilateral creditors.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

On May 23, 2005, President Bush and President Karzai signed a joint declaration of the United States-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership. The strategic partnership's primary goal is to strengthen U.S.-Afghan ties to help ensure Afghanistan's long-term security, democracy, and prosperity. The Strategic Partnership, by providing specific elements for regular high-level exchanges and cooperation in the areas of rule of law, democracy, prosperity and security, illustrates in a very public fashion our continuing commitment to and support for the process of economic and political reconstruction of a viable, stable, moderate Islamic state in Afghanistan, and for the elected Afghan authorities who share that goal.

The first U.S.—Afghanistan consultation on Strategic Partnership will take place March 20–21 when there will be an opportunity for substantive discussion in three working groups focusing on Democracy and Governance, Prosperity, and Security.

CONCLUSION

The accomplishments in Afghanistan can be directly attributed to strong U.S. and international leadership and support to the courageous and determined Afghan people. At the end of this fiscal year our cumulative assistance will top \$10.3 billion. This assistance has helped Afghanistan reinforce its newfound stability while engendering much goodwill among the population who see the U.S. commitment to their country as more than just rhetoric. The London Conference on Afghanistan also demonstrated that the international community is maintaining its political, security and financial commitments to Afghanistan.

Our many achievements aside, Afghanistan has more work ahead. This includes taking the next steps necessary to create a sustainable secure environment, strengthen democratic institutions, educate its people, respect and enforce the rule of law and human rights, and develop relations with its neighbors.

We thank Congress for its past support on Afghanistan. With your future support, the United States will follow through on building security forces, strengthening democratic institutions, and reconstructing Afghanistan so that it is never again a

haven for terrorists or a source of instability or oppression of its citizens. I would be glad to take your questions.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Wow, well timed. Thank you so much. You are so right, Mr. Kunder, to go to Ambassador Quinn. She has set the bar. Now, who is next so that I can be correct? I would say you, sir?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Timing is everything.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Timing is everything.

Mr. ACKERMAN. It does not matter what you say.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Kunder, you would be the right one. Would I be making the correct assumption?

Mr. KUNDER. Whatever order the Co-Chairs want.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. All right. Good. Thank you. The Honorable James Kunder, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Asia and Near East, USAID.

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

Mr. KUNDER. Thank you to both Co-Chairs for hosting the hearing. We very much appreciated the strong support of this Committee, which was made manifest early on in the passage of the Afghan Freedom Support Act, which codified and I think gave a boost to all of us working on Afghanistan at this time.

And as Mr. Delahunt said, I was one of those who got up with the chickens this morning to sit in on Mr. Rohrabacher's earlier hearing, which was a very, very useful panel of experts.

Yesterday was International Women's Day, and we celebrated that in Afghanistan with the graduation of 30 Afghan midwives, to join the 340 who had previously been trained under United States Government programs, and who are a part of the several thousand we will be training in the next couple of years.

I mention that because the title of the hearing is Afghanistan: Progress Report, and I think that event is a good metaphor for how I would view the overall progress in Afghanistan. That is to say that we are making steady, important progress.

We have done some very good things in the last couple of years, and we have a very long way to go. In the few brief minutes that I have here, I have got about 15 slides that I will go through very quickly that I am told are cued up behind us on the big screen, but you have a copy of this in front of you as well.

So, page number two talks about the major road and power projects in Afghanistan. As you can see from looking at the slide, the blue line indicates that those are the projects that we are currently working on from Kabul to Kandahar, and Kandahar to Herat.

And very significant progress has been made in road construction and power generation, but the needs are still immense. As some of the earlier witnesses said, a very small percentage of the Afghan population is actually on a power grid, and we have not yet been able to link all of the provincial capitals into the so-called ring road or beltway that goes around Afghanistan.

And so on the road and power projects areas, we have made some significant measurable progress, but there is a very long way

to go. Slide or page three shows the kind of terrain that we are working in. This is a river bed, a dry river bed on the Kandahar to Herat portion of the highway.

It is dry now, but during the spring floods, it will all be covered in water as the water rushes down from the Hindu Kush mountains into the plains of southwestern Afghanistan. So this is very tough terrain, but I noted on this slide that 75 percent of the individuals working on that road are Afghans, because a recurring theme is that we are bringing the Afghans along and increasing Afghan capacity.

Page four indicates more progress on the so-called ring road, the paving of the Kandahar to Herat portion of the road. And again, just some indication of the difficulty, the asphalt that is being used here is being hauled a truckload at a time over the Kyber Pass from Pakistan because of the lack of production facilities within Afghanistan itself. And so again the logistics issues are immense.

Page five. I know a number of the Members of the Subcommittees are interested in school and health clinic construction. This is also part of the progress report indicated by the blue circles where we are doing school construction.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Ms. McCollum had been especially interested in that. So we will share that with her.

Mr. KUNDER. Yes, Madam. And the pink circles indicate where we are building health clinics. And again it is the same kind of progress report. A lot of work is being done, and it is reaching out into some of the most isolated portions of the country, but also a great, great deal more work needs to be done.

As indicated earlier, the infant mortality and maternal mortality, and literacy rates, in Afghanistan are among the absolute poorest in the world.

Slide number six shows typical examples of reconstruction of schools. The Janqal-e-areq school at the top was a deteriorated school that we have now rehabilitated. The Bibi-Fatah School in Konduz in the north was a school that was destroyed in the 23 years of fighting, and has now been rebuilt.

Slide number seven addresses the USAID portion of the counternarcotics program. We are focusing on alternative livelihoods. That is to say giving Afghan farmers some options of what they can grow as a substitute for poppy.

The difficulties, which I have testified to this Committee before about, are enormous, because depending on the world prices for wheat and poppy, the return on investment for a farmer for poppy can be 10 to 30 times what it is for wheat, the primary grain product.

So the critical issue is to get other high value products, like almonds, or grapes, in production on those lands so that farmers have an economic incentive. Now, as we have shown with a little pyramid slide there, alternative livelihoods is but one part of the counternarcotics effort, and I know that Tom Schweich will be telling you more about that later.

Slide eight gives some examples of the kinds of alternative livelihoods work that we are doing. In the upper left is a picture of Afghans receiving cash for work in order to rebuild irrigation canals.

So we are trying to get a twofer with the taxpayers dollars. We are hiring people in the short term, paying them a salary so that they can be employed, and don't feel that they have to go into the poppy economy, and also by digging and by rehabilitating these irrigation canals, we are opening up opportunities to do other types of livelihood.

And in the lower right is a field that has been irrigated, and an Afghan farmer standing in front of it, and this happens to be grape vines, where we do think we have an alternative to poppy.

Slide number nine is just a quick snapshot of a woman's income generating project in Nangarhar, where again if we are able to set up the marketing chains and establish rural credit, we can create a market for high value products, and in this case by women, that will compete with poppy.

Slide number 10 gives you five different snapshots of a progress in Afghanistan. In the upper left, these are cumulative numbers, cumulative numbers between 2003 and 2006 of kilometers of road being paved, and the trend line is obviously up.

In the middle of the top, cumulative number of schools and clinics constructed, and the trend line is up. The third one over, millions of dollars of cash for work under the alternative livelihoods program, and the trend line is up.

Now we move to the bottom two, and on the left is cumulative casualties among not USAID employees, but among our contractor and grantee partners. These are people who are working with us. They are Afghans, or Americans, or third-country nationals, working in health care programs, education programs, and so forth.

Again, these are cumulative numbers, but we have had 40 individuals killed, and almost that number injured, since Fiscal Year 2003. In the lower right is the cumulative casualties of the USAID funded security personnel. These are primarily Afghan guards who have been killed or wounded primarily protecting infrastructure projects in the countryside.

And I wanted to do two things by this slide. One is to show you that again cumulatively that we have pushed these projects into the most isolated rural areas, and those who resist human progress have pushed back.

We are taking casualties, but also I wanted to highlight that it is the Afghans themselves who are primarily the casualties, and who are primarily responsible. As several Members, including Mr. Rohrabacher, have said, for the reconstruction effort.

Slide number 11 is just some snapshots of the kind of security incidents we are facing. In the upper left, is a burned school building, and in the lower left is a vehicle of one of our contractors that hit an IED, an improved explosive device, on the Kandahar to Herat Highway. So these are the kind of day to day incidents that occur.

But as I say in slide number 12, despite the threats and intimidations, these programs are continuing. The trend lines are up in incidents, security incidents, but the trend lines are also up in progress in all of these program areas.

This slide illustrates our program to reach 170,000 students who were denied education during the Taliban period, primarily girls.

Slide number 13 is an overall pie chart of how we are spending the taxpayers' dollars in Afghanistan.

As somebody said during the earlier hearing, this is a classic case after 23 years of warfare, where everything needs to be fixed at once. Hence, we are in a broad array of program areas in Afghanistan.

We are trying to balance showing immediate success by building schools, clinics, roads, and visible projects with the need to build the foundation for long term economic growth.

So we are working on economic policy reform, and getting an investment law written to encourage private sector investment in Afghanistan. It is a complex array of programs, which I am more than glad to go into in more detail later.

Slide number 14, and I apologize, is a little bit complex, but I have tried to illustrate the fact that there is a clear cut timeline of what is happening in Afghanistan, and a clear cut strategic plan.

The bottom, the blue areas indicate what we have been doing in the first couple of years, and that is a broad array of visible projects in humanitarian assistance and infrastructure reconstruction, social services, and so forth, including support of the Bonn process.

So we had those successful elections, and those successful constitutional processes. Where we are now is in a reconstruction and capacity building phase. We have in each of these four pillars, stabilizing the environment for development; coming up with a thriving licit economy, that is to say, a non-poppy economy; democratic governance, with broad citizen participation; and a better educated and healthy population.

We have indicators in each of these areas against which we measure our progress in Afghanistan, and the goal of course in the long term is the green area at the top, which is the Afghanistan Government, and as they have outlined in their own compact, has their own vision of taking over the bulk of this kind of work, and the international community can play a supportive role, but not the lead role.

Finally, on slide 15, I have listed, and I won't take the Subcommittees' time, but some of what we consider to be the milestones, the successful things on the progress report over the last couple of years.

Let me just close, Mr. Chairman, and Madam Chairman, by saying that I was honored to open the AID mission in Afghanistan in January 2002. I recall quite clearly my first day on the job, and we got one of the old beat up Embassy vehicles that had not been destroyed by the Taliban, and drove into downtown Kabul to take a look at the city.

I went first to the Ministry of Education, and at that time, it was a bombed out building, where the then Minister of Education—and by the way an Afghan-American, who had come from California to help his home nation—was sitting huddled over a kerosene heater, with no electricity, no computer, no staff, no payroll, no way of communicating with the outside world.

If someone had told me at that time that we would be as far along as we are today, frankly I would have disbelieved them. I would have been too skeptical. So I am not here to tell you that

everything is going swimmingly. It is a tough slog as those casualty figures indicate.

But our progress report, to respond to the Subcommittees' questions, is that there has been very, very substantial progress made in the last 4 years, primarily because of the Afghans themselves, and I would be glad to answer any questions that you have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kunder follows:]

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

Madame Chair, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committees, I would like to thank the committees for this opportunity to speak today about USAID's progress in helping the people of Afghanistan improve their economic circumstances, health and education and live in a thriving democracy. In today's testimony, I will describe the significant challenges of working in Afghanistan and highlight how USAID's programs have contributed, and will continue to contribute, to the achievement of U.S. foreign policy goals in the country and to the improvement of the lives of the people of Afghanistan.

There are three stages in the transition strategy for Afghanistan. The first stage was from 2002–2005, the current stage is focusing on stabilization and building systems. USAID assumes that the final stage—the normal development process will start from 2008. But, first let me set the stage.

AFGHANISTAN IN JANUARY 2002

I had the honor of being the first USAID official on the ground in Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban, in January 2002. I have personally witnessed how the U.S. Government reconstruction program has been instrumental in helping the people of Afghanistan move towards creating a stable and productive state.

According to our Military, after the first week of the war against the Taliban, there were few targets left to bomb. Afghanistan had virtually been decimated after 23 years of warfare. Driving through the streets of Kabul, I saw that huge sections of the city were nothing more than rubble, and I rarely saw women walking in the streets. Much of Afghanistan's population lived in refugee camps in Pakistan, Iran, and a lucky few, mostly the better educated and professionals, had made homes in the West.

I am happy to report that things have measurably improved in the last four years. Today, in Kabul and other major cities throughout the country, the economy is growing quickly: cell phones are everywhere, there are free radio and television stations, and more and more women are making their own choices about their lives.

However, because Afghanistan was so devastated by decades of war, despite the considerable progress to date, much remains to be done. Afghanistan has the highest maternal mortality in the world—one woman dies in child birth for every 1,700 babies born. One in four of those babies will not survive to celebrate her fifth birthday. Afghanistan is working to meet many of the Millennium Development Goals by the 2015 deadline. The human indices are among the worst in the world, some of which are listed below:

- Ranks 173 of 178 countries on the 2004 UNDP Human Development Index.¹
- Average income is \$300 per person, and this includes income from poppy production.
- 71% of Afghans over 15 cannot read or write (91% of all rural women are illiterate).
- Three out of five girls do not go to school.
- Life expectancy is 45 years.
- Most of the existing infrastructure has been destroyed, and in some remote areas, it was never developed.

Historically, the vast majority of Afghans have not had access to electricity or safe water. In some remote mountainous villages, the nearest paved road is a two-week walk away. And when USAID first arrived in Kabul, much of the population had

¹Afghanistan National Development Report 2004, *Security with a Human Face; Challenges and Responsibilities* and the Global Human Development Report, 2005 (www.undp.org)

been severely traumatized after years of war. Most Afghans did not remember a time when conflict was not a major part of their lives.

U.S. ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN AFGHANISTAN

USAID's program is fundamental to achieving the U.S. Government's objective to assist Afghanistan in becoming a stable, productive state. We are working in several key sectors: sustainable economic growth, agriculture and rural development, infrastructure rehabilitation, health, education democratization and the rule of law.

USAID's initial strategy in Afghanistan focused on getting people back to some sense of normalcy by providing emergency relief and basic services. We needed to get food on tables and jobs for people. We needed to tackle the collapsed social service sector. Since agriculture is the mainstay of about 70 percent of the population, we put much emphasis on the development of rural livelihoods. Children—especially girls—had not been to public schools in at least six years, so it was vital to get the education system back up and running and to provide the means for those who had missed schooling altogether to catch up. As mentioned before, Afghanistan has unconscionable health indicators, and we had to work to set things right, especially when women and children were dying at such alarming rates. In response to these incredible needs, we focused our funds on agriculture, education and health.

In December 2001, in Bonn, Germany, Hamid Karzai had just been named the head of the Afghan Transitional Authority. The country had to be put on a path of democratic stabilization, and USAID supported this process by funding and helping with the logistics for the Emergency Loya Jirga held the following June and then to implement the rest of the Bonn accords. These actions were augmented by a series of "transition initiatives", designed to show the people of Afghanistan that there were concrete dividends that would come from a new government. These included rebuilding destroyed schools, market centers and other small-scale, quick impact projects, and the development of an independent media, including radio and television stations.

After the fall of the Taliban, Afghanistan had five different currencies in circulation. As a first step in creating the environment for the development of an economy, USAID helped unify these currencies into one, country-wide new unit, and launched a program to help the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank with monetary and fiscal policy.

In addition to the lack of a viable currency, the total lack of physical infrastructure presented a serious impediment to economic growth. A country cannot develop without a functioning transportation network and electricity. Subsequently, both President Bush and President Karzai decided that Afghanistan needed a major road project. Therefore, USAID began an ambitious plan to rebuild the highway connecting Kabul with Kandahar and Herat as well as nine provincial roads. When finished, 14 provincial capitals will be connected to a critical trade route. Because only seven percent of Afghans have access to electricity, USAID began to rehabilitate the Kajaki Dam, the premier source of hydroelectricity for southern Afghanistan, so that region could have access to a good, consistent supply of electricity.

The future for Afghanistan does not look encouraging unless Afghans can develop relevant skills to generate economic growth and find employment. Most Afghans, particularly the younger generations, have been denied this opportunity. Therefore, one of the fundamental tenets of USAID's program is, wherever possible, to train and transfer skills to Afghans. This will allow Afghans to participate in their country's development and will lead to greater sustainability.

USAID has made a substantial effort to engage Afghan contractors in the implementation of its projects. While this helps to develop capacity, the process is slow, and some Afghan institutions and implementers still lack the know-how and the capability to perform at acceptable standards. USAID currently employs 193,978 on just the alternative livelihoods projects. Overall, 16 percent (\$450M) of USAID current awards are going to Afghan contractors. In any given reporting period, roughly 75 percent of the employees working on the Kandahar-Herat Highway are Afghans.

Having Afghan construction workers alongside the expatriate crews is critical to ensuring the future maintenance of new infrastructure and enhancing valuable skills for future reconstruction. However, there is another, equally important, benefit to employing Afghans in the reconstruction of the so called "Ring Road." As proven in one section of the Kandahar to Herat Highway, having Afghans rebuild the road helps to prevent insurgency in the area. Insurgents have consistently targeted road reconstruction teams because their movements and work patterns are predictable. In an effort to curb these attacks on the Kandahar to Herat Highway, a local subcontractor was hired to better involve the surrounding population. The subcontractor, whose workforce consisted entirely of previously unemployed former

insurgents, was hired to perform much of the earthworks on one section of the highway. Not only has there been no major local political opposition to the project, the contractor is now performing at 15 percent better than expected rate of delivery. The workers have graduated from earthworks and excavation to working on bridges, paving, and drainage and are now being trained on project management and quality management programs.

As I mentioned before, USAID is currently in the second stage of its long-term strategy and will be implementing this second stage of its reconstruction assistance program from 2006 to 2008. I would now like to discuss our priorities.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND USAID'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY

USAID recently completed a long-term strategy which identifies four key areas for continued assistance: the improved environment for development; a thriving licit economy led by the private sector; democratic governance with broad citizen participation, and a better educated and healthier population.

- *The Improved Environment for Development:* We intend to establish a platform for sustainable economic growth for the Afghan people. This strategy builds on our current programs, yet explicitly empowers the private sector as a key player and driver of Afghanistan's future. USAID will set the stage for sustainable economic growth by bolstering the justice system and providing means for conflict resolution, legitimizing local governance structures, and providing employment opportunities in the short- and long-term.
- *A Thriving Licit Economy Led by The Private Sector:* USAID will expand the licit economy through continued investment in physical infrastructure—roads and power—essential to the development of even the most basic industries. Growth in the agricultural sector, which provides a livelihood for the majority of Afghans, combined with other employment opportunities, has to happen to give impoverished farmers a valid income generating alternative to poppy cultivation.

In December 2004, USAID launched its Alternative Livelihoods Program (ALP) to provide these alternatives. The program is a key element in the joint counter-narcotics strategy of both the U.S. Government and the Government of Afghanistan and is designed to accelerate economic growth in Afghanistan's principal poppy-producing provinces. The program principally targets core poppy-producing areas in southern (Helmand and Kandahar Provinces), eastern (Nangarhar and Laghman Provinces) and northern (Badakhshan and Takhar Provinces) Afghanistan but includes activities in other provinces where poppy cultivation is expanding or where there has been a concerted effort to eliminate narcotics production. ALP is a decentralized activity that relies on cooperation with government entities across the country and in many remote areas. Therefore, a key cross-cutting objective of ALP is to train local government officials in planning regional economic development, facilitating the growth of local businesses and effectively administering the public good.

- *Democratic System with Broad Citizen Participation:* This guarantees the rule of law through the electoral process will promote good governance and make it easier to prosecute offenders ultimately restoring the country to the tranquility it enjoyed in the 1960s.
- *A Better Educated and Healthier Population:* This will be achieved through continued investments in social services to create an educated and healthy workforce, which will be able to participate fully in the country's economy and democratic government. Through sustained efforts in education, we will make vital, heavy investments in the health of mothers and children—the future work force of Afghanistan.

SUCCESSSES, FAILURES AND CHALLENGES OF USAID'S RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

USAID has had measurable success in Afghanistan in responding to the country's needs. USAID provided textbooks to school children in time for the start of the first school year after the fall of the Taliban; built the road linking Kabul to Kandahar in record time; assisted with the currency conversion; and supported the implementation of the Bonn Process, including the Emergency Loya Jirga, the Constitutional Loya Jirga, presidential and parliamentary elections and the seating of parliament. I am pleased to announce that yesterday, on International Women's Day, 30 additional midwives graduated from USAID-funded training, joining 337 alumnae of the program.

To date, USAID has built 477 schools accommodating nearly 300,000 students and 454 clinics serving 340,000 patients per month. By the end of 2006, USAID anti-

pates completing more than 600 schools and 600 clinics. This is a phenomenal number, averaging 19 schools and clinics per month since construction first started in April 2002. These buildings, constructed to high quality standards, are designed to withstand harsh environmental conditions, repair easily with local materials and expertise, and maintain cultural appropriateness. They are also earthquake-resistant, something which we take seriously since Afghanistan is in an earthquake zone. Initial reports showed that 18,000 schoolchildren died or were seriously injured in the October 2005 Pakistan earthquake because their schools collapsed onto them.

Our presence on the provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) has allowed us to build closer relations with local officials and community leaders to better understand local needs and development goals. Since the Coalition and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) militaries staffing a PRT are able to offer the necessary protection for our staff, PRTs have been a useful platform for USAID to monitor our programs throughout the country and ensure that aid is being delivered to the right people.

In addition to developing local connections and monitoring USAID's national programs, on each PRT, USAID has contributed to the province's local needs and development goals through the Quick Impact Program (QIP). QIP is the USAID funding mechanism that allows our field program officers on the PRTs to undertake specific development projects in their provinces. The field officers select appropriate projects and activities in consultation with the military on the PRTs, while ensuring local leadership. The primary purposes of QIP projects are to extend the reach and influence of government throughout the provinces and to create a climate of improved freedom and economic activity. Projects implemented through QIP include tertiary roads, bridges, water supply, irrigation, government administrative buildings, schools, clinics, micro-power generation and training courses for women.

PRTs are a vital part of Afghanistan's reconstruction, and as the majority of them shift from Coalition to ISAF control, it is important that USAID continues to work with each of the current ISAF member states (Germany, United Kingdom, Norway, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Spain, and—as of next week—Sweden) that lead NATO PRTs, as well as the nations that are expected to contribute by fall 2006, when ISAF is scheduled to assume responsibility for security in the south.

In addition, USAID coordinates closely with the Department of Defense, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of State to ensure that activities in development, diplomacy and defense complement and strengthen U.S. foreign policy goals, with the ultimate goal of extending the reach and legitimacy of the emerging government of Afghanistan. This inter-agency approach has been one of the most successful aspects of the PRTs.

A consistent challenge to working in Afghanistan is managing the expectations of the Afghan people, the government and the media. Because of decades of insecurity, destruction, and corruption, the state was incapable of the most basic functions by the time the Taliban fell. The country has been trampled by foreign invasions and fragmented by international as well as internal politics. The result was massive poverty, a state devoid of institutions to govern and serve the people, and the dominance of a drug economy that hindered revenue and state building as well as legitimate economic growth.

An important fact to remember is that development takes time. Comparing statistics from similar countries shows us that:

- It took Bangladesh 17 years to increase adult literacy by 9%, from 32% in 1985 to 41% in 2002.
- It took India 44 years to decrease the infant mortality rate from 242 deaths per 1,000 births down to 85 (a 65% decrease).
- It took Morocco 43 years to increase its GDP from \$2B to \$44B.

USAID has only been engaged in Afghanistan for just four years, and change takes time, despite the expectation of many that reconstruction and development should happen at lightning speed.

One of the issues discussed at the recent London Conference was the perception that donor programs, such as USAID's, are expensive and that these funds would be better used by giving them directly to the Afghan government. Based on our assessments and observation of the Government of Afghanistan, we believe that at the present time, and given current systems in place at the Afghan ministries, funds passed through ministries for development would sometimes not reach the target populations, delivery would be slow and it would be very challenging to account for these funds in a way that would satisfy U.S. taxpayers. We are committed to working with the Government to make sure that its employees develop the management and financial skills needed to implement development activities and to account for

the resources used, be they domestic or from international donors. However we recognize that this will be a long process, and we will not pass funds directly through the government until such capacity is improved.

We cannot talk about progress in Afghanistan without acknowledging that a major obstacle to getting our work completed on schedule is the security situation. Our staff faces real dangers every day, such as rocket attacks, banditry and kidnappings. We take necessary precautions to ensure their safety. Increasingly, our contractors are being targeted, and a number of them have been killed, making it more difficult for USAID to recruit appropriately qualified staff. The ancillary costs to provide security have also risen substantially.

We continue to implement our projects despite security threats by extremists who attempt to disrupt services and destabilize the country. Building schools and roads or educating girls is a challenge in an insecure environment. For example, USAID has built 477 schools and another 251 are currently under construction, but construction crews at 53 of our schools experienced violence. In January, a headmaster was shot in Helmand; 200 schools in Kandahar and 165 in Helmand closed for security reasons, and a high school teacher was beheaded in Zabul in January. Extremists have burned girls' schools and have injured or killed personnel with roadside improvised explosive devices.

February was a particularly deadly month—over a 14-day period, 24 violent incidents and 37 deaths were reported in the open media. Since 2002, 114 USAID-funded workers were killed, 130 seriously injured or disabled, and another 33 staff were killed in accidents.

I want to take this opportunity to recognize and thank our American and international staff on USAID projects who have given up the comfort and safety of their homes to help rebuild Afghanistan, and also acknowledge the major contributions of the Afghan staff working alongside us. Without them, we would have no success story.

BUDGET REQUESTS FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION

I would now like to provide the Committee with an introduction to the power sector request in the Administration's fiscal year 2006 supplemental submission for Afghanistan, as well as a brief overview of the USAID-implemented components of the fiscal year 2007 President's Budget request for Afghanistan. First, in addition to urgent requirements for debt relief, assistance for returning refugees and Embassy and USAID mission security costs and operations, the request for fiscal year 2006 supplemental funds reflects the importance of the power sector to U.S. efforts to rebuild and stabilize Afghanistan. Currently, as I said earlier, only 7 percent of Afghanistan's population has access to electricity, and even existing electricity supplies are unreliable. Moreover, the United States is devoting millions of dollars every year—\$55 million in fiscal year 2005 alone—to supply diesel fuel for thermal power plants in Afghanistan's major cities, a very inefficient way to provide power and one that is only viable in the short-term.

In order to increase the supply and reliability of electricity for the Afghan people and reduce U.S. diesel fuel expenditures, we have requested \$32 million in fiscal year 2006 supplemental funding to improve Afghanistan's power sector through two important activities. The first is a broad-based technical assistance program to restructure Afghanistan's power sector, facilitate power purchase agreements with the Central Asian Republics, and complete the engineering and design of a major power transmission line between Turkmenistan and northern Afghanistan. Supplemental funds are also being requested to provide technical assistance and training for the installation of an important diesel fuel generator in Kabul that will replace a power generation unit that failed in early February. In addition to the above \$32 million, we have requested \$16 million to pay for critical security costs for the USAID Mission. This request for additional operating expenses is being made in response to an unpredictable security environment and the need to ensure uninterrupted security for USAID personnel operating in Afghanistan.

USAID's fiscal year 2007 request is consistent with the priorities and the strategy I articulated earlier and was developed in close consultation with the Department of State and the Government of Afghanistan. The total Development Assistance, Child Survival and Health, and Economic Support Funds request of \$802.8 million demonstrates the continued U.S. commitment to rebuild Afghanistan's economy through infrastructure rehabilitation, agricultural assistance and private sector support. USAID will also provide alternative livelihoods activities as part of a broader, multilateral program to combat narcotics production. Furthermore, we will continue to provide basic health services and train Afghan health workers; expand educational opportunities, literacy, and basic skills through education programs; build

the foundations for a democratic society, notably through the training of new parliamentarians; and support local stabilization and reconstruction efforts through Provincial Reconstruction Teams. Throughout our entire portfolio, we will focus on building the capacity of Afghans within both the public and private sectors and continue to provide significant assistance to Afghan women and girls. Both the level and allocation of the fiscal year 2007 request are consistent with U.S. Government goals and strategies in Afghanistan, and are aligned with the Afghanistan Compact recently announced in London.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much. And now we are pleased to hear from Rear Admiral Moeller, who I had the pleasure of seeing in the region not too long ago.

**STATEMENT OF REAR ADMIRAL ROBERT T. MOELLER, USN,
DIRECTOR, PLANS AND POLICY, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND**

Rear Admiral MOELLER. Chairwoman Ros-Lehtinen, and Congressman Ackerman, and Chairman Rohrabacher, thank you very, very much for this opportunity to appear before this Committee today.

And on behalf of General Abizaid, it is certainly a pleasure to have this opportunity. I look forward to our discussion today. We just arrived in Washington last night, and in fact, earlier this week, having visited both Afghanistan and Pakistan for current updates on the situation there. It was very, very informative, and useful visits as always.

There are approximately 20,000 United States and 4,500 coalition forces from 19 nations deployed in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. These forces are commanded by Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan, headquartered in Kabul, which assures unity of effort with the United States Ambassador in Kabul, and the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), also headquartered in Kabul.

NATO's ISAF contributes approximately 8,500 troops, from 21 nations, over 150 of whom are American. ISAF troops are stationed in Kabul to provide security, conduct security and stability operations in northern and western Afghanistan, and are deploying to southern Afghanistan to take over from United States Operation Enduring Freedom forces.

My testimony today will focus upon the overall security situation in Afghanistan, and the issues and regions of concern, and an assessment of the continued threat of Taliban forces, and options to deal with them; an overview of increased NATO and individual nation participation in operations in Afghanistan; and a discussion of the integrated approach incorporating political and economic components in achieving long term security goals.

We have made significant progress in Afghanistan, and we must continue to work to promote stability, and thwart any burgeoning insurgency. Consistent with CENTCOM's (Central Command) primary goal of defeating al-Qaeda and its allies, CFC-Alpha (Combined Forces Command) maintains an intensive focus on any indications that al-Qaeda is attempting to reestablish a safehaven in Afghanistan.

Al-Qaeda's senior leaders operate in Pakistan's rugged and isolated, Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), that borders eastern Afghanistan. In addition to al-Qaeda, three insurgent

groups, all with al-Qaeda links, constitute the main enemy threat in Afghanistan.

First is the Taliban, and second the Haqqani Tribal Network; and third is the Hezb-i-Islami Gulbuddin, the HIG group. The Taliban are the largest and the most active group, operating primarily in the southern and eastern provinces in Kabul.

Its core supporters are almost entirely Pashtun, and seek its return to power. The Taliban has demonstrated resilience after defeats. They appeared tactically stronger on the battlefields this year, and they demonstrate an increased willingness to use suicide bomber and IED tactics.

While the Taliban remain very unpopular in most parts of the country, pockets of hardcore support remain. Taliban activities remain clearly linked to al-Qaeda funding, direction, and ideological thinking.

The Taliban do not have the capability to exercise control over large areas of Afghanistan, but they are disruptive to reconstruction and reconciliation efforts. It is increasingly clear that Taliban leaders are also using Pakistan's FATA to organize, plan, and rest.

Pakistani efforts to deny this safehaven, while considerable, have yet to shut down this area to Taliban and al-Qaeda use.

The Haqqani Tribal Network, which has ties to the Taliban, operates primarily in eastern Afghanistan and the FATA region of Pakistan. Haqqani goals are limited primarily to obtaining autonomy in eastern Afghanistan and the FATA region.

Although the most tactically proficient of the enemy we face in Afghanistan, they present a limited strategic threat. The HIG, while remaining dangerous, similarly presents only a limited strategic threat.

It operates primarily in eastern Afghanistan, and is heavily involved in illicit activities, such as narcotics and smuggling, resembling more of a mafia-like organization than an insurgent movement with national goals.

Nevertheless, given its historical links with al-Qaeda, it can help facilitate al-Qaeda operations in Kabul and eastern Afghanistan if it finds that doing so enhances its interests.

Some HIG operatives may be considering political reconciliation. Keeping our eyes on the target of making al-Qaeda irrelevant and preventing a return of the Taliban in Afghanistan, CFC-Alpha will continue to focus on killing and capturing terrorists, and neutralizing the insurgency, providing the shield behind which economic and political progress can move forward, and legitimate government institutions can form and take root, and training and building capable Afghan security forces.

Our goal, which we share with the people of Afghanistan, is a country at peace with its neighbors, and an ally in the broader war against terror; with a representative government and security forces sufficient to maintain domestic order and deny Afghanistan as a safehaven for terrorists.

During the past year, CFC-Alpha continued aggressive offensive military operations to kill and capture terrorists and insurgents, and shut down the sanctuaries in which they operate.

These efforts take time, rarely producing major breakthroughs, but incremental progress in this important area continues. United

States and coalition forces dominate the battle space, and are increasingly involving Afghan National Army units in military operations.

Training, building, and mentoring the Afghan National Army (ANA) remains a central pillar of our strategy to stabilize Afghanistan. Given the state of the ANA, our focus has been on quality building from the ground up, and not on quantity.

There has been steady progress. The Afghan army now numbers over 26,000 trained and equipped troops. Most importantly, in terms of progress, the citizens of Afghanistan are beginning to view the ANA as a truly national institution that is both trusted and respected.

Although the development of an effective Afghan National Army is proceeding on schedule, the Afghan National Police (ANP) force requires considerable work. In conjunction with our coalition partners, building a professional and competent ANP remains a top CFC-Alpha priority.

Over 59,000 police have been trained. Ultimately, police will provide the security backbone against any insurgency and criminal activity. Afghanistan is intensely tribal and lacks modern infrastructure.

Loyal and competent police are essential to the spreading of the rule of law and good governance. A long hard road is ahead to make Afghan police what the nation needs.

2006 is a pivotal year as NATO expands the mission of ISAF to include the total land area of Afghanistan.

Stage three of the ISAF transition is scheduled for the summer of 2006, when Regional Command South transfers to NATO command. CENTCOM continues to work closely with NATO to enable its command and control structures, and ensure a successful NATO transition in Afghanistan.

Having NATO, an organization consisting of 26 of the world's most powerful countries, committed to Afghanistan's future is good for Afghanistan. NATO ISAF is already a major contributor to Afghanistan's security. Deepening international commitment to Afghanistan's future will do much to assist the emerging Afghan Government, and diminish al-Qaeda's attractiveness to people in Central and South Asia.

The political and economic situation in Afghanistan is improving, but opium production and the resulting trafficking in opium and its derivatives, still accounts for roughly one-third of Afghanistan's GDP.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Admiral, if we could ask you to wrap it up. Thank you.

Rear Admiral MOELLER. Yes, Madam. Let me just conclude then very quickly by saying that success in Afghanistan not only requires military commitment, but it also requires economic revival and reconstruction of key infrastructure.

And certainly all of that effort is ongoing, and one from a Central Command perspective through our involvement in Provincial Reconstruction Teams, as well as other activities around the country, we will work very, very closely to support, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Rear Admiral Moeller follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REAR ADMIRAL ROBERT T. MOELLER, USN, DIRECTOR,
PLANS AND POLICY, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

Chairwoman Ros-Lehtinen, Congressman Ackerman, Chairman Rohrabacher, Congressman Delahunt and members of the Committees:

There are approximately 20,000 U.S. and 4,500 Coalition forces from nineteen nations deployed in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). These forces are commanded by Combined Forces Command—Afghanistan (CFC–A), headquartered in Kabul, which assures unity of effort with the U.S. Ambassador in Kabul and the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), also headquartered in Kabul. NATO's ISAF contributes approximately 8,500 troops from twenty-one nations, over 150 of whom are American. ISAF troops are stationed in Kabul to provide security, conduct security and stability operations in northern and western Afghanistan, and are deploying to southern Afghanistan to take over from US OEF forces.

My testimony today will focus upon the overall security situation in Afghanistan, and the issues and regions of concern; an assessment of the continued threat of Taliban forces and options to deal with them; an overview of increased NATO and individual nation participation in operations in Afghanistan and; a discussion of the integrated approach incorporating political and economic components in achieving long-term security goals.

We have made significant progress in Afghanistan and we must continue to work to promote stability and thwart any burgeoning insurgency. Consistent with CENTCOM's primary goal of defeating al Qaida and its allies, CFC–A maintains an intense focus on any indications that al Qaida is attempting to reestablish a safe haven in Afghanistan. Al Qaida senior leaders operate in Pakistan's rugged and isolated Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) that borders eastern Afghanistan. In addition to al Qaida, three insurgent groups—all with al Qaida links—constitute the main enemy threat in Afghanistan: (1) the Taliban, (2) Haqqani Tribal Network, and (3) Hezb-i-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG).

The Taliban are the largest and most active group, operating primarily in the southern and eastern provinces and Kabul. Its core supporters, almost entirely Pashtun, seek its return to power. The Taliban has demonstrated resilience after defeats. They appeared tactically stronger on the battlefield this year and they demonstrate an increased willingness to use suicide bomber and IED tactics. While the Taliban remain very unpopular in most parts of the country, pockets of hard core support remain. Taliban activities remain clearly linked to al Qaida funding, direction, and ideological thinking. The Taliban do not have the capability to exercise control over large areas of Afghanistan, but they are disruptive to reconstruction and reconciliation efforts. It is increasingly clear that Taliban leaders also use Pakistan's FATA to organize, plan and rest. Pakistani efforts to deny this safe haven, while considerable, have yet to shut down this area to Taliban and al Qaida use.

The Haqqani Tribal Network, which has ties to the Taliban, operates primarily in eastern Afghanistan and the FATA region of Pakistan. Haqqani goals are limited primarily to obtaining autonomy in eastern Afghanistan and the FATA region. Although the most tactically proficient of the enemy we face in Afghanistan, they present a limited strategic threat.

The HIG, while remaining dangerous, similarly presents only a limited strategic threat. It operates primarily in eastern Afghanistan and is heavily involved in illicit activities such as narcotics and smuggling, resembling more of a Mafia-like organization than an insurgent movement with national goals. Nevertheless, given its historical links with al Qaida, it can help facilitate al Qaida operations in Kabul and eastern Afghanistan if it finds that doing so enhances its interests. Some HIG operatives may be considering political reconciliation.

Keeping our eyes on the target of making al Qaida irrelevant and preventing a return of the Taliban in Afghanistan, CFC–A will continue to focus on: killing and capturing terrorists and neutralizing the insurgency; providing the shield behind which economic and political progress can move forward and legitimate government institutions can form and take root; and training and building capable Afghan security forces. Our goal, which we share with the people of Afghanistan, is a country at peace with its neighbors and an ally in the broader war against terror, with a representative government and security forces sufficient to maintain domestic order and deny Afghanistan as a safe haven for terrorists.

During the past year, CFC–A continued aggressive offensive military operations to kill and capture terrorists and insurgents and shut down the sanctuaries in which they operate. These efforts take time, rarely producing major breakthroughs, but incremental progress in this important area continues. U.S. and Coalition forces

dominate the battle space and are increasingly involving Afghan National Army units in military operations.

Training, building, and mentoring the Afghan National Army (ANA) remains a central pillar of our strategy to stabilize Afghanistan. Given the state of the ANA, our focus has been on quality—building from the ground up—not on quantity. There has been steady progress. The Afghan Army now numbers over 26,000 trained and equipped troops. Most important in terms of progress, the citizens of Afghanistan are beginning to view the ANA as a truly national institution that is both trusted and respected.

Although the development of an effective Afghan National Army is proceeding on schedule, the Afghan National Police (ANP) force requires considerable work. In conjunction with our coalition partners, building a professional and competent ANP remains a top CFC–A priority. Over 59,000 police have been trained. Ultimately, police provide the security backbone against any insurgency and criminal activity. Afghanistan is intensely tribal and lacks modern infrastructure. Loyal and competent police are essential to spreading the rule of law and good governance. A long, hard road is ahead to make Afghan police what the nation needs.

2006 is a pivotal year as NATO expands the mission of ISAF to include the total land area of Afghanistan. Stage III of the ISAF transition is scheduled for the late spring or summer of 2006 when Regional Command South (RC South) transfers to NATO command. CENTCOM continues to work closely with NATO to enable its command and control structures and ensure a successful NATO transition in Afghanistan.

Having NATO, an organization consisting of 26 of the world's most powerful countries, committed to Afghanistan's future is good for Afghanistan. NATO–ISAF is already a major contributor to Afghanistan's security. Deepening international commitment to Afghanistan's future will do much to assist the emerging Afghan government and diminish al Qaida's attractiveness to people in Central and South Asia.

The political and economic situation in Afghanistan is improving, but opium production and the resultant trafficking of opium and its derivative still accounts for roughly one third of Afghanistan's total GDP. Afghanistan's huge drug trade severely impacts efforts to rebuild the economy, develop a strong democratic government based upon rule of law and threatens regional stability. Dangerous security conditions and corruption constrain government and international efforts to combat the drug trade.

The Government of Afghanistan continues to pursue an eight pillar counter narcotics strategy focused on: public information, alternative livelihoods, law enforcement, criminal justice, eradication, institutional development, regional cooperation and demand reduction. The international community actively assists the Government of Afghanistan in its counter narcotics efforts and to help build its capacity. International counter narcotics activities remain under a multilateral mandate with the UK, Government of Afghanistan, and the United States. US government assistance focuses on the five pillars of Alternative Livelihoods, Public Information, Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement, and Eradication in close coordination with the Government of Afghanistan. Although 2005 saw some encouraging developments, the Government of Afghanistan will need sustained international assistance and political support over many years to achieve its counter narcotics goals.

Success in Afghanistan not only requires military prowess, it also requires economic revival and reconstruction of key infrastructure. The center of gravity of CFC–A's campaign is decreasingly military and increasingly in the domain of governance and economic development. American, Coalition and Afghan forces are continuing to provide the critical shield behind which progress in the political and economic realms can continue.

Reconstruction remains a critical way to isolate our enemies, depriving them of their support base, and giving Afghans hope for a better future. Continuing and sustained development efforts will be critical to overall success. The United States and our allies will continue to work with the Afghan government in assisting Afghanistan in building the infrastructure needed for a functioning economy. The London Conference in January 2006 was an important step in this regard. More than \$10 Billion has been pledged for Afghanistan from the international community for the next 5 years. This financial support is a critical aspect of reconstruction. Continued international and political support will be needed.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), small civil-military affairs teams with civilian and interagency expertise, remain an important tool in the reconstruction effort. This past year, CFC–A and its NATO–ISAF partners increased the number of PRTs to 23. Of these, 14 are directed by CFC–A, and nine others operate under the authority of NATO–ISAF. Over time, Afghan PRTs will transform from military to

civilian-led organizations, and ultimately become provincial development authorities of the Afghan government.

Since September 2001, progress in Afghanistan has been remarkable: the al-Qaida safe haven in Afghanistan was eliminated and the Taliban removed from power; security was established for a political process in which the people of the country have freely elected a president and parliament; military units spear-headed an effort to bring the significant resources and expertise of the international community to help Afghanistan begin to address many of its longstanding problems; and the United States, along with our international partners and the Afghan government and people, has begun the difficult work of helping Afghans build the institutions and infrastructure that are the key to the future of their country.

Given this progress, there is still a very strong notion of “consent” in this country—the Afghan people are very appreciative of the help they have received from international troops, especially those from the United States, and there is a strong, broad-based desire for such troops to remain in the country. But much work needs to be done and progress is not guaranteed. Helping Afghans build infrastructure, which in many regions is nonexistent, attack endemic corruption, address narco-trafficking, train their Army and police, all while fighting an insurgency that remains patient, hidden, and dangerous, are tasks that will require years. As in Iraq, an essential element of achieving overall success will depend on the leadership, character, and vision of Afghanistan’s elected leaders.

I will now be happy to answer your questions.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much. Mr. Schweich.

STATEMENT OF MR. THOMAS A. SCHWEICH, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. SCHWEICH. Distinguished Chairs Ros-Lehtinen, Rohrabacher, Congressman Ackerman, and Delahunt, and Distinguished Members of the Subcommittees, I thank you for the opportunity to discuss our efforts to assist the people of Afghanistan in their battle against the narcotics trade.

I would also like to express our thanks for the continued commitment of Congress to Afghanistan, and for its support for its programs. I submitted a very detailed and lengthy statement, and in the interest of time, I will summarize that very quickly, Madam Chairperson.

The United Nations estimates that the drug trade represents up to a third of Afghanistan’s total Gross Domestic Product. We believe that fostering a stable democracy in Afghanistan requires curbing the drug economy and the related criminality and corruption in the region.

We believe that this will be a very long and hard effort. The good news—in 2005 there was a drop in opium cultivation from 2004—is quite frankly tempered by the widespread reporting now that poppy planting is again on the rise this year.

Indeed, the NATO Supreme Allied Commander identified narcotics as an internal demon and the most serious problem facing Afghanistan today. At INL (Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs) we are very concerned that the cultivation, production, and trafficking of opiates is a destabilizing influence across the country, and particularly dangerous in a situation like Afghanistan, which is an emerging democracy.

In light of these concerns, the United States Government continues to refine its implementation of the five pillar strategy for counternarcotics, paying particular attention to the provinces that have the highest levels of cultivation. The public information pillar

focuses on convincing Afghans to reject opium poppy cultivation and trade.

The alternative livelihoods, spearheaded by USAID, establish economic alternatives to poppy cultivation. The eradication pillar centers on discouraging poppy planting and eradicating those fields where prevention is unsuccessful.

Then there is the intradiction pillar, which builds on the Afghan capacity to destroy drug labs, seizing precursor chemicals, and opiates, and arresting major traffickers. The law enforcement and justice reform pillar assists the Afghan Government in building its capacity to arrest, prosecute, and punish traffickers and corrupt officials.

It is very important, we think, that the Afghans for the first time in October 2005 extradited a major drug trafficker to the United States.

The five-pillar program is a cooperative interagency effort coordinated both in Kabul and Washington, and implemented in conjunction with our international partners. We work closely with the Afghan Government and support them at every opportunity in building domestic capabilities to fight counternarcotics.

We continue to engage the Government of Afghanistan on the need to crack down on corruption at all levels, which sometimes undermines our efforts. President Karzai has expressed his commitment to stemming illegal drug production, and welcomes international help in building the technical capacity for a successful counternarcotics program.

Only by working together to fight vigorously against narcotics will we be able to help Afghanistan on its road to becoming a fully functioning democracy, and to build a stable economy. I am ready to answer your questions, Madam Chairperson.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Schweich follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. THOMAS A. SCHWEICH, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AFGHANISTAN PROGRESS REPORT: COUNTERNARCOTICS EFFORTS

Distinguished Chairs Ros-Lehtinen and Rohrabacher, Congressmen Ackerman and Delahunt, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittees, thank you for the opportunity to discuss our efforts to assist the government and people of Afghanistan in curbing the production and trafficking of illegal narcotics.

The State Department's Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) plays a key role in carrying out the President's National Drug Control Strategy. INL manages a diverse range of counternarcotics programs in approximately 150 countries throughout Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, Africa, and Europe. These bilateral, regional, and global initiatives aim to fight the cultivation of drug crops at their source, disrupt the trafficking of drugs and precursor chemicals, and help build host-nation law enforcement capacity.

My statement today provides an overview of the contribution our counternarcotics programs make to the longer-term Afghan strategy. First, I will discuss the problem of narcotics in Afghanistan, and then I will discuss the U.S. Government's five-pillar counternarcotics strategy. My remarks will highlight the difficulties we are facing in Afghanistan and our plans to meet those challenges.

Narcotics Problem in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is the world's leading producer of illicit opiates, accounting for nearly 90 percent of the global supply according to U.S. Government figures. Almost 8.7 percent of the Afghan population was involved in opium cultivation in 2005. Additionally, the export value of Afghan opiates in 2005 is estimated at \$2.7 billion.

However, 80 percent of this money goes to drug trafficking networks and does not support the local rural Afghan communities.

The cultivation, production, and trafficking of opiates is a destabilizing influence in any country, but such trafficking is particularly dangerous to an emerging democracy such as Afghanistan. Promotion of economic development, rule of law, democratic elections, and a functioning civil society must be coupled with vigorous efforts to stem the tide of illicit narcotics and combat the accompanying corruption and instability. The continued support of counternarcotics efforts must remain an important part of overall U.S. policy in Afghanistan.

According to U.S. Government figures, there was a 48 percent decrease in poppy cultivation in 2005, down from record figures in 2004. However, due to favorable climate conditions, yield per hectare was up-resulting in only a 10 percent decrease in opium production. While we welcomed this decrease in 2005, early indications show that planting has significantly increased in 2006. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC's) Rapid Assessment Survey released in February 2006, poppy planting for the current growing season increased in 13 provinces, remained stable in 15, and decreased in only three.

Interconnecting Pillars: The Helmand Situation

Of particular concern, some of the sharpest increases in cultivation are expected in Helmand, a southern province, a place of traditionally strong Taliban influence, and a historically significant producer of opium poppy. UNODC field reports indicate that Helmand has the highest cultivation level of opium poppy in Afghanistan with 26,500 hectares in 2005 and project a strong increase for Helmand in 2006. In addition, the security situation in Helmand has been under stress recently with an increase in insurgent activity. The increased poppy cultivation in Helmand, combined with these security concerns, demands our attention.

The situation in Helmand underscores the necessity of comprehensive counternarcotics efforts. Responding to this, Embassy Kabul has organized a task force consisting of representatives of the Government of Afghanistan (including the Afghan National Army and National Police), the U.K., the UNODC, INL, and the U.S. military to coordinate security and counternarcotics assistance. Embassy representatives have been traveling to the area to coordinate eradication efforts with the provincial governors of Helmand and its neighboring province of Kandahar (also a major poppy producer). The Governor of Helmand has promised full cooperation and has requested that additional Afghan police and army forces be sent to provide security.

Support to governor-led eradication and strategic deployment of the national Afghan Eradication Force provides the best immediate strategy for dealing with increased planting. U.S. and U.K. eradication specialists are working with the Minister of the Interior and several governors to develop detailed eradication operations plans for each province. Helmand will be the first focus. UNODC is providing valuable monitoring and verification assistance. Actions in Helmand will be closely watched by other governors; an early success there has the potential of invigorating other provinces into eradication compliance.

Supporting these eradication efforts, the public information campaign is disseminating eradication into messages, focusing on alternative livelihood programs, and stressing the importance of rule of law. Foreign and domestic media will be brought along on eradication missions and briefed on the criteria used in choosing what fields are to be eradicated. Alternative livelihoods efforts will also be focused on Helmand to encourage the transformation to a licit economy. Specific and current development efforts in the area include irrigation, roads, power, building export capability, and investing in agri-business improvements.

United States Government Five-Pillar Counternarcotics Plan

The U.S. Government continues to implement and refine its five-pillar strategy for combating narcotics in Afghanistan, paying particular attention to provinces of concern such as Helmand, and making implementation changes as warranted. Our Public Information pillar focuses on convincing Afghans to reject opium poppy cultivation and trade. The Alternative Livelihoods pillar efforts, spearheaded by USAID, establish economic alternatives to poppy cultivation. Our Eradication pillar centers on discouraging poppy planting and eradicating those fields when prevention is unsuccessful. Efforts under our Interdiction pillar focus on building Afghan capacity to destroy drug labs, seize precursor chemicals and opiates, and arrest major traffickers. The Law Enforcement/Justice Reform pillar assists the Afghan Government in building its capacity to arrest, prosecute, and punish traffickers and corrupt officials.

Public Information

The Public Information campaign in Afghanistan is a key pillar in the effort to reduce the cultivation of opium poppy and the influence of the illegal drug trade. In addition to the media campaign with its focus on message development and product distribution, public information efforts also include capacity building, training, and research. The media campaign includes anti-drug messages spread through radio and television, posters, radio dramas, comic books, transit advertising, mobile cinema, calendars, billboards, banners, booklets, stickers, and matchbooks. The messages conveyed are rotated according to the poppy planting and growing seasons. The first phase, timed to coincide with planting decision making, roughly August through November, focused on steering farmers away from planting poppy, and the second phase, which just concluded, warned farmers of the threat of government-led eradication. The current third phase is an extension of previous efforts to warn of impending eradication and includes a pilot capacity-building program to train community stakeholders to deliver counternarcotics messages. The first groups to be trained are school teachers in Nangarhar province.

Overall campaign messages have included the ideas that growing poppy is against Islam and harmful for the reputation of Afghanistan. Last year, a group of approximately 350–400 Mullahs gathered to discuss ways to convince farmers that poppy growing was against Islam. The one-day event started with Afghan Government ministers discussing the importance of not cultivating poppy and trafficking in narcotics, followed by various Mullahs delivering presentations on how poppy farming and the drug trade were 'haram' or against Islam. Since then, local religious leaders have been delivering anti-poppy messages to congregations, and counternarcotics messages have even been delivered via loudspeakers at mosques.

Media products further convey this message. One poster, distributed throughout the country, included a depiction of a prosperous farmer surrounded by vegetables and a depiction of a miserable one in an eradicated, mowed-down poppy field. Other products focused on the overall deadly effects of opium. A new billboard at the airport will contain a tally of drug arrests at the airport to date.

Public affairs products and initiatives are undertaken in full coordination with appropriate entities of the Government of Afghanistan as well as the donor community and agencies of the United States Government. The campaign is conducted provincially, in close coordination with Poppy Elimination Program efforts, international observers, Provincial Governors' offices, and local authorities.

In addition to the media campaign, President Karzai plays an especially prominent and essential role in counternarcotics publicity efforts. In the past six months, he has made several speeches against opium cultivation, conducted shuras (a meeting of local political and tribal leaders) to win support for elimination efforts, and has held two governors conferences on counternarcotics. According to a recently completed survey conducted by INL, 73 percent of all Afghans have heard the counternarcotics message from President Karzai.

Alternative Livelihoods

Providing farmers with economic opportunities and alternatives to poppy cultivation is an essential part of our counternarcotics strategy in Afghanistan. The Department of State and USAID have been working through non-governmental organizations and contractors to help provide alternative livelihoods assistance to Afghan farmers, with USAID now having the primary interagency lead. All counternarcotics pillars are interdependent, and the alternative livelihoods program will only be effective at changing farmers' behavior if the risks and costs of poppy cultivation are increased through the other pillars.

Experience suggests that time is needed to provide sustainable livelihoods that are viable alternatives to growing poppy. Yet other factors push for quick solutions: the opium economy undermines the growth of the licit economy and it threatens the authority of the newly elected government. Thus, there is a need for immediate short-term assistance, as well as sustainable long-term economic development. USAID cash-for-work projects provide an immediate short-term alternative source of income to households that are dependent on the opium economy. These projects, such as cleaning irrigation canals and repairing roads, provide an income bridge until comprehensive alternative livelihood programs are in place. To date, \$15.7 million has been paid in cash-for-work salaries to more than 193,000 farmers.

Comprehensive Development agricultural and business projects accelerate economic growth, create jobs, and provide sustainable alternatives to poppy cultivation over the medium- to long-term. USAID projects launched last year provided credit to nearly 5,500 farmers. They also supported planting fruit and nut trees on 3,000 hectares of former poppy-producing land in Nangarhar and Laghman (representing roughly 2 percent of arable land in Nangarhar and 7 percent in Laghman.) In addi-

tion, several investment proposals are under consideration, including agricultural processing factories.

High Visibility Projects target provinces not covered by comprehensive development programs. These initiatives demonstrate Government of Afghanistan concern and reward local counternarcotics initiatives to reduce poppy cultivation. A recent USAID project distributed seeds and fertilizer, accompanied by counternarcotics messages in the bags and on the radio, to 550,000 farmers in every district in all 34 provinces. Nearly 40,000 metric tons of fertilizer and 14,000 metric tons of wheat and vegetable seed have been provided, representing 10 percent of fertilizer and 20 percent of seed demand for the 2006 planting season. The distribution of the seeds and fertilizer was timed to compete with the poppy planting season, and many farmers in 97 percent of districts received seed and fertilizer in time for planting. USAID assistance is also being directed to reward provinces that have taken decisive action against poppy cultivation through a Good Performers Fund.

Eradication

We cannot overstate the critical importance of a credible threat of forced eradication to the success of our comprehensive counternarcotics strategy. Alternative livelihood programs, even if successful, cannot replace dollar-for-dollar the income derived from poppy farming. A public information survey reports that farmers are aware of the Government of Afghanistan's ban on poppy production and planned eradication, but many do not believe those measures will be enforced. However, the UNODC indicates that fear of eradication is the single most effective deterrent to cultivation in Afghanistan. This finding highlights the importance of a strong eradication campaign.

The Eradication pillar has been revised substantially in light of our deep concern with the disappointing results from the 2005 eradication efforts. Based on lessons learned, the Eradication pillar was restructured to focus our efforts more at the provincial level. Poppy Elimination Program (PEP) teams, composed of Afghans and international experts and advisors, are being deployed to the seven major poppy producing provinces (Kandahar, Nangarhar, Uruzgan, Farah, Badakhshan, Helmand, and Balkh). The PEP teams will ultimately be responsible for coordinating public information campaigns and alternative livelihoods programs, monitoring cultivation and compliance, reporting significant developments to senior levels of the Afghan Government, verifying provincial eradication efforts, and, when necessary, requesting eradication by national authorities. These teams, while supporting the governors, report to the Minister of Counter Narcotics, who monitors the governors' progress in eliminating opium poppy cultivation.

Already, PEP teams are working on reinforcing and further spreading our public information message and verifying governor-led eradication. International advisors have been deployed to Kandahar, Nangarhar, and Balkh. While the deployment of full teams, particularly the international advisors, has proceeded slower than planned, we still believe they will be instrumental in facilitating governor-led eradication efforts. Furthermore, U.S. and U.K. eradication specialists are working closely with the Ministry of Interior and select governors to develop detailed eradication operations plans for each province.

The Afghan Eradication Force (AEF), consisting of four mobile units of approximately 150 eradicators and security personnel each, supported by air assets, will be deployed by the Afghan Government to help meet poppy elimination objectives. The AEF will be deployed where the provincial efforts fail or where provincial governors request such assistance. Currently, as the eradication season begins and as we watch disturbing signals from Helmand, trained AEF teams are already being deployed there.

To support both the PEP teams and AEF, we have purchased ten Huey-II helicopters that will provide emergency medical evacuation, support and protection of ground personnel if attacked, logistical re-supply, air transportation, reconnaissance, and command and control for counternarcotics operations. Currently, six Huey IIs have arrived in Kandahar, a strategic base of operations for the poppy-producing southern provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, and Farah. The remaining helicopters will arrive in Kabul during March. A wet-lease arrangement includes five aircraft, 3 helicopters and 2 fixed-wing, that provide both medium- and heavy-lift capabilities to support deployment of our eradication forces, move PEP teams, and support interdiction operations.

Interdiction

Interdiction efforts are focused on decreasing narcotics trafficking and processing in Afghanistan. Together with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and our international allies, we are helping to build Afghan capacity to disrupt and

dismantle the most significant drug trafficking organizations operating in Afghanistan through the arrest and prosecution of the command and control elements of these organizations.

The Afghan Ministry of Interior established the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) to be responsible for nationwide counternarcotics law enforcement. DEA rotates Foreign Advisory Support Teams (FAST) every 90–120 days to support five specialized units of the CNPA. These five National Interdiction Unit (NIU) teams are comprised of 25 members each, with every unit currently functional—having completed FAST-led basic training in 2005. The NIU is receiving advanced training in such areas as firearms, navigation, raid execution, arresting and interviewing techniques, and evidence collection.

Working with DEA, the CNPA seized 42.9 metric tons of opium and 5.5 metric tons of heroin in 2005. They also shut down 247 clandestine conversion labs and arrested or detained 32 individuals on charges related to these seizures. An additional 100-plus tons of opium and 30 tons of heroin were destroyed during operations of the Afghan Special Narcotics Force (ASNF), another paramilitary operational group within the CNPA that has conducted some joint operations with the NIU. This is a special force that has been in operation for two years, responsible for conducting interdictions and disruption activities against major drug operations, especially heroin laboratories, drug stockpiles, and wholesale market locations.

Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan (CFC-A) provides air lift, medevac, *in extremis* support, helicopter assets, and pilot training to support interdiction missions. The Department of Defense has refurbished three MI-17 helicopters for the ASNF, leased two MI-17s for the NIU, and has committed to provide eight MI-17s to the Ministry of Interior for interdiction operations, with the first four scheduled to arrive in May/June 2006.

Law Enforcement/Justice Reform

Law Enforcement/Justice Reform efforts in Afghanistan encompass both police and justice efforts to increase overall rule of law. While some of these programs are focused specifically on counternarcotics, general programs bolstering the rule of law in Afghanistan are vital, as they seek to improve public confidence in law enforcement by creating an atmosphere in which corruption, narcotics trafficking, and other illicit activities are effectively countered. Having an effective arrest and conviction mechanism is fundamental, because without legal consequences to follow Afghan interdiction efforts, we would essentially leave specially trained Afghan police powerless to do anything more than simply destroy the drugs they seize and temporarily detain suspects. As such, our overall counternarcotics strategy in Afghanistan consists of interrelated elements, one of which must be the deterrence of illegality through regularized legal structures and building Afghan law enforcement's capacities to prosecute illicit activity when it does occur.

U.S. Government support for rule of law programs in Afghanistan is broadly divided among three agencies: USAID focuses on civil law issues; INL funds programs focused on improving the criminal justice system at large including police training; and INL funds the Department of Justice (DOJ) Senior Federal Prosecutor Program in Kabul that provides law reform advice and assistance and training, mentoring, and support of the Afghan counternarcotics task force of prosecutors and police.

The goal of the U.S. police assistance program, in coordination with the international community and the Afghan Ministry of Interior, is to develop rapidly an Afghan capacity to provide public security. The program helps Afghanistan develop a competent, professional, civilian police force with the necessary training, equipment, infrastructure, institutional capacity, and organizational structure to enforce the rule of law in Afghanistan. To reach that goal, we are providing basic training to a total of 62,000 police, including 3,600 highway police and 12,000 border police.

To support training needs, the U.S. operates a Central Training Center in Kabul and Regional Training Centers (RTC) in Gardez, Mazar-e-Sharif, Kandahar, Konduz, Jalalabad, Bamiyan, and Herat. Utilizing these facilities, INL has trained more than 60,000 police as of late February 2006 including nearly 6,000 border police and 1,590 highway patrol.

In 2005, we enhanced the training program with mentoring initiatives and support for reform at the Ministry of Interior (MOI). The program also supported developing critically needed infrastructure and providing equipment support to ensure that the police have all the skills and tools they need to perform effectively and professionally.

We currently supply approximately 80 police advisors and 148 mentors in country and intend to deploy 100 more mentors during the first quarter of 2006. Mentors are deployed to more than 24 provinces and engage directly with local and provin-

cial police officials to provide critical on-the-job training, guidance, and mentoring to help professionalize police throughout the country.

The curriculum of the police-training program has been expanded and enhanced substantially over the last six months. Some of the new courses we have developed include firearms safety, maintenance and qualification; defensive driving; literacy education; counternarcotics skills; and professional standards/ethics.

We also continue to work with the Government of Afghanistan to implement police reform initiatives at the MOI to help it transition into a professional democratic police organization. This year we are focusing on pay and rank reform. This program will restructure the police, eliminating the top-heavy nature of the current organization while simultaneously bringing pay for Afghan Police to a level commensurate with equivalent ranks in the Afghan National Army. The initiative has the added benefit of reducing corruption among the senior leadership of the MOI, since applicants for positions in the new structure must undergo a competitive process including testing, background checks, and oral board interviews.

Anti-corruption efforts are key to the long-term success of the Afghan law enforcement sector and counternarcotics efforts. We consider eliminating corruption a high priority and are working closely with the newly developed Professional Standards Unit at the MOI to help mentor and guide efforts to pursue high-level corruption investigations.

This next year will be absolutely critical for the Afghan police; border police in particular. Afghanistan's capability to control its borders effectively will contribute directly to its ability to exert central government control over its territory and to collect the tax revenues necessary to sustain its basic operating budget independent of significant support from donor nations. Thus, the Department of State is working closely with other U.S. agencies, particularly the Department of Defense, to ensure that our efforts to train and mentor border police are closely tied into the larger Border Management Initiative led by the U.S. Government.

Development of the Afghan police must be complemented by the establishment of an effective criminal justice sector. Justice Reform efforts in Afghanistan have two primary components: criminal justice reform and corrections support. A subcomponent of both is support for counternarcotics prosecution. Programs in both criminal justice reform and corrections are designed to support the work the police and interdiction units are doing to bring drug production and trafficking to a halt.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) has posted three senior experienced U.S. prosecutors in Kabul, with a fourth to be deployed in the next months, to build counternarcotics investigative and prosecution capacity. In addition, DOJ and INL will deploy four U.S. criminal investigative mentors to assist the prosecutors in these efforts. The DOJ prosecutors and soon-to-be-deployed criminal investigators, working along with their Afghan counterparts and their international Coalition partners from the U.K., U.N., and Norway, provide training, assistance, and mentoring support to the Vertical Prosecution Task Force (VPTF). The VPTF is made up of approximately 30 Afghan prosecutors and 35 to 40 Afghan investigators. The DOJ prosecutors also provide advice and assistance to the VPTF in their narcotics prosecutions in Kabul and in their work toward extradition for prosecution in the U.S. and elsewhere.

The Central Narcotics Tribunal (CNT), consisting of 14 judges specifically assigned to hear significant narcotics cases, has exclusive nationwide jurisdiction established by presidential decree, and is now fully operational. Major narcotics and narcotics-related cases, regardless of where they originate, have now been ordered transferred to Kabul for trial in the CNT. Currently, the VPTF is preparing and trying several dozen cases before the Central Narcotics Tribunal. Eventually, offices for the Tribunal and VPTF, courtroom space, and secure detention facilities will all be co-located in a secure Afghan-run facility, the Counter Narcotics Justice Center. The Department of Defense is constructing the facility, and INL will provide operations and maintenance support to the Government of Afghanistan for the completed facilities. DOJ has been integrally involved in planning the facility and will continue to provide training and mentoring in the completed center.

The comprehensive Anti-Narcotics Law was enacted in December 2005. This law is an important step in supporting Amendment 7 of the Afghan Constitution to prevent the cultivation and smuggling of narcotic drugs. In addition to all forms of narcotics trafficking, the Law also makes criminal many narcotics-related offenses, such as money laundering, corruption, and violent offenses. This comprehensive law provides for the modern investigative and prosecutorial procedures necessary to fight narcotics trafficking in Afghanistan.

Significantly, the Afghan Government's commitment to tackling the narcotics trade was demonstrated in October 2005 with the extradition of Haji Baz Mohammad to the United States under the 1988 United Nations convention against nar-

cotics. Baz Mohammad is now in U.S. custody and awaiting trial in federal court in New York. This marked the first time Afghanistan permitted the extradition of one of its citizens for drug trafficking to a foreign country.

Other INL justice programs provide support to the Government of Afghanistan to improve the administration and enforcement of the rule of law. These include two programs based in Kabul, one for criminal justice reform, the other for corrections support. The Justice Sector Support Program consists of criminal justice advisors who provide legal counsel and mentoring to Afghan justice personnel. The program is helping to improve the capacities of the permanent justice institutions by supporting organizational reform, standardization of policies and procedures, and by providing equipment and supplies to the Ministries of Justice and Interior and the Attorney General's Office. Our criminal justice experts train and mentor judges, prosecutors, and defense counsel in criminal procedures, cases, and trials. The second program, INL's Corrections System Support Program, provides training, capacity-building, and infrastructure support to the corrections system in Kabul and key provinces. This program is linked closely to the justice and police programs, as well as other international efforts to reform and support the severely damaged prison system, managed by the Ministry of Justice.

We work closely with our Afghan and international counterparts in implementing our justice programs, which include the National Legal Training Center, a joint U.S.-Italian-Afghan initiative to establish a facility to provide standardized legal training and mentoring. The center, which should be completed by Italy by the end of 2006, will receive equipment and legal training support through our above-mentioned justice program. Along with supporting legal training, we also recognize that legal education is critical to ensuring that a professional, qualified cadre of legal experts can support the justice system in the future. Thus, we have started implementing a \$2 million, three-year grant offering law professors from Afghan Universities the opportunity to participate in an intensive year-long Master of Laws (LL.M.) program at a U.S. law school focusing on comparative law, modern legal practices, and criminal law and procedures. We have also sponsored two small but important grants that have taught legal awareness and rights to Afghan girls and women in Kabul and brought Afghan women judges to the U.S. for judicial training.

Conclusion

The seriousness of the narcotics problem in Afghanistan calls for a long-term commitment on the part of the U.S. Government to combat narcotics production and trafficking. U.S. efforts are focused on the interrelated pillars of Public Information, Alternative Livelihoods, Elimination/Eradication, Interdiction, and Law Enforcement/Justice Reform. The five-pillar program is a cooperative interagency effort coordinated both in Kabul and Washington, and implemented in conjunction with our international partners. Only by working together to fight vigorously against narcotics will we be able to help Afghanistan on its road to becoming a fully functioning democracy and to building economic stability.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, and I would like to ask you, Mr. Schweich, to answer a question on behalf of Chairman Hyde. Chairman Hyde, months ago, asked INL to have the UN ODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) in Vienna do an independent study of the spillover of Afghanistan's opium and heroin into Iraq. Chairman Hyde's office wants to know why that study has not moved forward.

Mr. SCHWEICH. Madam Chairperson, I discussed that briefly with Mr. Costa at the London Conference, and he was still evaluating, and he also wants to do one for Iran. I think they are looking at what their resources are and what their priorities are going to be.

I will be meeting with Mr. Costa next week in Vienna, and please tell Chairman Hyde that I will discuss with him the urgency of that question, and I will have an answer for you by the time that I get back.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much. I would now like to turn to Chairman Rohrabacher to start the questions.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much. Ambassador Quinn—and first let me note that we met in Qatar, and you are doing a

fantastic job there. This may be a tougher job. I remember asking you last year, and you committed to me to look into the herbicide that could be used as a tool or a weapon against poppies in Afghanistan. I do not remember hearing back from you. Do you have an answer for me today?

Ms. QUINN. Well, Mr. Rohrabacher, if I may, we have been discussing this with Mr. Schweich, and I would like him to answer the question on that one.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. On mycoherbicides, yes.

Mr. SCHWEICH. Chairman Rohrabacher, it is good to see you again, and you may recall that we worked together at the United Nations last year.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Mr. SCHWEICH. I started the job at INL about 3 months ago, and immediately was briefed on the question of the mycoherbicide issue. I am very aware that long before Ambassador Patterson and I arrived, and I guess back in 1999, there was money appropriated for the mycoherbicide, and that there were some studies done by the UN in Uzbekistan, about the viability of that in terms of combating poppy.

And that it looked promising to some degree, but immediately a political problem arose, where there was resistance to using a biological agent to combat poppy production.

And at that point the UN research stopped. After that, I know that INL had a number of internal meetings, and there were also meetings, Mr. Chairman, with the drug Czar and others, and the perception was that, after discussing it with the Government of Columbia, which did not want to field test it, and discussing it with some of our NATO partners who are involved with us in counter-narcotics activities in Afghanistan, they were opposed to it.

We determined that there was absolutely no place that we could field test the mycoherbicide because of the resistance. I am sure that you are quite aware that President Karzai resists any sort of aerial spraying or eradication, even of traditional herbicides, and that there is even a greater resistance to a mycoherbicide.

So while we are very sympathetic to the issue and recognize the potential that the mycoherbicide has right now, we can't find a willing partner where there is a poppy field that is willing to field test it, and for that reason, we have not expended the money that was appropriated.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, let us note that everybody suggests that until we tackle the drug problem or the drug challenge in Afghanistan, we will not succeed in the rest of our missions. I mean, we will have created—and which we have currently operating—an illegal sector of their economy which outweighs every other portion of their economy.

The money was put into your budget, the State Department budget, for R&D (research and development). From what you are telling me, no R&D has moved forward since we last talked, since I asked Ambassador Quinn about this a year ago. Is that what you are telling me and isn't that what you just said in so many words?

Mr. SCHWEICH. I believe that is the case, Mr. Chairman, yes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Even though the United States Congress allocated the money, the State Department has felt that because

some people might be upset or are upset about possibly testing it on their territory, that we shouldn't move forward at all; is that basically what has happened?

Mr. SCHWEICH. Well, at this point, I know that there has not been any activity since the activity that occurred in Uzbekistan in 2002.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Now, can you tell me why it would be impossible for us to field test this mycoherbicide in the United States of America?

Mr. SCHWEICH. Mr. Chairman, we did discuss that briefly, and while I think there are some places that might be willing to do it, we have not at this point located a facility to do it. And I think the other reason—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, let me say this. Places do not have wills. There are certain places willing to do it. There is no place that is willing. There are people who are willing or not willing, but we have lots of places to test this in the United States, lots of them. Tell me which ones have turned you down?

Mr. SCHWEICH. Well, I could give you a list in a written response. I don't have a list of those that have turned us down. And, Mr. Chairman, I want to emphasize to you that as soon as Ambassador Patterson got this job 3 months ago, she asked to be thoroughly briefed on this.

We would be happy to work with your staff on possibilities. What I can tell you is the reason that nothing happened after 2002 is that there was a perception that we could not get anyone to field test it on the actual poppy type plants which we would be using it against.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. And let me note that we give billions of dollars of aid to certain countries, and if we would suggest that that aid wouldn't be possible unless we were able to test the herbicide, my guess is that it would take a millisecond for that to be approved.

I am just going on the record right now that the State Department is not doing its job on this. There is something else happening on this issue. We have got the biggest area of growth, and the most demonstrable area of growth of opium, and source of heroin to the Western world right here in front of us, and our State Department is not doing its job.

I am assuming that is intentional. I am not assuming that what you are telling me, and that what you are saying here, is just so much blah-blah to cover up some intentional decision not to confront the heroin issue in Afghanistan.

And this is criminal. How much money do we spend on the outcome of the heroin that is grown, whether in Afghanistan or elsewhere? The fact is that we have billions and billions of dollars that we allocate out of our Federal budget, and the State Department is not willing to use any of its leverage at all to see if we can find a weapon that would eliminate the problem overnight?

Now, by the way, let me just note that I have a piece of legislation that I have submitted, and I don't expect that we can put the Afghans or anybody else in serious danger of just saying we are going to eliminate this thing overnight, and then just let you drift

on this violent economic ocean that we have created because now you don't have any other alternative sources of income.

The fact is that we spent a lot of money on our heroin problem in the Western world, and in the United States, and in the Western countries. If we can eliminate that problem, that source of heroin, and then use a portion of the money that we spend on interdiction of heroin down the line, we could have all the R&D, and we could do everything that we needed to make sure that this weapon was usable.

Madam Chairman, I am beside myself on this issue. I mean, I clearly—I mean, I am sorry, but our State Department is being disingenuous with the people of the United States and with the United States Congress, which represents the people of the United States, on this issue of heroin in Afghanistan.

And nowhere is that clearer than in the lack of any movement on this mycoherbicide, which could serve as the most efficient weapon ever developed in the war against heroin and drug use. So we will leave it at that.

We had a hearing today in which most of the witnesses offered some very constructive criticism to the effort. But what I think was the most important, Madam Chairman, that came out of that earlier hearing, was that they all agreed, unlike what I just said about the drug war, that Americans were well motivated, and that we were working with our allies, and they actually applauded the State Department in these other areas.

So let me balance off this criticism of my own with the fact that we note that even people who are invited to be critics of what is going on have admitted that the job that you have in Afghanistan is enormously challenging, and that you get high marks for trying to do your best, and that some progress has been made.

The biggest problem that I think came through today was that the economy there will not prosper until we have laid down a certain foundation of law, in terms of the rule of law, et cetera, and also that we make sure that the people who are running the Afghan Government are honest in making sure that they don't undermine people who want to come in and do business.

I would just like to ask that as a general question, and I think the insurgency there, Admiral, is just reflecting the fact that people are being frustrated right now. They were hoping for more progress than what they have gotten, and that we didn't kill all of the Taliban. So some of them are still around.

But do you agree with my assessment that if we can get a strong economy going that the insurgency will wither in Afghanistan rather than grow? I will just leave that to the panel.

Ms. QUINN. Certainly, Mr. Chairman, I would be glad to comment, and the Admiral as well. I think that it is actually very true that the need for a foundation of law to build the economy is essential.

The Government of Afghanistan has already made some progress with some of the laws passed related to the procurement, investment, and tax. In addition, in the Afghanistan Compact, as we have mentioned previously, there are these benchmarks.

I think one that is particularly of note is focused on public administration, and how the Government of Afghanistan plans to im-

prove its public administration, and how officials are appointed, et cetera.

And I think our assistance also will be—a certain part of it focused on that area. So that will contribute to—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, Ambassador Quinn, just recognize this. It is almost impossible to establish honest government when you have all of the opium and heroin that is being grown there.

It will be impossible, just like what is happening in Mexico with all the drug problems there, and local officials being bribed and being corrupted. Let us face this problem, and let us not be—I don't know what is going on behind the scenes at the State Department, but it doesn't look good from a distance, and let us see if we can work together on this.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Congressman, and I am sure that this issue is going to be brought up by the other Members as well. Thank you very much. I am now pleased to yield for questioning by the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you, Madam Chair. The first thing that I want to do is associate myself with the concerns of Chairman Rohrabacher. The narcotics situation is not fully confronted as a major part of the international communities' war on terror.

It will not allow us to move forward in any substantial way into the future to cure all the problems that seem more evident on a daily basis to some because of the coverage in the media. But I assure you that there are as many personal tragedies caused by drugs to Americans and American families as there are to loss of life due to the conflict itself.

And the amount of money building up in costs to American society because of drugs is much, much greater than the amount of money that we are investing in stopping it. It is just a math question, even if you want to strip the humanitarianism out of it, which certainly none of us desire.

I also find astonishing that the request of Chairman Hyde or any Chairman, or any Member of Congress, but especially the Chairman of the International Relations Committee, for a report upon which we would base the public policy issues that we helped to shape—to have that not provided, and to just discuss it again with somebody, causes a tremendous erosion and undermining of the credibility that witnesses bring to the table when telling us to come to conclusions that would help you solve the problems.

We want to be part of the solution, but in order to do that, we want to be as informed as we can. And in just sloughing off—and I am sure that is not the right word, and I am sure that it is not the decision of anybody at the table here.

But the appearance of it from this end of the table that when the Chairman asks for a study to be done, or a report to be provided, and it is just not done—another Member would use the term mind-boggling.

So I just urge you to take those things seriously, because we take you very seriously. The job that you all are doing is wondrous to us under the most difficult of circumstances.

And we have the responsibility of helping to provide the resources from the American people to you—help us to do that. On

the issue before us, things are not going as well as we would like to see.

The number of Americans killed last year exceeded any other year since the beginning of the 2001 new era. It seems to be going completely in the wrong direction. The effort seems greater. The intensity of our resolve seems greater. The bravery of the Afghan people and their resolve seems greater.

But it is like that cartoon with the kind of disheveled guy sitting on the curb holding a bottle, saying, "The drunker I sit here, the longer I get." I was looking at the chart on page 11 that Mr. Kunder provided that showed the tremendous increase in the kilometers of road paving, and asphalt, and the tremendous increase from 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006, and the clinics and schools built, and the huge jump in the millions provided in cash for, and the charts under it showing the number of people killed.

I mean, you could almost make the argument that there is a direct correlation between the kilometers of roads and the number of people killed. Every time we do better, we do worse. Something is going wrong. The insurgency seems more intense and more effective. Maybe somebody can tell us what is going on. Why is that? Admiral.

Rear Admiral MOELLER. Congressman, let me speak to that if I may. I think that it is very true that we have certainly seen a change in character in the insurgency, and as I briefly addressed in my remarks, we continue to face an enemy that has been somewhat flexible, is adaptable, et cetera.

I think also that as we expand our reach across the country, we are moving into areas and finding ourselves in contact with this adversary, and quite frankly, I think we should expect that during the course of the spring and summer, as NATO assumes responsibility for the south, and forces in greater numbers appear in predominantly Taliban-rich areas, that we will see continued violence, I think without question.

That said, it would be our view at Central Command, sir, that the overall trend line though is positive, despite the fact that the data is what the data is, with regard to United States forces that have been killed in the recent past, as compared to the first couple of years.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Admiral, you say that as we expand our reach, we encounter more of the insurgency. I am not sure what it means when we expand our reach. It sounds almost like we are going to these areas and we get attacked.

I am not getting the impression, and I will ask that a different way, vis a vis NATO, as I indicated in my opening statement. Are we aggressively going after insurgents? Do we know how to fight an insurgency?

Is NATO prepared and do they know how to fight an insurgency, or are we going places and then defending ourselves when we get there? It seems to me that this is a new phenomenon and I don't know that we should not be doing more on a training level and an aggressive level, or think out the process level, or whatever.

It is a different process. This is not a traditional war, as you well know, Admiral, and as we are all finding out, and their being more successful, as we get more able to crouch as they throw their

punches, they are becoming more successful in landing them in places that we are not protecting.

We have a War College. We do not have a fighting an insurgency college, and I don't know that we know how to do that quite yet. Certainly the numbers show that no matter what we do, and as good as we are, they are getting better.

Rear Admiral MOELLER. Sir, I think we have in fact learned quite a bit over the last several years in Afghanistan with regard to fighting an insurgency, in the same way that we have learned quite a bit quite frankly about doing so in Afghanistan.

I will tell you that we certainly believe that NATO is in fact well prepared for the duties, the increasing duties, that they will be assuming in the south this summer. To fully—

Mr. ACKERMAN. I am sorry, as I did not mean to interrupt you, Admiral, but does that mean that they will be taking the fight to the insurgents? Will they be actively and aggressively going after and wiping out the insurgents?

Rear Admiral MOELLER. We have every reason to believe that—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Or will they be doing a holding action and shooting back if fired upon?

Rear Admiral MOELLER. We have every reason to believe, based on all that we have learned, that we have been planning for their arrival in the south for some numbers of months with both the staffs, the SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) staff and the Joint Forces Brunson Staff, which is responsible for NATO activities in Afghanistan.

They will be in fact doing just what you say, and that is to say, going after the insurgency. But again as we move an increasing number of troops into areas where there have not been large numbers in the past, we are going to see what we believe to be more violence than we have seen in the past.

And what I would like to offer, sir, is perhaps an opportunity to come back in a closed session, where we can get into some of these details, and I think much more fully than I am able to in this session, give you a much better sense of why we believe what we do with regard to their posture and kind of where we see the trend, and where the activity is likely going to be, sir.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Would you be willing to do that on a Subcommittee rather than on a Full Committee level?

Rear Admiral MOELLER. Yes, sir, absolutely.

Mr. KUNDER. Sir, if I could just add one thing.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. If I could just interrupt you for a second. I also would like to remind the members on our panel that at 1:30, we have a briefing by Secretary Rumsfeld and General Pace, and others, and in fact, General Pace, I am sure—as we have read—has talked about the IEDs in Iraq, and that they have been traced back to Iran.

And there is no doubt that the enemy wants to destroy us, and the more successful we are, the more that they will ramp up their efforts. So we have got to look at their sources, and all roads are leading to Iran—and it could be very much the same source of terrorism activity in Afghanistan. So thank you, Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you. Ms. McCollum.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to just talk about a few things that we heard in the other hearing, things that you can pull down off the Internet. They really were not all that new or that surprising, but it kind of encapsulates the discussion that I want to have.

There have been advances in school enrollments, and as we have pointed out in the previous hearing, there are some success stories in Afghanistan. But it still remains very low for girls. It remains at 40 percent.

Life expectancy in Afghanistan is well below the average for low income countries, and below the average for low human development countries, and least development countries. There is a 4-in-10 probability that an Afghan newborn will not live to the age of 40. One out of five children dies before the age of 5.

And going back to the schools again, even though there has been a number of schools opened—and you also in your testimony alluded to this somewhat—dozens of girls' schools have been burned, bombed, attacked. There has been rape, sex trafficking, and forced marriage of women continues. Illegal detentions, threats against women rights activists.

So I think that we need to talk about our successes, but we also need to talk openly and in the same breath about the challenges that are in front of us, because if we don't do that, we can't work on this cooperatively together and change this around.

And so in looking at some of the testimony that was here today, I have a couple of concerns. And I think that we can address these challenges together, and see if we are moving forward in the most effective way in which to bring stability to the Afghan people so that they can have the success for their families that they want.

Security. Yes, there are NATO troops coming in, but we are drawing down U.S. troops. Maybe we need to have even more troops if we are going to make sure that there is an successful outcome with the attacks on schools, and buildings, and infrastructure, and the war on opium that was spoken about.

There are discussions in the testimony about electricity. Yet the number of people in Afghanistan that have access to clean potable water, one of the ways that we could quickly reduce the child mortality rate, is really not addressed at all very fully.

I am wondering if we base economic growth by the number of people that have access to cell phones—that is basic communication, and that is good—but what is the unemployment rate? Not the number of cell phones, but what is the unemployment rate? What are we really doing to work with the Afghan Government on the unemployment rate?

The schools and the clinics that are listed here, how many of these clinics are up and operational? How many of these clinics have clean water? How many of these clinics have electricity?

This isn't to be used as a way in which we are saying that you are not doing your job. This is a discussion that you need to be having with us so that we can help you do your job more effectively.

If I totaled up the numbers correctly for what USAID spent in 2005 in Afghanistan, it was a \$1.5 billion total. Now, we know how much we are spending in Iraq per month—\$1.5 billion for 1 year

in Afghanistan. And these are people, as Mr. Rohrabacher pointed out, that came to work with us after the United States was attacked.

We cannot allow it to become a failed state. We cannot make the promises that we made to the Afghan people and then back away from them. We want to help you do your job more effectively.

So I have one more question that came up in the last meeting, and that I would ask you to respond to in a way that tells us what we need to do to help you be more effective, and that has been talk about where the World Bank sets up trusts, in which donor countries put in dollars.

And then they work with the Parliament and the Administration to monitor the projects that the Afghan Government comes forward with, but there are strict provisions on how that money is taken out, and how it is spent. There is total accountability for it.

And it provides jobs, and it provides transparency, and it teaches parliamentarians how to budget. It does a whole lot of things. And it has been alluded to that the United States is not very supportive of even giving dollars to governments indirectly through the World Bank in that way, in which we can monitor and help with transparency and economic growth.

So I want to know what we can do to help you do a better job in those areas, because there is room for improvement, and there is an opportunity to improve, and if we miss this opportunity, we will be living with its consequences for the next several generations.

So what can we do to help you do your job better in these areas, because we are getting D's and C's as far as grades in some of them.

Mr. KUNDER. Congresswoman, those are all very compelling questions, and I tried to say earlier in my testimony that I am not trying to slap a smiley face on everything. It is still a very tough place to work, and to move the infant mortality numbers significantly in a place like Bangladesh, which is almost as poor, but stable and peaceful, took several decades.

The international community and the Bangladesh Government have had tremendous success—or dramatic success I would say, not tremendous success—in moving the numbers down, but it took decades, and it took sustained investment.

We are painfully aware that after 4 years the infant mortality rates, which are as advertised, as one in four children will not live to the age of 5. We are painfully aware of that. Those numbers have not moved.

Now, do we think we are putting in place the building blocks helping to create a modern Ministry of Health and creating revenue streams for the Afghan Government that will eventually bring those numbers down? Yes.

Are we also painfully aware that they have not moved yet? Yes. And are they going to move in the next couple of years despite anything that the international community does? No.

Can we do more in water? Yes, of course we can, but this is a population that is highly rural, and that is living on well water and underground irrigation systems that are in some cases a millen-

nium old. So how do we move out into the countryside quickly to change the numbers quickly? There is no silver bullet.

Mr. DELAHUNT [presiding]. Ms. McCollum.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. What have been the increases that USAID has requested to change the mortality rate? What have been the increases that have been put in that directly go toward working toward water? Not putting it into a ministry, but immediately working to help deliver the service in a way that is sustainable, because there are projects out there that USAID does all over the world that does not involve creating a ministry.

Mr. KUNDER. Well, the point that I was making is that clearly over time, the Afghans are going to have to have—donors are not going to put money in unless there are budget accounting systems in place. We are trying to do both at the same time.

We are trying to build those 600 health clinics in the countryside to have an immediate impact, and we are trying to do the irrigation work that I described, but simultaneously, we are trying to build the systems that in the long term will really turn the numbers around.

Now, the Administration witnesses are always in a difficult position. You know what the Administration's request is for financing, and that is the official request. Now, AID people are passionately committed to trying to bring those numbers down.

So if I bring our mission director in here from Kabul and you ask him the question, "Can you use double the amount of money you have, and can you use triple the amount of money that you have?", the answer is yes. The place is desperately poor and it was desperately poor before the Soviets invaded, and then it went through 23 years of warfare, grinding down what capacity and infrastructure there was to powder.

So could more be done? Absolutely more could be done. But obviously the Administration's request is coming in the context of Hurricane Katrina, and many other demands on the taxpayers' dollars.

So I guess the picture that I am trying to paint for you is, could more be done with more resources? The answer of course is yes, and that is why, led by Ambassador Quinn, we are trying to make sure that the entire international community is going out there.

And that is a function of stability and absorptive capacity on the part of the Afghan Government, because nobody is going to give them money over time unless they have functioning ministries.

It is also a function, as you mentioned, of the World Bank trust fund, and other donor mechanisms that are on the ground. We are not the only people working there, as one of the earlier witnesses said at 8 o'clock.

This is truly a multinational effort. We just got very substantial international pledges, in the \$10 billion range, and so we have been able to maintain the international coalition.

I guess I am giving you or feel like I am giving you an inadequate answer to the very profound questions that you are raising. We are trying to move quickly with the resources available to have an immediate impact on people's lives. Simultaneously, we are trying to build the structures and mechanisms that will drive these numbers down over the decade or so it is going to take to really move the numbers.

And I would be more than glad to give more of an answer, but I feel that I have been talking too long in a limited time.

Rear Admiral MOELLER. Congresswoman, if I could just briefly address the issue that you raised with regard to security, and the number of United States forces, and the relationship with NATO.

In fact, as NATO continues to assume greater responsibility initially over the south this summer, and then for the eastern portion later in the year, the reality is that the largest component of the overall NATO force will continue to be United States forces, and when that might change clearly will be a condition based assessment that we will do.

But for the foreseeable future, clearly the 20,000 or so United States forces that are in Afghanistan now, will be in Afghanistan. And as I say will constitute as a result the largest single nation contribution to the NATO forces.

It is, in fact, one of the things that we find that we need to do to make it clear to our Afghan partners that, by virtue of NATO assuming greater responsibility for Afghanistan, this is not an indication in any way that the United States is stepping back.

In fact, we believe very, very strongly that we are, by virtue of the NATO role, reinforcing our commitment to Afghanistan.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. I know that it is a difficult position, and that is why I am so glad that we had the other hearing, because you do speak on behalf of the Administration, and the President does put forward a budget, but Congress also has a role in oversight in working with you to make sure that we accomplish our mutual goals.

And that we might have a different way in which we want to go about accomplishing them here in our legislative roles. But the quickest way in which to really change the way in which people feel engaged in the United States is in the immediate delivery of service.

And potable water, and opportunities to reduce some maternal and child health, creating stable, healthy families, is one of the biggest foundation blocks in which to build the rest.

And I appreciate the challenges that you have in trying to accomplish both. But it is important that we have oversight hearings so we know where our challenges still remain so that we can work together in the future, because if we don't get this right, we are not going to get a second chance for the next generation of Americans who have to live with the consequences of this Administration's actions. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN [presiding]. Thank you so much. Thank you. And now I am pleased to yield for our last round of questioning to the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Yes, thank you, Madam Chairman, and for the audience from Massachusetts that might have been watching in your absence, that was not a coup. But the Chair had some business to attend to in the side office.

Just to continue to pursue the issue of forces, American forces, I think there was a consensus in the previous panel from several of the witnesses, that the message that was being sent by the

downsizing of American forces could be misinterpreted by the Afghan people.

And I had the impression after listening to their testimony that clearly there is a serious security issue. There is not an Afghan Government presence in the entire country. There are regions where the reality is that there is no government presence. Don't we need more troops in terms of a security presence, a military presence, Admiral?

Rear Admiral MOELLER. Congressman, we believe that the overall number of forces there now are adequate to the mission at hand, and I don't mean for a moment to belittle the fact that we have seen the character of this insurgency evolve as it has, and as I mentioned earlier, that, in fact, we anticipate that we are going to see a fairly violent spring and summer.

And then an improvement in overall conditions as we get toward the end of the year. Now, again, I would like to offer again the opportunity to come back and discuss the details of why we believe that to be the case in a closed session.

But with regard to the number of troops, United States troops, we have in fact increased the number. We have more United States troops in Afghanistan now than we have had since the early days of this campaign, and those numbers will remain at the level that they are for the foreseeable future as we do a condition based assessment with regard to the progress of that campaign in the country, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Right, but as I read the headlines, again, you know, a deteriorating security situation—we heard that from the gentleman who works for the RAND Corporation. I just have this uneasy feeling that we are not—that the demands on the United States military are clearly substantial given Iraq, given our global responsibilities.

But I just don't want sometime in the future for the equivalent of Paul Bremer to say, "I asked for more troops, because I believed that we needed more troops, and I was told to be quiet."

And I would hope particularly that the military, if in fact it would make the job easier, to encourage the growth of democracy and democratic institutions, would press the case. And I understand that you have a chain-of-command. I understand that the President is the Commander-in-Chief, but I would hope that if there is a need to make that case aggressively, because we don't want to go back and revisit the lessons of the late 1980s and the early 1990s, when we created a vacuum. Let us get it done right this time.

I am a civilian, and I served in the military, but I am a civilian. And my instincts are telling me that we need considerably more troops to provide security. Not just simply to respond to as you say an anticipated upsurge in violence in the spring time, but to create if you will through the entire country a sense of security, so that business can prosper, so that the economic component that former Congressman Ritter discussed in the earlier testimony could thrive.

I mean, it is up to you to make the case. But I dare say that if the Administration came to this Congress, there would be a positive response. Does the Administration—and I guess I would direct this to Ambassador Quinn—fully embrace the Afghan Compact?

Ms. QUINN. Yes, Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. There are no reservations?

Ms. QUINN. Well, we worked very closely with the Afghan Government and the international community. In the development of the Afghan Compact, what we saw was that the Afghan Government came forward and established the benchmarks and timelines in there.

They are ambitious. We also think this is—and this we did in consultation with experts, the World Bank and others—achievable. We also worked very closely on the annexes regarding aid effectiveness, and how we could work together to improve aid effectiveness and the establishment of a joint coordination and monitoring board.

So we worked with the Afghans and the international community on this document, because we thought that the international community as a whole, with Afghanistan, would work better going forward with this kind of a roadmap.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Ambassador, if you could tell me is there a consensus as to the price tag for the full implementation of the compact?

Ms. QUINN. No. Even the Government of Afghanistan, which in parallel produced its interim Afghan National Development Strategy, had not, last I checked, fully drafted out the cost of that document.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If you could tell me, Ambassador, when could you provide Members of Congress with the price tag?

Ms. QUINN. Well, certainly when the Government of Afghanistan has done its costing, we can provide you with that. Right now I don't have an estimate of when they are expected to do that.

If I remember correctly, I think what their plan has been is to take the interim Afghan National Development Strategy and over the course of this year to do that costing out. So even the Afghan Government, as I recall, it was over the course of the year. But we certainly would be willing to share with you that information as it develops.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, I know that I speak for myself and for Members on this side, we would like to have that figure because I think you would find considerable support for full implementation.

And I dare say that the majority would also support that, because we are aware of how critical the future of Afghanistan is to our national security, particularly as it is related to terrorists, because if we allow this to slip back into a failed state, I think we can all agree that we will rue the day.

It will again become a haven for groups such as al-Qaeda, and again the testimony from the previous panel at the earlier hearing talked about this being a critical moment. We have got to develop a sense of urgency.

We also heard from the previous panel about the relationship, the bilateral relationship, between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and also between Iran and Pakistan. Clearly there have been public—how shall I say—words going back and forth between Musharraf and President Karzai. What is the Administration doing to send a message to the Pakistanis that stability in Afghanistan, non-inter-

ference in Afghanistan affairs, as well as dealing with the cross-border incursions of Taliban and others has to be stopped?

Ms. QUINN. Mr. Delahunt, certainly the Administration has had regular contacts with both the Pakistani Government and the Afghan Government, and has been encouraging cooperation. We see this as we all face the same enemy in the war on terrorism.

In particular, on the military side, we have a tripartite commission—Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the United States—that is focused very much on the cooperation, military cooperation and border cooperation. I don't know, Admiral, if you want to say anything on that.

Rear Admiral MOELLER. I would just add to that, Ambassador, that in fact that commission meets on a regular basis. They deal with some pretty challenging issues. They have made progress in terms of the kind of collaboration, cooperation, and coordination that is absolutely essential to be effective, more so than just talking about the issue, and specific kinds of things that need to be done to see results on the ground.

And we are encouraged by the trend line in those kinds of activities and agreements reached, and again in a follow-up session, sir, at the Committee's convenience, to come back and talk about some greater details in that particular area.

If I may, sir, just going back to again the question of forces, in addition to the NATO presence, the U.S. force numbers, the biggest increase then will be—and what gives us again reason for confidence over the long haul is the progress that we see in the development of the Afghan National Army in two ways.

One, from the standpoint of just a military perspective, their concrete professional development, particularly in the leadership element of their development, is absolutely key to an effective military force.

But the other piece which I alluded to very briefly in my remarks is the increasing respect that the Afghan National Army enjoys around the country from the people of Afghanistan, and that is on the army side.

The police side, which I also alluded to, is very, very much a work in progress and more needs to be done there. Given the nature of the conditions on the ground across the country, having both very, very whole is key to long term success—going into further details on that matter, I would certainly welcome the opportunity to do so in a follow-on closed session, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. We had some surprising testimony, at least for me it was surprising, again in the previous hearing about the relationship between Afghanistan and Iran. I would be interested in what you would have to offer in terms of your observations about that particular relationship.

Ms. QUINN. In my testimony, I talked about how it is important for Afghanistan, because of its location geographically, and if you look at it economically, it needs to work with all of its neighbors in a positive fashion, and to develop economically, and Afghanistan certainly has done some of that.

They had a regional economic conference last December. They are participating more in some of the regional organizations. Recently, they became a member of the South Asia Group. So I would

say that we look to Iran and other countries throughout the region again to cooperate positively in the transformation in Afghanistan, and in its goal toward democracy.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, what we heard in that previous hearing was that Iran seems to be cooperating positively. Is that your conclusion also, Ambassador?

Ms. QUINN. We encourage it.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I am not asking you whether you encourage it. Do you agree with that conclusion?

Ms. QUINN. I think we have seen that Iran participated in the London Conference, and that they have contributed to road construction, electricity. We encourage them to—

Mr. DELAHUNT. It is not a question of encouragement.

Ms. QUINN. Yes, and—

Mr. DELAHUNT. We encourage them not to build a bomb.

Ms. QUINN. Well, the cooperation is also important in the area of refugees.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Right. But again, I—well, any other comments?

Rear Admiral MOELLER. Congressman, I think to adequately answer your questions, sir, we would need to take that up in closed session.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay.

Mr. KUNDER. Sir, I just want to say, and perhaps the Committee Members all know this, but there are deep traditional issues. One of the two national languages, Dari, is very closely related to Farsi.

And the western Afghan City of Herat, the largest city in the west, has traditionally been an eastern outpost of Persian culture. So there are a range of issues and layers to this question of so-called Iranian influence in the country.

Mr. DELAHUNT. But at this point in time, Mr. Kunder, would you agree with the consensus that I heard, and you were present in the hearing room at the time, with the consensus from the panel of experts, that the relationship between Iran and Afghanistan at this point in time did not appear to be problematic, and was generally constructive?

Mr. KUNDER. Sir, I seldom duck questions, but that is one that Ambassador Quinn has to answer.

Mr. DELAHUNT. You are ducking?

Mr. KUNDER. I duck.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Schweich.

Mr. SCHWEICH. Congressman, with respect to the narcotics trade—

Mr. DELAHUNT. I am not saying that Iran is good people, okay? I just want to hear from you what your observations are about the relationship between Iran and Afghanistan. Do we have a problem in terms of encouraging and supporting democracy in Afghanistan with the Islamic Republic of Iran?

Are they presenting both Afghanistan and us with problems in, hopefully, the transformation of Afghanistan into a modern state, and one that we hopefully can look back on at some point in time and say that we played a role? Are they making a positive contribution, or are they neutral, or what is their grade?

Mr. SCHWEICH. If I could comment on the narcotics trade, Congressman. Iran now has the highest rate heroin addiction rate in the world, and some 40 percent of the Afghanistan narcotics or opium goes into Iran via transit.

As a result, they have built hundreds of border posts and they have lost about 3,500 police fighting the narcotics trade. So while I wouldn't purpose to—

Mr. DELAHUNT. Is that the Afghan police?

Mr. SCHWEICH. No, no, those are Iranian police.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Iranian police?

Mr. SCHWEICH. Yes. So while I wouldn't purport to speculate, not having had direct contact with the Iranians as to whether there is cooperation, I could say that there is tremendous self-interest on the part of the Iranians to work with the Afghans in combating the narcotics trade, and there is evidence of that.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. It is an interesting observation on legalization, and what the consequences could potentially be. It is one thing that I have always wondered about. What are the rates of addiction in some of these cities in the opium producing areas in Afghanistan? Do you have estimates?

Mr. SCHWEICH. We don't have concrete numbers, but we do have estimates that there are up to 3 million Iranians that are addicted, and up to 700,000 Afghans that use illegal substances of some kind.

So again it is a self-interest issue. They have a strong interest in eliminating this opium trade, because it is affecting the productivity of their workers, and it is affecting their health, and it is affecting a lot of things which give them a strong incentive to stop it. That goes for Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, and all the neighboring countries.

Mr. ROYCE. Do we have any realistic strategy of curbing, in your opinion, or arresting, this trend? I know that there is an anti-planning campaign using the Koran anti-intoxicant message. I don't know if that works or not, but the UN ODC thought that might be an effective way. Can you shed any light on that?

Mr. SCHWEICH. Sure, Congressman. The first pillar of the five pillar strategy is public information, and part of that is to get a strong message out that using opium goes against the tenets of Islam, and that seems to have gained some traction in some places.

There have been about 6,000 ads, and there have been meetings of mullahs and pronouncements made that this goes against Islamic culture. Now that sort of gives you a backdrop. You need eradication, interdiction, and prosecution as well. But there is a strong element of appealing to people's religious convictions to stop them from using opium.

Mr. ROYCE. Of course, a lot of these people don't necessarily use it. They just sell it. This is not a slight against European partners, but the fact is that they are not used to doing operations at a theater.

I was in Germany, and had an opportunity to talk to their foreign ministry about the PRT teams that I have seen operate on the ground there to great effect, and I was inquiring just about heli-

copters and other support that we might be able to get into the theater in Afghanistan.

And I have to tell you that when we start talking about NATO, and handing off to NATO, this is an area that is going to need a lot of work. We are going to really have to bring these Europeans along on this, because it is just not something that conceptually they have in mind.

And, second, of course, there is the concern about taking casualties in Europe. You know, every nation worries about it. We saw what happened in Rwanda when the Belgians took some casualties, and so there is concern about being deployed in the Pashtun areas with PRT teams, and with troops that would attempt to keep order.

I just wanted an assessment and if you could give me on in terms of NATO, and how much competence you would have that they would be able to do the job if we passed the baton to NATO. Admiral.

Rear Admiral MOELLER. Sir, we are confident that, as they continue to assume greater responsibility in the country, they are prepared to do the job that needs to be done, and we say that based on many, many months of working very closely with them, and reviewing in detail the security situation, and sharing the intelligence, and working together on the construct for how operations would need to be conducted, et cetera.

So we believe from a Central Command perspective, that when NATO assumes responsibility for the areas that they will assume responsibility for, they will be prepared to do what needs to be done on the ground.

Mr. ROYCE. Will the Europeans deploy the equipment necessary—helicopter gun ships, and other equipment? That is another area that I wonder about.

Rear Admiral MOELLER. They will be bringing enablers with them to some extent, some countries more than others. We will be supporting some of that effort over the near- to mid-term. That obviously is—that kind of discussion is something that continues with our NATO partners and probably will continue on into the future, yes, sir.

Mr. ROYCE. I appreciate that. Ambassador Quinn, any thoughts on that front?

Ms. QUINN. I think, in terms of NATO's role, the work that was done recently on the operations plan, and rules of engagement, there is a commitment, and certainly the fact that the United States is a member of NATO, and the role that we are going to play is also a factor that should not be underestimated.

Mr. ROYCE. There is one other issue that I think that many in the Afghan-American community worry about, and that is because of the history of Afghanistan during the Taliban, with the Northern Alliance, and prior to that the vulcanization, let us call it, into Uzbek, Tajik, and Pashtun areas—Afghan-Americans who consider themselves Afghan—and most people in Afghanistan do not define themselves as Uzbek or Tajik, but they define themselves as Afghan.

But warlords have a different way of looking at this, and they tend to identify themselves with a certain tribal area, clan, and so

forth. And for Afghans, this is a particular point of concern. They ask, what can we do to sort of strengthen the center, and what can we do to empower the Cabinet, and empower the President?

And one of the things that we tried to do—I was the author of Radio Free Afghanistan, and it is one of the things that that has, according to President Karzai, allowed them to go out into rural areas where they suddenly have an identity, because 90 percent of the people get their information by radio.

They know who their ministers are now, and they have a sense of their national leaders. But locally the power is still with that warlord or warlord who has had himself made governor. What do we do?

What can we do to strengthen the center? I am convinced if we let nature take its course, and have a laissez-faire attitude about this development of warlords gaining more and more power, we will ultimately create or allow a situation to develop which is inherently destabilizing.

How do we get the nation state of Afghanistan on its feet with a centralized government, and how do we evolve into that? Ambassador.

Ms. QUINN. On the question of warlords, I think that President Karzai and his government have made a great deal of progress in diminishing the influence of the warlords. We also look at the program, the Disarmament Demobilization Reintegration (DDR) program—the first two D's essentially are completed, and they are in their reintegration phase now, and they have made substantial progress.

It is important at this time, and the government is pursuing it, that the disbandment, the disarmament of illegally armed groups anywhere in the country, that effort is underway. It is going to be a tough job. The government is committed to it, and there is international support to follow through on it.

And I think that is an important part of doing what you are talking about, taking away the power of a local commander, et cetera. In addition, I think what is important, and what the United States is already doing, and that we should certainly continue to do, is to promote, develop, and work with institutions of government now that they are in place in Afghanistan, as we already are with the National Assembly and the provincial councils.

And certainly our Provincial Reconstruction Teams, and we talked a little bit about those just now, have been very, very helpful in this role, and they certainly have helped with the DDR program.

Mr. ROYCE. And there are only 13 of them, right? I have to share one thing with you, Ambassador Quinn, and that is that I maintain a dialogue with journalists in Afghanistan, with Afghans from time to time, and I have been on the ground there, and they share these concerns to me, and those concerns are heart felt, and likewise the Afghan-American community.

And I opened my statement about the importance of working with the Afghan-American community, whether they speak Farsi, or Pashtun, they really believe that this is incredibly important, and I would ask, Ambassador, has the State Department worked with the Afghan-American community in order to try to address

this specific issue, which is the one right now that they fret most about?

Ms. QUINN. Obviously, we have worked with the Afghan-American community on a number of issues, and I will consider your suggestion, sir.

Mr. ROYCE. Yes, I might be in contact with you on that, and I appreciate that, Ambassador. That finishes my questions, and I want the Chairwoman, of course, to close. Thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN [presiding]. Thank you so much. Well, thank you so much to our panelists. And I wanted to just comment about some of the questions, and the outlook that some folks have.

For example, there are some who view that Iran works to block opium. However, Iran gives a pass to heroin since it generates more money for some of its other international operations, and not for the good.

And we all know that translates to terrorist financing, so let us be careful not to embrace Iran, as some might have been alluding to, as part of the solution, when it is clearly part of the problem.

And I know that we have been talking about the serious issues that confront Afghanistan, such as security and drugs, but when I was there, I saw such positive developments that were taking place every day.

Yesterday was International Women's Day. I was seated next to a woman from Iraq, and a woman from Iran, and we were asking who could have imagined that these two women from these two countries, especially Afghanistan, would be here in the halls of Congress, and be able to have the opportunities that they now have, being freed of the Taliban?

And when we were in Afghanistan, we saw what a great job our armed forces, coalition forces, and NATO forces are doing. It was amazing and eye-opening everywhere that we went with the Provincial Reconstruction Team, to see a lieutenant colonel from our American armed forces, a woman, leading the PRT, along with another woman from USAID, whether it was Kabul, or Jalalabad.

Two women head this PRT, along with the tribal leaders from Afghanistan, and the local mayor. And they get together to plan out what needs to be done for that village, what roads need to be constructed, and what sewer projects need to be put into place, and what we can do at a very local level to improve the daily lives of the people of Jalalabad.

And to have this multiplied throughout the country I think is such a hopeful sign. So, yes, there are problems, and we are not minimizing them, but at the same time, we cannot overlook the positive developments for women, for children, and for the future of Afghanistan.

I am also encouraged by the leadership of such a great man as President Karzai, who is such an ally in our war on terror. So I don't want to close out this hearing under doom and gloom, because there are a lot of bright lights in Afghanistan thanks to our military, thanks to our civil affairs units, and thanks to the State Department, USAID, and so many great organizations.

We had a great meeting with the United States Corps of Army Engineers about the projects that they have undertaken there. There are a lot of untold stories about the good and positive devel-

opments in Afghanistan, and they show our constituents our tax dollars at work, rebuilding a nation and helping the Afghan people see a better today.

So I thank you for your service, and don't think that it is being overlooked. We are here to talk about serious problems, but also to say thank you for great work, and for helping us all liberate a country and give a brighter future to those children that we saw, who were giving us the thumbs up as we were traveling through those dusty roads in Afghanistan. Muchas gracias. Thank you so much.

The joint Subcommittees are now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:13 p.m., the Subcommittees were adjourned.]

