



CANADA IN AFGHANISTAN:

IS IT WORKING?

Canada in Afghanistan: Is it Working?

By

Gordon Smith, PhD

Fellow and Advisory Council Member of the Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute

and

Director of the Centre for Global Studies at the University of Victoria
Victoria, BC

March, 2007

Prepared for the Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute
1600, 530 – 8th Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T2P 3S8

www.cdfai.org

© Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute

Other Publications Written For Or Assisted By:
The Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute

Effective Aid And Beyond: How Canada Can Help Poor Countries

Danielle Goldfarb
December, 2006

The Homeland Security Dilemma: The Imaginations of Failure and the Escalating Costs of Perfecting Security

Frank Harvey
June, 2006

An Opaque Window: An Overview of Some Commitments Made by the Government of Canada Regarding the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces; 1 January 2000 – 31 December 2004

David J. Bercuson, Aaron P. Plamondon and Ray Szeto
May, 2006

The Strategic Capability Investment Plan: Origins, Evolution and Future Prospects

Elinor Sloan
March, 2006

Confusing the Innocent with Numbers and Categories: The International Policy Statement and the Concentration of Development Assistance

Denis Stairs
December, 2005

In the Canadian Interest? Assessing Canada's International Policy Statement

David J. Bercuson, Derek Burney, James Fergusson, Michel Fortmann/Frédéric Mérand, J.L. Granatstein, George Haynal, Sharon Hobson, Rob Huebert, Eric Lerhe, George Macdonald, Reid Morden, Kim Richard Nossal, Jean-Sébastien Rioux, Gordon Smith, Denis Stairs
October, 2005

The Special Commission on the Restructuring of the Reserves, 1995: Ten Years Later

J.L. Granatstein and LGen (ret'd) Charles Belzile
September, 2005

Effective Defence Policy for Responding to Failed And Failing States

David Carment
June, 2005

Two Solitudes: Quebecers' Attitudes Regarding Canadian Security and Defence Policy

Jean-Sébastien Rioux
February, 2005

In The National Interest: Canadian Foreign Policy in an Insecure World

David J. Bercuson, Denis Stairs, Mark Entwistle, J.L. Granatstein, Kim Richard Nossal, Gordon S. Smith
October, 2003

Conference Publication: Canadian Defence and the Canada-US Strategic Partnership

September, 2002

To Secure A Nation: The Case for a New Defence White Paper

David J. Bercuson, Jim Fergusson, Frank Harvey, Rob Huebert
November, 2001

FOREWORD

This report is a team effort. That said, I alone am responsible for any mistakes and misjudgements. We are largely in agreement, but not completely so. In particular, the recommendations for realigning our assistance in Afghanistan more closely with Canadian Forces' activities are very much a preoccupation of mine, a preoccupation not shared by all. We also differ regarding the feasibility of negotiating, using a back channel, with the Taliban.

The first section contains our recommendations to high level policy and decision makers (we hope they will read at least this much). The main body of the report contains our analysis of what is happening, and why. It does not repeat all the recommendations. The conclusion covers a number of other issues that have come to our attention, particularly with respect to development assistance, which we believe have the potential to be as important to Afghanistan as Canada's military presence is. They are not all repeated in the first section.

Our team of researchers and writers included Marc André Boivin, Lenard Cohen, Graham Fuller, Lauryn Oates, and a fifth person who prefers to remain anonymous. They are all remarkable people. I thank them. I also thank the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute (CDFAI), without whose financial support and encouragement there would be no report. The CDFAI does not necessarily endorse the report's recommendations.

It is easy to criticize what is happening in Afghanistan. It is a far more difficult task to recommend what *should* be done. In my long professional life I have not encountered a more difficult policy challenge. I am not sure we have all the right solutions. But I do know we in Canada urgently need a more informed debate on these issues. Much is at stake.

Gordon S. Smith
Centre for Global Studies
University of Victoria

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Canadian military and civilian personnel have put, and are putting, their lives in mortal danger in Afghanistan; we respect and are proud of them.
- The Afghanistan-Pakistan region arguably represents the single most important, indeed critical, region in the world in the global effort against terrorism.
- NATO's aim is "to help establish the conditions in which Afghanistan can enjoy – after decades of conflict, destruction, and poverty – a representative government and self-sustaining peace and security"; this is a worthy, yet very ambitious goal.
- Current NATO policies and programs in Afghanistan are not on course to achieve that objective, even within a period of ten years. Some policies are working; more are not.
- The next two years will likely be decisive. If major conflict continues at the present rate, there is a very real risk that the local population will become increasingly frustrated by the lack of security (engendering various negative responses), and that some allies will head home.

The current odds against NATO's success in Afghanistan are daunting, but the situation is not hopeless. The cause is worth a renewed and serious, concerted effort. Time is not on NATO's side, however, and prompt, effective action must be taken.

- In the event of NATO's failure to achieve its broad nation-building goals in Afghanistan, its bottom line must revert to the original source of Western concern: the presence of al-Qa'ida in the area. That said, al-Qa'ida in Afghanistan today is less the centre of global terrorism than it was in 2001, simply because the movement has metastasized since then to other regions of the world. The leadership of al-Qa'ida today is in Pakistan, and it is remobilizing.
- The most essential goal – the bottom line – is to isolate al-Qa'ida from the mainstream Taliban and to find incentives to dissuade the Taliban from a commitment to international jihadi violence. This is not easily accomplished, given the close relationship between the two at the top levels, but it could possibly be achieved at the local level over time.
- We do not believe that the Taliban can be defeated or eliminated as a political entity in any meaningful time frame by Western armies using military measures, and certainly not with the relatively small increases in force strength that are currently planned. Indeed, some argue that certain activities of Western armies on the ground in Afghanistan are counterproductive to winning the support of the Pashtuns against the Taliban.
- Afghanistan should therefore receive – not in NATO communiqué language, but in actions – a larger, more fully operational military presence, above all in the south and the east, as the Supreme Allied Commander (SACEUR) has requested, eliminating "national caveats" with a fairer sharing of the burden; *and* greatly increased and strategically targeted civilian aid on the ground (focussing on Kandahar, as well as substantially and much more quickly strengthening the weak Afghan army and police).

Laid out in point form, the remainder of this section discusses, first, the current circumstances surrounding the Taliban; secondly, Pashtun support of the Taliban; and finally, related issues confounding NATO's mission in Afghanistan. Interspersed with our assessment of the situation are recommendations and suggestions meant to provide direction and rectify problems as we have assessed them.

- The Taliban are zealous extremists who advocate a highly disputed interpretation of Islam that is at odds with the beliefs of most Afghans. They also use violence as a means to achieve political ends. Nevertheless, the Pashtuns who support the Taliban do so for a variety of complex reasons: a craving for stability and order, self-interest, disillusionment with warlords, dislike of outsiders, discouragement regarding the slow pace of development, a desire to see the Pashtuns paramount in their country rather than the non-Pashtun Northern Alliance, and religious zeal. Mullah Omar remains unchallenged

as leader of the Taliban, and there is no alternative representing Pashtun interests in Afghanistan today who has more clout than he.

The exact role Pakistan, and Pakistani Pashtuns in particular, plays in support of the Taliban is controversial, but it is pivotal to the direction the insurgency in Afghanistan will take;

- The border remains easily permeable.
- Without Pakistani acquiescence and even support, the Taliban would have much more difficulty sustaining itself as a political entity in Afghanistan.
- We believe the nature of Pakistan's geopolitics in the broader region (think India) makes it all but impossible for Islamabad to abandon or destroy the Taliban; the latter is a significant political vehicle of the Pashtuns in Afghanistan, one with a strong following inside Pakistan.
- While Pashtun tribes are notoriously fractured, they have traditionally united against foreign invaders. While the Taliban are hardly universally accepted as a legitimate force, most Pashtuns know the Taliban will likely remain long after the foreigners have been drawn away to new battles in new lands, and are gone from Afghanistan.
- While negotiations certainly cannot guarantee that the Taliban will be brought into the political process, failure to negotiate will almost surely cede the field to them. Stability in Afghanistan depends on a political resolution.
- A variety of political approaches must be taken, including back channel negotiations with both the leadership of the Taliban and with local tribal leadership – those prepared to talk rather than fight to the bitter end. These negotiations would focus on drawing the Taliban into greater participation in government, both central and provincial.
- One incentive to bringing the Taliban into a more co-operative mode would be to indicate (quietly) that, if there is no political resolution and civil war were to break out, NATO is prepared to back the Northern Alliance and support a major Indian role in Afghanistan indefinitely – Pakistan's ultimate *bête noire*.
- Realistically, we do not believe that President Musharraf will do much more to bring Islamists to heel in Pakistan. While he may be willing, under rising external pressure, to do more to complicate the actions of the Taliban, he will not be party to their destruction; he will hide behind assertions that rogue elements in the ISI (the intelligence branch of the Pakistani military) are the chief drivers. (We are not persuaded that the ISI is fundamentally a rogue organization, but rather represents a powerful and significant geopolitical and ideological position within the Pakistani political spectrum.)
- That said, Canada should join with other NATO countries in pressing Musharraf to do as much as he can; as a political leader, he responds to both foreign and domestic pressure.
- More plausibly, Musharraf might be prepared to see the ISI create a back channel link to the Taliban that could reduce the level of conflict in Afghanistan, but this approach would have to be presented as offering meaningful beneficial tradeoffs to Pakistan's ultimate geopolitical position in Afghanistan. Even with the ISI playing a more constructive role, the struggle will basically be won or lost by political and military forces inside Afghanistan, despite Pakistan's importance.
- The ISI could conceivably be used as a go-between in these negotiations, but only as long as it was convinced that Pakistan's essential geopolitical interests are realistically served – also a tall order.

Ultimately, the alleviation of poverty must become a primary strategy for achieving security in Afghanistan. Yet the country still receives far less funding from the international donor community overall than most other post-conflict nations.

- Reconstruction in Kandahar is woefully insufficient. For security reasons there are few civilians engaged in aid and development in the province, and NGOs are leaving because of the same concern for their safety.
- We believe efforts to destroy poppy production are extremely counterproductive under the present circumstances. Instead, the focus should be to destroy the laboratories and

the traffickers rather than the poppy crops of the impoverished producer/farmers; an additional and controversial approach, though one which must be explored, would be to purchase poppy crops through an international marketing board. The cost could be partially met through resale of the product for medicinal purposes. This is an alternative which demands consideration in light of the global shortage of opiate-based morphine and other medicines.

- The Canadian government should ensure that the bulk of development funds is spent where Canadian Forces and civilian groups can show the local population quick, beneficial results. This is not a classic development situation – it is an insurgency in which Canada now “wears” Kandahar – and different policies must apply.
- Canadian diplomatic efforts should support the approach in this report in all forums – NATO, the UN, bilaterally, and in Afghanistan itself. The 3Ds (diplomacy, defence, and development) are not, however, effectively working together – the Canadian Forces have a fundamentally different agenda than does the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). We hope the decision to give a coordinating leadership in the public service to the Associate Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs works to integrate the government’s efforts. It will not be easy.
- The United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada have shouldered most of the burden of the current intervention. If NATO, as its leadership has stated, shares our belief that this region ranks so highly, then why has commensurate funding and military support from other NATO member states not been forthcoming?
 - Is it because many in NATO fear it is a losing venture?
 - Is it because NATO states are simply paying lip service to an American-dominated operation that they view as basically contaminated through association with the United States’ broader regional policies in the Muslim world?
 - Is it simply because the allies are not prepared to upset their domestic Moslem populations or risk sustaining casualties?
 - Or is it all of these factors?
- A NATO failure in Afghanistan would generate a wide variety of potential future scenarios (set forth at some length in the concluding segment of this report to generate debate), each with very different implications requiring close examination before subsequent policies are formulated.

AVANT-PROPOS

Le présent rapport est le résultat d'un effort d'équipe. Ceci dit, je suis seul responsable de toute erreur, de jugement ou autre. Nous sommes d'accord dans l'ensemble, mais pas en tout point. En particulier, les recommandations portant sur un réalignement plus étroit de notre aide en Afghanistan avec les activités des Forces canadiennes sont un sujet qui me préoccupe particulièrement, mais qui n'est pas partagé par tous. De plus, nous ne sommes pas du même avis concernant la faisabilité des négociations avec les Talibans, en utilisant des voies officieuses.

Dans la première partie, figurent nos recommandations aux décideurs et aux responsables des politiques de haut niveau (nous espérons qu'ils se rendront jusque-là dans leur lecture). Le gros du rapport comprend notre analyse de ce qui se passe et pourquoi. Il ne reprend pas toutes nos recommandations. La conclusion traite de plusieurs autres enjeux qui ont attiré notre attention, particulièrement l'aide au développement qui, à notre avis, est une activité potentiellement aussi importante que la présence militaire du Canada en Afghanistan. Ils ne sont pas tous réitérés dans la première partie.

Notre équipe de chercheurs et de rédacteurs comprenait Marc-André Boivin, Lenard Cohen, Graham Fuller, Lauryn Oates et une cinquième personne qui préfère garder l'anonymat. Ce sont toutes des personnes remarquables et je les remercie. Je remercie également le Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute (CDFAI), dont l'aide financière et les encouragements ont permis la réalisation de ce rapport. Le CDFAI ne souscrit pas nécessairement aux recommandations du rapport.

Il est aisé de critiquer la situation en Afghanistan. Il est bien plus difficile de formuler des recommandations sur ce qui *devrait* être fait en Afghanistan. Durant ma carrière, je n'ai jamais eu à affronter un plus grand défi de politique. Je ne suis pas sûr que nous possédions toutes les solutions. Mais je sais que le Canada a besoin d'urgence d'un débat plus éclairé sur la question. Il y a gros à perdre.

Gordon S. Smith
Centre for Global Studies
Université de Victoria

SOMMAIRE ET RECOMMANDATIONS

- Les effectifs militaires et civils canadiens ont mis, et mettent encore, leur vie en grand danger en Afghanistan; nous avons du respect et nous éprouvons de la fierté pour eux.
- La région qui regroupe l'Afghanistan et le Pakistan représente sans doute la région la plus importante, et même critique, dans le monde pour ce qui est des efforts de lutte contre le terrorisme.
- L'OTAN a pour mission « d'aider à établir les conditions qui permettront à l'Afghanistan de jouir — après des décennies de conflits, de destruction et de pauvreté — d'un gouvernement représentatif, et d'une paix et d'une sécurité autonomes »; il s'agit d'un objectif louable, quoique bien ambitieux.
- Les politiques et programmes actuels de l'OTAN en Afghanistan ne pourront atteindre cet objectif, même dans les 10 prochaines années. Certaines politiques réussissent, mais il y en a bien davantage qui échouent.
- Les deux prochaines années seront probablement décisives. Si un conflit majeur se poursuit au même rythme que maintenant, il y a un risque très réel de créer une frustration croissante chez la population locale en raison du manque de sécurité (créant diverses réactions négatives), et d'entraîner le départ de certains alliés.

Les chances de réussite de l'intervention de l'OTAN en Afghanistan sont bien minces à l'heure actuelle, mais la situation n'est pas désespérée. La cause mérite un sérieux effort renouvelé et concerté. Malheureusement, le temps joue contre l'OTAN et il est donc essentiel d'agir rapidement et efficacement.

- Si l'OTAN devait échouer dans sa mission de réaliser des objectifs généraux de reconstruction en Afghanistan, il devra en dernier recours en revenir à la source première des inquiétudes occidentales : la présence d'al-Qaïda dans la région. Ceci dit, al-Qaïda en Afghanistan est de nos jours moins au centre du terrorisme mondial qu'il ne l'était en 2001, tout simplement parce que ce mouvement s'est disséminé depuis dans d'autres régions du monde. Le leadership d'al-Qaïda est maintenant au Pakistan et il se remobilise.
- L'objectif le plus important — le fond du problème — est d'isoler al-Qaïda des principaux Talibans, et de trouver des moyens de dissuader les Talibans de s'engager à la violence internationale du Jihad. Ce n'est pas tâche facile, vu la relation étroite qui unit les deux groupes à haut niveau, mais elle pourrait éventuellement être réalisée au niveau local avec le temps.
- Nous sommes d'avis que les Talibans ne pourront être vaincus ou éliminés comme entité politique dans un délai significatif par les armées occidentales au moyen de mesures militaires, et certainement pas vu l'augmentation relativement faible des effectifs qui est planifiée actuellement. En fait, de l'avis de certains, il y a des activités menées sur le terrain par les armées occidentales en Afghanistan qui vont à l'encontre du but recherché, qui est d'obtenir l'appui des Pashtoons contre les Talibans.
- L'Afghanistan devrait donc bénéficier, non sous forme de paroles de l'OTAN, mais en gestes, d'une présence militaire plus opérationnelle, en priorité dans le Sud et l'Est du pays; comme l'a réclamé le Commandant suprême des Forces alliées (SACEUR), il faut éliminer les oppositions nationales en partageant le fardeau plus équitablement et fournir une aide accrue à la population civile qui est ciblée stratégiquement sur le terrain (en se concentrant sur Kandahar, tout en renforçant considérablement et bien plus rapidement l'armée et la police afghanes bien trop faibles).

Le reste de cette partie est rédigée en style télégraphique et traite en premier lieu des circonstances actuelles des Talibans, en second lieu, de l'appui des Talibans par les Pashtoons, et finalement, des enjeux connexes qui mettent en péril la mission de l'OTAN en Afghanistan. Dans notre évaluation de la situation, nous avons énoncé, ici et là, des recommandations et des suggestions visant à offrir une orientation et à rectifier les problèmes que nous avons soulevés.

- Les Talibans sont des extrémistes zélés qui défendent une interprétation hautement contestée de l'islam, contraire aux croyances de la plupart des Afghans. Ils ont recours à la violence pour parvenir à leurs fins politiques. Cependant, les Pashtoons qui appuient les Talibans le font pour une diversité de raisons complexes : une soif d'ordre et de stabilité, un intérêt personnel, une désillusion envers les chefs militaires, une aversion pour les étrangers, le découragement face au rythme trop lent du développement, un désir de voir les Pashtoons dominer au pays plutôt que l'alliance du Nord non-Pashtoon, et la ferveur religieuse. Le mollah Omar est le chef incontesté des Talibans, et il n'existe personne représentant les intérêts pashtoons en Afghanistan à l'heure actuelle qui jouisse d'un prestige plus grand.

Le rôle exact que jouent le Pakistan et les Pashtoons du Pakistan en particulier, en faveur des Talibans, est controversé, mais il est essentiel à la direction que prendra l'insurrection en Afghanistan;

- La frontière est facilement pénétrable.
- Sans l'assentiment ou même sans l'appui du Pakistan, les Talibans auraient bien plus de difficultés à se maintenir en tant qu'entité politique en Afghanistan.
- Nous estimons que la géopolitique du Pakistan dans la région élargie (pensons à l'Inde) rendra presque impossible pour Islamabad d'abandonner ou de détruire les Talibans; ces derniers sont un important véhicule politique des Pashtoons en Afghanistan, et ils ont beaucoup de partisans au Pakistan.
- Bien que les tribus pashtoons soient connues pour leur manque d'unité, elles se sont traditionnellement regroupées face aux envahisseurs étrangers. Bien que les Talibans ne soient certainement pas universellement acceptés comme une force légitime, la plupart des Pashtoons savent que les Talibans seront probablement encore là, bien après que les étrangers soient repartis vers de nouvelles batailles dans d'autres contrées, ayant quitté l'Afghanistan.
- Bien qu'il n'y ait pas de garantie que les négociations mènent à une participation des Talibans au processus politique, la non-négociation laissera presque certainement le champ ouvert aux Talibans. La stabilité en Afghanistan dépend d'une résolution politique.
- Il faut entreprendre un éventail de démarches politiques, dont des négociations officieuses avec les chefs Talibans et les chefs des tribus locales, avec ceux qui sont prêts à négocier plutôt qu'à se battre à tout prix. Ces négociations viseront à faire participer davantage les Talibans au gouvernement, tant central que provincial.
- Une mesure qui inciterait les Talibans à être plus coopératifs serait d'indiquer (discrètement) qu'en l'absence d'une résolution politique et en cas d'éclatement d'une guerre civile, l'OTAN serait prêt à épauler l'Alliance du Nord et à appuyer indéfiniment un rôle important de l'Inde en Afghanistan – la bête noire suprême du Pakistan.
- Soyons réalistes, nous ne pensons pas que le président Musharraf en fera beaucoup plus pour faire rentrer les Islamistes dans les rangs au Pakistan. Bien qu'il puisse être disposé, sous les pressions externes croissantes, à en faire davantage pour compliquer les actes des Talibans, il ne se fera pas complice de leur destruction; il se dissimulera derrière les affirmations que ce sont les francs-tireurs de l'ISI (les services de renseignements de l'armée pakistanaise) qui sont les principaux catalyseurs. (Nous ne sommes pas convaincus que l'ISI soit fondamentalement un organisme sans scrupule, mais plutôt qu'il représente une position géopolitique et idéologique puissante et importante dans l'éventail politique pakistanais.)
- Ceci dit, le Canada devrait se joindre à d'autres pays de l'OTAN et presser Musharraf d'en faire autant que possible; en tant que chef politique, il réagit aux pressions, qu'elles soient étrangères ou nationales.
- De façon plausible, Musharraf serait peut-être prêt à voir l'ISI créer un lien d'intermédiaire secret avec les Talibans, ce qui pourrait réduire la gravité du conflit en Afghanistan; mais il faudra faire valoir cette démarche comme un compromis qui offrirait des avantages positifs et significatifs à la position géopolitique éventuelle du Pakistan en Afghanistan. Même si l'ISI devait jouer un rôle plus constructif, la lutte sera éventuellement gagnée ou

perdue par les forces politiques et militaires en Afghanistan, et ce en dépit de l'importance du Pakistan.

- L'ISI pourrait en théorie servir d'intermédiaire dans ces négociations, mais seulement s'il est convaincu qu'elles serviront de manière réaliste les principaux intérêts géopolitiques du Pakistan, ce qui est également beaucoup demander.

Au bout du compte, c'est la réduction de la pauvreté qui doit être la principale stratégie favorisant la sécurité en Afghanistan. Malheureusement, le pays reçoit encore bien moins de financement du milieu international des donateurs que n'en reçoivent la plupart des autres nations après un conflit.

- La reconstruction à Kandahar est largement insuffisante. Pour des raisons de sécurité, peu de civils participent à l'aide et au développement de la province et les ONG quittent les lieux parce qu'ils s'inquiètent aussi de leur manque de sécurité.
- Nous sommes d'avis que les efforts visant la destruction de la culture du pavot sont extrêmement contre-productifs dans les circonstances actuelles. Il faudrait se concentrer sur la destruction des laboratoires et des trafiquants, plutôt sur les récoltes de pavot des producteurs-agriculteurs démunis; une approche supplémentaire et controversée, mais qui mérite d'être étudiée, serait de faire l'achat des récoltes de pavot par le biais d'un office de commercialisation international. Les coûts d'une telle mesure pourraient être amortis en partie par la vente du produit à des fins médicinales. Ce serait une solution qui mérite d'être envisagée, à la lumière de la pénurie mondiale de morphine et autres médicaments à base d'opiacés.
- Le gouvernement canadien devrait veiller à ce que la plus grande partie des fonds de développement soient dépensés là où les Forces canadiennes et les groupes civils peuvent montrer à la population locale des résultats rapides et avantageux. Il ne s'agit pas d'une situation classique de développement; il s'agit d'une insurrection dans le cadre de laquelle le Canada « porte » maintenant Kandahar, et il faut donc employer des politiques différentes.
- Les efforts diplomatiques canadiens devraient appuyer l'approche décrite dans le présent rapport, et ce au sein de tous les forums : l'OTAN, l'ONU, bilatéralement et en Afghanistan même. Cependant, les trois « D » (diplomatie, défense et développement) ne collaborent pas efficacement, car les Forces canadiennes ont un programme fondamentalement différent de celui de l'Agence canadienne de développement international (ACDI). Nous espérons que la décision de confier un leadership de coordination au sein de la fonction publique au sous-ministre adjoint des Affaires étrangères permettra d'intégrer les efforts du gouvernement. La tâche ne sera certainement pas aisée.
- Les États-Unis, le Royaume-Uni et le Canada ont assumé la plus grande partie du fardeau de l'intervention en cours. Si l'OTAN partage avec nous la conviction que cette région est d'une grande importance, comme l'a déclaré son commandement, pourquoi donc un financement et un appui militaire proportionnés n'ont-ils pas été fournis par les autres États membres de l'OTAN ?
 - Est-ce parce que bon nombre de membres de l'OTAN craignent que ce ne soit une bataille perdue d'avance ?
 - Est-ce parce que les États membres de l'OTAN n'offrent qu'un service pour la forme à des opérations dominées par les Américains, opérations qui, selon eux, sont fondamentalement empoisonnées par leur association aux politiques générales des États-Unis dans le monde musulman ?
 - Est-ce simplement parce que les alliés ne sont pas prêts à contrarier leurs propres ressortissants musulmans ou à risquer des pertes humaines ?
 - Ou s'agit-il de toutes ces raisons réunies ?
- Un échec de l'OTAN en Afghanistan produirait tout un éventail de scénarios éventuels (décrits dans la conclusion du présent rapport pour encourager le débat), comportant chacun des répercussions très variables qui méritent un examen de près avant la formulation de nouvelles politiques.

I CANADA IN AFGHANISTAN: HOW WE GOT THERE

Canada's original decision to go to Afghanistan stems directly from the events of 9/11. Many new factors complicated that original decision as Canada's policies subsequently evolved.

The global shock of 9/11 created broad international concern at the time that no country could remain immune to similar attacks from terrorist groups in the future; a consensus rapidly emerged that joint international action was required to eliminate such groups and their sanctuaries wherever they were located. President George W. Bush unambiguously demanded that all countries align themselves as "either with the U.S. or against it" in the struggle. Canada initially responded to the challenge by mobilizing air and naval forces and then secretly sent Joint Task Force Two (JTF2) troops to Afghanistan in late 2001. A larger contingent of 750 Canadian soldiers was then sent to Kandahar in February 2002 for a period of six months. Afghanistan became a symbolically key state in the broader effort to deter radical Islamic jihadism, particularly given its past role as host to al-Qa'ida under the Taliban.

But the Afghan challenge also came in the broader context of a U.S.-Canadian crisis regarding Washington's invasion of Iraq; Canada opposed this move and declined to send troops. However, sending a second deployment of 2000 Canadian soldiers to Kabul in 2003 in the multilateral setting of NATO and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) allowed Ottawa to avoid Washington's opprobrium for staying out of Iraq by making this significant contribution to the "U.S. global war on terror." Beyond its bilateral relations with Washington, Canada has sought to maintain a significant role within NATO which, together with various UN resolutions, provides a legitimizing multilateral umbrella for Canadian military participation in Afghanistan.

THE CANADIAN ROLE SINCE 2001

Since 2001, Canada has applied the "3Ds" to expand its presence in Afghanistan. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1386 at the end of 2001 mandated the ISAF to assist the Afghan Transitional Authority by providing security in Kabul; this has been reaffirmed and extended to the whole country in several subsequent UNSC resolutions. After Canada successfully lobbied for a NATO takeover of ISAF in 2003, it sent troops to secure parts of Kabul in a stabilization role. The Canadian Forces (CF) also provided security to the perimeter of the site of the Constitutional Loya Jirga proceedings, a key political process mandated by the Bonn Agreement.

Prior to 2001, Canada provided about \$10 million annually to Afghanistan for humanitarian aid. At the 2002 Tokyo Donors conference, Canada declared new commitments to Kabul, transforming Afghanistan into Canada's single largest aid recipient. Canadian development assistance for Afghanistan is scheduled to continue until at least 2011 with a current allocation of \$100 million annually.

Canada took responsibility for Kandahar province after other NATO member countries volunteered to deploy to more secure provinces in 2004. In 2005, Canadian Forces moved to Kandahar, taking over an American Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), one of 24 PRTs now active in the country. The current Canadian mission consists of 2,500 troops in Kandahar; 30 CF personnel in Kabul, either working on specific security areas as liaison or embedded within a joint task force; and a 15 member strategic advisory team of military planners assisting the Afghan government. The deployment has been renewed until February 2009.

Canada has supported other stabilization and peacebuilding initiatives, notably in the area of demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration of ex-combatants (DDR). Canada supported the decommissioning of militia forces, the collection and storage of 12,000 weapons, the destruction of ammunition stockpiles, de-mining, and landmine education.

Canadian involvement in Afghanistan first hit Canadian television screens in a major way when the CF moved to Kandahar to take on an active combat role in the more volatile and unstable south; they rapidly became the object of regular Taliban attacks, and CF began to sustain the heaviest casualties of any NATO participant in per capita terms.

II THE HISTORICAL LEGACY: UNDERSTANDING AFGHANISTAN THROUGH A GEOPOLITICAL LENS

As Canada takes on increasingly intense and deadly engagements in Afghanistan, its policies must be grounded in a realistic understanding of the inherent problems and challenges. A long series of conflicts over the last thirty years, a centuries-old rejection of all forms of foreign intervention, a historically fragmented state, and a complex and diverse political culture – all present unusually daunting challenges to any peacebuilding mission.

UNDERSTANDING THE AFGHAN STATE

The Afghan state has been historically fragmented by a number of factors: its mix of at least seven major ethnic groups and the ongoing power struggle among them, the heavily tribal nature of the Pashtun south, the country's notoriously difficult physical terrain, its nomadic groups, and ethnicities that in most cases spill over the border into neighbouring countries (most notably with Pakistan, in the transnational Pashtun region). There is also a long history of local resistance to a centralized state in Afghanistan. Institutions of local governance operate beyond centralized state control. A weak central government has helped to preserve all these characteristics.

Violent conflicts in recent history have exacerbated already entrenched difficult relations between the centre and the periphery, strengthening rogue groups like the private militias of warlords who control resources and offer protection where it is scarce. Since 2001, the Afghan government has used various strategies to contend with these para-state players, including efforts to integrate them into government institutions (with varying degrees of success), to disarm and demobilize some militias, and recently in the south, to re-arm new private militias to act as paramilitary or anti-terrorist forces in insecure areas.

A HISTORICALLY THREATENED SOVEREIGNTY

Lying athwart the crossroads of Asia, Afghanistan has been in the invasion path of various armies for thousands of years, including various Persian empires, Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan's army, the Indian Moghul Empire, the British on three occasions throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the Soviet Union in 1979. NATO forces represent only the latest of the foreign troops occupying Afghan soil.

The current cycle of violence can be traced back to the pro-Soviet Communist military coup in 1978 that plunged the country into what has become nearly thirty years of ongoing war. The coup prompted a Soviet invasion to protect the new Afghan Communist regime, and a ten-year popular resistance against 110,000 Soviet occupational troops fighting alongside 100,000 Afghan government troops against diverse mujahideen factions supported by the United States and many Middle Eastern countries. The Soviet withdrawal in 1989 then resulted in an Afghan civil war among rival mujahideen and warlords creating conditions of virtual anarchy; hundreds of thousands died throughout the country. Only when the Taliban gained power in 1996 was domestic order, of a kind, re-established.

THE MUJAHIDEEN AND CHALLENGES TO THE RULE OF LAW

In the course of their struggle against Soviet occupation, many groups that were part of the mujahideen were accused of committing "crimes against humanity" against their fellow Afghans, including massacres, rape, and the pillage of villages (either ethnically-based reprisals or acts of revenge against those civilians who co-operated with the Soviet-supported regime). The chaos and lawlessness of the civil war among the mujahideen ultimately facilitated the rise of the Taliban who, with Pakistani support, were able to restore order to most of the country, thereby meeting with much early public acceptance. It was the forces of al-Qa'ida, evolving out of select mujahideen groups, who took advantage of the Taliban to entrench their position in Afghanistan in a new form of violent, anti-Western resistance; al-Qai'da then aided the Taliban in securing the latter's hold on the country which in turn provided a secure base for al-Qa'ida. That then led to the American invasion of Afghanistan after 9/11, thus launching a new phase of internal warfare.

The consequences of prolonged conflict have destroyed any semblance of central control and opened the way for warlords to seize territory and build networks of influence within and beyond the central

government apparatus; they have generally preserved their power intact since 2001. Afghan warlords and various mujahideen forces still overlap significantly.

PROBLEMATIC VESTIGES OF COLONIALISM: THE DURAND LINE

One of the more enduring legacies of the Anglo-Afghan wars and British efforts to ensure the security of its colonies in the region is the present border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, known as the Durand Line. This border, drawn by the British in the nineteenth century to separate a weak Afghanistan from British India, arbitrarily cuts through the large Pashtun tribal areas. The border is mostly unmarked and has remained highly contested by those living in the regions on both sides. Approximately one-third of all Pashtuns live within Afghanistan, the remaining two-thirds inside Pakistan.

The continuing lack of any resolution of the Durand Line issue is an important factor fuelling instability and insurgent activity in the border regions. There has been no history of serious co-operation between the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan to resolve the issue: Afghanistan (and the Soviet Union in its day) often threatened to resurrect the “Pashtunistan issue” – an ethnic ambition of some to unite all Pashtuns under Afghan leadership – while Pakistan has manipulated the dispute as a bargaining chip in its international dealings. Over the longer run, resolution of the Durand Line should be one among many important factors that would improve relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan and extend ultimate state control over the border areas and tribes. But the Pakistani government is currently unable to control huge swathes of Pashtun territory and its tribes in the Northwest Frontier Province, where tribal law reigns supreme. Regulation of the tribal territories and their borders, while of great importance, remains an exceedingly complex, deep-rooted, long-term project that cannot realistically be adopted as an objective in NATO’s shorter-term search for stability in Afghanistan.

THE CENTRAL ROLE OF PAKISTAN

Since its creation in 1947, Pakistan, as successor to British imperial power on Afghanistan’s borders, has been a continuous variable in Afghan politics and its security. Pakistan views Afghanistan as vital to its own geopolitical security, providing a kind of “strategic depth” against the threat of the huge Indian state on the other side of Pakistan’s borders. Islamabad’s fundamental strategic vision requires an Afghan state that is friendly and responsive to Pakistan’s security needs.

The Pashtun ethnic factor remains key. Pakistan’s large Pashtun population represents Islamabad’s primary vehicle of influence inside Afghanistan, an account managed over long years by Pakistani military intelligence, the ISI, which lies outside the control of the civilian executive. The ISI and considerable numbers of civilian strategists, particularly in the large and powerful Islamist parties, are intent upon maintaining influence, and where possible, some degree of control over the Taliban movement to ensure it remains friendly to Islamabad. Within Afghanistan itself, the Taliban movement is viewed by large numbers of Pashtuns as a vehicle for their own nationalism and political dominance within Afghanistan. Destruction of the Taliban movement – were it even possible – at this point basically translates into the destruction of Pakistani influence in Afghanistan.

The Pakistani government, despite its rhetoric, is thus highly ambivalent about crushing the Taliban insurgency. Furthermore, Taliban supporters are widespread among Pashtuns within Pakistan, where the movement is perceived by large numbers as a force for radical, Islamic-based reform inside Pakistan itself. In this sense, the movement is a cross-border phenomenon and is thus much bigger than the ISI role.

Indeed, the Taliban originally emerged from among Afghan Pashtun refugees who fled to Pakistan during the Soviet invasion. Many were poor and lived in refugee camps. Many were also educated there, often in madrassas. Radicalized by the anti-Soviet struggle, they received guerrilla training and remain inspired by the example of al-Qa’ida’s struggle against their perception of an American bid to dominate the Muslim world; they now maintain ties on both sides of the border. Later (and only as the Taliban rose to pre-eminence), Pakistan was compelled to recognize the importance of the movement to its own interests in the region; it thus began to provide training grounds, technical assistance, and later, political support by recognizing the Taliban as the official government of Afghanistan and helping to finance, with Saudi

support, the fledgling government which, while rich in weapons, had little in the way of resources with which to meet the basic needs of citizens.

Pakistan's President Musharraf is thus compelled to engage in a complex juggling act. He must deflect American pressure by aggressively co-operating against elements of al-Qa'ida inside Pakistan, but he can only apply selective pressure against the Taliban presence there, as the Taliban enjoy much support among Pakistani Pashtuns. Musharraf must also acknowledge the many Taliban supporters within his own government in the broader context of wide-spread anti-American sentiment among the population at large and among influential religious leaders whose support is vital to his political survival. Past efforts to extend the writ of the Pakistani Government into the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in the Northwest Frontier Province (among fiercely independent tribesmen who have always enjoyed a local, tribally based sovereignty) have generally been disastrous. The area represents the heartland of Islamist sentiments and xenophobic passions. Thus the Pakistani government turns a blind eye to some elements of the cross-border links and activities of the Taliban whose tribal elements lie on both sides of a national "border."

Afghanistan and Pakistan blame each other for the Taliban resurgence. Pakistan acknowledges that some cross-border activity takes place in these largely mountainous regions, but its officials insist that a military solution is futile in trying to solve the problem of Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan. Kabul charges that the insurgency is basically fuelled by elements in Pakistan, and that Taliban leader Mullah Omar and many other key Taliban leaders take refuge there – a plausible yet deniable charge. Kabul also claims that Pakistani madrassas on the border provide a steady supply of suicide bombers, heretofore unheard of in Afghan culture. Islamabad retorts that Pakistani intelligence regularly mounts effective counter-insurgency activities, and that Afghanistan's Taliban problem is predominantly political, that it is home-grown and localized to the unruly tribal areas along the border region.

Pakistan's recent announcement that it would build a security fence in the FATA to prevent the flow of Pakistani insurgents into Afghanistan was clearly seized upon as a political opportunity to unilaterally and formally delineate the Pakistan-Afghan border along the Durand Line – a boundary that Afghanistan still vociferously refuses to recognize. The constant diplomatic sparring between Musharraf and Karzai must be understood through this lens of multiple domestic and regional political motivations, often wrapped in the language of international security and anti-terrorism.

There would seem to be little doubt that better border controls – extremely difficult under the best of circumstances – would help stabilize the Pashtun regions of Afghanistan, but the insurgency has deep roots within Afghanistan itself, and the cross-border connections are strong and enduring.

III THE CURRENT SITUATION

Canada thus faces an Afghan population that is deeply wary of foreigners on its soil. After decades of bloodshed, Afghans currently in the south have suffered mounting civilian casualties since 2001 as a result of misdirected fire from American-led coalition forces. This is coupled with a severely flawed policy towards poppy production carried out by the British, the Americans, and the Afghan government seeking to eradicate what is frequently the population's principal livelihood and their sole source of desperately needed income. While the Taliban and warlords benefit from the poppy industry, these policies of forcible crop destruction only play into the hands of the Taliban.

Reconstruction has been very slow in the south. The food aid distribution system has failed, causing a severe famine. Much of the population of southern Afghanistan is alienated from ISAF. Unless these circumstances change, the Canadian mission in Kandahar will become less and less acceptable to the local population. Time is not on NATO and Canada's side.

THE SECURITY CHALLENGE IN AFGHANISTAN: SOURCES OF INSECURITY

The Taliban

As the central government struggles to consolidate its power and exert influence in the Afghan countryside, a variety of *illegal, armed spoiler groups continues to disrupt the nation-building process*. Some of these spoilers are anti-government insurgents; others are paramilitary groups or criminal gangs. Distinguishing between these different security threats is essential to the development of an effective, long-term security strategy for Afghanistan.

While much of the original Taliban leadership is still extant, *the current Taliban insurgency is distinct from the original movement* in many important socio-political and military respects. When the Taliban first took power in Afghanistan in 1995, their leadership was motivated primarily by a conservative interpretation of Shariah law, based on the Hanafi school of jurisprudence in Sunni Islam. Hanafi jurisprudence is the predominant form of religious interpretation in Muslim south and central Asia, and is inherently neither extremist nor radical. The Taliban's particular culturally-driven interpretation of religious law that they imposed across the country was, however, specific to the rural south where *Pashtunwali* – a pre-Islamic Pashtun tribal code of conduct and law – and Shariah blend together in an indistinguishable code of behaviour and sometimes rough rural justice. Though the Taliban did not impose the "law of the Pashtun" on the whole of Afghanistan, their interpretation of Islamic law was coloured by their culturally specific understanding of that law. As the Taliban leadership draws from a predominantly rural base, their application of Shariah manifested a notable rural character. An obvious example of this is the enforcement of the *purdah* (seclusion of women); while this system of gender segregation is a long-time norm (which is not to say it is acceptable) in the villages of Kandahar, enforcing the *purdah* system in *urban* centres resulted in brutal gender apartheid.

Though born of the Pakistani madrassa system (thus warranting the name "Taliban" or "student"), the original movement was overwhelmingly comprised of rural Pashtuns; Mullah Omar extolled and upheld social values perceived as common to local people, thus garnering grassroots support for his movement. Moreover, because the Taliban had managed to provide the much needed public good of peace in the mid-1990s, citizens were at first inclined to support the movement's rise to power. What began as a localized puritanical movement quickly absorbed the support base of rival militia factions as fighters joined sides with the newest guerrilla on the scene. Not only did the Taliban have the support of Pakistani and Saudi funding, but the leadership also upheld a powerful ideological mandate that had sufficient grassroots appeal in the Pashtun rural areas to drain fighters away from enemy factions, such as *Hizb-i-Islami*. The Taliban's greatest public relations success was putting an abrupt end to the chaos and misery of the stalemated civil war period, arguably Afghanistan's worst period in its bloody history, with the promise of a puritanical peace.

Nonetheless, upon consolidating their authority over the countryside, the Taliban imposed an ultra-conservative interpretation and application of the Shariah without the nuance or care found in traditional applications of the law, including those in the Pashtun-dominated south and east. As a movement, the Taliban enjoyed considerable popularity; as a government, the Taliban had much less grassroots success. Under the Taliban regime, Afghanistan was diplomatically and politically isolated from the international community, save for Pakistani and Saudi relations. Severe drought and the cut-off of international development assistance during the Taliban's reign exacerbated the existing humanitarian crisis.

Since their removal from power in 2001, the Taliban have regressed from a government back into a movement. The neo-Taliban are much less a cohesive hierarchy than the original movement was, and they currently function as a fluid coalition of semi-autonomous insurgent groups. Although the Taliban remain loyal to the leadership of Mullah Omar, they have a considerable degree of military freedom in the current insurgency. For example, prominent commander and Taliban hardliner Mullah Dadullah, head of Taliban military operations in both Kandahar and Helmand provinces, has a free hand in military decision-making in the anti-NATO campaign. Different pockets of Taliban resistance have exhibited contradictory behaviours, some promising a kinder, gentler Taliban that will allow greater social freedoms, while others continue to blow up schools. Such contradictory manifestations demonstrate that the movement has

dissolved into a traditional Afghan, guerrilla-style warfare, wherein a lack of a strong central command structure makes it difficult for NATO to identify combatants and groups.

Currently, the Taliban have the strongest local support in rural southern Afghanistan, where ethnic allegiances and ideological compatibility are most potent. Rural Pashtuns have a deep-seated xenophobia and an innate hostility towards foreign occupation. Reaction to the presence of armed forces has prompted a reflexive and violent resistance in the isolated rural south, especially as NATO troops conduct invasive anti-Taliban actions in the villages. The active combat mission, designed to seek out and destroy both dormant and operational Taliban forces, has resulted in large civilian casualties in the southern villages in areas such as the Panjwaii and Musa Qala districts. Because of the loss of civilian life, these actions have, on the whole, fostered increased support for anti-NATO and anti-government insurgency, including support for the Taliban. In this context most rural Pashtuns, regrettably, do not particularly distinguish between Canadian, British, American, or Soviet forces.

The nature of the anti-NATO insurgency has further evolved as local Pashtun tribes were antagonized. Not only are Taliban out to kill Canadian troops, but victimized Kandahari tribes will also seek revenge for the death of their family members. Mullah Dadullah precisely expressed this vicious circle with his statement that “for every Talib you kill, I can recruit twenty more.”

Suicide bombing is a new military tactic wholly foreign to Afghans; such a tactic would not have been considered socially or culturally acceptable in Pashtun culture. This shift demonstrates an important indicator of the ideological sway held by al-Qa’ida in Afghanistan and by the Taliban leadership. Though the Taliban stem from the Hanafi school of Sunni Islam and are therefore intrinsically opposed to Wahhabist doctrine, the increase in suicide bombing attacks indicate that, in the battle for “hearts and minds,” the al-Qa’ida message has been propagated more effectively than alternate views.

Non-Taliban Spoiler Groups

Although the Taliban insurgency is a key factor in understanding insecurity in the south, there are also a number of non-Taliban actors undermining the central government’s capacity. For example, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar’s Hizb-i-Islami group, which in the past never enjoyed alliance with, or even acceptance by, the Taliban during their reign, has declared its support for al-Qa’ida and the anti-NATO insurgency.

Perhaps the most important of non-Taliban spoiler groups are the former Tajik-dominated Northern Alliance warlords (many of whom are now members of the current government) who retain private militias and dominate the countryside in private fiefdoms. These high-level commanders enjoy a much clearer chain of authority with their militias than the Taliban insurgency does, and they exercise a considerable degree of influence on their respective turfs. Mid-level and local commanders under the authority of these warlords have been accused of abusing and exploiting local populations. United States Army officials have admitted that some intelligence on Taliban whereabouts from warlord allies has been faulty, and has even been exploited to spark American aerial bombardment against rival factions rather than as a counter-insurgency measure.

The power of warlord-run parastatal and non-state militias has implications for all aspects of Afghan security, particularly as spoiler groups have infiltrated the nation-building process. Efforts have been made in security sector reform (SSR) to undermine this warlord power, particularly through the creation of the weak, but at least nationally-recruited Afghan National Army (ANA). The locally recruited and poorly trained Afghan National Police (ANP), however, has been accused of extreme corruption and co-option by local strongmen, essentially giving the ANP a reputation of being local thugs now dressed in new uniforms that give them political legitimacy.

The Afghan Security Forces (ASF) are also considered part of the national security architecture; the ASF, however, falls under American command, is financed through the American payroll, and functions as the Afghan contingent to American-led counter-insurgency operations. While U.S. and NATO forces have stated that they benefit from the knowledge of the terrain and guerrilla warfare that the ASF contributes, these soldiers are also local recruits with paramilitary associations and bloody militia histories. As such,

the ANP, auxiliary police, and ASF often only complicate or worsen the already complex security situation in the countryside.

The degree to which these official security forces moonlight as criminal gangsters is the subject of much debate in the security reform field. Criminality has surged since the fall of the Taliban, resulting from a combination of militia impunity and economic desperation. Forms of reported criminal violence include militia rape, murder, kidnapping, bride-napping, human organ trafficking, human trafficking, opium production, extortion, arms trafficking, and racketeering. One must therefore take into consideration the role of criminal gangs and profit-maximizing militia groups, rather than incorrectly assuming that human rights violations are solely related to the insurgency. "Law-and-order"-oriented Taliban also profit in the public eye from this lawlessness.

Understanding the extent of the damage these diverse spoiler groups do to the nation-building process is difficult. In southern Afghanistan, the most important security consideration remains the capacity of the Taliban to spur an ethnically and ideologically driven resistance against perceived NATO imperialism. Association with despised predatory local powerbrokers can further de-legitimate NATO forces. Though many internally displaced persons (IDPs) and affected villagers have remained neutral in their affiliations, neutrality is often not long an option; the balance of allegiances can be tipped rapidly in the Afghan environment, especially when NATO forces are perceived as being, ultimately, a transient presence.

IV MANAGING THE AFGHAN SOUTH

INSECURITY AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH

The average Kosovar got 25 times more assistance after 11 weeks of air war than Afghanistan got after 20 years. And in terms of peacekeeping, Kosovo got 50 times more on a per capita basis than Afghanistan.¹

In Afghanistan, security and development are integrally linked; it is futile to proceed with one without the other. It has been argued that Canada's current civilian development policies are not achieving the necessary success, because they are compromised through close association with the military presence. At the same time, the limited nature of reconstruction and economic opportunities in the south likewise impacts negatively on the Canadian military presence, putting Canadian soldiers at further risk and jeopardizing success.

As was noted in our summary segment, the alleviation of poverty is a critical component of securing stability in Afghanistan, an issue problematized by the relative dearth of sufficient contributions from donor communities. The south in particular has had even less access to development assistance than other parts of the country, even as it faces a hunger crisis, drought, the destruction of livelihoods through poppy crop eradication, aerial bombardment, and a growing insurgency. The devastating famine occurring at present in southern Afghanistan is the result of a dysfunctional aid delivery system marred by an inability to distribute food aid proportionally among the population or even to monitor its reach to southern Afghanistan's most vulnerable population. Furthermore, southern Afghanistan has the lowest number of hospitals of any area, despite the violence there that increases the need to treat the growing number of victims of the conflict. The health sector in Kandahar is insufficiently funded, as well. And finally, the south has the lowest number of girls in school and maintains only one severely under-resourced university.

RATING CANADA'S DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN THE SOUTH TO DATE

With Canada's major military commitment in Kandahar, one would expect to see a comparable level of humanitarian assistance, and where possible, development assistance. The CIDA expects to spend up to \$20 million this fiscal year in Kandahar (of the planned \$100 million aid disbursement across the country)

¹ James Dobbins (23 Sept. 2003). Dobbins was the first U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan after the defeat of the Taliban and is a leading expert on post-conflict peacebuilding.

to be delivered primarily through the PRT. It will disburse even more next year in coordination with the relevant local Afghan ministries. Canada also contributes to the Afghan National Programs that benefit Kandahar Province as well as the rest of the nation.

Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT) is spending approximately \$10–14 million in Kandahar this fiscal year through the PRT. The Department of National Defence (DND) also contributes through the Commander's Contingency Fund on numerous smaller initiatives. The critical question is whether this is enough to reverse the situation in Kandahar.

The British, whose military contribution to ISAF operates in the southern province of Helmand, recognized the need for a greater level of development assistance as a strategy to address insecurity in that Taliban-ridden province. The Department for International Development (DFID), the United Kingdom's international development agency, in the summer of 2006 created a new \$55 million programme to be managed by the Afghan government to alleviate poverty through access to credit, assistance to farmers, road- and bridge-building schemes (providing employment and increasing access to markets), and improving access to clean water and sanitation.

The distribution of food aid is rarely monitored beyond Kandahar City; this makes food supplies and distribution networks in the province vulnerable to abuse and corruption and intensifies the political power of corrupt individuals and institutions based on their control over essential resources. The problem of corruption in Afghanistan has begun to receive acknowledgement by donors and is consistently flagged by Afghan civil society organizations as a major concern. But little has been done to address the causes of corruption at all levels of government – such as the insufficient salaries of civil servants and police – and in the aid industry, or to put in place monitoring and accountability systems to punish those perpetuating corrupt practices.

Development goals are also hindered by the understandable reluctance of international and local NGOs to operate in the region owing to endemic insecurity. Humanitarian workers have been threatened, attacked, and killed in the southern provinces; project sites are vulnerable to sabotage and attack by insurgents, and they receive little direct protection from the ISAF troops operating there, as they have other priorities. Numerous Afghan organizations (such as the Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees [DACAAR]) have halted all operations in the south, as have large international agencies like Oxfam. In the south, one in four children will die before the age of five, 70 percent of children are malnourished, and 2.5 million people are in urgent need of more food assistance, as estimated by the World Food Programme (WFP).

MILITARY OPERATIONS

The Canadian Forces were embroiled in an intense series of military engagements as soon as they were sent to Kandahar. They have operated with bravery. The parallel Dutch deployment in the neighbouring region of Uruzgan proceeded much more smoothly. Their slower, less intrusive approach seems to have resulted in far fewer casualties among soldiers and civilians, as well as a better “blending” with the local conditions. But Uruzgan does not pose as great a security challenge. There are those who believe the Dutch, through local tribal elders, essentially struck a bargain with the Taliban to stay out of each other's way. The Taliban are also known to have singled out Kandahar as a priority.

NATO has acknowledged that its single most important mistake in 2006 was the unacceptable numbers of innocent bystanders who lost their lives during military operations. This was, of course, not intentional; preventing a similar situation would not be an easy task, and would entail some risk. Yet if the local population becomes alienated from those troops trying to help them, the results will be irreversible.

There are thus significant differences in the use of military force by NATO countries in Afghanistan. In the south, in particular, a choice must be made between either negotiating with the insurgents or confronting them. The Dutch approach in Uruzgan deployed more progressively, consulted the local leaders before showing up in force in their sectors, and generally avoided any direct confrontation with the insurgents. Discussions and local truces negotiated with local elders (such as the British experimental one in Musa Qala in Helmand which recently collapsed) can significantly reduce unnecessary destruction and loss of

life. If conducted in bad faith, however, they can also provide the insurgents with havens from which to regroup.

There are also considerable differences from one PRT to the next, depending on the policy of the country in charge. While in the Canadian PRT in Kandahar, the military can in principle be directly involved in reconstruction and development work; in the north, in Kunduz, the German PRT strictly forbids it. By their presence and coordination efforts, PRTs have certainly brought aid and reconstruction into regions that were neglected. They also signal that a simplistic Manichean military approach has been abandoned for a much more comprehensive understanding of the conditions that will facilitate a durable solution to the violence in Afghanistan and beyond. Mixing humanitarian with military efforts is a delicate matter considering the neutrality professed by most humanitarian organizations following decades of experience in conflict situations. That said, there must at least be immediate assistance available to villages from which the military have operated and caused damage. Money must be immediately put into the hands of villagers to rebuild.

The *size of the foreign military presence* in Afghanistan has been well below what might have been expected from the start. In the southern sector, there are approximately 6 soldiers per 100 square kilometres. In Bosnia, a country less than a third the size of Afghanistan, there are still 11 soldiers to cover the same area more than 10 years after they were first deployed following the Dayton accords (at which time there were 117 soldiers per 100 square kilometres). In Haiti, the MINUSTAH can count on 24 soldiers for every 100 square kilometres. If an insurgent is faced with overwhelming force, he is less likely to engage in violent actions. The level of violence in the south in 2006 is a reflection of how little force ISAF can muster on the ground. More importantly, the numbers show just how little political will – as distinct from rhetoric – countries have when it comes to Afghanistan. While well-conceived tactics are important, political will is essential to defeat an insurgency.

V STATE BUILDING: AFGHANISTAN IN PERSPECTIVE

The extremely difficult and typically protracted task of state building lies at the heart of the challenge in Afghanistan, entailing the construction or reconstruction of sustainable institutions of governance capable of providing citizens with physical and economic security and with a genuine voice in political decision making. While some progress in this direction has been made following the fall of the Taliban, the much larger and more challenging process of regime consolidation, economic change, and entrenchment of home-grown Afghan pluralist dynamics is still far from accomplished; it may not even be achievable in any realistic time frame. Generalizing from the record of state-building efforts in other recent post-conflict settings, the international community should not contemplate the withdrawal of ISAF forces or of foreign NGOs until after a consolidated foundation has been laid for self-sustaining state institutions. Indeed, what is required is greater commitment. Long-term commitment and ongoing investment are both needed. Expectations by members of the international community of rapid results in return for efforts and resources expended in short-term state-building are likely to be highly unrealistic, and can even be counter-productive to the overall goals of an intervention mission.

Moreover, successful state-building and regime legitimization are inextricably linked to other critical issues such as the defeat or de-radicalization of extremist forces, constriction of the present narco-economy over the longer term, and the establishment of a rule-bound framework of state institutions untainted by widespread administrative corruption or local level “state capture” by criminal and radical elements.

THE POST-BONN GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

Implementation of the goals outlined in the Bonn Conference process regarding governance, reconciliation, and assistance in Afghanistan has proved to be extremely slow and rather unsuccessful in some areas, weakening the government’s overall credibility. Key problems include a lack of capacity in the public administration and judicial sectors, and the inability of the government to achieve broad representation of ethnic and social groups critical to the promotion of national unity and reconciliation. These difficulties were aggravated by the behaviour of entrenched regional and factional leaders, some of whom maintain their own territorial fiefdoms and amass wealth through corrupt practices, including the

drug trade. They were compounded by the slow pace of economic construction, linked in turn to insufficient international funding and mounting security problems. In this environment, the ousted forces of the Taliban regime – who never accepted defeat and were not co-opted into the Bonn process – gradually began regrouping, playing on the government’s weaknesses and shortcomings, reviving old alliances, and establishing new allies, all this even as they were mobilizing resources and recruits within and outside the country.

The early disregard by the new Afghan government of the defeated Taliban – admittedly under difficult conditions for a new regime with its highly limited sovereignty – prevented the creation of a comprehensive amnesty program for selective reintegration of members of the losing side into the new society. And once Afghanistan had an operational, post-Bonn political system, including an elected legislature, it became more difficult politically to approach or co-opt members of armed groups such as the Taliban, who were now viewed as already outside the “legitimate political process.”

Under these circumstances, a vicious cycle gradually arose in many areas of the country: problems of insecurity obstructed reconstruction; blocked reconstruction fostered insecurity; and security and reconstruction difficulties prevented sufficient progress in the area of governance reform for the promotion of public order and significant economic progress. By the fall of 2006, such interdependent difficulties resulted in a highly deteriorated situation, especially in Afghanistan’s Pashtun-dominated regions of the east and south; a continuing trend which presently is a source of urgent concern for Canada and the international community.

THE SECURITY-GOVERNANCE-RECONSTRUCTION NEXUS

Military security lies at the heart of any substantial progress in governance and economic development. Robust Canadian and international military action is essential to halt suicide attacks, roadside bombings, and the abduction of people working for government and private organizations. Assisting the Afghan army to achieve its objectives and being publicly perceived as a viable defence force is closely linked to the regime’s own legitimacy. Recent tactics by the Canadian military such as embedding small teams of soldiers in Afghan units have been helpful, and efforts to retrain the Afghan army (currently under way with the assistance of a Canadian detachment) are early positive steps. But only when people in local communities recognize that they are truly safe from violent retribution when they assist the ANA and public authorities can more progress be made.

Clearly military means cannot impose the organic processes of state-building, accountability of government, or pluralism. But a framework of security is a necessary precondition for citizen participation in the polity and economy and for the operation of an educational system to help nurture such practices.

RULE-OF-LAW AND RECONCILIATION

Traditional Afghan methods of adjudication by local and tribal institutions (jirga/shura-based, informal justice) are still widely and generally productively utilized for addressing the bulk of legal disputes in the country, including non-political murders, small claims, criminal matters, and so on. But such traditional methods of justice – and sometimes injustice – need to be supplemented by a viable, country-wide, formal state court system presided over by qualified judges (at present, 50 percent of the approximately 1500 judges have no higher education) and “sensitized” to international legal norms and basic principles of human rights. Moreover, in the current context of low salaries, corruption in the justice system is rife. Courts are also backlogged, and record keeping is extremely poor. As one Afghan judge recently pointed out, “In the whole country, we may not even have two qualified defence lawyers ... This kind of justice system, which is not clear and transparent, threatens the government and democracy.”

President Karzai has promised his foreign donors that he will rebuild the country’s justice system by 2010 (ironically, the same year that the Taliban recently identified as their target for seizing control of the entire country), but the Italian-led effort to establish legal reform has been very slow. If NATO and the international community are serious about their commitment to Afghanistan’s state-building process – and want ordinary Afghan citizens to develop trust in a formal justice system – expanded assistance for legal development is a seminal area.

The December 2006 launch of the “Action Plan of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for Peace, Justice, Reconciliation” may also be a step forward in transitional justice development. But it will take time and substantial foreign funding to implement. And, as a recent Human Rights Watch report indicates, “several highly placed members of the current Afghan government and legislature were implicated during the brutal fighting that killed or displaced several hundred Kabul residents over the early 1990s and precipitated the rise of the Taliban.”

FOSTERING POLITICAL INCLUSION: “TALKING TO THE TALIBAN”

Following the creation of secure local conditions, equally essential is the *de-radicalization of forces that are presently hostile to the regime, and when possible, their incorporation into the political process*. Achieving this goal will require far more than episodic, jirga-centred dialogue between the government and extremist anti-state elements, the tokenistic representation of former radical figures in official state agencies, or the negotiation of ad hoc, local, cease-fire agreements with militant forces. What is needed is a process of substantial conversion or reorientation of anti-state elements into an open and non-violent political dynamic.

NATO countries do not seemingly now have the resolve to invest the huge new financial, human, and logistical resources – and long years – required to vanquish the Taliban on the battlefield. If NATO states it will only be satisfied with a decisive military victory, the Taliban will call our bluff. The Taliban have demonstrated greater resolve, tactical efficiency, and ability to absorb the costs of war over the long term than have NATO forces. While the Taliban cannot achieve decisive military victory on the ground, as spoilers they are able to continually undermine the capacity of the central government. They are convinced that continued fighting will further reduce the resolve of NATO forces and increase the potential for Taliban victory. Thus, the current calculus of interests for Taliban decision-makers favours continued fighting. Given the costs of war, NATO needs to look candidly at the prospects – aware that there can be no guarantees – of a political solution.

Any NATO effort to negotiate successfully with the Taliban involves changing the calculus of interest for Taliban decision-makers themselves; for NATO, it can only be judged a success if the Taliban come to favour a political settlement, refrain from violence, accept inclusion within the central government (and an ability to influence its character), and above all, stop providing a safe haven for al-Qa’ida fighters. This is a long shot, and it can only come about if the incentive structure of carrots and sticks is sufficiently powerful to influence Taliban decisions.

New deterrents and incentives for the Taliban are most effectively negotiated only via backchannels. Musharraf could be directly approached on such an initiative, but conceivably, for reasons of political deniability, he might prefer to remain aloof from such bargaining in order to retain the fig leaf of deniability. The ISI, as the key covert action arm of Pakistan in Afghanistan, is the ultimate and most discreet channel for such negotiations. It would also allow NATO to detail its mission objectives, red lines, and irreducible minimum goals to Taliban decision makers that otherwise may not be fully grasped in the often paranoid Pakistani fundamentalist context.

Carrots

Making political participation an attractive incentive for the Taliban requires both an ideological and a pragmatic appeal. How powerful that power is permitted to be becomes a key point of negotiations and a reflection of the correlation of forces on the ground.

The Taliban could be enticed by an opportunity to come in from the cold, join the government, achieve a certain legitimacy, and pursue their own interests from within. They could focus on issues key to them such as amnesty for themselves, elimination of warlords and corruption, economic gains, development and jobs in the Pashtun regions, resource sharing, the need to include more Islamic values, and a circumscribed relationship with the West. But the Taliban does not share a pluralist or democratic vision of governance and currently aspires to dominance in the political order – a goal that directly translates into greatly enhanced Pashtun power as well. How readily will they be willing to give up on prospects for total victory?

Sticks

While the Taliban are confident of their ability to force NATO to a stalemate in the Pashtun regions, what they may not fully grasp is the ability of NATO to impose the same stalemate on the Taliban's own ambitions through a NATO resolve to stabilize the rest of the country (non-Pashtun areas). More importantly, NATO can, with very little cost or effort and through indefinite, sustained financial and logistical support to the government and the Northern Alliance against the Taliban, accept a situation of protracted civil war that the Taliban cannot win, and that might eventually even lead to long-term failure for the movement.

The stakes become vastly raised – even more dramatically for Pakistan and the ISI – if NATO should additionally acquiesce to a major role for India in Afghanistan – Islamabad's ultimate *bête noire*. This kind of scenario greatly enhances the attractiveness of a political deal in Afghanistan, even one involving limitations on the Taliban's ambitions while including them in the political game – an important goal for Pakistan.

Nonetheless, proposals to reach out to the “less hardened Taliban” and bring them “in from the cold” require clear thinking and concrete steps, including the reaction of people in other parts of the country. Differentiating members of an extremist organization according to their different levels of commitment – the “ladder of extremism” – is a well-trodden counter-insurgency approach. Afghanistan needs a revitalized amnesty program that could permit the political integration of those Taliban who are willing to responsibly participate in a peaceful and open political process. But the threshold for such political reintegration should not be set so low that it would permit the political participation of those who have not demonstrably departed from a past of egregious crimes (or, as some have said, “are beyond forgiveness”). Accommodation with extremist Taliban or their temporary incorporation in ad hoc, local arrangements, if not carried out properly, could jeopardize the aspirations of Afghanistan's diverse population, as well as the commitment of Canada and other NATO countries to international legal norms, the appropriate handling of war crimes, and a commitment to democratic pluralism. But these extremists will, in the end, be controlled by Pakistan only if Islamabad believes that pressuring them to make a political accommodation meets Pakistan's own national interests.

VI THINKING THE UNTHINKABLE

The success of NATO in Afghanistan is vital. But given the course of events and current circumstances, there is a quite reasonable possibility that NATO may not succeed. The resources – military and development and humanitarian assistance – may not be forthcoming. “Failure” of the mission would most likely come about if, after one or two more years, participating members witness only increased instability, stepped up enemy attacks, heightened NATO casualties, and a floundering central government – a trajectory that will spur the withdrawal of most participating member-state forces from Afghanistan. Thus NATO must examine the character and implications of such a failure scenario, that is, the prospect of a pullout before achieving minimal goals, creating the perception of defeat. This may be “unacceptable” or “unthinkable,” but it may yet impose itself, much like the deteriorating situation in Iraq.

Given that, it is important to recognize that even scenarios involving NATO mission failure can produce a range of alternative and differing scenarios. Among them are the following:

- **Afghanistan Returns to Civil War:** The Taliban become dominant in all the Pashtun regions, and elements of the old Northern Alliance (non-Pashtun) dominate in the other areas: Kabul once again is contested. Pakistan intervenes overtly or covertly to give the Taliban the upper hand again over the Northern Alliance. The West arms the Northern Alliance against it or is required to take a stand in Kabul.
- **The Taliban Fracture in Internal Struggles:** The Taliban take over most of the Pashtun areas virtually uncontested. But fissures among the Taliban develop; not all Pashtuns by any means support the Taliban's narrow and primitive instincts (the bloody-mindedness of many of them), even as they perceive them as the primary vehicle of Pashtun nationalism today. The Pashtun

region loses out on western development aid with the departure of NATO; many of the Taliban now resent the presence of foreign jihadis who have little to offer them in the absence of a hated foreign presence. Fault lines emerge:

- “Moderate” vs. radical Taliban;
 - Domestically oriented vs. internationally oriented Taliban;
 - Splits over the price of relationships with foreign jihadis and the implications for Taliban maintenance of power in Kabul;
 - Divisions among east vs. west Pashtun tribal orientations (and many other smaller clan/tribal differences);
 - Divisions on how beholden the Pashtuns wish to be to the interests of Islamabad and Pakistani Pashtun influence.
- Jihadi Pashtuns Triumph: The Taliban take over, and moderates are quickly marginalized by a triumphalist spirit among the Taliban that they have now vanquished the last remaining global superpower – after their earlier victory over the USSR. Al-Qa’ida inspires the Taliban with an internationalist jihadi vision that lends support to foreign Islamist elements; many Afghans are now drawn into the international mission to discharge their debt in jihad to other Muslims who aided them in their hour of need against Russians and Americans. The Pashtun become a new factor in the international jihad, even without al-Qa’ida bases as such in Afghanistan.
 - Afghanistan is Divided into International Spheres of Influence: After a Taliban takeover, Pakistan recognizes that it cannot afford to run through a reprise of the Bin Laden adventure of 2001. Islamabad moves to assert considerable control over the Pashtun regions through tribal and financial instruments; they cannot exert full control, but they can deter the most radical elements with the assistance of non-jihadi fundamentalists in the key Pakistani Islamist parties. Afghanistan becomes divided into significant spheres of influence: Pakistan dominant in the east and south; Iran in the west and in central Hazarajat; Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan in the north.
 - A Resurgent “Pashtunistan”: The Taliban successfully extends their ideological power into the northwest frontier of Pakistan, further weakening Islamabad’s hold there. A transnational Pashtun force emerges that operates independently in many respects, weakening any centralized control over the Pashtun regions and opening the door to jihadi enclaves. Pakistan is seriously threatened with losing the NWF and Baluchistan areas to a united Pashtunistan movement. A Pak-Afghan war emerges over the Pashtunistan issue.
 - Pakistan Dominates Kabul: The Pashtuns are emboldened after their victory over NATO and now seek to play the Pashtunistan card once again – calls for Pashtun unity that deeply threaten Pakistan’s integrity, as they have in the past. Islamabad moves to confront and stem this action by asserting increased de facto dominance over the Pashtun of eastern and southern Afghanistan. Pakistan also works to ensure that the Pashtun take over Kabul once again, since the Northern Alliance is dangerously anti-Pakistani, pro-Indian, and outside of Islamabad’s control. Pakistan, working with western financial inducements, is able to deter the internationalist jihadi elements among the Pashtuns.
 - Afghanistan Disappears: It is unlikely, but not inconceivable, that Afghanistan could even disappear and be absorbed by the respective border states in accordance with its ethnic makeup. The basic division would be as follows: north of the Hindu Kush – classically central Asian in its culture – reverts to Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan; south of the Hindu Kush, the Pashtuns go with Pakistan; and accompanied by a huge demographic impact on that country, western Afghanistan goes with Iran.

AID SCENARIOS – VARIATIONS

- NATO is finished as a force in Afghanistan – perceived as a tool of the U.S. military hegemony in Afghan minds – but with its military departure, there remains continued desire for western aid

money and expertise in many Pashtun regions. Pashtun/Taliban are not opposed to such aid since it involves no military instruments. Many Pashtuns and even moderate Taliban are willing to protect aid workers from xenophobic zealots.

- The outside world is compelled to deliver aid to the Pashtun regions via Pakistan, a reprise on the mechanism utilized by the jihad against the USSR. This is not an ideal arrangement, but Pakistan helps keep the lid on – that is, it largely controls international jihadi activity, even while highly xenophobic, anti-western, but *non-jihadi* Islamists forces gain the upper hand in the region and set the mood of Pakistan. It will be a form of “anti-western lite,” possibly the best the West can get.
- The West simply has too much baggage; it outsources the development work in Afghanistan to Japan, China, Russia, India, and other countries perceived as having less imperialist baggage. All have a keen interest in keeping Afghanistan from turning into another al-Qa’ida base.

NATO

- The failure of NATO in Afghanistan is a disaster for the hopes of an Atlanticist, out-of-region project. But some states of Europe find NATO heavily compromised in any case as the key instrument of American power in Europe and become totally alienated by its experience with Washington under Bush’s leadership. The EU becomes willing to try new instruments of its own, especially in the now hyper-sensitive and anti-American Muslim world. The EU is able to function more successfully free of the U.S. “taint.”
- Alternatively, other international forces noted above and including Japan, South Korea, China, India, Russia, Turkey, and even Iran in some respects, contribute to new, looser, ad hoc project-packaging in Eurasia. This represents a definitive tipping away from a Washington-centric, or even Eurocentric, vision of the international order.

These represent a few variations on possible outcomes; there are many others that can be crafted by combining various elements touched upon here. They should be thought about in combination with a significant U.S. defeat in Iraq, with all that portends for the region.

VIII POLICY CONCLUSIONS

- **The battle for Afghanistan must be long term**, requiring a sustained Canadian commitment in development assistance for a **minimum of ten years**. The planned overall budgetary increases for CIDA must be implemented. There is no other way to overcome such deeply ingrained problems in any shorter time span. Either Canada will need to make increased commitments or persuade other countries to do so. Canada “wears” Kandahar, and the fight to turn loyalties in a NATO-positive direction must clearly be the priority.
- Despite some inherent contradictions between the use of military force and the need to build independent civilian structures and institutions, in order to protect civilian lives **a robust military presence** will be required beyond 2009 to protect the civilian infrastructure until the security situation is under much greater control. This involves an increase in the overall NATO military presence and military expenditure; NATO must have an integrated strategy for all member participants that excludes selective and constraining “national caveats” on what national forces can and cannot do.
- Responsibility for the security of Afghanistan must be turned over to the Afghans; much more rapid progress must be made to **increase both the size and the quality of the Afghan National Army and the police force**.

- Excessive reliance on aerial bombing must be replaced by **more “boots on the ground”** designed to keep the military more in touch with the ground situation. Every effort must be made to avoid civilian casualties and collateral damage.
- The **food delivery system in the south requires urgent attention** to overcome current malnutrition and starvation. The Canadian government should allocate a substantially increased amount of funding towards food aid specifically in that region. Effective food aid requires an airtight distribution system which reaches the most vulnerable villages rapidly and in co-operation with organizations having an excellent track record for aid delivery there, such as the International Committee for the Red Cross.
- **Improved security on project sites** for safe project implementation is urgently required, and CIDA should work with its partners to ensure the necessary funding. Specifically needed, for example, are bullet-proof glass, additional security staff, consultation with security experts, more secure premises, safe transportation through insecure areas for beneficiaries who must reach the project site, and mobile project delivery to reach communities in high-risk areas.
- CIDA should organize forums which allow for the **exchange of information on project security** among CIDA partners; this includes shared security manuals and common procedures on office security in high-risk areas.
- **Strengthening the capacity of public sector institutions**, including central, provincial, and local agencies, remains critical to the next stage of the international mission in Afghanistan. This endeavour must also overcome the disconnect, recently noted by the UN, between “parallel administrations” run respectively by the international community and by the Afghan government.
- Innovative alternatives are urgently required to **replace current counterproductive policies of poppy eradication by force** that only alienate farmers and drive them into the arms of the Taliban. Poppy production in Afghanistan has been a problem for over half a century and has consistently defied international control efforts. Meanwhile, the world’s hospitals face a major shortage of opiate-based medicines like morphine. Canada should advocate for the creation of an international marketing board for Afghan poppy producers, whereby farmers are paid fair prices, and overseen by the auspices of a governmental body that would ensure central regulation, legality, and security. Production marketed through this body would be used solely for medicinal purposes on the international market.
- More funds should be allocated towards immediate and visible **improvement of health services** in Kandahar and the south for the local population, including doctor upgrade training.
- A viable, efficient, honest, country-wide **formal state court system**, presided over by qualified judges and “sensitized” to international legal norms and basic principles of human rights, is a critical facet of Afghanistan’s future stability; Canada and the international community are well qualified to provide assistance with this, working within the framework offered by the Action Plan on Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation.
- Canada should support, with technical assistance and financial contributions, the implementation of the **action plan for transitional justice** outlined in the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission’s “A Call for Justice.”
- **Aid distribution in the south** requires immediate improved monitoring to assess needs, identify gaps in the provision of aid, and redirect the flow of aid to ensure better distribution balance to the most vulnerable. The Canadian International Development Agency should co-operate with an established central coordinating body, such as the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) and with relevant Afghan government ministries.

- Canada should provide **technical assistance to Kandahar's sole university**, particularly for the repair and construction of infrastructure, expansion of students served (including accessibility to female students), improved teacher training, curriculum reform, and the acquisition of library resources. The university's medical school is the highest priority. Greater effort is required to recruit female and low-income students from rural areas.
- All CIDA-funded projects should be required to **include budget provisions that will contribute to preventing corruption**, such as higher salaries for civil servants, police, and other government staff known to partake in corrupt practices.
- Canada needs to work with international partners to ensure that the National Solidarity Program (NSP) shifts a larger share of the implementation from international organizations over to Afghan organizations and to the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development.
- Provision must be made for **immediate assistance to villages after military operations** have occurred in order to repair damage and generate cash in the local economy.

(The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and not CDFAI.)

BIOGRAPHIES

Gordon Smith

Gordon Smith is the Executive Director of the Centre for Global Studies and Adjunct Professor of Political Science at the University of Victoria. He arrived at the University of Victoria in 1997 following a distinguished career with the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, which included posts as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1994-1997 and Ambassador in the Canadian Delegation to NATO from 1985-1990. He is the author of numerous books, chapters and articles. He currently holds positions as Visiting Professor at the Diplomatic Academy of the University of Westminster (London and Paris), Member of the Advisory Committee for the Conflict Analysis and Management Program at Royal Roads University and Associate Faculty, Member of the Canadian Group of the Trilateral Commission, and is one of the editors of the journal Global Governance. He holds a PhD in Political Science from M.I.T.

Graham E. Fuller

Graham E. Fuller is currently an independent writer, analyst, lecturer and consultant on muslim and world affairs and Adjunct Professor of History at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. He has a BA and MA from Harvard in Russian and Middle East studies. He worked 20 years as a CIA operations officer, 17 of them overseas and mostly in the Middle East. He later became Vice-Chair of the National Intelligence Council at CIA, with overall responsibility for national level strategic forecasting. After leaving government service Mr. Fuller was a Senior Political Scientist at the RAND Corporation for 12 years. He speaks several Middle Eastern languages. Since 1990 he has been working as an independent analyst on Middle Eastern affairs, particularly on issues of Islam, ethnicity, democracy, and geopolitics. He has written many books and articles relating to the Middle East, global geopolitics, and religion in politics, including a book on the Geopolitics of Islam and the West, several books on Turkey, one on Iran, and a study of the Arab Shi'a (with Rend Rahim Francke). His most recent book is "The Future of Political Islam," Palgrave 2003.

Lenard J. Cohen

Dr. Lenard J. Cohen is a Professor in the School of International Studies at Simon Fraser University specializing in the area of Eurasian and East European political development, with special emphasis on issues of post-conflict state-building, ethno-sectarian conflict in deeply divided societies, and international responses to complex emergencies. His research and publications include studies of international and Canadian policies in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Serbia. Currently he is writing a comparative study of the transition to democracy and reconstruction in the Western Balkans.

Marc André Boivin

Marc André Boivin is Assistant Director of the Réseau francophone de recherche sur les opérations de paix (Peace Operations Research Network), fellow at the Research Group in International Security (REGIS), both affiliates of the International Studies Centre of the University of Montreal (CÉRIUM). He has also worked for the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre developing courses for civilians deployed in peace operations. His work focuses on Afghanistan and peace support operations.

Lauryn Oates

Lauryn Oates, M.A. is a professional human rights advocate and award-winning social activist from Vancouver. She has worked on Afghanistan for over ten years, and has also been involved in international development work in other parts of Central Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Her areas of expertise include Islam and gender, access to information communications technologies, fundraising and communications in the voluntary sector. She will commence PhD studies in Education in Fall 2007.



Canadian Defence
& Foreign Affairs
Institute