

November 30, 2007

The Honourable John Manley
Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan
55 Metcalfe Street, 15th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 6L5

Dear Mr. Manley,

The Independent Advisory Panel on Afghanistan, announced by the Prime Minister on October 12, 2007, is a welcome opportunity for Canadians to re-evaluate our goals and approach to Canada's largest foreign policy commitment in years.

The Prime Minister outlined at least four options for the Advisory Panel to consider. We call on you to take leadership by adding the vital role of development and peace-building to your considerations.

Since a peaceful outcome cannot be achieved by military means, we urge the Panel to investigate the role Canada can play to support a broad-based peace process in Afghanistan. This would include peace-building efforts at the local level, with women and elders. Canada has both technical and financial resources to aid in such a process. Most importantly, without such efforts, local level conflicts and the insurgency risk undoing progress in development.

Further, the Panel should also examine the effectiveness of development assistance and how to ensure benefits reach Afghans living in rural areas. Critical to this is finding mechanisms that maintain the independence of development and humanitarian actors from military personnel to prevent beneficiaries of aid, aid workers, and aid itself becoming war targets.

Please find attached our recommendations for a re-orientation of Canada's role in Afghanistan to place development and diplomacy first. We urge you to include them in your recommendations to the Prime Minister.

Sincerely,



Gerry Barr
President – CEO

Encl.: Canada's whole-of-government approach in Afghanistan: Implications on Development and Peace-building