

APPENDIX I: MOTION ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF COMMONS MARCH 13, 2008

Whereas,

the House recognizes the important contribution and sacrifice of Canadian Forces and Canadian civilian personnel as part of the UN mandated, NATO-led mission deployed in Afghanistan at the request of the democratically elected government of Afghanistan;

the House believes that Canada must remain committed to the people of Afghanistan beyond February 2009;

the House takes note that in February 2002, the government took a decision to deploy 850 troops to Kandahar to join the international coalition that went to Afghanistan to drive out the Taliban in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and that this deployment lasted for six months at which time the troops rotated out of Afghanistan and returned home;

the House takes note that in February 2003, the government took a decision that Canada would commit 2000 troops and lead for one year, starting in the summer of 2003, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul and at the end of the one-year commitment, Canada's 2000 troop commitment was reduced to a 750-person reconnaissance unit as Canada's NATO ally, Turkey, rotated into Kabul to replace Canada as the lead nation of the ISAF mission;

the House takes note that in August 2005, Canada assumed responsibility of the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kandahar province which included roughly 300 Canadian Forces personnel;

the House takes note that the government took a decision to commit a combat Battle Group of roughly 1200 troops to Kandahar for a period of one year, from February 2006 to February 2007;

the House takes note that in January 2006, the government participated in the London Conference on Afghanistan which resulted in the signing of the Afghanistan Compact which set out benchmarks and timelines until the end of 2010 for improving the security, the governance and the economic and social development of Afghanistan;

the House takes note that in May 2006, Parliament supported the government's two year extension of Canada's deployment of diplomatic, development, civilian police and military personnel in Afghanistan and the provision of funding and equipment for this extension;

provision of funding and equipment for this extension;

the House welcomes the Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, chaired by the Honourable John Manley, and recognizes the important contribution its members have made;

the House takes note that it has long been a guiding principle of Canada's involvement in Afghanistan that all three components of a comprehensive government strategy – defence, diplomacy and development – must reinforce each other and that the government must strike a balance between these components to be most effective;

the House takes note that the ultimate aim of Canadian policy is to leave Afghanistan to Afghans, in a country that is better governed, more peaceful and more secure and to create the necessary space and conditions to allow the Afghans themselves to achieve a political solution to the conflict; and

the House takes note that in order to achieve that aim, it is essential to assist the people of Afghanistan to have properly trained, equipped and paid members of the four pillars of their security apparatus: the army, the police, the judicial system and the correctional system;

therefore, it is the opinion of the House,

that Canada should continue a military presence in Kandahar beyond February 2009, to July 2011, in a manner fully consistent with the UN mandate on Afghanistan, and that the military mission should consist of:

(a) training the Afghan National Security Forces so that they can expeditiously take increasing responsibility for security in Kandahar and Afghanistan as a whole;

(b) providing security for reconstruction and development efforts in Kandahar;

(c) the continuation of Canada's responsibility for the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team;

that, consistent with this mandate, this extension of Canada's military presence in Afghanistan is approved by this House expressly on the condition that:

(a) NATO secure a battle group of approximately 1000 to rotate into Kandahar (operational no later than February 2009);

(b) to better ensure the safety and effectiveness of the Canadian contingent, the government secure medium helicopter lift capacity and high performance Unmanned Aerial

Vehicles (UAVs) for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance before February 2009; and

(c) the government of Canada notify NATO that Canada will end its presence in Kandahar as of July 2011, and, as of that date, the redeployment of Canadian Forces troops out of Kandahar and their replacement by Afghan forces start as soon as possible, so that it will have been completed by December 2011;

that the government of Canada, together with our allies and the government of Afghanistan, must set firm targets and timelines for the training, equipping and paying of the Afghan National Army, the Afghan National Police, the members of the judicial system and the members of the correctional system;

that Canada's contribution to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan should:

(a) be revamped and increased to strike a better balance between our military efforts and our development efforts in Afghanistan;

(b) focus on our traditional strengths as a nation, particularly through the development of sound judicial and correctional systems and strong political institutions on the ground in Afghanistan and the pursuit of a greater role for Canada in addressing the chronic fresh water shortages in the country;

(c) address the crippling issue of the narco-economy that consistently undermines progress in Afghanistan, through the pursuit of solutions that do not further alienate the goodwill of the local population;

(d) be held to a greater level of accountability and scrutiny so that the Canadian people can be sure that our development contributions are being spent effectively in Afghanistan;

that Canada should assert a stronger and more disciplined diplomatic position regarding Afghanistan and the regional players, including support for the naming of a special envoy to the region who could both ensure greater coherence in all diplomatic initiatives in the region and also press for greater coordination amongst our partners in the UN in the pursuit of common diplomatic goals in the region;

that the government should provide the public with franker and more frequent reporting on events in Afghanistan, offering more assessments of Canada's role and giving greater emphasis to the diplomatic and reconstruction efforts as well as those of the military and, for greater clarity, the government should table in Parliament detailed reports on the progress of the mission in Afghanistan on a quarterly basis:

that the House of Commons should strike a special parliamentary committee on Afghanistan which would meet regularly with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and National Defence and senior officials, and that the House should authorize travel by the special committee to Afghanistan and the surrounding region so that the special committee can make frequent recommendations on the conduct and progress of our efforts in Afghanistan;

that, the special parliamentary committee on Afghanistan should review the laws and procedures governing the use of operational and national security exceptions for the withholding of information from Parliament, the Courts and the Canadian people with those responsible for administering those laws and procedures, to ensure that Canadians are being provided with ample information on the conduct and progress of the mission; and

that with respect to the transfer of Afghan detainees to Afghan authorities, the government must:

(a) commit to meeting the highest NATO and international standards with respect to protecting the rights of detainees, transferring only when it believes it can do so in keeping with Canada's international obligations;

(b) pursue a NATO-wide solution to the question of detainees through diplomatic efforts that are rooted in the core Canadian values of respect for human rights and the dignity of all people;

(c) commit to a policy of greater transparency with respect to its policy on the taking of and transferring of detainees including a commitment to report on the results of reviews or inspections of Afghan prisons undertaken by Canadian officials; and

that the government must commit to improved interdepartmental coordination to achieve greater cross-government coherence and coordination of the government's domestic management of our commitment to Afghanistan, including the creation of a full-time task force which is responsible directly to the Prime Minister to lead these efforts; (*Government Business No. 5*)