



**HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA**

CANADA IN AFGHANISTAN

Report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

**Kevin Sorenson, MP
Chair**

JULY 2008

39th PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

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THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

has the honour to present its

TENTH REPORT

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(2), and the motion adopted by the Committee on November 20, 2007, your Committee has undertaken a study of Canada's Mission in Afghanistan and has agreed to report the following:

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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

Canada's continuing multi-faceted engagement in Afghanistan represents both a major opportunity and an ongoing challenge for Canadian leadership in world affairs. That is the overriding thrust of our Committee's Report *Canada in Afghanistan* containing 35 recommendations to the Government of Canada, notably in the crucial inter-linked areas of security, development and governance.

It has been almost two years since we began our study of Canada's involvement in Afghanistan since 2001. In October 2006, Chief of the Defence Staff General Rick Hillier accompanied the then Minister of National Defence as our first witnesses on the situation in Afghanistan. Fittingly, in April 2008, several months before his retirement, General Hillier was also our last witness.

Our Committee's study looked at the totality of Canada's role in Afghanistan, including the many non-military aspects. Sustainable development and achieving a lasting peace were the subjects highlighted in our January 2008 Preliminary Report. In this main report, our perspective on the important contribution being made by the Canadian Forces' mission in Afghanistan is integrated into an overall picture of the security objectives required for Afghanistan's long-term stability. We recognize as well that Canada's efforts must be coherent with the priorities agreed to by the Government of Afghanistan and the international community.

The Committee's report is based on the testimony of many expert witnesses and pertinent supplementary analyses. We have also taken into account the January 2008 Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan and, most importantly, the March 13, 2008 motion passed by the House of Commons (see Appendix I).

In addition we have taken in consideration the London Afghanistan Compact of early 2006 (see Appendix II), the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's new *Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2008-2013)*, the Government of Canada's first quarterly report to Parliament of June 10, 2008, *Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Setting a Course for 2011*, and the outcome of the June 12, 2008 Paris International Conference in Support of Afghanistan (see Appendix III).

The Committee has strived to be as frank and as forward-looking as possible because we believe that the Canadian public needs to have confidence that Canada is making its best effort in Afghanistan in support of internationally-agreed goals that are in the long-term Canadian and global interest.

As Chair, I want to express my thanks to my Committee colleagues from all parties for working in a collaborative spirit on this report throughout a long and sometimes difficult process. This report demonstrates what elected Members of Parliament can achieve on complicated contentious issues. Whatever our disagreements, all of us are motivated by serving the Canadian public interest.

I also want to thank the Committee's excellent and consistently reliable staff for their tireless work over many months, especially our Clerk Angela Crandall, lead researcher Dr. Gerald Schmitz and his colleagues James Lee and Dr. Natalie Mychajlyszyn from the Parliamentary Information and Research Service of the Library of Parliament. In addition, the Committee is grateful to all of the support staff, interpreters, publications personnel, translators, and others who have assisted during the course of this study and in the production of this report.

To my fellow Canadians, taking into account the situation as of June 2008, the Committee calls on the Government of Canada to continue strengthening Canada's contribution to improving conditions for the Afghan people. In light of that, and as matters evolve, I urge you to continue to take an interest and to ask questions about what is Canada's largest and most complex international engagement since the war in Korea over a half century ago.

The future of Afghanistan is one of global and regional concern affecting our national interest on the ground every day. We all have a responsibility to see that Canada puts its best foot forward on what the Committee recognizes will be a long and sometimes rocky road ahead.

PREFACE

There can be no government without an army

No army without money

No money without prosperity

And no prosperity without justice and good administration

Ibn Qutayba, 9th century Muslim scholar¹

The Committee first began public hearings on the situation in Afghanistan and Canada's role in October 2006. Since that time, we have held almost 30 meetings on the subject, and heard from a diverse range of over 60 witnesses on matters pertaining to Afghanistan and Canada. These have included the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of International Cooperation and their immediate predecessors, the Minister of Public Safety (and a former Vice-Chair of this Committee) Hon. Stockwell Day, and the Chief of the Defence Staff General Rick Hillier at the beginning and the end of the hearings process.²

In addition, the Committee heard from: noted international experts on Afghanistan, such as Dr. Barnett Rubin of New York University's Centre on International Cooperation (both in New York City and in Ottawa); Mr. Chris Alexander, Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations (UN) Secretary General to Afghanistan (and Canada's former ambassador in Afghanistan); His Excellency Omar Samad, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to Canada; Mr. James Appathurai, international spokesperson for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); Hon. Flora MacDonald, a former Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs; as well as three members of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan following the release of its January 22, 2008 Report, including its Chair Hon. John Manley (who was Canada's Deputy Prime Minister at the time of the October 2001 US-led military campaign in Afghanistan and when Canadian combat troops were first deployed to Kandahar province early in 2002).

This is to highlight only some of the more prominent witnesses. We were enriched by the testimony of many other knowledgeable experts on Afghanistan from the academic community and from non-governmental organizations, including members of the Afghanistan Reference Group, a coalition of Canadian NGOs with links to partners working in Afghanistan.

The Committee regrets that it was not able to travel to Afghanistan as part of this study in order to obtain further insight on the ground.³ However, in addition to hearing from Afghanistan's ambassador to Canada, we were able to obtain testimony from several Afghans, Afghan Canadians, and noted experts currently living in Afghanistan. For example, the Committee heard from intrepid American

journalist and founder of the Arghand Cooperative, Sarah Chayes, by video-conference from Kandahar City.⁴ Moreover, as the introduction below underlines, Afghanistan is a hugely complicated country in evolution that requires a patient persistent effort to better understand.

Canada's role in Afghanistan is also one of the most difficult international policy challenges that Canadian decision-makers have had to confront in decades. This report follows on our preliminary report, *Canada's International Policy Put to the Test in Afghanistan*, presented to the House of Commons on January 28, 2008, and also takes fully into consideration the January 2008 report *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan* (commonly referred to as the Manley report), and the Government motion on Afghanistan passed by the House of Commons on March 13, 2008 (see Appendix I for the full text of the motion).

The Committee recognizes that events are not static, and that the troubled situation in Afghanistan within a volatile region bears constant monitoring. As much as possible, we have attempted to keep abreast of the latest developments affecting the policy environment -- including making reference to the Government of Canada's first quarterly report *Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Setting a Course to 2011* presented to the House of Commons on June 10, the Government of Afghanistan's new five-year *Afghanistan National Development Strategy 2008-2013*, and the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan held in Paris on June 12.⁵ This report does not have any illusion of being the last word on Canada's Afghan policy. We do not address all of the possible questions in depth, but concentrate rather on three fundamental areas which seem to us to be essential to any sustainable positive long-term outcome for the Afghan people: achieving basic security and a lasting peace; proceeding with reconstruction and development that provides long-term benefits to Afghans; and building governance institutions that will enable a more stable democratic Afghanistan to emerge and endure.

These objectives are at the core of the *Afghanistan Compact*⁶ agreed to by Afghanistan, 49 other participating countries including Canada, and 10 international organizations at the London Conference in early 2006, unanimously endorsed by the UN Security Council⁷, and covering the five years from that time till the end of 2010. The Compact's "principles, pillars and benchmarks" also underpin the aforementioned *Afghanistan National Development Strategy: A Strategy for Security, Governance, Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction (2008-2013)* submitted to the Paris conference of June 12.⁸ Accordingly, these areas are the focus of the three main sections of the report.

Notes to the Preface

- 1 Cited in “Afghanistan: A war of money as well as bullets”, *The Economist*, May 24, 2008, p. 38.
- 2 At the latter, General Hillier presented an overall upbeat but carefully nuanced and detailed assessment of Afghanistan's situation following his March 2008 trip to the country and the April 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit. See *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 23, April 10, 2008.
- 3 As of May 2008, only committees devoted to defence matters had travelled to Afghanistan – the Senate committee four times, and the House committee twice.
- 4 Ms. Chayes and her work in the Kandahar region were profiled in the two-hour CBC documentary “Afghanistan: Between Hope and Fear” that was broadcast on the main network on Easter Sunday March 23, 2008.
- 5 The Canadian document announced an increase to \$1.9 billion in development and reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan over the decade 2001-2011. Afghanistan was seeking \$50 billion in donor pledges for its strategy. The Paris conference, co-chaired by France, Afghanistan and the United Nations, was attended by 68 countries and over fifteen international organizations. See Appendix III for its final declaration. Donors pledged about US\$20 billion in additional support to Afghanistan. The conference was also preceded by an International Civil Society and Private Sector Forum in Support of Afghanistan, also held in Paris on May 24. More information can be found at: http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files_156/afghanistan_498/international-conference-in-support-of-afghanistan-paris-12th-june-2008_6366/index.html . (See also Cyril Vanier and Armen Georgian, “Donors led by the United States pledge about \$20 billion in aid to Afghanistan on Thursday but said Kabul must do more to fight corruption”, Reuters, June 12, 2008.)
- 6 http://www.unama-afg.org/news/londonConf_docs/06jan30-AfghanistanCompact-Final.pdf
- 7 <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sc8641.doc.htm>
- 8 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2008-2013)*, Kabul, April 2008, http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/IMG/pdf/Afghanistan_National_Development_Strategy_eng.pdf . (See also John Hemming, “Calls to back \$50 bn Afghanistan aid plan”, Kabul, Reuters, May 22, 2008.)

INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan is perhaps one of the most nuanced countries in the world and hence defies simple categorization. Very few authorities can claim deep expertise on Afghanistan. Amongst the skilled few who can claim such in-depth knowledge are academics who have devoted a lifetime of study to the region and the country ..., cultural anthropologists who have an understanding of the dynamics within central Asian tribes and peasant warfare ... [and those] who have had an intimate relationship with the country. (...) In my three years of very high-level linkages into the country and the mission, with over 30 voyages to Afghanistan straddling the period 2003-2006, I was amazed to discover how little I actually knew ...

George Petrolukas,
The Future of Canada's Role in Afghanistan,
Submission to the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan⁹

Lacking a comprehensive modern census and a consensus about how groups are to be enumerated, scholars estimate that Afghanistan contains anywhere from fifty to two hundred ethnic groups. As anthropologists have learned, however, many Afghans do not necessarily identify with such categories of classification. How Afghans have viewed such labels depends upon specific political and social contexts and has proved highly variable over time.

Robert Crews and Amin Tarzi,
The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan, 2008¹⁰

Canadians have to understand, to gain a better understanding of the complexities of the Afghan people, including the diversity of their religions, their ideologies, and their ethnicities. These are the things that make up their national psyche, and they are at the root of much of the internal discord. It is important to learn from Afghans themselves and about their capabilities. That's what I hope Canada and Canadians will do.

Hon. Flora MacDonald,
Evidence, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, p. 2¹¹

Scholars of Afghanistan are unanimous that it is impossible to understand the current situation of and prospects for the country without some appreciation of its unique historical and pre-9/11 context. Afghanistan first emerged as a defined territory in the mid-eighteenth century, but did not achieve independent statehood until after the 1921 treaty that ended the third British-Afghan war.¹² During the late nineteenth century landlocked Afghanistan was often seen as a Central Asian “buffer state” between the contending empires of Russia and Great Britain, part of the so-called “Great Game” being played over Central Asia and the Middle East.

Some have argued that the Afghanistan of recent decades has again been the object of a new strategic game among greater powers and interests, both regional and international.¹³

Afghanistan has known only rare periods of peace within a mostly violent history. A modern constitution (constitutional monarchy with some democratic elements) was only achieved in 1964, but King Zahir Shah was overthrown by a coup in 1973 which proclaimed a republic. Following the successive turbulences of Communist rule, Soviet occupation, mujahideen civil war, the rise to power of the Taliban and defeat of its Islamist “emirate” regime in late 2001, the monarchy was not restored. Afghanistan’s new constitution (its sixth since 1923) as an “Islamic republic”, approved by the Constitutional Loya Jirga in early 2004, draws considerably on the 1964 constitution.

The realities of Afghanistan are plural involving a multiplicity of factors and actors. The Taliban regime that emerged out of the rubble of the post-Soviet mujahideen civil war, capturing Kabul in 2006 but never controlling all of the country, was more complicated than it appeared, as detailed in Ahmed Rashid’s seminal 2000 study *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*. Their regime was only ever recognized by three UN member states (Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates). Especially after Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden issued a call to global jihad against the United States from Afghan soil in early 1998, after major terrorist attacks against US interests, and after Taliban outrages came to public attention, there was increasing international pressure on the regime to cease such behaviour and its provision of sanctuary for Al-Qaeda’s leadership and terrorist training camps.¹⁴

At the time, Afghanistan was rarely on the foreign policy radar screen of Canada. Of course, the tragic events of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent multinational military intervention to remove the Taliban regime under the auspices of the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom dramatically changed all that. On September 12, 2001, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) invoked its Article 5 provision on collective self-defence for the first time in its history. Afghanistan quickly rose to the top of the Canadian international policy agenda, and has been there again since early 2006 when large numbers of Canadian combat troops were deployed to dangerous Kandahar province; where, provided certain conditions are met as outlined in the Government motion passed on March 13, 2008, they will remain until 2011.

For Canada, Afghanistan represents more than a military mission with an end date. It entails a comprehensive long-term engagement with that country requiring a coordinated approach among all Canadian government channels involved, notably in the areas of defence, diplomacy, development and democratic governance. In his appearance before the Committee, Colonel Mike Capstick, former head of Canada’s Strategic Advisory Team Afghanistan (SAT-A) in Kabul

during 2005-2006, began by calling Canada's future role in Afghanistan "without doubt, the most important foreign policy debate that Canada has been involved in during my lifetime".¹⁵

At the same time, for outsiders, Afghanistan presents a notoriously intricate and dynamic combination of characteristics and circumstances. Matt Waldman, Oxfam International's Policy and Advocacy Advisor in Afghanistan told the Committee on April 8, 2008 that "Afghanistan is an incredibly local society"; hence solutions cannot be simply top-down but need to be tailored to the local level as well as nationally.¹⁶ Crews and Tarzi refer to Afghanistan's "extraordinarily complex landscape of human diversity". Explaining how the Taliban phenomenon has persisted, re-emerging as a menacing "neo-Taliban" movement that has "continued to shape the politics of Afghanistan, its neighbors, and the world beyond", they refer to "multiple and distinct insurgencies".¹⁷ Other scholars point to the geographically disparate inter- and intra-tribal variations and factional conflicts that are encountered on the ground.

What is certain is that Afghanistan and Afghans have suffered greatly from decades of warfare and instability. It is essential that this terrible legacy be overcome. Into the seventh year of major military and non-military international intervention in Afghanistan post-9/11, Afghans must perceive real improvements in their daily lives and personal security. There has been a great deal of ongoing debate on the balance of positive and negative trends in Afghanistan, and this was evident from the sometimes conflicting testimony that the Committee received.

We heard different views, some more optimistic, others less so, about the situation in Afghanistan. The Committee has listened carefully to such assessments of Afghanistan's current circumstances and future prospects. In this report, our primary concern is with how best Canada can make a real difference in benefiting the Afghan people. A pragmatic approach demands that we face up to a mixed situation that is in flux and in which progress has and can be made but is not yet irreversible. We can demonstrate resolve to help without minimizing the extent of the challenges that remain.

As Mark Schneider of the International Crisis Group put it in recent testimony to a subcommittee of the US House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee:

Six and a half years after intervention in Afghanistan, positive developments include a popularly elected government, a stable new currency, two million females back in school and access to basic health care for a large percent of the population, according to UN and government figures. However, Afghanistan's social indices still rank it 174th out of 178 nations in the UNDP Human Development Index.¹⁸

Afghanistan, as Barnett Rubin notes, has the youngest population in the world (57% estimated to be under the age of 18), making education and job creation key objectives. Most Afghans still live in rural areas, are extremely poor, illiterate, lack electricity and often other basic services as well. Moreover, as Kabul

resident Joylon Leslie has observed, it is not just a matter of throwing more aid money at the problems since “the failure of the government, and of the international allies, to ensure basic security is the single most important cause of public disaffection in Afghanistan”.¹⁹ According to US official sources in 2007, there were “approximately 140 suicide bombing attacks ... inflicting large numbers of civilian casualties”.²⁰ The worst suicide bombing in Afghanistan’s history occurred in February of this year near Kandahar City. More generally, with respect to the effects of the insurgency, Schneider noted the following in his remarks to the US Congressional Committee:

Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, testified earlier this year that suicide bombings were up 27% in 2007 over 2006. He should have added that they are up 600% over 2005; and that all insurgent attacks are up 400% over 2005.

The UN Secretary General reported last month the looting of 40 convoys delivering food for the World Food Programme (WFP) in 2007, 130 attacks against humanitarian programs, 40 relief workers killed and another 89 abducted.

There were 8,000 conflict-related deaths in 2007, 1,500 of them civilian.²¹

Last year was also the worst year yet for international soldier deaths with 230 killed, including 29 Canadians.²² Moreover, In May 2008, for the first time since 2003, more foreign soldiers died in Afghanistan than in Iraq.²³

To say the least, maintaining conditions of security remains a top priority for achieving overall progress in Afghanistan. Although advances are taking place in training the Afghan army, and violence is concentrated in certain districts mainly in the south, Canada’s Chief of Defence Staff General Rick Hillier described to the Committee an increase in “indiscriminate” insurgent attacks, acknowledging as well that “the direct threat [to Canadian and other coalition forces and to Afghan civilians] is still very real”, and that “the security situation ... is still very fragile” for civilians, either international or Afghan, attempting to do development work in the south.²⁴

More generally, as Canadian Colonel Capstick told Committee, “the single greatest need, cited in report after report, is human security”.²⁵ This message also comes through in the latest report (March 6, 2008) of the UN Secretary General to the UN Security Council²⁶, the January 2008 report of the Independent Panel on Canada’s Role in Afghanistan – as elaborated on by its Chair John Manley and two other members in testimony before the Committee²⁷ – and in subsequent international reports on the situation in Afghanistan.²⁸

UN Security Council Resolution 1806, adopted on March 20, 2008, in extending and bolstering the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the UN Secretary General’s Special Representative in Afghanistan – Norwegian Kai Eide’s appointment to this post was announced on March 20, 2008 – reiterated “its concern about the security situation in Afghanistan, in particular the increased violent and terrorist activities by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, illegally armed

groups, criminals and those involved in the narcotics trade, and the increasingly strong links between terrorism activities and illicit drugs, resulting in threats to the local population, including children, national security forces and international military and civilian personnel ...". The resolution went on also to express concern over "the harmful consequences of violent and terrorist activities by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other extremist groups on the capacity of the Afghan Government to guarantee the rule of law, to provide security and basic services to the Afghan people, and to ensure the improvement and protection of their human rights and fundamental freedoms ...".²⁹

The Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan had full access to government information, having as its secretary David Mulroney, then Associate Deputy Minister in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and head of the Interdepartmental Task Force on Afghanistan set up in May 2007, subsequently appointed Deputy Minister to a new Privy Council Office (PCO) Afghanistan Task Force in early February 2008, working "closely with Ms. Susan Cartwright, Foreign and Defence Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister".³⁰ In light of that, the Panel's report³¹ was notably pointed in its critical assessments of past Canadian efforts and approaches in Afghanistan, including in regard to the interdepartmental coordination process itself to that point. The following excerpts from it are indicative:

We are trying to help a country whose recent history has been one long, unending tragedy, and whose prospects still appear bleak. The question of Canada's future role defies a simple answer. ... It is made more complex because we assumed responsibility for fighting an insurgency in a dangerous province of the country and we did so with little political debate and not much public engagement. And that insurgency is far from defeated. (Chair's Foreword, p. 3)

To put things bluntly, governments from the start of Canada's Afghan involvement have failed to communicate with Canadians with balance and candour about the reasons for Canadian involvement, or about the risks, difficulties and expected results of that involvement. (p. 20)

The Panel strongly believes that the Afghan and ISAF governments need first to craft a much more unified and coherent security strategy, and then to impose practical, verifiable criteria for gauging and analyzing the course of that strategy. (p. 13)

Afghanistan remains a shockingly poor and dangerous place for too many Afghans. ... Gender discrimination remains pervasive; the illiteracy rate among women has been put at 87 per cent, as against 57 per cent among men. And Afghanistan reports one of the world's highest rates of tuberculosis infection, another common marker of severe poverty. (p. 18)

[T]he Canadian aid program in Afghanistan has been impeded not only by the dangerous security environment in Kandahar but by CIDA's own administrative constraints. ... Funding allocations aside, CIDA staffers in Kandahar do not often venture beyond their base, in part, we were told, because of restrictive security regulations maintained by CIDA's headquarters in Canada. ... It makes little sense to post brave and talented professional staff to Kandahar only to restrict

them from making regular contact with the people they are expected to help. While we acknowledge the courage and professionalism of the civilians posted to Kandahar, the Canadian-led PRT in Kandahar also displays signs of the fragmentation and uncoordinated effort that prevail throughout the programming of international development aid in Afghanistan. ... We also believe that the Provincial Reconstruction Team, sooner rather than later, should be placed under civilian leadership. (pp. 25-26)

Further, Panel members believe that Canada's civilian programs have not achieved the scale or depth of engagement necessary to make a significant impact. ... It is essential to adjust funding and staffing imbalances between the heavy Canadian military commitment in Afghanistan and the comparatively lighter civilian commitment to reconstruction, development and governance. (p. 28)

Separate departmental task forces are not the answer to inadequate coordination of Canadian activities. These coordinating efforts would have stronger effect, and achieve greater cross-government coherence, if they were led by the Prime Minister, supported by a cabinet committee and staffed by a single full-time task force. Fulfilling Canada's commitment in Afghanistan requires the political energy only a Prime Minister can impart. (p. 28)

The Government has accepted the report in principle, putting in place the aforementioned PCO task force which supports a new five-member Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan chaired by Minister of Foreign Affairs David Emerson, (then Minister of International Trade). Many, though not all of the elements of the Manley report's recommendations, have been incorporated into the Government motion on Afghanistan passed by the House of Commons on March 13, 2008. That motion also reinforces a concern about better communication with Parliament and Canadians that was made strongly in the final recommendation of the independent panel report:

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.³²

There are multiple accountabilities that must be considered. Overall, under the umbrella of the 2006 Afghanistan Compact, all parties must be held to its benchmarks, including the Government of Afghanistan, which as an elected government is accountable to its citizens.³³ The Compact is at the core of current Canadian policy. As then Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Maxime Bernier described it to the Committee: "The Afghan Compact talks about security, governance, and development as three pillars. Each pillar is equally essential, and the three are mutually reinforcing. Canada's approach entirely reflects this interdependence. In fact, we have actively sought out issues where we can best leverage our resources, for example, where our security effort will help build capacity in governance or where our development projects will help ensure a more secure environment."³⁴

Afghanistan is also a sovereign state of the United Nations, and therefore troop-contributing and donor countries must be held accountable to its elected government for their actions inside its territory. The Canadian government must also be held accountable to Parliament and Canadians for the conduct of its actions and expenditures in Afghanistan.

All of this is easier said than done. Colonel Mike Capstick, former head of Canada's SAT-A, provided the Committee with a sobering reality check. Making commitments is important, but the proof is in the implementation. And in the case of the Afghanistan Compact, which sets out the key elements of security, economic and social development, governance, the rule of law and human rights, the achievement of its benchmarks has not been going as well as it could be. As he told the Committee in early March 2008:

The London conference [of 2006 which he attended] was another moment of high optimism. For the first time since the fall of the Taliban regime there was an agreed Afghan international strategic framework and a common language. Promises were made, commitments given, and hope was the prevailing sentiment. That sense of hope would not last long. Within months, the lack of strategic vision and the almost total absence of international cohesion in Kabul began to threaten the compact and the interim ANDS [Afghanistan National Development Strategy].

This lack of cohesion, in fact, puts the entire state-building enterprise at risk. To be clear, the Afghan mission can be lost on the battlefields of Kandahar province, but it can only be won in Kabul. (...)

A few of the most powerful states represented in Kabul, as well as some of the most important development agencies, have consistently weakened the possibility of UN leadership by their insistence on following national and organizational agendas and priorities as opposed to those laid out in the compact.³⁵

It is impossible in a short report to do justice to all of the testimony we received, including the nuances and sometimes divergences in perspective and emphasis. Nevertheless, the Committee is able to summarize some points on which there was virtual unanimity among witnesses. Among these are the following:

- The solution in Afghanistan must be more than military. It must be comprehensive, long-term and sustainable;
- A long-term solution to the stability of Afghanistan as a developing democracy must also be regional³⁶, involving positive involvement by all of its neighbors, notably with Pakistan and in regard to the particularly troubling border issues between the two countries³⁷;
- In regard to combating the insurgency within Afghanistan, a successful approach must include the elements of diplomacy, development, democracy, rule of law and good governance, intra- and inter-tribal reconciliation;

- Canada's contributions in Afghanistan, military and non-military, must have the ultimate aim of making the Afghan state capable of maintaining all elements of security – notably reform of the army, police, courts and corrections system – while providing other basic services to its citizens in all of its territory;
- Canada does not want to keep troops on Afghan soil indefinitely. At the same time, Canada and Canadians must be prepared for a long-term engagement with Afghanistan that focuses on achieving the aim described above;
- Canada needs to be clear about its policy goals in Afghanistan and to communicate those effectively to the Canadian public.

With respect to these points, and the last in particular, there is still work to be done. Professor Robert Jackson, a Canadian who is now Director of International Relations at the University of Redlands, California, underlined at several points in his testimony to the Committee – on the same day that the House of Commons passed the Motion on Afghanistan – the bottom-line question: “What is the strategic goal [that Canada wants to see achieved in Afghanistan]? ... we should deduce the details of policies from the goals, not the other way around.”³⁸

The persistent divisions within Canadian public opinion indicate that this is not as clear as it should be. Following the terms of the House of Commons motions of March 13 and April 8 (the latter passed unanimously), the creation on April 10, 2008 of a Special House of Commons Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan, on which four members of this Committee sit, will help to strengthen the information, monitoring and accountability process. In line with that, the Committee believes that the Government must be more forthcoming about the details of its strategic framework for long-term engagement in Afghanistan.

Minister David Emerson, speaking as chair of the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan, indicated on the same day as the creation of the special committee that the Government will start releasing quarterly reports on the progress of Canada's mission in Afghanistan.³⁹ On June 10 Minister Emerson, Minister of Foreign Affairs, tabled in the House of Commons the inaugural report entitled *Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Setting a Course to 2011*.⁴⁰ Significantly, this report announced a substantial increase in total Canadian assistance to development and reconstruction in Afghanistan over the decade 2001-2011, from \$1.3 billion to \$1.9 billion. It also outlined a pronounced shift in concentrating Canadian assistance on Kandahar province, from 17% to 50% of future programming. The report described Canadian priorities and objectives, and concluded by stating: “Benchmarks are being prepared that will allow Parliament and Canadians to assess progress towards these objectives, and will be presented in next fall's quarterly report. Future reports will measure progress against those

benchmarks to 2011.”⁴¹ The Committee urges that these reports provide to the fullest extent possible frank and detailed results-based assessments, which can be examined by Parliament.

Recommendation 1

Taking into account the decisions of the House of Commons and the first quarterly report presented to the House on June 10, the Government of Canada should continue its efforts to communicate to Parliament and Canadians a comprehensive strategic policy framework for Canada’s multi-year engagement in Afghanistan in support of the international benchmarks already agreed to in the 2006-2011 Afghanistan Compact. Adjustments made as necessary to this Canadian framework should be promptly explained to Parliament and the Canadian public. Future quarterly reports on the implementation of Canadian policy objectives in Afghanistan should include, to the fullest extent, possible frank and detailed results-based assessments of Canadian support to the realization of internationally agreed benchmarks and timelines. These reports should also include an update of the financial costs of Canada’s engagement in Afghanistan.

Notes to the Introduction

- 9 Submission of November 18, 2007, p. 2 and notes 6 and 10 – accessed online at <http://www.independent-panel-independant.ca/pdf/Submission-112.pdf> . Mr. Petrolekas, a reservist, was for years the Vice President, Marketing for an international telecoms company with interests in over 75 countries. He came out of retirement in 2003, donned a uniform and represented Canada and the Chief of Defence Staff to NATO's operational headquarters on Afghanistan. He was also instrumental in developing the process governing the evacuation of wounded through Germany. The full text of this submission was subsequently published in *Esprit de corps*, Vol. 14, No. 38, January 2008, pp. 8-9.
- 10 Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi "Introduction", in Crews and Tarzi, eds., *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge and London, 2008, p. 15. Professor Crews is in the Department of History, Stanford University, and author of *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia*. Dr. Tarzi is Director of Middle East Studies at the US Marine Corps University.
- 11 Ms. MacDonald is the Founder of Future Generations Canada and a former Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs.
- 12 Joylon Leslie, "A Short History of Afghanistan", *The London Review of Books*, Vol. 30, No. 6, March 20, 2008, p. 41.
- 13 Notably the classic study by Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2000, and the recently published volume edited by Robert Crews and Amin Tarzi, *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, 2008, op.cit. Rashid described the "new great game" of the 1990s in Part III of his book, and in his pre-9/11 conclusion on the future of Afghanistan, described it as an "orphaned" conflict: "The world has turned away from Afghanistan, allowing civil war, ethnic fragmentation and polarization to become state failure. The country has ceased to exist as a viable state and when a state fails civil society is destroyed" (p.207). On the post-9/11 successor to the "great game", see Crews and Tarsi 2008, "Epilogue", pp. 314ff. See also Ahmed Rashid's new book, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of National Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia*, Viking Penguin, New York, 2008.
- 14 For background reading, see notably two books by Steve Coll, President of the New America Foundation, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*, New York, Penguin Books, 2005; *The Bin Ladens: An Arabian Family in the American Century*, New York, Penguin Books, 2008.
- 15 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 16, March 4, 2008, p. 5.
- 16 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 22, April 8, 2008, p. Waldman is a former foreign affairs and defence advisor in the UK and European Union Parliaments.
- 17 Crews and Tarzi, "Introduction", *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, 2008, pp. 13 and 9.
- 18 Schenider, "Strategic Chaos and Taliban Resurgence in Afghanistan", Testimony to the US House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, Washington D.C., April 2, 2008, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5370&l=1> .
- 19 Joylon Leslie, "Money, Lots of Money", *The London Review of Books*, Vol. 30, No. 6, p. 42. Leslie's new edition of *Afghanistan: The Mirage of Peace*, written with Chris Johnson, is due to be published in September 2008.

- 20 U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2007*, Released by the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Washington, D.C., April 30, 2008, "Afghanistan", <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2007/103709.htm>. This Congressionally-mandated report also indicates that worldwide there were a total of 14, 499 terrorist attacks in 2007. Iraq with 6, 212, and Afghanistan with 1,127, accounted for over one half of these. "National Counterterrorism Center: Annex of Statistical Information, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2007/103716.htm>.
- 21 Schneider, April 2, 2008, op.cit.
- 22 See "The State of NATO: A ray of light in the dark defile", *The Economist*, March 29, 2008, pp. 33-36. 2007 was not the worst year for Canadian soldier deaths in Afghanistan; that was 2006 when 36 soldiers and one diplomat Glynn Berry were killed.
- 23 "Afghanistan, Still in the Fight: A good week for the Taliban's propaganda machine", *The Economist*, online print edition, June 19, 2008.
- 24 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 23, April 10, 2008, pp. 3 and 9.
- 25 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 16, March 4, 2008, p. 6.
- 26 "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security: Report of the Secretary General", S/2008/159, <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/sgrep08.htm> .
- 27 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, March 11, 2008, passim.
- 28 Three of these reports were introduced in the US Congress on January 30, 2008 by former democratic presidential candidate Senator John Kerry and Senator Norman Coleman, Chair of the Near East and South and Central Asian Affairs Subcommittee: Atlantic Council of the United States, *Saving Afghanistan: An Appeal and Plan for Urgent Action*, Issue Brief, Washington D.C., January 2008; Center for the Study of the Presidency, Co-Chairs General James L. Jones (ret.) and Ambassador Thomas Pickering, *Afghanistan Study Group Report*, Washington D.C., January 30, 2008; Oxfam, *Afghanistan: Development and Humanitarian Priorities*, January 2008. See also International Crisis Group, *Afghanistan: The Need for International Resolve*, Asia Report No. 145, Kabul/Brussels, February 6, 2008. The International Institute for Strategic Studies' annual survey *The Military Balance 2008* released the day before warned that, without greater Western effort, Afghanistan risked becoming a failed state, thereby undermining NATO's credibility and boosting Islamist extremism world-wide (Robin Millard, "Afghanistan is lost if NATO fails, study says," (*The National Post*, February 6, 2008, p. A5.)
- 29 S/RES/1806 (2008), "The Situation in Afghanistan", p. 2, http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions08.htm .
- 30 Prime Minister's Office Press Release, February 8, 2008, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=1985>.
- 31 *Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan*, Ottawa, January 2008, Press Release, January 22, 2008. The full text of the report (see especially Part IV Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan: Considerations and Recommendations) is available online, <http://www.independent-panel-independant.ca/main-eng.html>.
- 32 Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, 2008, p. 38.
- 33 For the full text of the Compact and an official description of Canada's commitments related to it see http://www.canada-afghanistan.gc.ca/cip-pic/afghanistan/library/contrib_and-en.asp
- 34 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 3.

- 35 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 16, March 4, 2008, p. 5.
- 36 Increasing attention is being focussed on the necessary regional dimensions of a
peacebuilding political process for Afghanistan. See, for example, the ideas proposed by
US Ambassador Karl Inderfurth, a member of the US Afghanistan Study Group who
teaches at The George Washington University in Washington D.C., in a public lecture “A
Regional Compact for Afghanistan” at the University of Ottawa, May 28, 2008.
- 37 On the complexities of the border regions, see Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason,
“No Sign until the Burst of Fire: Understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan Frontier”,
International Security, Vol. 32, No. 4, Spring 2008, pp. 41-77.
- 38 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, pp. 6 and 15. Dr. Jackson has been
head of the Department of Political Science at Carleton University in Ottawa and an
advisor to Canadian governments. He is co-author with Philip Towle of *Temptations of
Power: The United States in Global Politics After 9/11*, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills
UK, 2006.
- 39 Steven Chase, “The Afghan mission: Ottawa dampens expectations, Emerson pleads for
realism, promises new benchmarks by which to measure progress”, *The Globe and Mail*,
p. A4.
- 40 The full report can be accessed at: <http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/documents/q108/index.aspx> .
- 41 Government of Canada, *Canada’s Engagement in Afghanistan: Setting a Course to
2011*, June 2008, p. 16. On the reaction of Afghanistan’s ambassador to Canada see Lee
Berthiaume, “Kandhar Aid Focus to Hit National Programs”, *Embassy*, June 18, 2008, p.
4. For further analysis see also John Geddes, “Not a pretty picture”, *Maclean’s*, June 23,
2008, pp. 20-21.

PART I: CANADA'S ROLE IN THE SEARCH FOR PEACE AND REGIONAL SECURITY

*Security enables development; effective governance enhances security; development creates opportunities, and multiplies the rewards, of improved security and good governance. In this virtuous circle of cause and effect, security is an essential condition of good governance and lasting development.*⁴²

Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan

*[T]he war in Afghanistan cannot be won without a peace track, a political track. Why? Because there is a big political component in the conflict in Afghanistan, and a political component cannot be resolved through war alone. The political component has at least two dimensions: one is the unresolved civil war; the other is the regional factor in the conflict.*⁴³

Seddiq Weera,
Senior Advisor, Independent National Commission on
Strengthening Peace and Senior Policy Advisor to the Minister of Education,
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, February 14, 2008

*It seems to me that Canada should be using its very hard-won influence within NATO, literally purchased with the blood of Canadian soldiers, to seek to secure the support of the alliance's 26 members—comprising much of the key donor community in Afghanistan as well as the troop-contributing nations—for what is most urgently needed: a new overarching political framework for international engagement in Afghanistan with much more emphasis on creating the conditions for a comprehensive peace process.*⁴⁴

Ambassador Peggy Mason
Senior Fellow,
Norman Paterson School of International Affairs
Carleton University, March 6, 2008

*... this process will be neither Canadian nor international even, but well and truly Afghan. The Afghans must in effect own the negotiation process. Our role is to support them, to encourage them, to make connections and to serve as a catalyst. We are not necessarily called upon to play the role of negotiator or mediator, particularly given that we are currently combatants.*⁴⁵

Gerry Ohlsen
Vice-Chair Group of 78,
and member of the Afghanistan Reference Group, November 29, 2008

The Military Contribution to Security

Canada and other members of the international community that participated in the UN-mediated talks on Afghanistan at Bonn in December 2001 began their final declaration by stating that they were: “Determined to end the tragic conflict in Afghanistan and promote national reconciliation, lasting peace, stability and respect for human rights in the country.”⁴⁶ The Bonn talks recognized facts on the ground and established an interim Afghan government, but did not include the Taliban, and its final declaration was not a peace agreement. Despite recognition by all of the need for a comprehensive approach that included both military and non-military elements, the fact that fighting continued and, in the words of the January 2006 Afghanistan Compact, “genuine security remains a fundamental prerequisite for achieving stability and development in Afghanistan,”⁴⁷ meant that the military aspects of the international mission were initially accorded the most attention. While reconstruction and development and governance reform are also necessary for long-term security, the strengthening of the insurgency in the south and east of the country has meant that attention and resources focused largely on the military aspects of the mission.

While the UN-authorized International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was initially deployed only to Kabul, in August 2003 NATO agreed to take command of the force, and in October, the United Nations extended its mandate to cover the whole country. By the time of NATO’s Bucharest Summit in April 2008, ISAF had some 47,000 troops from 40 nations in Afghanistan. By April 2008, the United States had 33,000 troops stationed in Afghanistan: some 19,000 in ISAF and about 14,000 others operating separately under Operation Enduring Freedom, with what the Manley panel called “...a particular emphasis on counterterrorism.”⁴⁸

Canadians have much to be proud of in terms of the work done by members of the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan, where some 20,000 had served by April 2008. This work has regrettably come at a high cost; however, with Canadian military personnel suffering casualty rates “the highest in ISAF as a proportion of troops deployed.”⁴⁹ over 80 dead, almost 300 wounded in action and about 400 otherwise injured. Some 2,500 Canadians remained deployed in Kandahar province, which General Rick Hillier told the Committee in April 2008 has been described by Afghan President Karzai as “ ‘the centre of gravity’ for his country... as Kandahar province goes, so will the rest of the country.”⁵⁰

General Hiller told the Committee that Canadian forces have played a key role in Kandahar province since their deployment there, including in the 2006 Operation Medusa, the first brigade-level combat in NATO’s history. As Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Afghanistan and former Canadian ambassador to Afghanistan Chris Alexander explained to the Committee, Operation Medusa, which prevented the capture of Kandahar city and proved the Taliban could not stand against NATO in a conventional battle, “...was a battle waged and won primarily by Canadians, with the strong support of allies and the sanction of the United Nations Security Council. Medusa changed the insurgent

landscape in southern Afghanistan. It restored hope. It rallied the tribes. It devastated Taliban morale. In the end, it brought roads, jobs, and rural development projects to Panjwai and Zherai districts... In short, Medusa allowed the Government of Afghanistan to regain the advantage in its deadly contest of wills with the resurgent Taliban.”⁵¹

The Manley panel reported that: “By many knowledgeable accounts, security generally has deteriorated in the South and East of Afghanistan, including Kandahar province where Canadian Forces are based, through 2006 and 2007.”⁵² In April 2008, General Hillier quoted NATO statistics which show that over 90% of attacks took place in only 10% of the country. However, he told members that in the year and a half since Operation Medusa, Canadian Forces have provided security for the return of Afghans to the area surrounding Kandahar and some reconstruction, and have made significant progress training Afghan National Security Forces.⁵³ The Manley panel had also argued that “...ISAF and Afghan commanders must take every precaution to respect local culture, and to prevent civilian casualties in military operations.”⁵⁴

In response to a question about combined operations with American forces not operating under ISAF, General Hillier replied: “I can tell you for sure that despite the violence caused by the Taliban in heavily populated areas, there is a laser-like focus by the NATO chain of command at every single level, right down to our most junior soldier of any nationality, to ensure that collateral damage is prevented, if at all possible, and minimized.” Following criticism by President Karzai, the Secretary General of the United Nations and others, there is now widespread acknowledgement of the need to reduce the number of Afghan civilian casualties, which, as noted earlier, amounted to at least 1,500 in 2007. General Hillier told the Committee that “we know what the winning conditions must be. That has not been a part [of] having immense collateral damage and therefore turning the population away from us.”⁵⁵

While Committee members have had differences of opinion regarding the mission assigned to the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan, they all agree that the Canadian men and women deployed there have carried this out with the highest degree of professionalism. Members note that the first element of the military mission specified in the motion passed by the House of Commons on March 13, 2008 is “training the Afghan National Security Forces so that they can expeditiously take increasing responsibility for security in Kandahar and Afghanistan as a whole.” The June 2008 cabinet committee report on Canada’s engagement on Afghanistan likewise specified that one of Canada’s priorities in Kandahar would be to “enable the Afghan National Security Forces in Kandahar to sustain a more secure environment and promote law and order.”⁵⁶ With this approach, Canada’s military mission in Kandahar can hopefully consolidate security in that province, while at the same time avoiding civilian casualties and strengthening the capacity of the Government of Afghanistan.

Recommendation 2

Taking into account local sensibilities and culture, the Canadian military should carry out its mission as outlined in the motion passed by the House of Commons on March 13, 2008. Moreover, the Government of Canada should do its utmost to ensure that in conducting military operations the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF) continues to focus on avoiding Afghan civilian casualties and minimizing property damage.

Establishing the Conditions for a Multi-level Peace Process

While the Taliban-led insurgency is the most obvious and direct threat to peace in Afghanistan, it is not the only one. Insecurity in that country springs from multiple sources, including: a history of conflict with regional states that has resulted in a traditionally weak Afghan state; decades of continual war, including a civil war that underlined ethnic and other divisions in the country; porous borders and traditionally poor relations with neighbouring powers, particularly Pakistan; and chronic poverty.

Overcoming these legacies to achieve real peace will require sustained work over the long term. In addition to reconstruction and development and governance reform, which will be discussed later in this report, significant action must also be taken in the areas of Afghan-led dialogue and reconciliation within the country, and diplomacy and increased cooperation with its neighbours. Retired Canadian diplomat Paul Heinbecker told the Committee that:

I do see that there needs to be a very big diplomatic effort. I don't think we've been doing enough at all. We need to be taking a role that is commensurate with the contribution Canada is actually making. One has to be realistic. There are other countries involved, and those other countries are playing a much larger role, in particular the United States and the British as well. But we are the third donor. We have the leverage, and we should be using that leverage. We should be insisting on using it.⁵⁷

In terms of dialogue and reconciliation in Afghanistan, Hon. John Manley, Chair of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, told the Committee that: "We can't win it militarily. We could lose it militarily, however. So we can't send the Salvation Army in; we have to send the Canadian army in. And they have to be equipped, capable, and able to do the job. But if that's all we do... this will not end happily. It will end in an awkward way and in a disappointing way."⁵⁸

Witnesses before the Committee agreed that since there can be no purely military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan, a political one must ultimately be found. To quote Mr. Manley's testimony:

I think it's really important to recognize that this insurgency, unless it's the first time ever, will not end in military success. It will end because of a political agreement that will resolve some of the issues there...We must not lose sight of the fact that ultimately a political solution must be found. It must be conditioned, of course, upon appropriate respect for human rights, including the rights of women and others. It must be conditioned on the renunciation of violence. We mustn't get ourselves into the position where we think no political reconciliation is possible and that we're prepared to fight to the last Taliban, because quite frankly, we will never reach that point.⁵⁹

In April 2008 Nick Grono of the International Crisis Group similarly argued that: "insurgents do not have to win -- they just have to not lose long enough to sap the population and the donors' will." He added "We are never going to shoot the last insurgent and leave. The military are there to create a security umbrella to allow political and development work to take place and the strategic must take the place of the tactical."⁶⁰ Obviously security and political processes must be complementary and reinforce each other.

At the first hearing of the Special Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan Ambassador Kai Eide, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Afghanistan explained the key elements of a reconciliation process in this way:

First, a reconciliation process, when it comes about, must be a process led by the Afghan government with the support of the international community. It must be coordinated and led by the Afghan government. Second, it must be a political process, not a security process or intelligence process. Third, it must be based on the Afghanistan Constitution and on what we have achieved over the last few years...No political process should take place at the cost of these achievements. Finally, it must be a process that is conducted on the basis of strength and not as a replacement for our military operations.⁶¹

While some initially rejected the idea of "negotiating with the Taliban," many witnesses underlined that not all insurgents were really "Taliban," while others added that "the Taliban" itself was composed of a number of groups. Former Secretary of State for External Affairs Flora Macdonald, who has made regular trips to Afghanistan since March 2001, told Members that "...not all the Taliban are militant. Among them are people who desire peace and stability in their country, and many would willingly share those views with others. They're a political movement, and like any other political movement, there's real variation in their beliefs."⁶² Former Canadian diplomat Scott Gilmore argued that: "We lump all these various insurgents, from those who are just merely disgruntled to those who are religious fanatics, under one rubric—the Taliban—and that's simply not the case. We need to be able to split them, to come to terms with some of them and isolate others."⁶³

The Government of Afghanistan has already created several mechanisms for political dialogue and outreach. In 2005, it established a Strengthening Peace Commission, also referred to as the National Reconciliation Commission. According to Surendrini Wijeyaratne of the Canadian Council for International

Cooperation, this commission, which is still active in 11 provinces of the country, “was set up by the government to attract, often through financial incentives, ‘soft’ Taliban and other ‘opposition’ groups... to peace talks.” While one official told her that the Commission has encouraged over 5,000 people to stop fighting and “reintegrate” into civilian life, however, an international official told her that “We would argue that most of them (the 5,000 reconciled) were not combatants and there is a financial motive that needs to be scrutinized.”⁶⁴

In 2005, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission developed a time-bound action plan on peace, justice, and reconciliation that is set to end in June 2008. Oxfam International described this plan as follows in February 2008:

The Afghanistan Action Plan on Peace, Justice and Reconciliation is the measure which most directly aims to strengthen peace. It contains a programme for the acknowledgement of the suffering of Afghan people; reforming state institutions and purging them of human-rights violators and criminals; truth seeking and documentation; promotion of national unity and reconciliation; and the establishment of mechanisms for accountability.

This programme has significant potential, but was only formally launched in December 2006 and is notably absent from the Afghan government’s paper ‘Afghanistan: Challenges and the Way Ahead’ of January 2007. It is only briefly referred to in the [Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board] Annual Report of 1 May 2007.⁶⁵

The issue of *whether* the Government of Afghanistan would negotiate with leaders of the Taliban was effectively settled in September 2007, when Afghan President Karzai took the unusual step of publicly offering to meet Taliban leader Mullah Omar. While the government rejected conditions set by the Taliban – such as the withdrawal of all foreign forces – the issue was now obviously how and when negotiations might begin. Kamran Bokhari told the Committee that: “We tend to talk about either military conflict or negotiated settlement as if it’s a black and white dichotomy, an either/or situation. It is not, because every military conflict ends with a negotiated settlement—and each side knows that. There is no war for the sake of war; we’re not going to be in Afghanistan for the long haul or just for the sake of occupying the country. We need to get beyond that and to understand how to reach a negotiated settlement.”⁶⁶

When asked about Canada’s position on a negotiated settlement, then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxime Bernier agreed on the need for political dialogue, while underlining that “it is up to the government of Afghanistan to decide how and with whom it intends to establish a lasting peace in Afghanistan. It is a sovereign, democratically elected government... If negotiations were undertaken by the government of Afghanistan with people who respect the Constitution of Afghanistan and who renounce violence, it would be better for the international community.”⁶⁷

While President Karzai’s offer legitimized the idea of negotiations, it was criticized by some as premature, and by others as evidence a peace process might involve only the Government of Afghanistan and the Taliban. In terms of timing,

Barnett Rubin told the Committee in March 2007 that “of course people don't surrender when they think they're winning. There haven't been a lot of outstanding successes recently.” He continued:

As long as there is, from their point of view, a part of Afghanistan that is not under the control of the Government of Afghanistan because it's in the tribal agencies and in Pakistan, and as long as that area is also not really controlled by Pakistan and Pakistan does not do more to effectively shut down that recruitment centre, then there is a vast reserve that they have that makes it very difficult to create conditions for that kind of political discussion, although it can be done on a local basis within Afghanistan.⁶⁸

Kamran Bokhari added a year later that: “Of course, the Taliban are being approached. There's a lot of talk about a negotiated settlement. What does that mean? Do we negotiate from a position of relative weakness? Do we allow the other side to dictate terms that at this point in time are not favourable by any stretch of the imagination?”⁶⁹

In terms of process, former Canadian diplomat Gerry Ohlsen of the Group of 78 and the Afghanistan Reference Group argued that:

[...]Afghanistan does not need another back-room deal forged by political elites to save their political hides. But that's what it's going to get if the international community doesn't change direction soon. What Afghanistan does urgently need is a UN-supported, broadly based political dialogue, one that engages all sectors of the society and all communities of interest. They didn't get it at Bonn or at London. They need it now.⁷⁰

While talks would not begin immediately, witnesses outlined a number of approaches based on lessons learned from other conflicts and best practices that could help set the stage for them. Stefan Lehmeier, of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee and the Afghanistan Reference Group, argued that while the motives of the various groups are different and will therefore require different approaches, “...you can assume that probably the majority of actors involved in the insurgency will be open to dialogue.” He added:

The point is it will take a very long time. It will be a process. As you see right now, the central government in Kabul has strict conditions for negotiations, and also strict conditions have been mentioned by members of the insurgency. And at this stage these conditions are not compatible. Where we are today, we cannot have talks, but this is where we are today. Stakes are being raised, and this is where we have to start from, and as the process takes us forward, I think we will get to a point where we can start talking and negotiating.⁷¹

Professor Graeme MacQueen of McMaster University and the Afghanistan Reference Group told the Committee that: “A planned, phased peace process for Afghanistan need not take the familiar three-stage form of ceasefire, face-to-face negotiation, and peace agreement. Rather, we might think of the process as dialogue and problem-solving, first stage; negotiation, second stage; and

reconciliation, third stage. It would probably be very unwise, in fact, to go directly to negotiation between leaders of main belligerent groups. This would encourage undemocratic backroom deals, which is not what we are advocating.”⁷²

Whatever model is eventually chosen by the Government of Afghanistan, Gerry Ohlsen argued that the international community knows how to support it effectively, explaining that “this kind of negotiation would be multidimensional. It would take years. The international community has a long history of doing this in Kosovo, in the former Yugoslavia, in the Congo, in Liberia. We know how to do it. The international community as a whole, the diplomatic community as a whole, knows how to implement this sort of thing... It can be done. It just takes time and it takes patience and a huge commitment.”⁷³

Surendrini Wijeyaratne of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, who visited Afghanistan and conducted extensive interviews with Afghans and international officials in January-February 2008, reported in March 2008 that “interviews carried out... in Afghanistan indicate that nascent peace efforts are already under way. Peace initiatives are currently being carried out by the Government of Afghanistan and Afghan civil society organizations, but these peace efforts are not receiving enough support from the international community and are disconnected, limiting their impact.”⁷⁴ She told the Committee that “with further support and some reform,” current efforts in areas such as political outreach and reconciliation, disbanding of illegal armed groups and in particular transitional justice and social reconciliation “could help foster the conditions for a peace process in Afghanistan.”

She said that most of the people she interviewed on this topic argued that there needed to be “a parallel top-down/bottom-up approach.” In her words:

They said there needs to be work with the central government right now to build its capacity to engage in talks with opposition groups in order to resolve issues of internal governance and internal fighting within the government. That needs to be a top priority, so the government is more functional.

There also needs to be grassroots community peacebuilding. The reason for that is that a large number of disputes that happen in Afghanistan are not necessarily insurgency-related. These are disputes over land, water, marriage, the regular old things, that are sometimes mono-ethnic, mono-tribal. Sometimes it's between tribes, between ethnicities, between different communities. There has been a lot of work actually done among Afghan organizations. Oxfam International, for example, just put out a report saying that grassroots peacebuilding—working on local-level disputes, strengthening relationships within communities and between communities, as well as with communities and the central government—can help build foundations for peace, and it also can help build the government's legitimacy in some of these communities as well.⁷⁵

The Committee also heard from the lead author of the OXFAM report referred to above, Matt Waldman, who argued the need for the development of an Afghan national strategy on community peacebuilding. He added “I think if CIDA contributed that would lead the way and encourage other donors to do likewise.”⁷⁶

Recognizing that Canada is a combatant in Afghanistan, witnesses concerned with establishing the conditions for a broad-based peace process argued that it should both champion such a process and increasingly use its CIDA and other programming to help establish the conditions for it, both through its own programming, in cooperation with the Government of Afghanistan, and in cooperation with Canadian civil society organizations. As Gerry Ohlsen told us: “there is a vacuum right now when it comes to constructive, responsible promotion of a political settlement in Afghanistan. It's never had one, and no one is doing it now.” He added that “Canada can—and we should—fill that vacuum. We should take the lead among our NATO allies, including the Americans: within NATO, within the UN, within the region, and with the Afghan government, as well as with the Afghan people. We can help lead to shape a comprehensive peace process.”⁷⁷

Surendrini Wijeyaratne argued that “In order to have a more coordinated or formalized effort, there first needs to be an agreement within the Government of Afghanistan that it will happen. In the international community, Canada can take that first step and play a role in dealing with some of the political reforms. They need to happen rather delicately behind the scenes to form the basis for a more formalized peace process in the future. Those discussions are going on right now, and now is the time to take a more proactive role in responding to them.”⁷⁸

More generally, she recommended that:

Canada is indeed in a leadership position in Afghanistan, and it should make the most of that position by becoming a strong advocate for peace. To do this, Canada can do four things. It can rebalance its diplomatic, development, and military strategies to place greater emphasis on development and building the conditions necessary for an eventual peace process in Afghanistan. It can encourage the international community and the Government of Afghanistan to strengthen the conditions for a future peace process and to coordinate current efforts. It can promote an immediate peace-making and national reconciliation mandate for the UN envoy, which is under negotiation right now. And it must support a recommitment to the action plan on peace, justice, and reconciliation.⁷⁹

However, as Ambassador Peggy Mason reminded the Committee, “it’s not really for us to sit here saying this is the best process or that’s the best process. It’s really... to throw our weight behind, first of all, the idea that the process is necessary: to champion this, not ad hoc efforts.” She added: “In fact, there are many ad hoc efforts going on, including some by Canada. Virtually all of the countries who are troop contributors are there talking at the local level. We’ve heard of Pakistan doing this. Karzai himself is trying to do it, except that he doesn’t have the trust with the parties to do it.”⁸⁰

In June 2008, the cabinet committee report on Canada’s engagement in Afghanistan did acknowledge the importance of Afghan-led efforts toward political reconciliation, and pledged to facilitate them.⁸¹ While the Government of Canada cannot impose a course of action on the Government of Afghanistan, it can and should continue to state its belief that broad-based negotiations will eventually be

required for the establishment of a durable peace in that country. It should also ensure that its CIDA and other programming encourages grassroots dialogue and other means to contribute to establishing the conditions for such a process.

Recommendation 3

The Government of Canada should reinforce efforts on the diplomatic, military and development levels, to promote the creation of conditions favourable to a peace process in Afghanistan.

The Government of Canada should make a concrete commitment to promote the organization of broad-based negotiations both with the central government, by bolstering its ability to initiate talks, and with local communities.

In its CIDA and other programming, the Government of Canada should take advantage of every opportunity to encourage dialogue among all sectors of Afghan society and all communities of interest, and thereby help to establish conditions conducive to peace negotiations.

The Government of Canada should also promote a peace and national reconciliation mandate for the United Nations Special Envoy for Afghanistan.

Strengthening the Role of the United Nations

Testimony before the Committee underlined two things about the role of the United Nations in Afghanistan. First, it plays a very important role that could increase in importance in the context of supporting political negotiations. Second, it has not been as effective as it should be.

The United Nations has been involved in the most recent international efforts to assist Afghanistan from the beginning, when it authorized the international actions that led to the overthrow of the Taliban regime and helped negotiate the establishment of an interim Afghan government. Nevertheless, many Canadians are probably unaware of the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). In February 2007, Deputy Special Representative Chris Alexander explained to the Committee that:

The United Nations remains at the heart of this effort. There are upwards of 5,000 UN personnel in Afghanistan. This is a fact that is little known in Canada and the outside world, where the focus tends to be on NATO, on the military mission. But these are civilians, and they are part of the largest political mission the United Nations has. It's also an integrated mission, where the expertise of

over 20 UN agencies, programs, and funds is brought to bear on the challenges of Afghans, particularly in rural communities, where most Afghans live on a daily basis.

The United Nations has delivered up to one-fifth of all the assistance that has gone to Afghanistan in the past five years. We have overseen the holding of elections. We have implemented rural development projects. We have implemented, even in the conditions of insurgency this year, inoculation programs for the most devastating diseases that have affected children in Afghanistan, even in the war-affected south.⁸²

Other witnesses, particularly those that advocated the pursuit of a “peace track” leading to political negotiations in Afghanistan, underlined that the UN could play a critical role as a trusted facilitator. While the United Nations is currently prepared to support the Government of Afghanistan in any negotiations it chooses to hold, Afghan Canadian Seddiq Weera argued that the UN mandate in Afghanistan should be changed to allow it to broker peace negotiations. In his words “The UN is the best placed, it is trusted, it has the infrastructure. We need a neutral body to broker peace. If Afghans could have done it among themselves, why would war and terror be housed in Afghanistan today?”⁸³ Gerry Ohlsen added that: “The UN may or may not ultimately lead the peace negotiation. UN blue helmets may not ultimately provide the security assistance during the implementation of a peace agreement. But only the UN, only the Security Council, can actually mandate a multi-dimensional peace operation. Equally importantly, only the UN can notionally lead that peace implementation process, if for no other reason than that it’s the only body that is acceptable to the international community.”⁸⁴

Despite the fact that the United Nations and its agencies have provided real help to the people of Afghanistan; however, Colonel Mike Capstick, who commanded Canada’s Strategic Advisory Team in Kabul in 2005-06, told the Committee that “...the United Nations assistance mission in Afghanistan, UNAMA, remains marginal to the dynamic in Kabul.” He continued:

A few of the most powerful states represented in Kabul, as well as some of the most important development agencies, have consistently weakened the possibility of UN leadership by their insistence on following national and organizational agendas and priorities as opposed to those laid out in the compact.

The roots of this problem lie in the period immediately following the fall of the Taliban. The U.S. consciously limited the role of the UN, and the dysfunctional lead-nation system of the Bonn process proved to be a structural barrier to cohesion. Clearly, this situation is untenable.⁸⁵

Retired Canadian diplomat Paul Heinbecker, who was Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations at the time of the Bonn conference, argues that Afghanistan is simply not a priority of the United Nations. As he told the Committee in March 2008: “I understand that Ban Ki-moon described a dozen priorities the other day, and Afghanistan wasn't even one of them. Here we're transfixed, engrossed in Afghanistan, but at New York I don't think that's the case.” He added:

[T]here are two or three factors that explain the current situation. One is that the UN was attacked in Iraq in 2003, and I don't think they have quite got over it—not yet. They lost some of their best and brightest, and it made the UN, as a secretariat institution, quite nervous about its role in the world.

The second thing is to bear in mind that Afghanistan is one of 17 UN missions. The UN has something like 100,000 soldiers and officials in the field—quite a bit more than that if the Darfur operation ever gets off the ground properly. It has a budget of something like \$6 billion. And Afghanistan is one of those missions.⁸⁶

Recognition of problems in coordination and other areas led to calls for the appointment of a UN “super-envoy” with expanded authority to oversee international assistance, and perhaps an expanded UNAMA mandate as well. Canada's then-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Maxime Bernier, told the Committee in December 2007 that: “We want to work with the Secretary General and the leading states to ensure that the UN continues to play an important role.” On the envoy, he stated:

We also requested support for creating a high-level UN envoy position so that the forces there can be properly coordinated. I can tell you that at NATO, at the Brussels meeting, there were discussions with colleagues about the possibility of a UN special envoy coordinating the efforts of both NATO and the UN, and of other international organizations. The international community should be making a decision in the next few weeks or months on Canada's request, which has been... supported, by the international community. Canada encourages the efforts currently being made to increase coordination in the international community. That is why the special envoy was important to us.⁸⁷

At the end of 2007, the UN Secretary General offered the position of special representative to the British former High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lord Paddy Ashdown. Following opposition from both President Karzai and some members of the Security Council, however, Ashdown withdrew his name on January 27, 2008.⁸⁸ The Secretary General announced the appointment of Norwegian diplomat Kai Eide as the new Special Representative in March 2008.

On the question of the Special Representative, Paul Heinbecker told the Committee:

[W]hen we and the international community and the UN started in Afghanistan and we had Mr. Brahimi as the head of the operation, we had a truly exceptional man running the operation. Even at that time, when we in Canada were trying to say that all of the authority should be invested in this person so that all the different countries would not be competing with each other and the different aid

organizations would not be competing and conflicting and asking contradictory things of people, we weren't able to achieve that, and I would say that subsequently it's become only more difficult to do it.

One of the recommendations in the Manley commission was that there should be a senior UN person appointed. Of course there was talk of Paddy Ashdown being such a person. The Karzai government seemed to be the one that said they didn't want to do that. I'm not sure that should be their call, in fact. I think it would make a lot of sense to have such a person, a person invested with the authority of the international community. At the same time, while the job is not to contradict the local government and to enter into a conflict with it, it is to make sure the interests of the international community are also looked after.⁸⁹

However, Robert Jackson of the University of Redlands responded that since the strategic goal of the international community is to strengthen the sovereign Government of Afghanistan, the decision should be up to it. In his words, "...if Mr. Karzai and the government do not want to have a UN ambassador there, then of course there's not much we're going to be able to do about it. Much of what I've seen is that they in fact think that people who come in from outside will be telling them what to do."⁹⁰

Colonel Mike Capstick argued that whether or not formal changes were made to the mandate of the UN envoy, the real issue would be how much political support is given to the envoy and the UN mission by Canada and other member states, and the extent to which this results in changes on the ground. In his words:

The appointment of the proposed high-level UN envoy holds the potential to redress this situation but would not, by itself, be sufficient to achieve the necessary cohesion...

If UNAMA is to be effective, the appointment of a special envoy must be accompanied by expressions of full political support and genuine behavioural change on the ground. Canada's political leaders can and must leverage this nation's hard-earned influence and political capital to exercise leadership in developing the international political will that is absolutely necessary for success in Kabul.⁹¹

Despite discussion about expanding the mandates of the Special Representative and UNAMA, it was eventually decided that the goals of the international community could be achieved by "sharpening" these mandates rather than expanding them. Upon his arrival in Afghanistan at the end of March 2008, Kai Eide stated that: "Afghanistan has been calling for stronger coordination of international assistance - we need to better respond to this demand. The Security Council has now sharpened our mandate to meet the needs of Afghanistan's people and government. In the past, there has been much focus on the security situation. This needs to be balanced with the political dimension of our work to deliver much needed peace, stability and visible progress for all the peoples of Afghanistan."⁹²

In terms of increasing the priority given to Afghanistan at the United Nations, Paul Heinbecker suggested to the Committee that: "...the Canadian government should—and I presume it's doing this, but given the circumstances it would have to do more—make a greater effort to persuade the UN to take this more seriously, to raise its profile, to raise its place in the UN list of priorities."⁹³ While it would be easy to blame the UN bureaucracy and press the Secretary General to add Afghanistan to his list of priorities the next time he makes a speech, however, the problem goes deeper. As UN representative Chris Alexander told members "...the United Nations is only as good as its constituent members."⁹⁴ Canada must redouble efforts in concert with like-minded states to convince all UN members, including those not active in Afghanistan, of the importance of the mission both for that country, for its region and for the broader international community.

Recommendation 4

Given the essential role that the United Nations must play in Afghanistan, the Government of Canada should work with the relevant regional players, the concerned members of the international community and the United Nations to enable the UN to have the means required to ensure better coordination of what is being done and thereby increase the effectiveness of the UN mission in Afghanistan. The Government of Canada should also use all bilateral and UN channels to convince member states and the UN itself of the Afghan conflict's importance to the international community and thereby convince them of the necessity to make the conflict a priority.

Understanding and Addressing the Regional Dimension

Among the recommendations made by many witnesses was the need, for two reasons, to address Afghanistan within its broader regional context. First, many of the longstanding dynamics in the region – such as the poor relations between Afghanistan and its neighbours -- make it practically impossible to defeat the insurgency in Afghanistan, whose leaders have had a secure sanctuary in Pakistan. Second, the establishment of a peaceful and stable Afghanistan – which regional powers currently see according to one expert as “a potential source of instability through the export of arms, drugs, and ideology,”⁹⁵ – would do much to help ensure both the stability and prosperity of a region that Derek Burney called the “most dangerous” in the world. As he told the Committee, “You have nuclear weapon states surrounding Afghanistan—some actual, some potential...” and added “A lot of people focus a lot of attention elsewhere, but when you consider the countries that surround Pakistan and the capacity for mischief that is in that region, you understand the complexity and the tension that goes with the mission we're performing.”⁹⁶ Addressing the challenges of this region will require understanding core security and other concerns of key actors, encouraging both bilateral and multilateral cooperation to address them, and maintaining engagement over time.

As American expert Marvin Weinbaum has warned, “While most regional states have permanent interests in Afghanistan, international players have repeatedly demonstrated short attention spans.”⁹⁷

While insecurity in Afghanistan has many sources, Afghan Ambassador Omar Samad told the Committee that: “If you ask Afghans... most Afghans think that insecurity has external roots. Yes, there is a component that's internal, domestic, and we know there is some dissatisfaction by some groups here and there for this reason or that reason. But the core of the armed groups that are facing us and your soldiers today, and the soldiers of many other countries, is fighting there for an ideological reason, a very narrow ideological reason.”⁹⁸

The Manley panel agreed, stating that: “History proves how readily Afghanistan can fall victim to regional rivalries and foreign invasion.”⁹⁹ It later added: “Beyond its own borders, Afghanistan is surrounded by a violence-prone region. The mountainous western reaches of Pakistan, along the boundary with Afghanistan, harbour Afghan insurgents who are reinforced by recruits from countries around the Gulf and further abroad. Pakistan's own domestic political upheavals and recurring crises—and its concerns about India's growing economic and political presence in Afghanistan—complicate the region's geopolitics. Iran, to Afghanistan's West, has been a source of arms trafficking into Afghanistan.”¹⁰⁰

Despite the truth of these observations, Afghans also share some responsibility, both for regional tensions and for their impact on Afghanistan. As Weinbaum wrote in 2006:

[...]Afghanistan stands in a dangerous neighborhood. Responsibility for much of the political instability and misery of its people can be traced to external powers seeking to realize their own strategic, ideological, and economic interests in the country. The close and more distant neighbors of Afghanistan have regularly intervened in its politics and economy. Foreigners have sometimes acted on behalf of domestic clients and have organized and armed them to dominate large portions of the country. Although renowned for resisting foreign intruders, Afghans cannot thus be absolved of responsibility for much of the fratricide and destruction that has occurred in recent decades. Still, the aggravating role of outside states, near and far, has also made civil conflicts more sustained and lethal.¹⁰¹

In January 2007, Ambassador James Dobbins, who was the U.S. administration's envoy to the Afghan opposition in the fall of 2001, told American legislators of the role Afghanistan's neighbours played both in that country's “civil war” in the years before before 2001, as well as at the Bonn conference. His testimony is worth citing at length:

Americans tend to recall that, in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the Bush Administration formed a multinational coalition that drove the Taliban from power. It is more accurate, however, to state that in late 2001, the United States joined an existing coalition that had been fighting the Taliban for half a decade. That coalition consisted of Russia, India, Iran, and the Northern Alliance. With the addition of American airpower, and the withdrawal of Pakistani support for their

opponent, that coalition prevailed. Northern Alliance troops, who had been equipped, trained and paid by Russia, India and Iran, occupied most of the country.

If credit for America's military victory in Afghanistan needs to be shared with this unlikely coalition, so must America's diplomatic achievement in rapidly installing a broadly based successor regime. When named as the American envoy to the Afghan opposition October of 2001, I quickly concluded that the United States could not succeed in halting civil war in Afghanistan, however successful we might be in ousting the Taleban, without the support of the very governments responsible for that war in the first place...

By November of 2001 we were working with the United Nations to bring all factions of the Afghan opposition together in Bonn, where we hoped they would agree upon an interim constitution and the membership of a new government. The UN's initial inclination had been to tightly sequester the Afghan representatives from all outside contacts in order to prevent foreign government from exerting malign influence over their deliberations. I made the opposite case, arguing that it was only by bringing governments like Iran, Pakistan, India and Russia into the process that we had some chance of securing a positive outcome. In my view the Afghans would only reconcile their differences if they were subjected to convergent pressures from all their foreign sponsors and supporters. And this was, in fact, exactly how it worked out. Each of those governments, and particularly Russia and Iran, played positive and essential roles in forging the compromises upon which the Afghans ultimately agreed.¹⁰²

This level of initial cooperation convinced some that economic and other regional cooperation would continue. Afghanistan has joined a number of regional organizations in the years since 2001, and regional conferences have been held focusing on the potential for economic cooperation in a number of areas, including energy. Yet regional cooperation has not proceeded as far or quickly as many had hoped. Weinbaum wrote in 2006 that:

Particularly disconcerting are the indications that several states in Afghanistan's neighborhood are becoming more assertive, possibly reviving older geostrategic aims. While none of its neighbors and other interested powers have yet pursued a course to destabilize the Afghan state or threaten its recovery, some seem prepared to extend their influence in Kabul through their traditional, divisive Afghan clients. Only with a renewed commitment of the international community to Afghanistan will it be possible to succeed in holding back these potentially disruptive political currents.¹⁰³

In response to a question about the potential for economic and other cooperation, Barnett Rubin told the Committee that " ... confidence-building measures on security and fundamental issues of national interest are what will make the regional cooperation possible. " He added: "I think that experience shows that countries tend to put their security interests first. Certainly countries under military rule put their security interests first. I wouldn't say all the countries have an interest in stability in Afghanistan. They all have an interest in Afghanistan being stable and ruled by their friends. The second-best solution is for it to be unstable. The third-best solution is for it to be stable and ruled by their enemies' friends. That is the source of the problem." ¹⁰⁴

Rubin, who served as an advisor to the UN envoy during the Bonn Conference, underlined the fact that the states of the region cannot escape their mutual dependence during his testimony before the Committee. He told Members that: “At the Bonn Conference, the Iranian representative came to Mr. Brahimi, who was chairing it for the UN, and said to him, ‘I’d like to assure you that from now on, Iran will not interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.’ Mr. Brahimi said to him, ‘Don’t speak to me as if I’m a child. It’s not possible for Iran not to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, but what we want you to do is interfere in a way that’s positive.”¹⁰⁵

Seema Patel of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington likewise told the Committee that: “The diplomatic front in the regional countries I think is critical. It was during Bonn, and it should be for the long term.”¹⁰⁶ Beyond encouragement of greater regional cooperation, Canada and other states can also intensify their bilateral discussions with regional states. According to Paul Heinbecker, “there’s more diplomacy we should be directing at Pakistan. There’s more we should probably be directing at India and at Iran. I think there’s a lot to be done on that front, and if I were in the Committee’s position, I’d be advocating doing more of that.” He added that: “I would also like to see the creation of some kind of contact group, based in capitals, the kind of thing we used to do for Bosnia and for Kosovo. And that’s the way we brought an end to the Kosovo war, in effect. We had a group of senior officials from the various interested capitals and we got them together, and ultimately we got to an agreement on that.”¹⁰⁷

Engaging Pakistan

The majority of the testimony before the Committee on regional issues focused on the role of Pakistan. Taliban and al-Qaeda leaders took refuge in the tribal areas of that country after 2001, and from there were essentially able to regroup and re-launch the insurgency in southern Afghanistan. American former journalist Sarah Chayes, who has lived in Kandahar for several years, told the Committee of the insurgency in Afghanistan that:

It’s really important that you understand what’s happening in southern Afghanistan, not so much as an insurgency--that is, an indigenous uprising by locals--but rather as a kind of invasion by proxy of Afghanistan by Pakistan using Afghans. Fundamentally, this so-called insurgency is being orchestrated, organized, financed, trained, and equipped across the border in Pakistan. So in a sense, what your troops are doing here is protecting Afghans from this invasion. Now, that’s schematic. It is certainly true that the more Afghans are disillusioned with the government we have provided them, the more likely they are to be tempted to sympathize with this Taliban invasion, is what I would call it.¹⁰⁸

Barnett Rubin told Members that “of course, the official policy of the Government of Pakistan is that they support the international effort, but they think it has been excessively military, not sufficiently political. They argue for a political approach to the Taliban, and also to the tribal areas.” He added, however, that: “There certainly is, in Pakistan, obvious infrastructure of support for the insurgency,

both in the tribal agencies and also in parts of Baluchistan, which includes *madrassas*, training camps, recruitment, videos and DVDs that are sold openly, and so on.”¹⁰⁹

Almost all witnesses agreed that the insurgency in Afghanistan cannot be stopped as long as Taliban leaders based on the Pakistan side of the porous border have a secure sanctuary. Manley panel member Derek Burney told the Committee that: “Unquestionably, the open border between Afghanistan and Pakistan is, next to the shortage of troops, probably the most serious deficiency in the mission to try to counter the insurgency in Afghanistan.”¹¹⁰

While many witnesses told the Committee that Canada and its allies should “do more” to press the Pakistani government into taking action, such as “sealing the border,” others pointed out that Pakistan’s policies were based on what it saw as core national interests, and that in any event it had little ability to effectively police its tribal areas that border Afghanistan.

On the question of Pakistani interests and preoccupations, Rubin wrote in early 2007 that:

A realistic assessment of Pakistan's role requires not moving Pakistan from the "with us" to the "against us" column in the "war on terror" account books but recognizing that Pakistan's policy derives from the perceptions, interests, and capabilities of its leaders... The haven and support the Taliban receive in Pakistan are partly a response to claims Afghanistan has made against Pakistan and are also due to Islamabad's concern about both Indian influence in Afghanistan and Afghan backing for Pashtun and Baluch nationalists operating across the Durand Line.

Accordingly, unified pressure on Pakistan should be accompanied by efforts to address Islamabad's core concerns. The United States and its allies should encourage the Afghan government to open a domestic debate on the sensitive issue of recognition of the Durand Line in return for guarantees of stability and access to secure trade and transport corridors to Pakistani ports. Transforming the border region into an area of cooperation rather than conflict will require reform and development in the tribal territories. And Washington should ask India and Afghanistan to take measures to reassure Pakistan that their bilateral relations will not threaten Islamabad.¹¹¹

On the issue of lack of control over its tribal areas, he told the Committee that: “I want to be clear about the tribal agencies. It's not that the Government of Pakistan has no *de facto* control over them. The Government of Pakistan has no *de jure* control over the tribal agencies. They are not under the government administration.”¹¹²

Former Canadian diplomat Scott Gilmore of the Peace Dividend Trust agreed that: “Pakistan is the elephant in the room, and it is an intractable issue. We, frankly, will not see long-term stability while we have a split policy, as the international community, regarding the way the Taliban insurgents are treated on one side of the Pashtun-speaking belt versus the Afghan side.” While

acknowledging calls within Canada for greater pressure on Pakistan, Gilmore added that there was a tendency in Canada to “overestimate our influence in certain capitals around the world... Afghanistan is the right place for us to be, and that's because in Kabul we actually do carry a big stick. We don't in Islamabad, and our allies that do have already been extraordinarily frank and aggressive behind closed doors with President Musharraf...”¹¹³

Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan had improved somewhat by 2007, when the two leaders signed a bilateral declaration in Ankara in which they pledged to cooperate on confidence building measures related to border security, signed a trilateral agreement with Iran to carry out more joint border operations and information sharing, and participated in a “Peace Jirga.” At this jirga, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf acknowledged that “...Afghan militants are supported from Pakistan soil. The problem that you have in your region is because support is provided from our side.” The UN Secretary General later added that the joint declaration produced at this jirga “was an important confidence-building measure between the two countries and the communities on both sides of the border. Both sides identified the need to address jointly a broad range of common problems, beginning with terrorism.”¹¹⁴

Canadian Grant Kippen, who lived and worked in Afghanistan with the National Democratic Institute, and later worked with the Pakistani electoral commission in the months before that country's February 2008 election, told the Committee that “removal of the sources of insurgency in Pakistan requires a new regional approach and needs to address a number of legitimate concerns of both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Among the most compelling of these concerns are development and the education of the populace in the rural tribal areas on both sides of the border, promoting democratic values within Pakistan, and enhancing governance in Afghanistan.”¹¹⁵ Ambassador Peggy Mason likewise argued that:

No country could possibly have been more forceful in its representations to Pakistan than the United States in seeking to get Pakistan to rein in the Taliban and al-Qaeda in the border areas. It didn't work. Exhortations, no matter how forceful, must be buttressed with international support for processes that address the deep democratic deficit that is at the roots of Pakistani insecurity in the border areas. The results of the recent elections in Pakistan offer a new opening to begin to do this, given the stated desire of the winners of that election to pursue political dialogue with disaffected local leaders in the border area.¹¹⁶

Officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade told the Committee that while Canada was forceful in its discussions with Pakistan on security issues, it was also prepared to help Afghanistan and Pakistan cooperate in such practical areas as border management. Jim Nickel, the Director of the South Asia Division at DFAIT, who had recently travelled to Pakistan's border region, told members in February 2008 that: “We foresee the border remaining wide open, but, with some investment made in the capabilities of Pakistani and Afghan guards,

improvements could be made to border control, on both sides and with mutual cooperation.”¹¹⁷ Randolph Mank, the Director General of the Asia South and Pacific Bureau, added:

In a rather unique initiative, Canada convened senior officials from Pakistan and Afghanistan from October 30 to November 1 in Dubai for a confidence- and capacity-building workshop to discuss bilateral cooperation on customs, immigration, law enforcement, counter-narcotics, and economic development of the tribal areas. It's not always easy to get these parties in the same room, but they seemed willing to work together. We're now preparing for five follow-up workshops to be held in the spring of 2008.¹¹⁸

In June 2008 the Cabinet Committee report announced that one of Canada's six priorities in Afghanistan would be to “enhance border security, with facilitation of bilateral dialogue between Afghan and Pakistani authorities.”¹¹⁹

More generally, officials told the Committee that Canada's focus is on working with the Government of Pakistan through CIDA and other programming to address development and other challenges in the tribal agencies. According to Jim Nickel: “Working with the other members of the G8, and, of course, with the Pakistani and Afghan governments, Canada is trying to deal with at least four problems: economic development, the Afghan refugees who are still in Pakistan after 25 years, security, including the drug trade, and one more that I have not mentioned, border control. We foresee the border remaining wide open, but, with some investment made in the capabilities of Pakistani and Afghan guards, improvements could be made to border control, on both sides and with mutual cooperation.”¹²⁰

When asked about the specific issue of developing the tribal areas, Nickel replied:

[T]hat is perhaps one of the most difficult problems to solve in the area. As you know, even when the British were there, they had no way to tackle the problem. Nevertheless, strategies have been put in place. There is the strategy presently being adopted by Pakistani government with the support of various development and international aid agencies, including ones from Canada, to develop the frontier region.

Canada's investments will mainly be made at community level and will target education, health, the status of women in the area and ways to find jobs other than those provided by the Taliban or the drug trade. This is new for Canada and it is being done as part of CIDA programming. Targeted programs have only been in place for two years in Baluchistan, one of the provinces right beside Kandahar. It is new. We must find partners, and historically we do not have any there. It is going to take time. Of course, this is one of Pakistan's least developed regions. As I said earlier, it is a region where the Pakistani government has little authority.¹²¹

In April 2008, one month after the election of a new government in Pakistan, General Rick Hillier described a recent trip to Afghanistan and the region, which included a visit with his counterpart in Pakistan. He told members that: “We actually

think the Pakistanis are stepping up their efforts on the border in a way that we have not yet seen... ." He continued: "We need them to do all they're doing and we need them to do more, and if they can do more in a joined-up fashion with the Afghans, I think that would bring a great deal of effect." ¹²²

Recommendation 5

The Government of Canada should significantly increase its focus on regional diplomacy within the context of its mission in Afghanistan. In the particular case of Pakistan, the Government of Canada should take advantage of the recent election of a new government in February 2008 to advance cooperation on key issues of common interest, such as the development of the border regions, notably the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, and increased technical and other cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Notes to Part I

- 42 *Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan*, Ottawa, 2008, p. 11.
- 43 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 14, February 14, 2008, p. 4.
- 44 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 2.
- 45 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 5, November 29, 2007, p. 14.
- 46 Officially the *Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions*, see <http://www.afghangovernment.com/AfghanAgreementBonn.htm>
- 47 *The Afghanistan Compact*, London 31 January- 1 February 2006, p.3, see http://www.unama-afg.org/news/_londonConf/_docs/06jan30-AfghanistanCompact-Final.pdf
- 48 US troop numbers contained in JoAnne O'Bryant and Michael Waterhouse *US Forces in Afghanistan*, CRS Report For Congress RS22633, updated May 9 2008, and ISAF. Manley quoted from *Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan*, p. 23.
- 49 *Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan*, p. 26.
- 50 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 23, April 10, 2008, p.5.
- 51 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 42, February 27, 2007, p. 2-3.
- 52 *Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan*, p. 12.
- 53 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 23, April 10, 2008.
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PART II: CANADA'S ROLE IN RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Rebuilding Afghanistan after decades of war is not an easy task, and not one that can be reduced to a simple equation. Along with our Afghan and international partners, we are working to ensure that the progress being made becomes irreversible.

*Hon. Maxime Bernier, Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Evidence, FAAE Meeting No. 8,
December 11, 2007, p. 3.*

We have to readjust some of the priorities, and that includes CIDA. There has been an overemphasis on certain types of activities that are confined within the framework of security. I think we have to recognize those issues.

*Emmanuel Isch, Vice President,
International and Canadian Programs, World Vision Canada,
Evidence, FAAE Meeting No. 5,
November 29, 2007, p. 9.*

The mission has to change. We must put more effort into reconstruction and development in order to help the population and to improve their situation. ... It is not just a question of having programs, it is a question of projects that the population can see. This is the change we recommended.

*Hon. John Manley, Chair,
Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan,
Evidence, FAAE Meeting No. 18,
March 11, 2008, p. 2.*

In the course of its study of Canada's mission in Afghanistan, the Committee was particularly interested in examining Canada's role in Afghanistan's reconstruction and development, including the purpose and objectives of its aid programs, their effectiveness and efficiency, and those factors which the Canadian government needs to take into account as it charts Canada's future involvement in this war-ravaged state.

The Committee believes that, while good progress has been made in Afghanistan's reconstruction and development, Canadian and international efforts and resources must be intensified and priorities restructured in order to build on the progress already achieved, nurture it more deliberately in areas that have not received much attention, and in the end make it irreversible.

Afghanistan has come a significant distance. As Nipa Banerjee, who headed Canada's aid program in Kabul from 2003-2006 and is currently with the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, attested:

[G]iven the zero-base capacity with which the Afghanistan transitional government started, progress in the post-Taliban period in social and economic sectors has been commendable and has overreached the achievement of other south Asian countries within the first five years of their independence.¹²³

The Hon. Flora MacDonald, former Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs and founder of Future Generations Canada, has travelled frequently to and extensively throughout Afghanistan over the course of the last several years. She agrees with Dr. Banerjee about progress there, saying: “[P]rogress is being made in Afghanistan, although certainly not uniformly across the country.”¹²⁴

Afghanistan’s progress is particularly evident with respect to the treatment of women and across different spheres. As the Minister of International Cooperation, the Hon. Bev Oda, told the Committee:

[O]ne of the key successes is enabling [girls and women] access to formal education, where they represent two-thirds of the children attending schools. The education and literacy has improved. There’s mobility now. ... [Y]ou see Afghan women, young women and girls, going to school, in the streets, going shopping, walking down the streets, and then you recognize that this is a significant change in the lives of those women. The other part I can report on is the improvement of the health care they’re receiving. In fact, we have seen a four times increase in the access of women to childbirth attendants. Consequently, with improved medical care and access to medical care, we’ve been able to reduce the infant mortality by 22%. The Afghan women, I would suggest, are like all women around the world. They’re very entrepreneurial, very industrious, etc. We have contributed \$56 million to date to the microfinancing facilities, the MISFA facility. The majority of people accessing that facility, as I say, are women. They are now earning an income for their families. They are establishing businesses. On top of that they’re repaying those loans at a 90% rate. We are also supporting their agricultural efforts with our programs that support livelihood—livestock, seeds, and fertilizer. We see improvements there. Many of the women, of course, are the caregivers in their families, so that they’re able to not only participate on an increased level but actually to contribute significantly. One of the things I’d like to speak to is to recognize that when they have the opportunity, they participate in elections. They participate as voters. To me, that shows they are concerned about their futures, when 43% of the 6.5 million Afghans who voted in the last election were women. They had been denied that previously under the Taliban. Not only that, but 25% are parliamentarians right now. ... I think one of the things is to basically understand that there’s a recognition of the basic rights of women, their basic human rights—protection against violence, ability to have free mobility, access to education, access to democratic process, access to literacy, access to facilities that are taking better care of their health and consequently the health of their families as well. There’s a saying that if you want to ensure that the people are educated, you educate the women, and the women will ensure that everyone gets educated. Of course, the same goes for health care. The same also goes for respecting basic rights.¹²⁵

Hon. Flora MacDonald also testified to the Committee on the role of women:

One year ago the capital of Bamian Province, Bamian Town, elected its shura, and for the first time in the history of Afghanistan a woman was elected to head the shura. Four of the 10 members of that shura are women, and this is a breakthrough indeed. Bamian Province is the only one of the 34 provinces of Afghanistan to have a woman governor.¹²⁶

Recommendation 6

The Government of Canada should ensure that its development and reconstruction projects continue to include aspects that focus on Afghanistan's women and improvements in their social, economic and political capacities.

It is clear to the Committee that Afghanistan has much to benefit from the continued assistance and support of the international community. Matt Waldman, Afghanistan Policy Advisor at Oxfam International, summarized the unanimous view of witnesses in this way:

I would certainly agree that there have been significant strides forward in a number of areas, but I think it is important to recognize that in many areas of Afghanistan ... there are still areas of very severe poverty. In those conditions, we may find that individuals are joining the militants or growing poppies. ... There have been improvements, but we can certainly do a lot more with the funds that are coming into Afghanistan.¹²⁷

Scope of Canada's Reconstruction and Development Activities and Achievements

The Canadian government's strong support for Afghanistan's reconstruction and development is evident in the amount of its financial and human resource contributions, as well as the scope of its activities. As the Committee already detailed in its preliminary report, Canada ranks among Afghanistan's top five donors. Afghanistan itself is Canada's largest single country bilateral aid commitment: Canada has already pledged C\$1.2 billion in total aid until 2011, the end of the five-year period of the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS) and the Afghanistan Compact.¹²⁸

The Canadian government's commitment is not static or rigid, but importantly has evolved to suit changing circumstances and needs on the ground. For instance, the amounts spent have increased to over \$250 million in 2006-07 from \$139 million the previous year, which itself increased from \$100 million the previous year.¹²⁹ In 2007, the government anticipated spending more than \$30 million in Kandahar province, five times more than in 2005-06.¹³⁰

In order to manage the increased disbursements and associated activities, programs and projects, CIDA officials told the Committee that the size of the field presence in Afghanistan as well as staff at headquarters has increased. As CIDA President Robert Greenhill told the Committee, "Our field presence has more than

doubled in the past two years: we will have 35 professional staff working in Afghanistan by April 2008 compared to just 10 in 2006. Overall with the creation of the Afghanistan Task Force, we have grown from a program of just 20 full-time employees to a staff of almost 80.”¹³¹ This includes nine staff overseeing projects in Kandahar.¹³²

The Committee notes the scope of activities in which Canada is involved and which it has supported. These include initiatives that directly target reconstruction such as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, the Anti-Mine Program for Afghanistan, construction of the Spin Boldak road, infrastructure projects and road and bridges rehabilitation.¹³³ It also includes economic development activities such as the Micro-Finance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan (MISFA),¹³⁴ and the re-building of Afghanistan’s governance institutions, such as through the National Solidarity Program as well as the support for democratic development.¹³⁵ In particular, Canada’s contributions have stood out in Afghanistan’s health and education sectors.¹³⁶

As noted by many witnesses and in its preliminary report, the Committee acknowledges the positive results of Canada’s contributions to Afghanistan’s development and reconstruction. For example, Linda Jones of the Mennonite Economic Development Associates of Canada (MEDA), which had been operating in Afghanistan for three years, told the Committee that during that time “we have also seen the tremendous impact that Canada’s development contribution is having on the rebuilding of the nation.”¹³⁷

Canada’s aid contributions and commitment to rebuilding Afghanistan are not taken for granted. The Ambassador of Afghanistan to Canada, His Excellency Omar Samad, told the Committee:

We are very grateful for this [aid], and we appreciate every dollar. I, as an Afghan, have said many times that I want every dollar of Canadian aid to go as far as it can in changing and improving the lives of Afghans, whether it's for children and women, whether it's for infrastructure, whether it's for governance or rule of law or human rights.¹³⁸

Recognising the Relationship Between Development and Security

The Committee feels strongly that the progress Canada and the international community have achieved and continue to promote in Afghanistan’s reconstruction and development is not disconnected from the parallel purpose of advancing Afghanistan’s security, particularly the human security of the Afghan men, women and children. As indicated in its preliminary report, the Committee appreciates and supports Canada’s multifaceted approach, which recognises the mutually reinforcing relationship between security and development.

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Leonard Edwards, noted that: “Our development projects are also aimed at building a more secure environment for the Afghan people. The pillars reinforce one another, showing that Canadian interests

and values come together in our mission in Afghanistan.”¹³⁹ It is, therefore, not surprising that Canada has multiplied its reconstruction assistance to Kandahar, a region where approximately 2500 Canadian troops are deployed under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to promote security and diminish the influence of the insurgents, by almost eight times since 2005-2006, totalling \$39 million in 2006-2007.¹⁴⁰

At the same time, the Committee believes that the level of security on the ground can influence reconstruction and development efforts. The more stable the conditions, the easier for aid to be delivered, reconstruction projects to take place and endure, and the sooner the Afghan people can resume their daily routines. Many witnesses affirmed this view. For instance, Paul Heinbecker emphasised the connection:

[I]t's not obvious to me how you're going to carry out a development effort unless you have an adequate measure of security. The UN has just said that most of the south of Afghanistan is not safe for aid workers, and it's not safe for aid workers because of the efforts of the Taliban. ... So I think it starts with security.¹⁴¹

However, as some witnesses testified, there is concern that the activities of the insurgents are on the rise, thereby undermining the conditions under which development and reconstruction can proceed, risking the progress that has been achieved. For instance, Seddiq Weera, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Education, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan attested that, “We are witnessing a surge in the insurgency, both in terms of actual fighting, the guerrilla-style fighting, and suicide bombings.”¹⁴² Lina Holguin, Policy Director of Oxfam Quebec, testified about the impact of the insurgency on the Afghan people:

On top of the 130,000 long-term displaced people in Afghanistan, recent fighting in the south has displaced up to 80,000 more. The war has affected people's ability to farm, forced the closure of education and health facilities, and curtailed the availability of humanitarian relief workers.¹⁴³

Moreover, Peggy Mason, Senior Fellow of the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University, said that, “I would suggest that women's rights are not being advanced in Afghanistan in a situation where the security of everyone is deteriorating on a daily basis. That is not the way to protect women in Afghanistan.”¹⁴⁴

As the Hon. Maxime Bernier, the then-Minister of Foreign Affairs, testified: “No project can be carried out without security. Security is the basic element. The Canadian Forces oversee these people to be sure that the area is secure and that development projects can be carried out.”¹⁴⁵

This point was also emphasised by the Hon. John Manley:

Security and reconstruction are linked and we cannot forget that. At the moment, it is not possible to advance the cause of reconstruction and development in Afghanistan without having the military force necessary to guarantee the security of workers, of representatives of non-governmental organizations and of those of

CIDA or other international aid agencies. This is necessary in a dangerous situation. An alternative government in the form of the Taliban would like to establish itself. They are ready to say that no progress has been made, that the international forces are providing nothing and that another uprising is needed. Conflict exists, and it is clear to us that we must continue our security efforts if we want to continue development.¹⁴⁶

The contribution of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) is invaluable in this regard. As the then-Minister of Foreign Affairs described the activities of Canada's PRT in Kandahar to the Committee:

The 350- person team utilizes the expertise of diplomats, development experts, corrections advisers, the police, and the military. Its mandate closely mirrors the priorities of the Afghan Compact and Afghanistan national development strategy, namely, security, governance, development. The provincial reconstruction team supports key national Afghan programs such as the national solidarity program. ... The provincial reconstruction team also carries out a broad range of programming, such as police training, strengthening local governance and justice capacity, and delivering material assistance.¹⁴⁷

Matt Waldman of Oxfam International supported the work of the PRTs, saying that:

The mandate of PRTs is very clear and that is to create a stable and secure environment in which development can take place. We believe that they should adhere to that mandate as far as possible. We accept now that given that over the last few years PRTs have been engaging in development activities in providing assistance, it may be necessary for them to continue to do so to an extent.¹⁴⁸

The Committee understands that support for military delivery of development assistance, and PRTs more specifically, is controversial. Indeed, some witnesses testified that military participation in development activities is not only ineffective, but compromises the neutrality of development work. On the matter of PRTs specifically, Lina Holguin, Policy Director of Oxfam-Quebec, stated:

PRTs are no substitute for long-term development work, and the military has neither the expertise nor the staying power to engage in it. PRTs also blur the distinction between the military and aid workers, placing our staff in considerable danger and reducing our ability to operate. Association with the military has also turned PRT projects, such as school buildings, into targets. Canada's PRT should be refocused. PRTs should exist only where security conditions make them absolutely necessary. They should concentrate on achieving security, stability, and law and order, which is their primary expertise. They should engage in relief activities only where lives hang in the balance and no civilian alternative exists. They should not engage in development work. In accordance with the interim status of PRTs, Canada should develop an exit strategy for its PRTs, with downscaling and closure plans for when areas become comparatively secure.¹⁴⁹

The Committee heard from Gerry Barr, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, about the risks posed by insurgents to development workers and the impact on projects generally:

Aid worker insecurity poses a major challenge in at least two ways: first because, if aid workers are threatened, abducted, or killed, they are of course unable to deliver assistance; second because aid agencies have to decide whether their staff are able to operate with reasonable levels of safety. The more aid staff are targeted, the less likely it is for organizations to actually engage in programming. In both instances, it means that aid can't reach those in need, and that has severe repercussions on the country's ability to make vital progress in development.¹⁵⁰

These risks of course are not to be minimised or dismissed, and the Committee is gravely concerned about the increase in the danger to aid workers who are committed to improving the lives of others. However, the Committee firmly believes that the alternative, no development assistance at all because of the insecure conditions, is unacceptable. This view was best expressed by the Hon. John Manley:

[I]f you're not there doing anything because of the security risks, surely it's better to be there doing something, even with the protection of the military, than not to be there at all, so that people get the benefit of it, rather than leave the military as the only people who can deliver development assistance.¹⁵¹

As Robert Jackson, Director of International Relations at the University of Redlands, bluntly stated:

[I]f reconstruction takes place today without military support, we in fact will have the people who are carrying out the reconstruction killed. It's as simple as that. The Taliban will in fact murder them. ... So I think when we talk about aiding and reconstruction, first of all we have to bear in mind that the Taliban are there, and therefore we have to protect the people who are carrying out reconstruction.¹⁵²

The Committee unanimously shares the hope that the military's involvement in these activities is only temporary, and the sooner the security conditions improve because of increased commitment on the part of the international community, the sooner the military will be able to disengage from development activities, the Afghan National Army will become operational, and the development community will be able to function under more secure conditions.

Moreover, a majority of the Committee hopes that the April 2008 announcements on the part of Canada and its NATO allies concerning increased troop levels in ISAF will help address the threats posed by insurgents, diminish the risk to aid workers, and restore conditions on the ground that permit NGOs to function in a neutral manner.

Recommendation 7

Recognising the importance of security if reconstruction and sustainable development are to occur, and given the security conditions that currently prevail in Kandahar, the Canadian Forces should continue to be involved through Canada's Provincial Reconstruction Team in providing protection for the delivery of vital humanitarian, reconstruction and development

assistance to the population of Kandahar province. In addition, the Canadian government should monitor the security conditions in Kandahar for improvements and make changes accordingly to the roles of the military and PRTs in Afghanistan's reconstruction and development.

Rebalancing Priorities

Notwithstanding its recognition of the need for a military presence to facilitate progress in Afghanistan's reconstruction and development, the Committee is concerned about the current balance of development and defence priorities in Afghanistan. Indeed, witnesses were unanimous that the current ratio needed to be revised in order to increase the proportion devoted to development. For instance, Nigel Fisher, UNICEF Canada testified that:

Assistance to Afghanistan should be a high priority for Canada today and for the foreseeable future. It's in our self-interest to invest in Afghanistan's security and reconstruction. Canada's military role is important and absolutely necessary at this time, but it is not sufficient. An increase in non-military development assistance to Afghanistan is absolutely essential.¹⁵³

This view was echoed by others, including Emmanuel Isch from World Vision Canada, who stated:

We have to readjust some of the priorities, and that includes CIDA. There has been an overemphasis on certain types of activities that are confined within the framework of security. I think we have to recognize those issues. But if we broaden our reach, our sectoral approach, and the partners we connect with, I think we will be able to achieve some of these.¹⁵⁴

Such concerns about rebalancing priorities were raised in the House of Commons motion passed March 13, 2008, which recommended specifically 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."¹⁵⁵ It was also addressed in the report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan: "It is essential to adjust funding and staffing imbalances between the heavy Canadian military commitment in Afghanistan and the comparatively lighter civilian commitment to reconstruction, development and governance."¹⁵⁶ The Committee agrees.

In calling for an increase in attention to development priorities in Canada's comprehensive approach to Afghanistan, the Committee acknowledges the concern of some witnesses that this rebalancing not take place at the expense of defence resources. This view was represented by retired General Lewis MacKenzie, who argued that, "There's too much emphasis on the military, but that doesn't mean you reduce the military. That means you increase the diplomatic side and the development side, as possible."¹⁵⁷

As the Committee was concluding our study in June 2008, the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan released its Report to Parliament, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan," in which it presents a rebalancing of Canada's civilian and military programs in Afghanistan.¹⁵⁸

Recommendation 8

The Government of Canada should rebalance its priorities in Afghanistan in order to give emphasis to reconstruction, development and peace-building efforts in Afghanistan, while maintaining Canada's military commitment.

Some of the witnesses who testified about signature projects considered that, local Afghan awareness and perception about Canada's contribution to Afghanistan's reconstruction and development would be improved. In turn this would stabilise conditions on the ground, facilitate more reconstruction and development, and over time reduce the need for a military presence. As the Committee heard from Derek Burney, one of the members of the Manley Panel:

[T]he point we're trying to make is that if three-quarters of the assistance Canada is giving to Afghanistan is going through multilateral channels, or government channels in Afghanistan, there's no awareness on the ground that we are doing anything. And to your point about imbalance, which we agree with, we're not going to correct that imbalance unless there are more identifiable Canadian projects being conducted in that country. ... All I would say is that in a war zone, I think we have to be more conscious of quick impact projects that people can identify.¹⁵⁹

In its June 2008 Report to Parliament, the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan identified three signature projects in which Canada would invest its efforts: the rehabilitation of Kandahar's Dahla Dam and its irrigation and canal system; the construction and rehabilitation of 50 schools plus the training of up to 3000 teachers; expansion of support for polio immunization.¹⁶⁰

At the same time, the Committee acknowledges the concerns raised by some witnesses about the limitations of signature projects. Specifically, it heard the opinion of retired General Lewis MacKenzie, who said, "If we build these projects, ... , and we have a Canadian flag on them, they're destroyed. ... I know that the signature project with the Canadian flag is a popular idea. I just don't think it would last very long."¹⁶¹ Retired Colonel Mike Capstick was concerned about the effect that such signature projects would have on the legitimacy of the Afghan government in the eyes of its own people as a first order provider: "... [R]enovating the Mirwais hospital and slapping a Canadian flag on it does nothing to legitimize the Afghan government. In fact, it could send Kandaharis the clear message that Ottawa can do more for them than Kabul."¹⁶²

Nipa Banerjee in her June 12, 2008 editorial published by the Ottawa Citizen echoed these concerns that signature projects diminish the Afghan government's authority and legitimacy, noting in particular that "they will not increase the

presence and visibility of the government of Afghanistan to its people or help to earn people's loyalty to the government as opposed to the Taliban." ¹⁶³ CARE Canada, Oxfam Canada and World Vision Canada remarked in a January 2008 press release issued in response to the Manley Panel's recommendations for signature projects that such projects "provide few lasting benefits to Afghans and too often endanger civilians and aid workers." ¹⁶⁴

Yet, the Committee returns to the point that security and Afghanistan's reconstruction and developments are inter-related, and that improvements in one will have positive consequences for the other. It also emphasises Colonel Mike Capstick's suggestion for mitigating the impact on the Afghan government's legitimacy: "Any such project must therefore be designed in partnership with the Afghan government and the community. Most importantly, it must reinforce the governance pillar and Afghan government legitimacy by ensuring properly supported Afghan leadership and ongoing sustained capacity-building."¹⁶⁵ Thus, Canadian signature projects could positively affect not only security and the Afghan government's legitimacy, but also the lives of the men, women and children of Afghanistan.

Recommendation 9

Emphasising what is most likely to deliver benefits to Afghans in need while also raising local Afghan awareness of Canada's efforts, the Government of Canada should consider projects in Afghanistan in a manner that respects the Afghan government's authority and that is coherent with other international assistance activities.

Strengthening Aid Effectiveness and Accountability

While the Committee heard many positive statements about Canadian aid effectiveness and accountability, it is not completely satisfied with the status quo and would like to see improvements.

Many witnesses pointed out that the current level of reconstruction aid is far too low given Afghanistan's needs and challenges. This sentiment was best expressed by journalist Sally Armstrong who stated in her testimony to the Committee: "Consider that we are investing 1/25th of the military and 1/50th the aid that we put into Bosnia and Kosovo."¹⁶⁶ Paul Heinbecker, former Canadian ambassador to the United Nations, agreed, arguing: "A much greater effort is needed, proportionate at least to that of the Balkans."¹⁶⁷ Other witnesses concentrated on the disconnect between the amounts of aid pledged and those actually delivered. For instance, according to Matt Waldman of Oxfam international, who recently wrote a report entitled, "Falling Short: Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan"¹⁶⁸.

[I]n terms of the volume of aid, it has been insufficient. According to the Afghan government, \$25 billion of aid has been pledged and only \$15 billion delivered. When we look at the comparison of military spending to development spending, we see that the American military alone is spending over \$100 million a day and aid spending has averaged about \$7 million a day. Too much aid is supply-driven, prescriptive, rather than being needs-based and addressing demand. It's been centralized and urban and has not been evenly distributed. Indeed, we believe that's one of the reasons why insecurity has spread.¹⁶⁹

The Afghanistan National Development Strategy for 2008-2013 released in April 2008 notes as well that, “[t]he amount of money pledged per head for Afghanistan’s reconstruction is still low in comparison to pledges made previously for other post-conflict countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina.”¹⁷⁰

Moreover, as Nipa Banerjee noted before the Committee, “Large volumes of aid will be of no consequence if not properly programmed, producing results on the ground. Disbursement is not an indicator of success.”¹⁷¹

Recommendation 10

The Government of Canada should meet its commitments and provide the assistance it has promised to Afghanistan, and should strongly encourage other donors in both bilateral and multilateral settings to do likewise.

The Committee also heard testimony about aid effectiveness in terms of its impact on the local economy. Former Canadian diplomat Scott Gilmore of the Peace Dividend Trust argued that “... among the donor community, CIDA has one of the largest impacts on the local economy per dollar spent” while also pointing out that “[d]onors, including Canada, have pledged in the Afghanistan Compact to ... increas[e] the use of Afghan staff and Afghan business, but to date no one has ever attempted to actually measure how much money is entering the local economy.”¹⁷²

Matt Waldman was especially concerned about the allocation of resources, noting that: “A lot of the aid money is going to major contractors and to consultants. We accept that contractors and consultants will be required in the reconstruction process, but it's no reason not to rigorously assess whether they are providing value for money.”¹⁷³

As Nipa Banerjee commented, “A slew of overpaid, inexperienced, and untrained recent graduates from the northern countries have used ODA resources to develop their own capacity, working in the ever-expanding aid industry that has engulfed Afghanistan.”¹⁷⁴

The international community in its Declaration of the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan issued June 12, 2008 took note of the issues surrounding aid effectiveness. Moreover, in the Declaration it agreed to provide “increased, more predictable, transparent and accountable assistance” and to provide “aid in a way that promotes local procurement and capacity-building.”¹⁷⁵

Recommendation 11

The Government of Canada should ensure insofar as possible that Canadian personnel working on international reconstruction and development projects are suitably qualified and experienced in order that Afghanistan's development be carried out efficiently and effectively.

Recommendation 12

Given the impact of the international presence on Afghanistan's economy and capacity-building, the Government of Canada should increase efforts to ensure that Afghan personnel and services receive all necessary consideration in Canada's reconstruction and development efforts.

Sound accountability and evaluation practices are critical for determining progress in Afghanistan. In general, the benchmarks used by Canada and the international community are defined in the Afghanistan Compact.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, according to Nipa Banerjee, aid programs—whether bilateral or multilateral—have accountability and reporting mechanisms built in. “If these are not found adequate by the Canadian government, tighter accountability requirements might be demanded, but just for the sake of tracking Canadian dollars.”¹⁷⁷

The Committee heard from Ministers and government officials about their confidence in the evaluation methods used to ensure sound accountability of the reconstruction and development funds and programming. As the Minister of International Cooperation Bev Oda told the Committee:

As our programming continues, we are mindful of the challenges we face to ensure aid effectiveness and accountability. That is why monitoring, reporting, and evaluation are employed at three levels: nationally, working with the international community and the Afghan government; at the program level; and at the project level.¹⁷⁸

The Minister also testified that she was satisfied with the level of cooperation at the multilateral level to generate the necessary information for Canada's accountability requirements.

We have to remember, first of all, that we are working with the Afghan government and with 60 international partners. ... Because these organizations are internationally very experienced organizations, such as the World Food Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank, the International Red Cross—we work with them—they also understand the requirements of all their contributors to report back on the utilization of their funds and the contributions, so they're always willing to work with us on reporting back. I could not have given you the facts and the numbers that I reported in my presentation if there wasn't that cooperation on reporting back to the donor countries and to the donor organizations.¹⁷⁹

At the same time, the Committee was pleased to hear from the Minister that efforts have been made to improve accountability and evaluation:

We've also just recently completed discussions with the Government of Afghanistan... on strengthening their requirements and coming up with our agreements when we're working with them, as far as the requirements of how they will report on the utilization of the funds are concerned.¹⁸⁰

Notwithstanding the Minister's confidence, the Committee was concerned to hear from other witnesses about points of weakness concerning evaluation methods. For instance, as Nipa Banerjee testified that, "expenditure tracking alone cannot make aid effective. Performance measurements for aid effectiveness is essential."¹⁸¹ Such concerns were raised in the Manley Report, which specifically noted that, "... [the Afghanistan Compact's] targets have proved more formal than real, and performance assessments have been flimsy."¹⁸²

Moreover, the Committee heard witness concerns regarding the lack of transparency of the evaluation process. According to Professor Pierre Beaudet of the University of Ottawa:

... I do know that CIDA is refusing, despite access to information requests, to release information on the estimated and partial results of those operations. ... A number of documents that are currently circulating show that these initiatives are not achieving their expected objectives. The aims were perhaps worthy, but the circumstances prevented us from achieving them. ... Where is the money going? ... I would like for CIDA to be transparent and provide us with the information, because it does exist.¹⁸³

The concerns about transparency were echoed by other witnesses. Specifically, Matt Waldman noted:

[T]here is not enough transparency. If there were, we could identify clearly the bad practices and try to put them right, which is why we are advocating for full transparency—indicators of aid effectiveness that apply to all donors and measure all the key aspects of aid, such as impact, efficiency, relevance, sustainability, accountability, and the use of Afghan resources.¹⁸⁴

Accountability and transparency issues were also addressed in the House of Commons motion passed on March 13, 2008, which specifically called for Canada's contribution to Afghanistan's reconstruction and development to "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" and for the Canadian government to "provide the public with franker and more frequent reporting on events in Afghanistan, offering more assessments of Canada's role" ¹⁸⁵

Recommendation 13

The Government of Canada must continue to improve its accountability and evaluation methods concerning its reconstruction and development commitments, and must

ensure that its evaluation process is transparent. In this regard, the Government of Canada should also work with the international community to structure an effective framework for measuring progress and conducting performance evaluation on the basis of the benchmarks established by the international community in the Afghanistan Compact.

Recommendation 14

The Government of Canada should take the necessary steps to improve awareness among the Canadian population of the achievements and shortcomings of Canada's reconstruction and development efforts in Afghanistan. The Government of Canada should strengthen transparency in the process for evaluating its assistance to Afghanistan's development.

National and Local Level Reconstruction and Development Programs and Projects

In looking at Canada's reconstruction and development role in Afghanistan, the Committee notes that both national and local targets are important considerations for Afghanistan's future. We were pleased to hear testimony of Canadian efforts at the national level, supporting in particular the Afghan government's legitimacy. As the Minister for International Cooperation testified, "While Canada's activities have a special focus on Kandahar, our development program reaches all corners of Afghanistan. In fact, 80% of our commitments are directed to national programs impacting all 34 provinces in the country."¹⁸⁶ Nipa Banerjee remarked on the positive impact of such national programs, noting in particular that "... the financing of national programs designed and delivered by the Afghan ministries do earn the support of the people. There is evidence of that."¹⁸⁷ Pointing to the importance of observing the "do no harm" principle by which actions should be carried out that benefit and do not harm the recipient, she also cautioned against approaches that are harmful by being "counterproductive to the objective of expanding the Afghan government's legitimacy."¹⁸⁸

The Committee was also encouraged to hear about the extent to which Canada works with the Afghan people to identify their needs and promote local ownership. As the then-Minister of Foreign Affairs commented to the Committee: "Canada, along with our international partners, is fully committed to help the Afghan government provide security, education, greater economic opportunity and a better future for its people. Every day we see the difference we are making as Canadian soldiers and civilians work with Afghans to help them build a better society."¹⁸⁹ This was reinforced by the Minister for International Cooperation's statement that: "Our aim is to enable the citizens of Afghanistan to take full ownership of all aspects of the country's development and future. We stand firmly by their side as they strive to rebuild their country one village and one day at a time."¹⁹⁰

Even so, the Committee believes that the greater impact on Afghanistan's future lies with the development of the rural areas, notably community-based initiatives that emphasise local, or Afghan, ownership. In this context, there was consensus among witnesses that while attention is already paid to rural development, there is room for improvement. We first noted this view in our preliminary report, in which we referred to Seema Patel's testimony, specifically:

We believe the best way to ensure that R and D funds go further, particularly in the tough southern provinces, is to engage ordinary Afghans, from planning to implementation. The process is as important as the programs. At various times, from *shuras* to micro hydro projects to informal government justice structures, Afghanistan has shown the value of local ownership.¹⁹¹

This view remains current, and was recently expressed by one of the Committee's last witnesses, Matt Waldman from Oxfam International, who noted:

I would like to address the key issue of rural development. We think this is the priority issue in Afghanistan today. It is clear when you go to communities that things still are very difficult in rural areas as opposed to urban areas, which have seen some progress. In one community I was in recently of 260 families, 45 children died over the winter due to preventable causes; 12 women died in pregnancy or childbirth. ... There need to be more resources directed to communities themselves who can then lead the development process, and we can build civil society at a local level as well.¹⁹²

In this respect, the Committee believes that giving the local communities a role in their own development gives them more tangible stakes in their own future. As Rémi Landry testified to the Committee, "What we need to do is empower the people, and I think the solution is with the people. Provide them order and empower them."¹⁹³ The Hon. Flora MacDonald was equally emphatic and confident about the capabilities of the Afghan people in their own future, exclaiming, "For goodness' sake, give Afghans the chance to do what they can do. They are very good at what they can do."¹⁹⁴

As the Committee heard, the Afghans would be more likely to protect locally-owned projects and insurgents will be less likely to target them; as a result, security conditions would improve. As the Afghan ambassador remarked: "Every project that has been implemented in such a manner has not been destroyed, because the locals in the communities have protected it. The Taliban and the terrorists have not been able or not dared to go into those communities to try to create problems for themselves."¹⁹⁵ Retired General Lewis MacKenzie also spoke to this point— "Of 200 projects where we came in the back door and provided the project management, empowered the local people, and gave them the money, only one has been destroyed."¹⁹⁶ Emmanuel Isch of World Vision Canada put it this way to the Committee:

We want to make sure as well that donor funding not only is more equally distributed, but also is not primarily focused on urban centres, as often there is little trickle-down within the grassroots. We want to make sure that the population, wherever it is located in the country, gains confidence and hope that

they will also benefit from international and government aid efforts. I'm not suggesting that Canada should support programming in every province or district of the country, but certainly that the bilateral assistance should be more evenly spread ..., and again I want to emphasize community base and grassroots.¹⁹⁷

The Afghan ambassador to Canada further stated to the Committee:

We are now looking at new concepts, including, for example, how to empower Afghans even more so that they can make decisions about their priorities and needs without having some consultant from a third country who is contracted for three months to come and tell all of us how to spend millions of dollars. We have learned many lessons over the past six years in terms of how to disburse funds towards development and reconstruction. One of the lessons is to go to the communities, go to the Afghans, engage the Afghans, engage the communities. Afghanicize the process, listen to them, get them involved. They will protect your money and they will protect the school you build. Every project that has been implemented in such a manner has not been destroyed, because the locals in the communities have protected it. The Taliban and the terrorists have not been able or not dared to go into those communities to try to create problems for themselves.¹⁹⁸

Recommendation 15

In order to contribute more effectively to poverty reduction in Afghanistan, the Government of Canada should ensure that commitments regarding Afghanistan's rural development, particularly in remote areas and areas that are more stable than Kandahar, are integrated into the reconstruction and development effort. The Government of Canada should also continue to support projects and activities with impact at the national level.

Recommendation 16

The Government of Canada should continue to ensure that its reconstruction and development projects respect the importance of Afghan ownership in their own development.

Balance of Short- and Long-Term Projects

The Committee believes that the continued and irreversible progress of Afghanistan's reconstruction and development can only be assured by due consideration of both the short- and long-term dimensions.

As noted in the Manley Report, projects that focus on the short-term have an immediate impact on the lives of Afghan men, women and children and generate support in and loyalty to the larger endeavour.¹⁹⁹ As Derek Burney emphasised before the Committee:

[T]his is, after all, a war zone and ... normal procedures for the kind of development assistance that is normally conveyed by CIDA is not directly applicable to the situation. So what we were recommending, in essence, was that

there be a change in procedures that would enable a quicker response to some of the more basic needs of the people in Kandahar whose area has been made secure by our military activity. That's what we were concerned about, the ability of CIDA to react quickly, to provide assistance such as wells for drinking water, health care centres, very basic needs of the people, so that the full strategy of secure, hold, and develop in a war zone is applied in an efficient manner. The change in procedure that we were emphasizing and the change of emphasis that we were recommending was to key it more to the reconstruction effort, the immediate needs of the people in Kandahar, as opposed to the longer-term needs of the Afghan government to develop capability and competence to run a government.²⁰⁰

Moreover, projects with immediate results will help sustain the will of the Canadian public with respect to Canada's role in Afghanistan's future.

Recommendation 17

The Government of Canada in concert with its international partners should increase support for projects that will have an immediate impact on the lives and living conditions of the Afghan people.

The Committee believes that, to benefit Afghanistan more comprehensively, short-term projects should be supplemented with long-term impact projects which have greater depth and are more likely to be enduring.

Witnesses were unanimous about the significance of long-term projects and the need to encourage them. However, Robert Jackson warned that Canada and the international community must be prepared to make "a long-term comprehensive contribution. An extended period ... of possibly up to 30 years will be required before Afghan is up to scratch."²⁰¹ As Afghanistan's ambassador to Canada noted to the Committee:

As we are a fragile state, we cannot always expect quick fixes and immediate solutions that can satisfy all the stakeholders, domestic or foreign. Given the Afghan traditions, the rebuilding process is a long-term mission, with many pitfalls along the way, and it will require statesmanship, strong political will, sacrifice, leadership skills, perseverance, and sustainable support to attain its objectives.²⁰²

Indeed, as Ambassador Samad subsequently pointed out, patience must be accompanied by more realistic expectations of the timeframe for Afghanistan's reconstruction and development. Specifically, he stated:

Just imagine any society, whether developed or semi-developed or under-developed, being hammered politically, militarily, economically for 25 years constantly. What would happen? Do you expect that to rebound over five years? It doesn't happen. It has never happened in history. Why do we have such expectations for Afghanistan? The question is whether we have the political will to understand this and then to commit long term, not only to the military aspect of this mission but also on all the other fronts that exist.²⁰³

Such patience and realism is critical for sustaining the international community's will and interest in Afghanistan's rehabilitation. Indeed, Marc-André Boivin foresaw that "with the initial anti-terrorism impetus gone, this more long-term approach is also faced with the renewed insignificance of Afghanistan on the world scene."²⁰⁴ Colonel Mike Capstick emphasised this concern: "My biggest fear is that in its frustration with slow progress, confusing politics, and weak governments, the international community will blame the victim and simply abandon Afghanistan and Afghans yet again."²⁰⁵

The Committee believes that a combination of short- and long-term projects will have the greatest benefit for Afghanistan, as well as the greatest value for Canada's foreign policy and aid objectives. As the Committee already noted in its preliminary report, any reconstruction and development strategy that only looks at the short-term puts at risk not only our considerable investments to date and commitments under the 2006 Afghanistan Compact, but more importantly the prospects of the Afghan people for a better life.

Recommendation 18

The Government of Canada should take the necessary steps to remind Canadians and the international community of the value of long-term projects for Afghanistan's long-term and sustainable development. The Government of Canada should also encourage the international community to place the necessary importance on long-term projects, while demonstrating both realism and resolve about their outcomes.

Recommendation 19

The Government of Canada should ensure that its contribution to Afghanistan's reconstruction and development includes a balance of both short- and long-term projects.

Strengthening Coordination

The Committee heard testimony regarding the coordination of Canada's reconstruction and development efforts in Afghanistan. For instance, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB), co-chaired by the Afghan government and the United Nations, is primarily responsible for the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact. Canada's then Minister of Foreign Affairs Peter MacKay also noted:

We'll continue to keep all development projects under constant review to ensure that our efforts align closely with the intent and purposes that have been set out in the annual UN Security Council resolutions and the benchmarks established by the Afghanistan Compact.²⁰⁶

However, the Committee also heard significant criticism from witnesses about the ineffectiveness of these mechanisms, with the consequences of a less than optimal impact on Afghanistan's reconstruction and development. As the Committee heard from Stefan Lehmeir of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee:

The UN was initially confined to a very narrow humanitarian coordination role Despite all these lessons learned over the years, even the recently established coordination mechanism to oversee the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, is proving to be largely ineffective in its current set-up and with its current procedures.²⁰⁷

These concerns were more recently highlighted by Kai Eide, the newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Afghanistan and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), in his 9 April 2008 press conference:

The first and most important priority is, ... the question of coordination of the international efforts. I think we have seen that it is still too fragmented to have the effect that we want it to have on the ground. So we are looking at the structures of cooperation and coordination that we have in place, including the JCMB.²⁰⁸

This report earlier noted more general coordination problems. Reference was also already made to the appointment of a high-level special envoy with responsibilities different from the SRSG and head of UNAMA as a possible solution.

Many of the concerns pertaining to aid effectiveness and coordination are raised in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy released by the Afghanistan government in April 2008. Its priorities in this regard are "to minimize the risk of duplication, poor alignment, coordination and harmonization."²⁰⁹

Recommendation 20

Working with the United Nations special envoy, the Government of Canada should pursue the necessary steps to strengthen the coordination of aid priorities among all key actors, including the Afghan government.

Witnesses also argued that other aspects of Canada's role in Afghanistan's reconstruction and development merited greater attention. One such controversial issue was that uniquely presented by Professor Robert Jackson, who was concerned that the international community was not giving more attention to the development and reconstruction of Afghanistan's gas pipeline. While debate about its viability surrounds the project, its success would significantly improve Afghanistan's infrastructure and energy services. In his words:

[W]e should talk about things like the gas pipeline. The gas pipeline Russia had built. It goes throughout Afghanistan and helps to bring the electricity to the country. ... Canada should help with the reconstruction of the pipeline, which is

needed. Norway's taking the lead here. They're having trouble with countries like Canada providing enough money and enough clout and saying they will support them. ... In my opinion, building a national pipeline is crucial in order to make electricity work again in the country. Rather than some of the low level projects, maybe it's more important.²¹⁰

In particular, the Committee heard concerns about the prevalence of poverty and unemployment and the lack of employment opportunities for the Afghan population, particularly its youth and young men, and the impact this has on Afghanistan's stability. As Seema Patel testified: "Poverty is fuelling the anger towards the central government and motivating many young men, particularly in the south, to rearm and fight with the insurgency or with local armed groups to earn cash."²¹¹ Mirwais Nahzat, an Afghan Canadian, argued that: "... Canada should support enhanced participation of Afghan youth in governance, development, and socio-political processes."²¹²

Recommendation 21

In order to deepen the foundations of Afghanistan's future governance, stability and economic productivity, the Government of Canada should ensure that its aid efforts emphasise human capital development, particularly programs and projects that focus on Afghanistan's youth in the rural areas in particular. Such programs would include not only job creation projects, but also the development of employable skills and training across different sectors that are part of the reality of Afghan life.

Recommendation 22

The Government of Canada should continue to contribute to the development of Afghanistan's education system at the primary, secondary and post-secondary levels.

Recommendation 23

In consultation with the Afghan government and people, Canada's aid efforts should target poverty reduction in Afghanistan more tangibly, in part by attending to the development of the private sector and the local economy in the urban centres and especially in the rural areas. This can be achieved by encouraging the international community to make better use of Afghan services, skills and procurement rather than relying on non-Afghan contractors and consultants.

Barnett Rubin commented that not enough attention is being devoted to infrastructure projects that support the rehabilitation of the agricultural industry in Afghanistan. Specifically, he said:

What I see that has been really missing in the agricultural sector has been the type of infrastructure and institutional changes that are needed above the village level – for instance, larger-scale and medium-sized water projects, which are very essential, and measures that would improve marketing, such as roads, more information, and things like that. Those are actually very key to counter narcotics also, because people need to be able to market alternative crops and create employment and other types of activity.²¹³

The April 2008 Afghanistan National Development Strategy also emphasizes the role of agriculture and rural development to “ensure the social, economic and political well-being of rural communities, especially poor and vulnerable people, while stimulating the integration of rural communities within the national economy.” In this regard, the ANDS includes a policy and strategic framework for this sector.²¹⁴

The importance of rural and agricultural development was also highlighted in the Declaration of the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan held in Paris, June 12, 2008 whereby investment in infrastructure, especially in the agriculture sector was identified as essential for the security and prosperity of the Afghan people.²¹⁵

Recommendation 24

In line with support for poverty reduction and investment in Afghanistan’s rural areas, Canadian aid efforts should reflect awareness of and attention to agricultural development, particularly in the context of infrastructure rehabilitation involving water and irrigation systems and transportation.

Ambassador Samad testified that the Afghan diaspora in Canada has not been fully accessed by the Canadian government in its reconstruction and development projects in Afghanistan:

[O]ne of the most effective ways to build capacity and transfer knowledge and skills to this newly redeveloping country, and to be a bridge between the new home and the old home, is to reconnect the Afghans, who had to leave their country under duress over the past 25 to 30 years, to their homeland. I have talked to my colleagues within the Canadian government on many occasions, especially in CIDA, about looking at ways to facilitate the return of some qualified Afghans who are willing to go—and spend whatever period of time they would like—and be of help. I think that help will not only go a long way to assist Afghanistan, but it will also go a long way to assist Canada and other countries where we have large communities of Afghans.²¹⁶

Mirwais Nahzat similarly commented on the “largely neglected Afghan diaspora in Canada’s development efforts.”²¹⁷

Recommendation 25

In noting that the talent and knowledge of the Afghan diaspora in Canada have not been as systematically and effectively accessed to the benefit of Canada's reconstruction and development activities in Afghanistan, the Government of Canada should actively pursue mechanisms by which the Afghan community in Canada could be consulted and engaged in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan.

Notes to Part II

- 123 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 3.
- 124 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, p. 1.
- 125 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 11.
- 126 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, p. 2.
- 127 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 21, April 8, 2008, p. 11.
- 128 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 46, March 27, 2007, pp. 2 and 8.
- 129 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 4, November 27, 2007, p. 9.
- 130 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 46, March 27, 2007, pp. 2 and 8; *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 4, November 27, 2007, p. 1.
- 131 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 4, November 27, 2007, p. 1.
- 132 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 4, November 27, 2007, p. 15.
- 133 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 46, March 27, 2007, pp. 2 and 8; *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 1.
- 134 MISFA is a micro-credit loans and savings program that is helping more than 400,000 adults start a business, rebuild their livelihoods, support their families, and raise healthy children. *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 46, March 27, 2007, pp. 2 and 8.
- 135 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 46, March 27, 2007, pp. 2 and 8.
- 136 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 1.
- 137 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 28, November 8, 2006, p. 9.
- 138 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 6, December 4, 2007, p. 12.
- 139 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 4, November 27, 2007, p. 3.
- 140 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 46, March 27, 2007, pp. 2 and 8; *Evidence*, FAAE, Meeting No. 62, June 6, 2007, p. 4.
- 141 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, p. 11.
- 142 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 14, February 14, 2008, p. 12.
- 143 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 5, November 29, 2007, p. 3.
- 144 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 10.
- 145 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 8.
- 146 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 18, March 11, 2008, p. 10.
- 147 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 3.
- 148 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 21, April 8, 2008, p. 9.
- 149 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 5, November 29, 2007, p. 3.
- 150 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 5, November 29, 2007, p. 2.
- 151 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 18, March 11, 2008, p. 12.
- 152 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, p. 15-16.

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- 153 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 48, April 17, 2007, p. 4.
- 154 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 5, November 29, 2007, p. 9.
- 155 *Journals*, No. 66, Thursday, March 13, 2008, p. 595.
- 156 Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, Ottawa, January 2008, p. 28.
- 157 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 14, February 14, 2008, p. 17.
- 158 Government of Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Setting a Course to 2011," Report to Parliament, June 2008.
- 159 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 18, March 11, 2008, p. 13.
- 160 Government of Canada, "Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan: Setting a Course to 2011," Report to Parliament, June 2008.
- 161 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 14, February 14, 2008, p. 17.
- 162 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 16, March 4, 2008, p. 6.
- 163 Nipa Banerjee, "Remember Who We're Supposed to be Helping," *Ottawa Citizen*, June 12, 2008.
- 164 "Afghanistan Needs Development That is Coordinated, Not Co-Opted: CARE, Oxfam and World Vision Respond to Independent Panel Report," press release, January 22, 2008.
- 165 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 16, March 4, 2008, p. 6.
- 166 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, p. 3.
- 167 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, p. 8.
- 168 Matt Waldman, "Falling Short: Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan," March 2008, [http://www.acbar.org/ACBAR%20Publications/ACBAR%20Aid%20Effectiveness%20\(25%20Mar%2008\).pdf](http://www.acbar.org/ACBAR%20Publications/ACBAR%20Aid%20Effectiveness%20(25%20Mar%2008).pdf).
- 169 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 21, April 8, 2008, p. 9.
- 170 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *Afghanistan National Development Strategy 2008-2013*, p. 160.
- 171 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 4.
- 172 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 51, April 26, 2007, pp. 12, 14.
- 173 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 21, April 8, 2008, p. 9.
- 174 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 4.
- 175 Declaration of the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan, June 12, 2008.
- 176 See Appendix II.
- 177 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 3.
- 178 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 2.
- 179 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 6.
- 180 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 7.
- 181 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 4.

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- 182 Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, Ottawa, January 2008, p. 19.
- 183 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 48, April 17, 2007, p. 10.
- 184 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 21, April 8, 2008, p. 9.
- 185 *Journals*, No. 66, Thursday, March 13, 2008, p. 595.
- 186 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 1.
- 187 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 3.
- 188 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 3.
- 189 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 3.
- 190 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 8, December 11, 2007, p. 2.
- 191 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting, No. 54, May 8, 2007, p. 3.
- 192 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 21, April 8, 2008, p. 8-9.
- 193 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 14.
- 194 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, p. 10.
- 195 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 6, December 4, 2007, p. 14.
- 196 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 14, February 14, 2008, p. 17.
- 197 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 5, November 29, 2007, p. 4.
- 198 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 6, December 4, 2007, p. 14.
- 199 Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, Ottawa, January 2008, p. 28.
- 200 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 18, March 11, 2008, p. 2.
- 201 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, p. 7.
- 202 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 6, December 4, 2007, p. 9.
- 203 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 6, December 4, 2007, p. 12.
- 204 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 48, April 17, 2007, p. 11.
- 205 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 16, March 4, 2008, p. 7.
- 206 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 44, March 20, 2007, p. 4.
- 207 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 5, November 29, 2007, p. 10.
- 208 Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Press Conference, United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, April 9, 2008, <http://www.unama-afg.org/news/pc/english/2008/08april09-print.html>.
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- 210 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, pp. 15-16.
- 211 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 54, May 8, 2007, p. 3.
- 212 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 5, November 29, 2007, p. 6.

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- 213 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 47, March 29, 2007, pp. 8 and 16.
- 214 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *Afghanistan National Development Strategy 2008-2013*, p. 87-93.
- 215 Declaration of the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan, June 12, 2008.
- 216 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 6, December 4, 2007, p. 10.
- 217 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 5, November 29, 2007, p. 6.

PART III:

CANADA'S ROLE IN ADDRESSING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONAL, AND STATE-BUILDING CHALLENGES

While effective military action may deny victory to the insurgency [in Afghanistan]—only effective governance will defeat it.

Mark L. Schneider Senior Vice-President,
International Crisis Group, April 2, 2008²¹⁸

[T]he war in Afghanistan cannot be won without a peace track, a political track. ...My observations take into account the government and the politics a round the government. The civil war is hampering governance and civil service reform. Good governance is impossible to achieve unless this conflict is resolved.

Seddiq Weera, Senior Advisor,
Independent National Commission on Strengthening Peace and Senior Policy Advisor to
the Minister of Education, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, February 14, 2008²¹⁹

[T]he strategic goal should be that the Afghan political system would be so strong that it could endure without international support.

Professor Robert Jackson, Director of International Relations,
University of Redlands, California, and former head of the Department of Political
Science, Carleton University, Ottawa, March 13, 2008²²⁰

Imagine in a three to five years, when a trained Afghan army, having taken its losses, looks over at the civilian government and sees them as corrupt. Can you imagine the sort of things that can happen then?

General Rick Hillier,
Canada's Chief of the Defence Staff, March 27, 2008²²¹

We need to emphasise institution building and accountability over favoured individuals in every area if stability [in Afghanistan] is to prove sustainable in every area.

Nick Grono, Deputy President (Operations),
International Crisis Group, April 2, 2008²²²

Good Governance as an Essential Objective of International Policy

As indicated in the above citations, and the points of agreement among witnesses underlined in the Introduction, good governance – which incorporates the rule of law, transparent accountable public administration, democracy and human rights – is an integral component of what Canadian Chief of Defence Staff General Rick Hillier referred to in the context of protecting civilians as “the winning conditions” in his April 2008 testimony to the Committee.²²³ It is also one of the three main pillars of the Afghanistan Compact which is to guide international and Afghan government action during these critical years. Indeed, Chris Alexander, Canada’s first post 9/11 ambassador to Afghanistan who is currently Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Afghanistan, stated during a March 2008 press conference in Kabul that “the conviction now, in Afghanistan and among the partners of Afghanistan, is stronger than ever that the key to peace and security here remains the success of state institutions.”²²⁴

Yet as also indicated in testimony before the Committee, and in a growing body of serious analytical literature on the subject²²⁵, there is still a long way to go in actually achieving good governance goals from the highest international (UN/ISAF/Compact participants) to the most grounded local Afghan village level. With respect to the former, Stefan Lehmeier observed that: “Despite all these lessons learned over the years, even the recently established coordination mechanism to oversee the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, is proving to be largely ineffective in its current set-up and with its current procedures.”²²⁶ With regard to the latter, the Afghan government and Afghan analysts have known for some time that poor governance is a major factor fuelling local grievances, especially in rural areas, which fan the flames of insurgency. Indeed, a 2006 intelligence assessment by Afghanistan’s National Directorate of Security (NDS) concluded that: “The first requirement of countering Taliban at the village level requires good governance, honest and competent leaders leading the institutions. ... A lot of people in the villages of Zabul, Helmand, Kandahar, and Oruzgan ... say this is a corrupt government.”²²⁷

His Excellency Omar Samad, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to Canada, was equally candid about what remains to be done in his remarks to the Committee: “We also face weak institutions and government services, mixed with corruption, and at times a dysfunctional judiciary, which in our opinion will take a long time to reform. The enemy, however, is exploiting all these fault lines while we attempt to maintain our equilibrium. As we are a fragile state, we cannot always expect quick fixes and immediate solutions that can satisfy all the stakeholders, domestic or foreign. Given the Afghan traditions, the rebuilding process is a long-term mission, with many pitfalls along the way, and it will require statesmanship, strong political will, sacrifice, leadership skills, perseverance, and sustainable support to attain its objectives.”²²⁸

Overcoming weak governance that is prone to corruption has emerged as an overriding priority for achieving sustainable security and development in Afghanistan.²²⁹ For example, Ashraf Ghani, Afghanistan's first post-Taliban finance minister and co-author of a new book, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World*, stated recently: "It is the weakness of the government, not the strength of the Taliban that is the issue."²³⁰ The Government of Afghanistan itself recognizes the problem, affirming in its new five-year National Development Strategy (2008-2013) discussed at the international conference on Afghanistan in Paris on June 12: "Improving governance is essential to the attainment of the Government's national vision and the establishment of a stable and functioning society."²³¹

The Paris conference brought into focus a number of concerns about the level and nature of international assistance, notably that only about \$15 billion of the \$25 billion already pledged from 2001-2008 has actually been delivered and much of this flows back to the donors, and that about two-thirds of international aid bypasses the Afghan government budget.²³² President Karzai stated in Paris that: "The current development process that is marred by confusion and parallel structures undermines institution building. While Afghanistan needs large amounts of aid, precisely how aid is spent is just as important."²³³ While analysts often point to corruption within the Afghan government, in an earlier interview with the German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel*, Mr Karzai turned the tables, alleging that: "Some members of the international community are strongly connected to corrupt elements and use them as their sources."²³⁴

According to the Afghan government's new five-year development strategy:

The governance agenda addresses three major challenges: pervasive corruption, low public sector capacity and human rights deprivations for girls and women in Afghanistan. 80 per cent of provinces identified reducing corruption in public administration as a priority during sub-national consultations.

The policy framework for the proposed reform program to strengthen governance includes all national and sub-national government, parliamentary, civil society and political structures.²³⁵

Afghanistan, dependent on foreign assistance for 90% of government expenditure, was seeking an additional US\$50.1 billion in donor commitments from the Paris conference (about \$20 billion was pledged, about half of that by the United States). Afghanistan's plan drew support from UN Special Envoy Kai Eide, with, however, a critical proviso. As he stated on May 22: "It's obvious the international community does not spend its resources as well as it should and it's obvious that corruption is a much too widespread phenomenon in Afghanistan. I would like to see a partnership coming out of Paris where the international community says 'yes, we will spend our resources better', and the government says 'yes, we will fight corruption more vigorously.'²³⁶ On the eve of the conference he told a French television interviewer: "Too much of the donor money falls back into the hands of the donor country itself and never reaches the Afghans. That is a big

problem. Another problem is that we do not follow what are the plans and priorities of the Afghan government. We start projects and sometimes the Afghans don't even know about it, what we are doing in the field."²³⁷

Public Administration Reform from the National to the Local Levels

The testimony of our witnesses reinforced numerous analyses in recent years that have detailed the deficits in the capacity of Afghan governance at all levels to carry out the functions of an effective state. One witness, Grant Kippen, former National Democratic Institute National Country Director for Afghanistan, referred the Committee to a report on public administration reform done by the Kabul-based Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit.²³⁸ All acknowledge that Afghanistan was starting from near zero after the toppling of the Taliban, whose repressive regime had already turned the country into a failed state. Facing a huge uphill struggle from the start, Afghanistan is still paying the price.

Colonel (ret.) Mike Capstick, Canada's first commander of the SAT-A in Kabul, told the Committee that: "We have a failure to develop the proper governance strategy. ... We need a leader, and we need a strategy that addresses everything from soup to nuts, from A to Z in the civil service of Afghanistan – everything. ... There are ministries there, such as the Ministry of the Interior ... Everybody knows that most of the wheels in the Ministry of the Interior are bad guys. They're former warlords, you name it."²³⁹ Professor Robert Jackson told the Committee that: "There's a lack of administrative capacity in the country. There is only a narrow skilled human resources base, and this is particularly true at the highest levels of government. Only about a quarter to a third of the government ministries, out of 27, are effective. The higher Afghan bureaucracy was decimated by decades of Soviet and Taliban control. Today they are struggling with huge amounts of paperwork required by international funding agencies and governments. About 25% of civil service time is spent merely reporting on the funds received. They don't have much time for action."²⁴⁰

Overcoming obstacles to good governance was always going to be a long difficult process. But in the view of some analysts, it has not been helped by the creation of a centralized unitary state in the 2004 constitution or the post-2001 flood of foreign consultants that moved in with uncoordinated Western-style "fixes". As Barnett Rubin and Humayun Hamidzada have observed: "Emerging from decades of conflict, Afghanistan has one of the weakest governments in the world. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates that government revenue will total 5.4 per cent of the non-drug GDP in 2005-2006, less than any country with data. Furthermore, the administration has difficulty disbursing the funds it has: the ten poorest provinces receive the smallest budgetary allocations, leading to a nearly non-existent government presence and rampant security problems. The government has started reforms at the national level, but many ministries are still

non-functional or corrupt. The provincial and district administrations, the face of government for most Afghans, are largely controlled by illicit or violent power holders.”²⁴¹

Marc André Boivin emphasized to the Committee that: “The critical issue for the future of Afghanistan is political. [T]he government is completely disconnected from the people. It is perpetuating predatory practices relating to the interests of certain factions rather than offering services.”²⁴² Another two of our witnesses, one civilian, the other ex-military, who have held Canadian leadership positions inside Afghanistan, were equally blunt about what still needs to be rectified and where our efforts can be most usefully focused. Both emphasized Afghan ownership of the governance reform process. Nipa Banerjee, former CIDA Head of Aid in Afghanistan from 2003-2006, and who had just returned from Afghanistan, told the Committee:

The legitimacy crisis of the Afghan government could be abated through a leadership role taken by Afghans and with a coordinated donor strategy supporting the leadership. Instead, domination of Afghanistan’s institution building process by the international community has tilted the entire process of nation building into a decline from which Afghanistan may not recover, ever. (...)

On state building linked to capacity building, at the base of the state-building agenda lies capacity building. With a \$1.6 billion investment in capacity building, the international community has failed to build sustained capacity in the critical Afghan ministries and institutions. Capacity buying and replacement for quick and easy management solutions have failed to build sustained capacity. A slew of overpaid, inexperienced, and untrained recent graduates from the northern countries have used ODA resources to develop their own capacity, working in the ever-expanding aid industry that has engulfed Afghanistan.²⁴³

Colonel Mike Capstick, who during 2005-2006 headed Canada’s Strategic Advisory Team – Afghanistan, working directly with Afghan government ministries in Kabul, made the following appeal to the Committee:

Every single Canadian effort in the governance and development pillars of the compact must be designed to strengthen the legitimacy of the Afghan government. ... CIDA support of the national solidarity program has not only resulted in the positive outcomes that other witnesses have described to you; it has also been one of the major reasons that the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, MRRD, is one of the most credible arms of the Afghan government. It should be our objective to make more ministries and the administration of Kandahar province as effective as MRRD. ...

Public administration and governance reform efforts in Kabul have been ill-disciplined and fragmented since the fall of the Taliban regime. Despite the expenditure of large amounts of money and the presence of hundreds of international technical assistants, there is still no comprehensive strategy to reform the entire system and its processes. Canada could exercise leadership in this area by working closely with the UN and the World Bank to develop the necessary strategy and to focus international efforts.²⁴⁴

A number of witnesses emphasized that state reforms must not be top-down but include the level of local self-governance, which as Rubin and Hamidzada observe, “have enabled people to survive even when the central government collapsed.”²⁴⁵ Hon. Flora MacDonald, a frequent visitor to Afghanistan, gave the Committee examples from “a form of local governance [that] is emerging, although not particularly the one dictated by western thinking.” She noted that in the capital of Bamian province (Afghanistan’s poorest), a woman has been elected to head its local ‘shura’, the first time this has happened in Afghanistan’s history. Such locally-led developments are “now spreading to other provinces. It is a homegrown kind of governance, not the kind that is depicted through NATO, ISAF, Karzai, or through anybody else who is borrowing western ideas. This is something that is locally grown and is succeeding ...”.²⁴⁶

These are small-scale signs of hope although still not part of the formal state system. More broadly, it is important to look at the Community Development Councils (CDCs) that have been created under the National Solidarity Program (NSP).²⁴⁷ There are currently over 12,000 CDCs, the progress of which is documented in a recent World Bank study, *Implementation Completion and Results Report of the National Solidarity Report Programme I*.²⁴⁸ According to Mariam Sherman, World Bank Country Manager for Afghanistan, “The NSP has for the first time in Afghanistan’s history introduced an institutionalized framework for inclusive consultative decision-making at the village level as part of the state governance system. Before NSP, women were not permitted to participate in rural institutions ... With the introduction of CDCs, equal representation for women is actively promoted, and on average, 35 percent of the CDC representatives are female.”²⁴⁹

In addition, the Committee welcomes the increased focus of the Afghan government on local governance issues and its creation of an Independent Directorate for Local Governance in August 2007, and the consultations undertaken within Afghanistan by the Working Group on Sub-National Governance under the Auspices of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS).²⁵⁰

Still, much remains to be reformed and sorted out in terms of overall provincial, district, and local governance structures, including the layer of provincial development committees initiated in 2006.²⁵¹ According to the summary of a July 2007 World Bank report: “One of the key constraints to strengthening the sub-national system in Afghanistan is the absence of a clear policy framework regarding its desired institutional structure, and a strategy to guide actions and activities to realize it.”²⁵² The bottom line for Afghans is that they need to be able to see effective public institutions working to meet their needs where they live, bearing in mind that the situation on the ground is locally complicated and constantly shifting.²⁵³

Over a year ago Sarah Chayes, founder of the Arghand Cooperative near Kandahar, warned the Committee by video-conference from Kandahar City about growing disillusionment with government among the local population, observing that: “The governor is not elected. The mayor is not elected. Nobody who was

direct impact on the lives of people has been elected.”²⁵⁴ Emmauel Isch of World Vision Canada also reminded the Committee that “sustainable development needs stable local governance. Canada’s approach to developing Afghanistan should support the development of strategies that can build up subnational governance structures. We often refer to some issue-related corruption and lack of capacity in that country, and we’re aware of it, but what we would like to see happen more is that there be more investment in the capacities of local governments and local communities ... We need to invest not just at the national level but also within the communities so that the local authorities can more effectively provide and deliver services to their own people.”²⁵⁵

Better governance on the part of Afghan authorities is essential to the ultimate success of the Canadian mission in Kandahar. Colonel Capstick alerted the Committee to “a desperate need to extend good governance to Kandahar Province. The entire subnational governance structure in Afghanistan is problematic, and I’m being generous. Corruption, weak capacity, and arbitrary decision-making are all common.” He added that: “Clearly, projects intended to correct this situation in Kandahar should be a Canadian priority. This must include projects designed to reform the public administration system, the police and security forces, the penal system, and the control of public finances. At the same time, Canadian efforts must also focus on assisting the Afghan government in its efforts to deliver basic services to the population.”²⁵⁶

Recommendation 26

As part of helping to ensuring that the governance benchmarks in the Afghanistan Compact can be met, the Government of Canada should consider all means necessary to raise the legitimacy and effective capacity of public administration institutions in Afghanistan from the national to the local level. This should include, where feasible, exploring support for Afghan-led structures and processes. Particular attention should be paid to fostering improved governance mechanisms in Kandahar province aimed at providing better security and basic services to the population there. The Government of Canada should seek responsible local partners in this endeavour.

Reform of the Justice System and Security-Sector Institutions

Order and justice, as retired Lieutenant-Colonel Rémi Landry remarked to the Committee, are essential to the establishment of a stable legitimate Afghan state.²⁵⁷ The rule of law encompasses both. Without order there can be no justice, and vice versa. Restoring a functioning justice system in Afghanistan remains a work in progress. The July 2007 Rome Conference on The Rule of Law in Afghanistan made a series of ambitious joint recommendations to the governments of Afghanistan, donor countries and the international community.²⁵⁸ The March 2008 Report of the UN Secretary General to the Security Council observed a mixed

picture. For example: “While public access to courts and legal aid is a constitutional right, it remains elusive to the majority of Afghans, especially women, children and vulnerable groups. This problem is compounded by the fact that public awareness of legal rights and processes is limited. ... Nevertheless, there have been slow improvements in infrastructure development for the legal system, and a private corps of lawyers continues to grow.”²⁵⁹

Action being taken on a number of fronts rests on the Afghan state’s ability to provide basic justice and order to its citizens. Several of our witnesses suggested that minimal conditions of security of the person, and the means of achieve that – i.e., the instruments necessary to enforce the rule of law – must exist for progress on all other objectives to be achieved. As Sally Armstrong put it to us, “you can’t do anything without security. You can’t run a government, a judiciary, a school, a hospital, you can’t do anything.”²⁶⁰

Nipa Banerjee argued to the Committee that this has been a weak point in the trajectory of post 9/11 international intervention in Afghanistan: “In reality, security sector reform, the prerequisite to stability, became a secondary affair in the interest of rushing the political objectives of the Bonn process. The Afghan security forces and the army are not yet strong enough to resist aggression. The police force is unable to win the trust and confidence of the people. Reforms to the Ministry of Interior Affairs have not been implemented, and access to justice is non-existent.”²⁶¹

Kamran Bokhari, Director of Middle East Analysis for Strategic Forecasting Inc. (STRATFOR), was even more pointed in telling the Committee: “We definitely need to develop institutions, but what are the primary institutions that we need to develop and upon which every other institution will rest? These are the security institutions, the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army. But they’re not there yet, and they’re not going to be there for a very long time. We need to admit that and to acknowledge it. Until such a time, we need to be able to support these institutions.”²⁶²

Reform of the national police was of particularly urgent concern to witnesses, including retired General Lewis Mackenzie who suggested that such reform might be better organized at a provincial level²⁶³, and was acknowledged by then Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxime Bernier in remarks at the opening of a new Canadian training centre at the Kandahar provincial reconstruction site on April 13, 2008: “Accountable and professional Afghan National Police is essential to stability and supporting the rule of law in Afghanistan Establishing effective rule of law is essential to rebuilding Afghanistan, promoting peace, stability and democracy, a goal that we all share.”²⁶⁴ Another element to consider is adequate oversight of the large number of private security personnel operating in Afghanistan.²⁶⁵

Building a competent, trustworthy Afghan army of 70,000 (since increased to 80,000²⁶⁶) and police force of 62,000, for a total of 132,000 by 2011, is a benchmark goal of the 2006 Afghanistan Compact. Specifically with regard to the police

component, the Compact states: “By end-2010, a fully constituted, professional, functional and ethnically balanced Afghanistan National Police and Border Police with a combined force of up to 62,000 will be able to meet the security needs of the country effectively and will be increasingly fiscally sustainable.”²⁶⁷ According to the January 2008 *Independent Panel on Canada’s Future Role in Afghanistan*, this combined force total was subsequently amended upwards to 82,000.²⁶⁸ It is difficult to be precise about the exact numbers actually on the job. In February 2008 the Afghan Ministry of the Interior provided the Afghanistan Compact’s Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board with a December 2007 estimate of 75,000 employed by the Afghanistan National Police (ANP) and foresaw the involvement of 1,417 contractors. The Ministry further stated that it was in the process of commissioning an professional and independent review.²⁶⁹ In June 2008, Brig.-Gen. Peter Atkinson told the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence that as of February 1, 2008 the force strength of the Afghan National Police had reached 76, 410 (93% of the numerical goal). However, only half of the target for the Afghan Border Police (9,000 of 18,000) had been reached.²⁷⁰

Canada currently has 60 soldiers and police officers working with the border police, which have responsibility for patrolling Afghanistan’s 5,500-kilometre border, 14 land border crossings and four international airports.²⁷¹ At the same time, it is widely recognized that much still needs to be done with regard to the Afghan police forces as a whole in terms of their quality as well as numbers. Together with Afghan authorities, Canada and other international partners are striving to make progress on achieving the necessary institutional reforms, force strengths, and training goals.²⁷²

The Afghanistan Compact also affirms the following: “Democratic governance and the protection of human rights constitute the cornerstone of sustainable political progress in Afghanistan. ... Reforming the justice system will be a priority for the Afghan Government and the international community. The aim will be to ensure equal, fair and transparent access to justice for all based upon written codes with fair trials and enforceable verdicts. Measures will include: completing legislative reforms for the public as well as the private sector; building the capacity of judicial institutions and personnel; promoting human rights and legal awareness; and rehabilitating judicial infrastructure.”²⁷³

Here again, the proof of progress will be putting these aims into practice. Barnett Rubin observed in 2006 that: “Police cannot provide security without courts. The judiciary is the sole part of the state still dominated by the ulama, the learned clergy, who play a central role in determining—and undermining—the legitimacy of governments. Hence judicial reform involves sensitive issues. By now however, the lack of judicial reform has become a bottleneck for security, governance, and economic development.”²⁷⁴

In proceeding, the international community needs to be cognizant of the fact that Afghanistan is an Islamic republic as defined by its constitution approved by almost all members of the 502-member Constitutional Loya Jirga on 4 January

2004.²⁷⁵ The current constitution under Chapter One “The State” affirms in Article Two: “The religion of the state of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is the sacred religion of Islam”, and in Article Three that: “In Afghanistan, no law can be contrary to the beliefs and provisions of the sacred religion of Islam.”²⁷⁶ The new Afghanistan National Development Strategy also makes clear that “Islamic values” are to be reflected in every aspect of government policy.²⁷⁷

Obviously it makes a difference how liberally or narrowly these provisions are interpreted by the courts. Other issues of legal human rights import have come before Afghanistan’s legislature – the 249-seat lower house, the “Wolesi Jirga”, and the 102-seat upper house, the “Meshrano Jirga”. Two in particular are described in a document prepared for the US Congress:

Parliamentary opposition contributed to [Afghan President Hamid] Karzai’s apparent dropping of a July 2006 proposal to revive a “Ministry of Supporting Virtue and Discouraging Vice,” a ministry that was used by the Taliban to commit major human rights abuses. Karzai said the ministry would focus on advice and public relations to encourage Islamic behavior. Another significant vote came in February 2007, when both houses passed a law giving amnesty to so-called “warlords,” the faction leaders who participated in the two decades of anti-Soviet and then civil war. Despite demonstrations in Kabul by 25,000 Afghans supporting the resolution, Karzai returned a modified draft giving victims of these commanders the right to seek justice for any abuses. The new version was passed and has become law.²⁷⁸

As the Committee heard from witnesses, concerns persist about Afghanistan’s criminal justice system at all level from courts to corrections and prison conditions. As Hilary Homes of Amnesty International Canada told the Committee in March 2008: “Many promises have been made to improve human rights through the mandates of the international forces, the United Nations, the recent Rome conference on the rule of law in Afghanistan, and of course the Afghan constitution itself. These commitments to creating and strengthening institutions and building a broad culture of human rights to ensure their survival must be followed through if the progress that has been made is not to be lost.”²⁷⁹ At the same time, Amnesty International’s Canadian Secretary General Alex Neve agreed with another witness, journalist and author Sally Armstrong, that the Canadian-supported Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission has achieved some real success.²⁸⁰ In that context, he appealed for further support from Canada for this body:

The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission is an incredibly important institution in the country; it has done some great work. ... There’s a lot of work that they’ve done, not just with respect to this particular issue of battlefield detainees; that’s one very specific issue in a broad human rights landscape. ...there’s a vital need, not just for somewhat increased resourcing, but substantially increased resourcing.²⁸¹

The Committee has heard considerable testimony on the issue of detainees, which remains a matter under judicial review in Canada. What we would underline is that the Afghanistan Motion passed by the House of Commons on 13 March

2008 stipulates 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.”

The Canadian government must be held to the above commitments. In addition, while respecting Afghanistan’s sovereignty, it has also made internationally-binding commitments under the terms of the 2006 Afghanistan Compact and it must be held to those. In the words of Marc André Boivin to the Committee, “internationally, the Afghan government must be required to meet its obligations in the areas of human rights, freedom of the press and freedom of association and to fully shoulder its responsibilities to its population.”²⁸²

Recommendation 27

As part of its quarterly progress reports to the Parliament of Canada on the Canadian mission in Afghanistan, the Government of Canada should include detailed information on what steps are being taken, and with what success, to implement the commitments on governance, rule of law and human rights — including benchmarks and timelines — undertaken by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community under the terms of the Afghanistan Compact.

Recommendation 28

Given the progress that has been achieved to date working with the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, the Government of Canada should increase its support to that vital body so as to ensure that it has sufficient capacity and resources to effectively carry out its mandate.

Recommendation 29

In addition, with respect to the issue of transfer of Afghan detainees to Afghan authorities, the Government of Canada should indicate in its future reports the details of what it is doing to implement the terms of the Afghanistan Motion passed by the House of Commons on March 13, 2008.

Anti-Corruption and Counter-Narcotics Efforts

We made it clear to the president [of Afghanistan] that Canadians expect that if we're going to be in Afghanistan – Canadian lives are being lost there, there's a lot of money being spent – there's got to be a sense of public confidence that the money and the lives are in pursuit of something worthy. And when there's a scent of corruption you get people turning off. And so, I explained to him the importance of dealing with that.

Minister of Foreign Affairs David Emerson,
Paris, June 12, 2008²⁸³

Everyone will agree that corruption is a cancer that must be constantly combated. Afghanistan, which ranked 172 out of 179 countries surveyed on a Transparency International index cited in a 2006 UN report, is clearly a hard case in point.²⁸⁴ The Afghanistan Compact signed in early 2006 states that: “The UN Convention against Corruption will be ratified by end-2006, national legislation adapted accordingly by end-2007 and a monitoring mechanism to oversee implementation will be in place by end-2008.” Afghanistan actually signed the Convention in February 2004 and it was ratified by parliament in August 2006, meeting the Compact commitment. The last element of implementation remains the most crucial. Work continues in that area in 2008 assisted by international donors.²⁸⁵

There is no time to lose. As Barnett Rubin observed several months after the adoption of the Compact: “Afghanistan’s weak administration has few if any effective controls over corruption, which has undermined support for the government. Some systems have been instituted to prevent the most important types of corruption, notably a system requiring transparent public bidding for procurement. Increasingly, however, ministries are sidestepping this procedure and signing single-source contracts, many of which are then approved by the president in the interest of not delaying important projects. The compact obliges the government to fight corruption without saying how.”²⁸⁶

The Committee observes that some progress has been made through the establishment in August 2007 of the Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG) with a mandate to review the performance of subnational governance appointees. Indeed, as of early May 2008, the IDLG had “fired the governors of eight of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces.”²⁸⁷ Afghanistan has also established a High Level Commission against Corruption which has produced a “roadmap” document “Fighting Corruption in Afghanistan – Strategy and Action”.²⁸⁸ Afghanistan needs to be encouraged to continue to strengthen such oversight and anti-corruption measures.

Improving government accountability and performance is a joint responsibility of the Afghan government and international partners. Rubin, who subsequently testified before the Committee several times, had recommended in 2006 that: “The Afghan president should tell his cabinet that he will no longer sign single-source contracts without exceptional circumstances and that all ministers

found proffering such contracts will be sacked. International donors should invest in building the capacity of the Afghan government to draft proposals and process contracts so that transparent procedures do not lead to intolerable delays.”²⁸⁹

The need to keep the pressure on for reform was fully recognized by then Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxime Bernier when he stated to the Committee:

The fight against corruption in the public service is an important element, and Canada is making enormous efforts to help the Afghan government make its institutions more responsible. ... That government must be present throughout the country, and in order for it to do that, the existing corruption has to be eliminated. We want the government to have the utmost credibility among the people; that is why we and the international community, together, are fighting to reduce and eliminate corruption in the various components of the Afghan public service. Canada has also insisted that the Afghanistan Compact include an important clause on the creation of a fair and transparent mechanism for reviewing government appointments. As you know, corruption is a human thing, and we want to be sure that the people whom the Afghan government appoints to various positions, to senior positions, such as chief of police, lawyers in the department of Justice, directors of security in the districts and provincial governors, for example, are above any suspicion of corruption. The mechanism for appointments to senior posts was recently established by order of the Afghan government, in September 2006, and we are currently working with our international and Afghan partners to ensure that the order is carried out.²⁹⁰

In subsequent testimony, Surendrini Wijeyartne of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation agreed that: “Canada and other donors have a distinct opportunity to take a very strong diplomatic role ensuring that the senior appointments panel functions fully and credible and doesn’t become manipulated by the government.”²⁹¹ At the same time, *how* this role is played can be a delicate matter, as Minister Bernier himself discovered when comments he initially made on 14 April 2008 about the governor of Kandahar province Asadullah Khalid – appearing to link him to corruption – had to be clarified after protests from the Afghan government. Minister Bernier issued a statement that: “Afghanistan is a sovereign state that makes its own decisions about government appointments. I can assure you that Canada fully respects this and is not calling for any changes to the Afghan government.”²⁹²

It is true that Afghanistan’s government has made anti-corruption reform commitments under the Afghanistan Compact, and it should be held to those. As Sally Armstrong described to the Committee, one problem to be overcome is that during the early years of the state-building process: “What happened, as you know, is that Mujahideen leaders took control of the ministries and simply refused to give them up. Remember that the international community was invited in by the government to help. We weren’t invited in to make decisions, and we couldn’t say, ‘Fire those three ministers.’ We couldn’t do that; it was not our role. This is a very tricky file.”²⁹³ Debate continues about how public or not international donors should be in raising governance concerns linked to corruption. But all agree that the issue

should not be swept under the rug. At least one Afghan government minister, education minister Haneef Atmar, is reported to “want foreign countries to name and shame corrupt officials”.²⁹⁴

Furthermore, dealing with corruption in Afghanistan is impossible to achieve without confronting the enormous illicit drug economy which has infected Afghan society, distorted governance at every level, and fuelled the insurgency.²⁹⁵ Even though opium poppy production for trafficking is banned by the 2004 constitution²⁹⁶, the raw figures are staggering. In 2007 Afghanistan accounted for fully 93% of global opium production; Helmand province next to Kandahar alone supplying nearly half of world production. The value of this illegal economy (around \$5 billion annually, only about 20% of which is income at the “farm-gate”) is far higher than what Afghanistan receives in international aid, and is greater than any other country in the world in comparison to the size of the legal GDP. Indeed according to the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Bank, the magnitude is virtually unprecedented in modern experience.²⁹⁷ Moreover, this is a demand as well as a supply problem. Rates of drug abuse are rising inside Afghanistan, which now has nearly a million addicts as well as disturbingly high levels of mental illness.²⁹⁸ Most opium, however, is exported, mainly to Europe where its street value has been estimated at \$60 billion annually²⁹⁹. Some 70% of global heroin is refined from raw opium within the country. This in turn requires the interdiction of trafficking in precursor chemicals such as acetic anhydride used to make heroin.

The complexity of the problem, its links to Taliban insurgency – it is estimated that from 20-40% of Taliban financing comes from opiate exports³⁰⁰ – and government corruption, are compounded by the problems with existing counter-narcotics approaches which have been amply documented.³⁰¹ The Committee has heard considerable testimony outlining the issues.³⁰² One of our witnesses, noted analyst Barnett Rubin, has called for reformed comprehensive strategies that include long-term rural development and improved cross-border interdiction³⁰³ – which must involve all of Afghanistan’s neighbours, Iran and the Central Asian Republics³⁰⁴, as well as Pakistan.³⁰⁵ This is in line with the Manley report’s assessment that: “Opium profits flow to the Taliban, to criminal elements and to corrupt provincial and central-government officials. The Panel found that different and in some cases contradictory Afghan government and foreign counter-narcotics policies and practices have been working at cross-purposes. Coherent counter-narcotics strategies need to be adopted by all relevant authorities.³⁰⁶ These approaches must include justice-sector reforms to tighten the prosecution of traffickers. And they must offer effective economic provisions to induce would-be poppy farmers and middlemen to prefer and find alternative lines of work.”³⁰⁷

Efforts to eradicate the poppy crop have been especially contested, including by local Afghan government officials³⁰⁸, and US proposals for aerial spraying have been resisted by Afghan President Hamid Karzai³⁰⁹ and some international partners who feel that this may further alienate small farmers and the migrant labourers who actually harvest most of the raw opium.³¹⁰ Alternative uses

for opium – in effect, a legalization of production – notably the “poppy-for medicine” proposal advanced by the privately-funded Senlis Council led by Canadian Norine MacDonald³¹¹ – have attracted interest. The Manley panel report stated cautiously that: “As one possibility, a limited poppy-for- medicine project might be worth pursuing. Any good strategy will take time to yield results.”³¹² However, the Senlis proposals have been rejected by the Afghan and Canadian governments and critiqued by knowledgeable analysts.³¹³

The latest report of the UN Secretary General on the situation in Afghanistan observed some “significant momentum” in counter-narcotics efforts in response to the alarming rise in production in trafficking in 2007, but also presented a mixed picture:

The Government [of Afghanistan] will provide force protection to counter-narcotics operations, bearing in mind the powerful link between the drug industry and the insurgency. The plan strongly emphasizes the importance of alternative development, a province-centred approach and strengthened donor support for the Counter-Narcotics Trust Fund, the successful restructuring of which is essential to its improved performance. ... There is an urgent need for strengthened counter-narcotics leadership based on clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics and other relevant authorities. ... In 2008 opium-poppy cultivation is not expected to change significantly, according to the Opium Winter Rapid Assessment Survey issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in February. Cultivation remains concentrated, and is likely to increase, in the insurgency-affected provinces in the south and west. No major change is expected in Helmand province, which accounted for over half of Afghan production last year. While, on a positive note, 12 provinces are expected to remain free of opium cultivation this year, Afghanistan is emerging as one of the largest suppliers of cannabis in the world, with an estimated 70,000 hectares of cannabis crops cultivated in 2007.³¹⁴

Recommendation 30

The Government of Canada should use prudent and measured diplomacy to hold the Afghanistan government to its anti-corruption commitments under the Afghanistan Compact. The Government of Canada should support a coordinated approach to anti-corruption measures and in particular should work with the Government of Afghanistan and its international partners to ensure that the senior appointments panel is functioning effectively as a key part of preventing corruption within the institutions of governance.

Recommendation 31

The Government of Canada should work with the Government of Afghanistan and international partners to reform counter-narcotics policies so that effective and coherent counter-narcotics strategies can be adopted. All feasible measures should be examined in that regard.

Support for Accountable Governance, Multiparty Democracy, Elections, and Effective Legislative Institutions

Building an effective, more democratic state in Afghanistan will be a long, difficult process, one in which, rather than the imposition of any Western “models”, local characteristics in conformity with *both* Afghanistan’s Islamic constitution and its international human rights obligations must be respected. In the Committee’s July 2007 report on Canadian assistance to international democratic development, we noted how Elections Canada supported the electoral processes of 2004 (presidential) and 2005 (parliamentary) and how other Canadian expertise in this field has been deployed in Afghanistan. A Canadian role in additional democratic development activities in Afghanistan was suggested to the Committee by several witnesses. At the same time, our report stated that “much greater knowledge of the highly varied circumstances in Afghanistan is essential for a long-term democratic development program for that country to have a chance to succeed.”³¹⁵ If anything, events since then have reinforced that view.

At the time of the Bonn Agreement of December 2001, the mood was one of buoyant optimism, with the preamble to it ambitiously calling for “the establishment of a broad-based, gender sensitive, multi-ethnic, and fully representative government”.³¹⁶ The “Timelines and Benchmarks” appended to the 2006 Afghanistan Compact (see Appendix II) address governance and participation but do not make any specific reference to democratic goals as such. Clearly, notwithstanding the holding of the first democratic elections in decades, democracy-building in Afghanistan remains a work in progress.

By way of brief background, Afghanistan’s 2004 constitution instituted a form of presidential system in which voting for the president (along with two vice-presidential candidates as part of the “ticket”) is by direct popular vote for a five-year term. No president can serve more than two terms. The bicameral national legislature is divided into an elected lower chamber (also five-year terms), the 249-seat *Wolesi Jirga* (House of People) and the partly-elected, partly-appointed upper chamber the *Meshrano Jirga* (House of Elders). The *Wolesi Jirga* reserves ten seats for the ‘kuchi’ (nomad) population (three of which must be held by women), and requires that two female candidates be elected from each of the country’s 34 provinces in order to give women overall about 25% of the seats. The president appoints one-third of the members of the *Meshrano Jirga* (half of these must be women); the others are to be selected, one-third by elected provincial councils, and the final third by about 400 district councils (although elections to the latter have been postponed).³¹⁷ As of April 2008, female representation was 27.7% in the lower house (67 of 242 sitting members) and 21.6% of the upper house (22 of 102 members).³¹⁸

Adding to the complexity of the system, and seen by a number of analysts as problematic, is the fact that the parliamentary electoral process is conducted using the complicated little-known and little-used proportional representation system known as the Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV). It appears that the choice of SNTV was at least in part motivated as a means to inhibit the formation of political parties, but it is hard for the average person, much less an illiterate majority, to understand it and has resulted in some perverse effects. This is only one of the questions that surround legislative development in Afghanistan.³¹⁹ Another is the parliament's ability to provide proper oversight of public expenditures. Indeed this aspect of accountable governance affects Afghan government as a whole, since, as Nipa Banerjee stated to the Committee – "A government's primary accountability is to its people. Both overdependence and long-term dependence of a government on aid transfers the government's accountability from its citizens to the donor community."³²⁰

With respect to parliamentary development, in addition to some bilateral donor support, there are multilateral initiatives such as the United Nations Development Program's Support to the Establishment of the Afghan Legislature (SEAL) which started working in 2005.³²¹ After decades of dictatorship and war, these have had to start from a very low base. Efforts are also underway to provide support for women parliamentarians, although again, there is a long road ahead. Surendrini Wijeyaratne told the Committee that "the women in Parliament do face more challenges and that there is a need to further support them. There is a lot of intimidation, a lot of harassment for all of them to do their jobs. There does need to be much more support so that these women, after having gone to Parliament, are able to actually do their jobs in Parliament."³²²

Also looking ahead, witnesses told the Committee that the time is now to start preparing in earnest for the next electoral cycle in 2009 (presidential in September) and 2010 (legislative). Indeed UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon stated in his most recent report on Afghanistan to the Security Council that: "Preparations must begin immediately on voter registration and planning for the next elections. This requires decisions by the Afghan authorities on electoral dates and the adoption of electoral legislation. The international community will need to begin mobilizing funds to support these vital processes, especially that for voter registration, which must start in the summer of 2008 in order for elections to be held in 2009."³²³

The comments on this subject by Hon. John Manley, Chair of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan, also deserve citing in full:

... I want to underscore the importance of the upcoming election, in part because one of the things we're trying to instil is democratic institutions, but also because the past elections are a benchmark for how these elections will be run. By every measure, I think they were remarkably successful, given the state of affairs at the time; they will be a reference point for the 2009 elections, which I think a lot of

people hope will combine both presidential and parliamentary elections. If they don't go well, it's going to be a serious problem, not just for Afghanistan, but also for the international community. So it's right that these should be focused on.

Canada actually has some history of involving ourselves with those. Elections Canada was very involved with the last round of elections. Therefore, we ought to be heavily engaged, whether it's through UN agencies or the OSCE, or wherever that coordination comes from. This is one of the things that we do quite well and should be contributing to.³²⁴

Other witnesses also pointed to the upcoming elections process and Canada's role in supporting that. Grant Kippen, who most recently monitored Pakistan's February 2008 elections, and who was Chairman of Afghanistan's Electoral Complaints Commission for the 2005 parliamentary and provincial council elections³²⁵, told the Committee that: "One election does not a democracy make. We have to stay for the longer term. We have to facilitate that understanding, education, and build up the capacity. I think there are a lot of expectations from the international communities about what they would like to see Afghans do in terms of their own governance, etc., but I think we've been woefully inadequate in providing the skills and the knowledge and the capacity to make that happen."³²⁶ He added that "there's a tremendous opportunity for Canadian parliamentarians and the Government of Canada to develop professional working relationships with the new parliamentarians, both at the national assembly and at the provincial assemblies, particularly in Beluchistan, which borders, as everyone knows, on Kandahar province. I think the time is short and I think the opportunity needs to be grasped very quickly in order to do that."³²⁷

Elections by themselves are not enough without follow through in developing and sustaining effective legislative governance institutions, and that links back to the broader prospects for enhancing the legitimacy and stability of the state. As Marc André Boivin explained to the Committee: "The presidential and legislative elections in 2004 and 2005 were clearly a great success. Among peace consolidation specialists, the consensus is that the second and third elections are the decisive ones. In addition to the symbolic success of holding elections, patience is required in establishing structures and institutions that can support a political system that excludes violence as a means to an end."³²⁸

As well, Derek Burney introduced a note of practical realism and caution when he told the committee that "sometimes when you sow the seeds of democracy, you don't get a pristine verdict from the electorate. There may be many reasons why some of these people are elected by their local people, but it's very difficult for the international community to go in and impose a standard of democracy that suits our interests, as opposed to what they see as being in their interest."³²⁹

In sum, the Committee heard that more could be done to accompany Afghans in *their* journey towards realizing the goals of free and fair elections, multiparty democracy, effective legislative institutions, and accountable democratic governance overall. But we cannot presume to know what is best for them. This is a learning process on all sides and one that must be continued over the long term.

Recommendation 32

The Government of Canada should examine ways to increase its support for the development of both the national legislature of Afghanistan and elected subnational governance institutions, building on lessons learned from work that has already taken place in this regard. This should include additional support tailored to the needs of women parliamentarians. Furthermore, Canadian assistance to legislative and other aspects of democratic development must ensure that this is a sustainable Afghan-led process that respects Afghan priorities and strengthens Afghan capacities for democratic representation and oversight. At the same time, Canada should help Afghanistan to build its democracy in a way that fulfills Afghanistan's international human rights obligations.

Recommendation 33

The Government of Canada should immediately examine how best to provide support for Afghanistan's next democratic elections in 2009-2010 in coordination with the relevant Afghan authorities and international partners. The Government of Canada should also foster professional working relationships between Canadian parliamentarians and Afghan legislators at the national, provincial and local levels.

The Future Role of Canada's Strategic Advisory Team-Afghanistan (SAT-A)

One of the most innovative components of Canada's support to good governance has been "Operation Argus", instituted by the Canadian Forces in the summer of 2005 and comprising a team – know as the Strategic Advisory Team-Afghanistan or SAT-A – of about 15 military (out of uniform) and civilian members based in Kabul in order "to help the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan develop key national strategies, and mechanisms for the effective implementation of those strategies."³³⁰ According to official Canadian government information, the SAT-A includes: "a small command and support element, two teams of strategic planners, a defence analyst, a strategic communications advisor, and a development expert. ... [It] cooperates closely with Canada's Ambassador Arif Lalani and Head of Aid George Saible at the Canadian Embassy, and a senior representative of the Afghan government, to provide direct planning support to government ministries and working groups responsible for development and governance. To date, the SAT-A has worked extensively with the Afghan

government's Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, and with working groups on national development strategy, public administration reform, and gender equity policy in the Afghan Civil Service. The members of SAT-A planning teams bring a wide range of training, education, experience and strategic planning skills (both civilian and military) to bear on complex civil problems. They embed with Afghan government ministries and agencies and work under Afghan direction to help Afghan government officials integrate the substantive ideas of international experts and their own national leadership into cohesive strategic plans."³³¹

As the SAT-A's first commander Colonel Mike Capstick, now retired from the Forces, told the Committee in March 2008, SAT-A members were involved in the intense effort to produce the Afghanistan Compact and the interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (IANDS) in time for their approval by the London Conference in early 2006 which he attended.³³² One of our witnesses, Professor Robert Jackson, was very positive about the role that the SAT-A as constituted has played in providing appropriate support to the Afghan government. As he explained the context and nature of the role to the Committee:

There will never be success in Afghanistan until a strong and capable government is set up in Kabul. Of course eradicating the poppy fields, building a few roads, educating more people, and fighting the Taliban are important, but they will never be successful if the democratic institutions and state bureaucracy are not powerful enough to counter the fragmentation caused by powerful warlords.

Canada's Strategic Advisory Team has been helping with this vital task, and the government, in my opinion, should put more funds and more people into this effort. Canada's armed bureaucrats punch above their weight in Afghanistan. They are only 16 officers in number, but their influence in Kabul is impressive. Recently they have been embedded in the departments of education, justice, public service reform, transportation and aviation, and rural rehabilitation and development, and the office of the special economic adviser to the President. They are obviously not included in the department of defence, as their work is not in the security field. This small group consists of dedicated planners and strategic analysts who are bringing their skills to the Government of Afghanistan. They work to bolster the capacity of the government to receive and spend the funds they have and to develop coherent public policies from the centre. When I was there, Afghan government officials, ministers and otherwise, unanimously told me that SAT is doing necessary and excellent work and should be continued.³³³

However another witness, Paul Heinbecker, a former Canadian ambassador to the United Nations, questioned whether the SAT-A should be run as a Canadian Forces operation. He argued to the Committee that "SAT is a very good idea, but if there were ever a case for a whole-of-government approach to something, this would be it. It's not perfectly obvious to me why this should be done by military planners, especially when the ground rules are that they don't do military activities. What I would have said on SAT is that there's been some controversy over how it's being managed. There's no reason that operation should not be part of the overall Canadian operation, and it should be run like every other part of the Canadian government."³³⁴

While he did not address the issue of the planners being serving members of the Canadian Forces operating under Operation Argus, Professor Jackson disagreed on the following grounds: “These SAT people work for Afghan ministers. Let’s assume an American diplomat was on secondment in the Department of Foreign Affairs here in Ottawa. Would we want that person to report back to Washington, or would we want him to report to his minister here in Ottawa? Of course we’d want him to report to his minister in Ottawa. The whole point about this staff is that they need to work for what the Afghan ministers want them to do, and not for what Canada wants them to do.”³³⁵

The Committee heard from witnesses that the important work of the SAT-A should be continued, and that it should be enhanced as warranted by circumstances, on a basis that is mutually satisfactory to the governments of Canada and Afghanistan. Appropriate reporting relationships should be reviewed as part of developing and finalizing the comprehensive Canadian public strategy for Afghanistan that we recommended in the Introduction.

Recommendation 34

The strengthening and extension of the mission of the Strategic Advisory Team-Afghanistan in Kabul should be reviewed by the Special Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan. On the basis of this Committee’s recommendations, the Government of Canada should consider whether or not to enhance the Advisory Team’s mission and strengthen the Team through the addition of more civilian members. Subsequently, and in consultation with the Government of Afghanistan, appropriate reporting relationships should be reviewed as part of developing and finalizing the comprehensive Canadian public strategy for Afghanistan called for in Recommendation 1.

Achieving Canadian and International Coordination of Assistance to Good Governance in Afghanistan

Inadequate coordination of assistance to Afghanistan, both military and non-military, and both at the domestic and international levels was a problem repeatedly raised by witnesses before the Committee. As Professor Douglas Bland, Chair in Defence Management Studies in the Queen’s University School of Public Policy Studies, told the Committee: “We can have slogans like three Ds, and that’s all they are – slogans. We need the other slogan, ‘whole of government approach,’” which some of us have talked about for a long time, to bring the efforts of ... all the parts of the government together so they work in a coherent way under a strategy. ... We haven’t adjusted the Canadian bureaucracy to the steady piece of the commitments to NATO and UN peacekeeping. ... So we need to think about how we are going to handle that politically, bureaucratically, and with all the instruments of government.”³³⁶

The need for a better system within Canada was also underlined in the January 2008 *Report of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan*, and has resulted in some Canadian “whole-of-government” measures being implemented in terms of the Afghanistan Task Force within the Privy Council Office and the creation of the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan. Parliament has also moved forward with the creation of the Special House Committee on Afghanistan according to the terms of the motion passed by the House of Commons on 13 March (see Appendix 1).

The Committee is encouraged by these developments and believes that these will strengthen the elaboration of a comprehensive Canadian public strategy for Afghanistan that includes regular reporting to Parliament and better communication with Canadians on goals and progress towards results.

In the area of governance, Nipa Banerjee told the Committee that: “The international community’s response to institution building is totally uncoordinated. Despite the rhetoric of coordination by addressing the Afghanistan Compact benchmarks, it is quite clear that the international community has no shared vision, much less a common strategy.”³³⁷ Yet as clearly observed in a report on the situation in Afghanistan released the same day in March by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon to the Security Council, that is precisely what is needed, now more than ever. To cite the report:

To meet the security challenge and stabilize Afghanistan, a common approach is needed that integrates security, governance, rule of law, human rights and social and economic development. The partnership between the Government, ISAF, the United Nations and the international community remains essential to this approach, which must also be aimed at implementing, under Afghan Government leadership, the shared vision of the Compact, with parliamentary, civil society and private sector support.³³⁸

Canada should do all it can internationally to promote the common approach advocated by the UN Secretary General. Domestically, there are also still further measures that should be considered. Col. (ret.) Mike Capstick welcomed the PCO Afghanistan Task Force, the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan, and the Special House of Commons Committee on Afghanistan. He also made several suggestions to the Committee in this regard which he has subsequently raised in the April 2008 issue of *Policy Options*. As the former commander of Canada’s SAT-A in Kabul told the Committee:

These positive steps must now be supported by the development of a comprehensive public strategy that defines Canadian objectives in Afghanistan—the ends; specifies the organizations, methods, priorities, and benchmarks required to achieve these ends—the ways; and quantifies the necessary commitment of human and financial resources—the means. This strategy must accord with the compact and serve as the authoritative guidance for Canada’s “whole of government” effort. It would permit you as parliamentarians to monitor progress and at the same time fully inform Canadians of our goals in Afghanistan

and our plan for achieving them. Taken together, the new cabinet committee, the task force, the special parliamentary committee, and a public Afghan strategy can only improve our national strategic coherence.³³⁹

Colonel Capstick made an important point to the Committee about the need to improve domestic Canadian government coordination.³⁴⁰ More specifically, he proposed a new position to oversee the implementation of such a comprehensive, coherent and coordinated Afghanistan strategy. As he argued before the Committee: “Despite the strong diplomatic skills of our foreign service officers, the leadership and management of a complex, multi-dimensional operation such as the Afghan mission is simply not a core competency of Canada's ambassadors, nor is it an appropriate role for senior military commanders. To overcome this, the Prime Minister should appoint a prominent and experienced Canadian as a special envoy. This envoy should have the authority to act as the head of Canada's “country team” in Afghanistan and a specific mandate to ensure that Canada's Afghan strategy is coordinated. Reporting to the PM, the envoy should be supported by a strategic coordination team of approximately four people. They should have experience in Afghanistan and expertise in security, governance, and development, as well as proven planning and coordination skills at the strategic level. To ensure their independence from the natural bureaucratic pressures that would certainly affect their judgments, the members of this team must not be serving soldiers or public servants. This team would advise the prime minister's envoy, review all projects and activities, ensure strategic coherence, and act as the envoy's eyes and ears throughout the country.”³⁴¹

Recommendation 35

The Government of Canada should increase its efforts towards achieving the improved coordination of Canadian government efforts in Afghanistan linked to the implementation of a comprehensive public strategy. In that context, the Government of Canada could consider appointing an experienced Canadian coordinator for Afghanistan. Furthermore, the Government's approach must be field tested and coordinated with those of Afghan authorities. At the broadest strategic level, the Government should use all diplomatic means to push for the improved international-Afghan coordination that will be required to meet the commitments which all parties have made under the terms of the Afghanistan Compact.

Notes to Part III

- 218 “Strategic Chaos and Taliban Resurgence in Afghanistan”, Testimony to the US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, Washington D.C., April 2, 2008, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5370&l=1> .
- 219 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 14, February 14, 2008, 4.
- 220 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, 15.
- 221 Remarks to the Canadian-American Trade Summit in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, cited in Theo Caldwell, “The ‘Vimy effect’ – 91 years later”, *The National Post*, April 7, 2008, p. A12.
- 222 “Success in Afghanistan: how to define it, how to make it happen”, Speech at the Policy Dialogue conference, European Policy Centre, Brussels, April 2, 2008, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5371&l=1> .
- 223 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 23, April 10, 2008, p. 8..
- 224 United Nations Mission in Afghanistan, Press Conference, March 10, 2008, http://www.unama-afg.org/news/_pc/Index.htm .
- 225 See, for example: numerous reports on Afghanistan by the International Crisis Group (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1266&l=1>); the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (http://www.areu.org.af/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=53); the Centre for Conflict and Peace Studies Afghanistan, <http://www.caps.af/>; the London School of Economics Crisis States Research Centre (<http://www.crisisstates.com/publications/publications.htm>), among others; additionally, the 12 articles in *International Peacekeeping*, “Special Issue: Afghanistan in Transition: Security, Governance and Statebuilding”; Robert Rotberg, ed., *Building a New Afghanistan*, World Peace Foundation and Brookings Institution Press, Cambridge and Washington D.C., 2007; The Asia Foundation, *State-Building, Political Progress, and Human Security in Afghanistan: Reflections on a Survey of the Afghan People*, San Francisco and Kabul, April 2007, <http://www.asiafoundation.org/publications/> .
- 226 Stefan Lehmeier, Coordinator, Canadian Peace building Coordinating Committee, Afghanistan Reference Group, *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 5, November 29, 2007, p. 10.
- 227 Amrullah Saleh, *Strategy of Insurgents and Terrorists in Afghanistan*, National Directorate of Security, Kabul, 2006, cited in Seth Jones, “The Rise of Afghanistan’s Insurgency: Flawed Ideas about Failed States”, *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 4, 2008, p. 20.
- 228 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 6, December 4, 2007, p. 9. Ambassador Samad also observed in remarks to a 19 June 2008 Ottawa panel co-sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the North-South Institute, “Afghanistan: Peace and Prosperity for the People and a Test Case for NATO”, that the first years of international intervention in Afghanistan had not sufficiently addressed these dimensions. By the second phase of international intervention, coinciding with the resurgence of the Taliban, problems of “corruption and impunity” had become “acute”.
- 229 As an editorial in *The Economist* put it: “The weakness and corruption of Afghanistan matters more [than NATO troop levels to Western purposes there]”. (“Afghanistan: How the ‘good war’ could fail”, May 24, 2008, p. 18.)

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- 230 Cited in Peter Goodspeed, "An Afghan's fears", *National Post*, May 17, 2008, p. A20. The book is Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World*, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- 231 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2008-2013)*, Government of Afghanistan, Kabul, April 2008, p. 61.
- 232 See Andrew Bishop, "Can Paris save Afghanistan?", *Middle East Times*, June 5, 2008; Nipa Banerjee, "Remember who we're supposed to be helping", *The Ottawa Citizen*, June 12, 2008, p. A17.
- 233 Cited in Cyril Vanier and Armen Georgian, "Donors led by the United States pledged about \$20 billion in aid to Afghanistan on Thursday but said Kabul must do far more to fight corruption", Reuters, June 12, 2008.
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- 235 *Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2008-2013)*, p. 62.
- 236 Cited in Jon Hemming, "Calls to back \$50bn Afghanistan aid plan", Kabul, Reuters, May 22, 2008. The amount of \$50 billion would be more than twice as much as the \$24 billion cumulative total of aid pledges in the three donor conferences held since 2002.
- 237 As told to Claire Billet of the television network, France 24, cited in N. Germain, "In an unusually frank interview with FRANCE 24, the UN's aid chief in Afghanistan says too much Western aid goes back to the donor countries, instead of the Afghan people it was intended to help", June 11, 2008.
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- 239 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 16, March 4, 2008, pp. 8-10.
- 240 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, p. 6.
- 241 Barnett Rubin and Humanayun Hamidzada, "From Bonn to London: Governance Challenges and the Future of Statebuilding in Afghanistan", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 14, No. 1, January 2007, pp. 17-18.
- 242 Marc André Boivin, "Helping Canadian Policy in Afghanistan to Succeed", Statement presented at FAAE meeting No. 14, February 14, 2008, p. 4. Dr. Boivin is Deputy Director, Francophone Network on Peace Operations, Centre for International Studies and Research (CÉRIUM), University of Montreal.
- 243 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, pp. 2-4. Ms. Banerjee is currently with the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, International Development and Globalization, University of Ottawa.
- 244 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 16, March 4, 2008, p. 5. See also by Capstick, "Reviewing Canada's Afghan Mission", *Policy Options*, April 2008, pp. 22-25; "The war will be won in Kabul", *The Ottawa Citizen*, April 14, 2008, p. A11.

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- 245 Rubin and Hamidza, "From Bonn to London: Governance Challenges and the Future of Statebuilding in Afghanistan", 2007, p. 18.
- 246 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 19, March 13, 2008, pp. 1-2 and 10.
- 247 On the latter, see the analysis by Hamish Nixon, "The Changing Face of Local Governance? Community Development Councils in Afghanistan", Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) Working Paper Series, Kabul, February 2008.
- 248 The February 2008 report can be accessed online at www.worldbank.org/af. On the CDCs, see also Christine Noelle-Karimi, "Village Institutions in the Perception of National and International Actors in Afghanistan", Center for Development Research, University of Bonn, Amu Darya Series, Paper No. 1, April 2006.
- 249 Press Release of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and the World Bank, Kabul, February 4, 2008.
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- 337 *Evidence*, FAAE Meeting No. 17, March 6, 2008, p. 2.
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CONCLUSION

This is not a time for finger pointing or scaling down commitments. Neither Western publics nor the Afghan people have boundless patience; their support will disappear if the drift is not halted quickly. Other than rhetorically, the international community has aimed too low in Afghanistan, pandering to patronage networks rather than respecting the wishes of ordinary Afghan men and women for accountability and more inclusive peacebuilding. While addressing their own shortcomings, the internationals must also hold the Kabul government accountable for its failings.

International Crisis Group,
“Afghanistan: The Need for International Resolve”,
Asia Report No. 145, February 6, 2008, p. ii.

While much has been accomplished since 2001, more remains to be done as we move from “Compact to Impact”. ... When empowered with appropriate tools, skills, political support, and respect for human rights, the Afghan people—facilitated by their Government and international partners—will be the key to comprehensive recovery and a durable peace.

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan,
Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2008-2013)
Kabul, April 2008, pp. vi and 1.

Afghanistan is Canada’s top international priority and its costliest overseas military and civilian mission since the war in Korea over a half century ago. More than 80 members of the Canadian armed forces and a senior diplomat have lost their lives.

In order to meet the shared goals, benchmarks and timelines set out in the multilateral Afghanistan Compact of 2006, more Canadian engagement may be necessary over the long term in diplomatic, developmental and democratic governance efforts, including in regard to the achievement of sustainable security-sector and rule of law institutions (army, police, border controls, courts, prisons, etc.).

The Committee’s report concentrates on Canada’s contribution to the integrally linked three main pillars of the Compact: security and sustainable peace; reconstruction and long-term development; good governance, the rule of law, human rights and democratic institutions. We have heard evidence of progress being made, albeit more in some areas than in others.

While that is encouraging, the Committee also agrees with the many witnesses it heard from, the 22 January 2008 report of the Independent Panel on Canada’s Future Role in Afghanistan, and the 13 March House of Commons Motion, that the status quo will not suffice. Indeed, as Hon. John Manley bluntly told the Committee, “the status quo is going poorly. The commitment is inadequate.

Afghanistan could be lost.³⁴² Improvements are needed and to that end the Committee has made 35 recommendations to the Government.

In the Committee's view, a combination of realism and resolve is required to effect improvements that benefit ordinary Afghans. That does not mean minimizing the progress made to date or looking for early exits. It does mean facing up to the multi-faceted challenge that remains. Internationally, Canadian General Raymond Henault, Chairman of NATO's Military Committee and a former Canadian Chief of Defence Staff, put both aspects well when he stated recently:

We are making progress in Afghanistan; there is absolutely no doubt of it. ... It's slow progress. This is not a military mission alone. We're never going to achieve success with just military forces on the ground. ... It's not going to work until we get the right overall commitment by the international community on the civil side.³⁴³

What is needed is a comprehensive "big picture" view that aims for a stable democratic Afghanistan at peace with itself and its neighbors. But General Henault added that still on the military side, "the political level has not been able to agree on this comprehensive approach or even to give us the political elements of an effects-based approach – and that's because of political differences [among allied governments]".³⁴⁴ Vigorous continued diplomacy will be required to overcome this weak point among troop-contributing countries and international donors to Afghanistan.

Inside Afghanistan, the legacy of so much war and destruction must also be overcome. And this will take time and patience. As a recent study of international intervention in conflict states concludes: "An extended donor presence ... provides the space for the creation, sustenance, and maturation of institutions that are finally able to undergird the state from rolling back into state failure or donor exit."³⁴⁵

Moreover, Afghanistan remains among the most difficult cases confronting the international community. The compound index in a new survey of state weakness in developing countries ranks Afghanistan behind only Somalia, and its score of zero on both the "security" and "social welfare" indicators is the worst among the 141 countries examined.³⁴⁶

As well, repairing so much damage entails an approach to conflict resolution and development for Afghans that goes much beyond counter-insurgency. As Nick Grono of the International Crisis Group summarized the situation of Afghanistan in April 2008:

The decades of conflict have damaged the country's social fabric, undermining state and traditional resolution mechanisms. Without the institutions to tackle grievances the result is chronic local conflicts – not all, or even most of it directly linked to the insurgency itself. In fact, a recent, nationwide survey by Oxfam, following on from our own 2003 work on peacebuilding, found that the leading cause of conflict in Afghanistan was not the insurgency, but water, land and tribal disputes, in that order. (...) When it comes to tackling the pervasive insecurity in Afghanistan, the Karzai government and the international community need to

hold their nerve and focus on institution building rather than quick fixes. In particular this must be those institutions central to the rule of law and driving service delivery. ... by building such institutions we undercut Taliban legitimacy and their recruitment and support base.³⁴⁷

The Committee agrees that making progress on security, development, and governance in Afghanistan is an interlinked process. We are convinced that Canada is capable of rising to the multi-dimensional challenges of this mission by pursuing a comprehensive public strategy for Afghanistan and by making appropriate improvements in our approach while adapting to changing circumstances as necessary. As long as Afghans need our help, we must not shrink from that responsibility.

Moreover, Canada is in a position to exercise leadership in international efforts to assist Afghanistan. As our ambassador to Afghanistan Arif Lalani told the Special Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan on May 28, "Afghanistan is a place where we are actually one of the leaders. One of the implications of that is that it's not easy, and as Canadians we need to come to terms with that too. Leadership means that sometimes we do things that are tough and difficult, and I think we are doing that in Afghanistan."³⁴⁸

In that spirit, the Committee's report recommends ways that we believe can strengthen Canada's contribution to Afghanistan's long-term peace and security, development, and democratic governance. None of this will come easily. But we are confident that Canadians are up to the task.

Notes to Conclusion

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- 344 Ibid.
- 345 Satish Chand and Ruth Coffman, "How Soon Can Donors Exit From Post-Conflict States?", Center for Global Development (www.cgdev.org), Working Paper No. 141, February 2008, "Abstract".
- 346 Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick, *Index of State Weakness in the Developing World*, The Brookings Institution, Washington D.C., 2008, p. 10.
- 347 Speech by Nick Grono, Deputy President, International Crisis Group, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)-NATO Parliamentary Assembly Seminar on "Stabilising Afghanistan: Developing Security, Securing Development", April 17, 2008, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5396&l=1>.
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LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Taking into account the decisions of the House of Commons and the first quarterly report presented to the House on June 10, the Government of Canada should continue its efforts to communicate to Parliament and Canadians a comprehensive strategic policy framework for Canada's multi-year engagement in Afghanistan in support of the international benchmarks already agreed to in the 2006-2011 Afghanistan Compact. Adjustments made as necessary to this Canadian framework should be promptly explained to Parliament and the Canadian public. Future quarterly reports on the implementation of Canadian policy objectives in Afghanistan should include, to the fullest extent, possible frank and detailed results-based assessments of Canadian support to the realization of internationally agreed benchmarks and timelines. These reports should also include an update of the financial costs of Canada's engagement in Afghanistan.

Recommendation 2

Taking into account local sensibilities and culture, the Canadian military should carry out its mission as outlined in the motion passed by the House of Commons on March 13, 2008. Moreover, the Government of Canada should do its utmost to ensure that in conducting military operations the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF) continues to focus on avoiding Afghan civilian casualties and minimizing property damage.

Recommendation 3

The Government of Canada should reinforce efforts on the diplomatic, military and development levels, to promote the creation of conditions favourable to a peace process in Afghanistan.

The Government of Canada should make a concrete commitment to promote the organization of broad-based negotiations both with the central government, by bolstering its ability to initiate talks, and with local communities.

In its CIDA and other programming, the Government of Canada should take advantage of every opportunity to encourage dialogue among all sectors of Afghan society and all communities of interest, and thereby help to establish conditions conducive to peace negotiations.

The Government of Canada should also promote a peace and national reconciliation mandate for the United Nations Special Envoy for Afghanistan.

Recommendation 4

Given the essential role that the United Nations must play in Afghanistan, the Government of Canada should work with the relevant regional players, the concerned members of the international community and the United Nations to enable the UN to have the means required to ensure better coordination of what is being done and thereby increase the effectiveness of the UN mission in Afghanistan. The Government of Canada should also use all bilateral and UN channels to convince member states and the UN itself of the Afghan conflict's importance to the international community and thereby convince them of the necessity to make the conflict a priority.

Recommendation 5

The Government of Canada should significantly increase its focus on regional diplomacy within the context of its mission in Afghanistan. In the particular case of Pakistan, the Government of Canada should take advantage of the recent election of a new government in February 2008 to advance cooperation on key issues of common interest, such as the development of the border regions, notably the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, and increased technical and other cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Recommendation 6

The Government of Canada should ensure that its development and reconstruction projects continue to include aspects that focus on Afghanistan's women and improvements in their social, economic and political capacities.

Recommendation 7

Recognising the importance of security if reconstruction and sustainable development are to occur, and given the security conditions that currently prevail in Kandahar, the Canadian Forces should continue to be involved through Canada's Provincial Reconstruction Team in providing protection for the delivery of vital humanitarian, reconstruction and development assistance to the population of Kandahar province. In addition, the Canadian government should monitor the security conditions in Kandahar for improvements and make changes accordingly to the roles of the military and PRTs in Afghanistan's reconstruction and development.

Recommendation 8

The Government of Canada should rebalance its priorities in Afghanistan in order to give emphasis to reconstruction, development and peace-building efforts in Afghanistan, while maintaining Canada's military commitment.

Recommendation 9

Emphasising what is most likely to deliver benefits to Afghans in need while also raising local Afghan awareness of Canada's efforts, the Government of Canada should consider projects in Afghanistan in a manner that respects the Afghan government's authority and that is coherent with other international assistance activities.

Recommendation 10

The Government of Canada should meet its commitments and provide the assistance it has promised to Afghanistan, and should strongly encourage other donors in both bilateral and multilateral settings to do likewise.

Recommendation 11

The Government of Canada should ensure insofar as possible that Canadian personnel working on international reconstruction and development projects are suitably qualified and experienced in order that Afghanistan's development be carried out efficiently and effectively.

Recommendation 12

Given the impact of the international presence on Afghanistan's economy and capacity-building, the Government of Canada should increase efforts to ensure that Afghan personnel and services receive all necessary consideration in Canada's reconstruction and development efforts.

Recommendation 13

The Government of Canada must continue to improve its accountability and evaluation methods concerning its reconstruction and development commitments, and must ensure that its evaluation process is transparent. In this regard, the Government of Canada should also work with the international community to structure an effective framework for measuring progress and conducting performance evaluation on the basis of the benchmarks established by the international community in the Afghanistan Compact.

Recommendation 14

The Government of Canada should take the necessary steps to improve awareness among the Canadian population of the achievements and shortcomings of Canada's reconstruction and development efforts in Afghanistan. The Government of Canada should strengthen transparency in the process for evaluating its assistance to Afghanistan's development.

Recommendation 15

In order to contribute more effectively to poverty reduction in Afghanistan, the Government of Canada should ensure that commitments regarding Afghanistan's rural development, particularly in remote areas and areas that are more stable than Kandahar, are integrated into the reconstruction and development effort. The Government of Canada should also continue to support projects and activities with impact at the national level.

Recommendation 16

The Government of Canada should continue to ensure that its reconstruction and development projects respect the importance of Afghan ownership in their own development.

Recommendation 17

The Government of Canada in concert with its international partners should increase support for projects that will have an immediate impact on the lives and living conditions of the Afghan people.

Recommendation 18

The Government of Canada should take the necessary steps to remind Canadians and the international community of the value of long-term projects for Afghanistan's long-term and sustainable development. The Government of Canada should also encourage the international community to place the necessary importance on long-term projects, while demonstrating both realism and resolve about their outcomes.

Recommendation 19

The Government of Canada should ensure that its contribution to Afghanistan's reconstruction and development includes a balance of both short- and long-term projects.

Recommendation 20

Working with the United Nations special envoy, the Government of Canada should pursue the necessary steps to strengthen the coordination of aid priorities among all key actors, including the Afghan government.

Recommendation 21

In order to deepen the foundations of Afghanistan's future governance, stability and economic productivity, the Government of Canada should ensure that its aid efforts emphasise human capital development, particularly programs and projects that focus on Afghanistan's youth in the rural areas in particular. Such programs would include not only job creation projects, but also the development of employable skills and training across different sectors that are part of the reality of Afghan life.

Recommendation 22

The Government of Canada should continue to contribute to the development of Afghanistan's education system at the primary, secondary and post-secondary levels.

Recommendation 23

In consultation with the Afghan government and people, Canada's aid efforts should target poverty reduction in Afghanistan more tangibly, in part by attending to the development of the private sector and the local economy in the urban centres and especially in the rural areas. This can be achieved by encouraging the international community to make better use of Afghan services, skills and procurement rather than relying on non-Afghan contractors and consultants.

Recommendation 24

In line with support for poverty reduction and investment in Afghanistan's rural areas, Canadian aid efforts should reflect awareness of and attention to agricultural development, particularly in the context of infrastructure rehabilitation involving water and irrigation systems and transportation.

Recommendation 25

In noting that the talent and knowledge of the Afghan diaspora in Canada have not been as systematically and effectively accessed to the benefit of Canada's reconstruction and development activities in Afghanistan, the Government of Canada should actively pursue mechanisms by which the Afghan community in Canada could be consulted and engaged in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan.

Recommendation 26

As part of helping to ensuring that the governance benchmarks in the Afghanistan Compact can be met, the Government of Canada should consider all means necessary to raise the legitimacy and effective capacity of public administration institutions in Afghanistan from the national to the local level. This should include, where feasible, exploring support for Afghan-led structures and processes.

Particular attention should be paid to fostering improved governance mechanisms in Kandahar province aimed at providing better security and basic services to the population there. The Government of Canada should seek responsible local partners in this endeavour.

Recommendation 27

As part of its quarterly progress reports to the Parliament of Canada on the Canadian mission in Afghanistan, the Government of Canada should include detailed information on what steps are being taken, and with what success, to implement the commitments on governance, rule of law and human rights — including benchmarks and timelines — undertaken by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community under the terms of the Afghanistan Compact.

Recommendation 28

Given the progress that has been achieved to date working with the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, the Government of Canada should increase its support to that vital body so as to ensure that it has sufficient capacity and resources to effectively carry out its mandate.

Recommendation 29

In addition, with respect to the issue of transfer of Afghan detainees to Afghan authorities, the Government of Canada should indicate in its future reports the details of what it is doing to implement the terms of the Afghanistan Motion passed by the House of Commons on March 13, 2008.

Recommendation 30

The Government of Canada should use prudent and measured diplomacy to hold the Afghanistan government to its anti-corruption commitments under the Afghanistan Compact. The Government of Canada should support a coordinated approach to anti-corruption measures and in particular should work with the Government of Afghanistan and its international partners to ensure that the senior appointments panel is functioning effectively as a key part of preventing corruption within the institutions of governance.

Recommendation 31

The Government of Canada should work with the Government of Afghanistan and international partners to reform counter-narcotics policies so that effective and coherent counter-narcotics strategies can be adopted. All feasible measures should be examined in that regard.

Recommendation 32

The Government of Canada should examine ways to increase its support for the development of both the national legislature of Afghanistan and elected subnational governance institutions, building on lessons learned from work that has already taken place in this regard. This should include additional support tailored to the needs of women parliamentarians. Furthermore, Canadian assistance to legislative and other aspects of democratic development must ensure that this is a sustainable Afghan-led process that respects Afghan priorities and strengthens Afghan capacities for democratic representation and oversight. At the same time, Canada should help Afghanistan to build its democracy in a way that fulfills Afghanistan's international human rights obligations.

Recommendation 33

The Government of Canada should immediately examine how best to provide support for Afghanistan's next democratic elections in 2009-2010 in coordination with the relevant Afghan authorities and international partners. The Government of Canada should also foster professional working relationships between Canadian parliamentarians and Afghan legislators at the national, provincial and local levels.

Recommendation 34

The strengthening and extension of the mission of the Strategic Advisory Team-Afghanistan in Kabul should be reviewed by the Special Committee on the Canadian Mission in Afghanistan. On the basis of this Committee's recommendations, the Government of Canada should consider whether or not to enhance the Advisory Team's mission and strengthen the Team through the addition of more civilian members. Subsequently, and in consultation with the Government of Afghanistan, appropriate reporting relationships should be reviewed as part of developing and finalizing the

comprehensive Canadian public strategy for Afghanistan called for in Recommendation 1.

Recommendation 35

The Government of Canada should increase its efforts towards achieving the improved coordination of Canadian government efforts in Afghanistan linked to the implementation of a comprehensive public strategy. In that context, the Government of Canada could consider appointing an experienced Canadian coordinator for Afghanistan. Furthermore, the Government's approach must be field tested and coordinated with those of Afghan authorities. At the broadest strategic level, the Government should use all diplomatic means to push for the improved international-Afghan coordination that will be required to meet the commitments which all parties have made under the terms of the Afghanistan Compact.

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;

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*)

APPENDIX II: INTERNATIONALLY AGREED BENCHMARKS AND TIMELINES FROM THE 2006 LONDON AFGHANISTAN COMPACT*

BENCHMARKS AND TIMELINES

The Afghan Government, with the support of the international community, is committed to achieving the following benchmarks in accordance with the timelines specified.

SECURITY

International Security Forces

Through end-2010, with the support of and in close coordination with the Afghan Government, the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and their respective Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) will promote security and stability in all regions of Afghanistan, including by strengthening Afghan capabilities.

Afghan National Army

By end-2010: A nationally respected, professional, ethnically balanced Afghan National Army will be fully established that is democratically accountable, organized, trained and equipped to meet the security needs of the country and increasingly funded from Government revenue, commensurate with the nation's economic capacity; the international community will continue to support Afghanistan in expanding the ANA towards the ceiling of 70,000 personnel articulated in the Bonn talks; and the pace of expansion is to be adjusted on the basis of periodic joint quality assessments by the Afghan Government and the international community against agreed criteria which take into account prevailing conditions.

Afghan National and Border Police

By end-2010, a fully constituted, professional, functional and ethnically balanced Afghan National Police and Afghan Border Police with a combined force of up to 62,000 will be able to meet the security needs of the country effectively and will be increasingly fiscally sustainable.

* Source, *Building on Success: The London Conference on Afghanistan – The Afghanistan Compact*, pp. 6-12.

Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups

All illegal armed groups will be disbanded by end-2007 in all provinces.

Counter-Narcotics

By end-2010, the Government will strengthen its law enforcement capacity at both central and provincial levels, resulting in a substantial annual increase in the amount of drugs seized or destroyed and processing facilities dismantled, and in effective measures, including targeted eradication as appropriate, that contribute to the elimination of poppy cultivation.

By end-2010, the Government and neighbouring and regional governments will work together to increase coordination and mutual sharing of intelligence, with the goal of an increase in the seizure and destruction of drugs being smuggled across Afghanistan's borders and effective action against drug traffickers.

Mine Action and Ammunition

By end-2010, in line with Afghanistan's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Afghanistan's Ottawa Convention obligations, the land area contaminated by mines and unexploded ordnance will be reduced by 70%; all stockpiled anti-personnel mines will be located and destroyed by end-2007; and by end-2010, all unsafe, unserviceable and surplus ammunition will be destroyed.

GOVERNANCE, RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Public Administrative Reform

By end-2010: Government machinery (including the number of ministries) will be restructured and rationalised to ensure a fiscally sustainable public administration; the civil service commission will be strengthened; and civil service functions will be reformed to reflect core functions and responsibilities.

A clear and transparent national appointments mechanism will be established within 6 months, applied within 12 months and fully implemented within 24 months for all senior level appointments to the central government and the judiciary, as well as for provincial governors, chiefs of police, district administrators and provincial heads of security.

By end-2006 a review of the number of administrative units and their boundaries will be undertaken with the aim of contributing to fiscal sustainability.

By end-2010, in furtherance of the work of the civil service commission, merit-based appointments, vetting procedures and performance-based reviews will be undertaken for civil service positions at all levels of government, including central government, the judiciary and police, and requisite support will be provided to build the capacity of the civil service to function effectively. Annual performance-based reviews will be undertaken for all senior staff (grade 2 and above) starting by end-2007.

Anti-Corruption

The UN Convention against Corruption will be ratified by end-2006, national legislation adapted accordingly by end-2007 and a monitoring mechanism to oversee implementation will be in place by end-2008.

The Census and Statistics

The census enumeration will be completed by end-2008 and the complete results published.

Reliable statistical baselines will be established for all quantitative benchmarks by mid-2007 and statistical capacity built to track progress against them.

National Assembly

The National Assembly will be provided with technical and administrative support by mid-2006 to fulfil effectively its constitutionally mandated roles.

Elections

The Afghanistan Independent Electoral Commission will have the high integrity, capacity and resources to undertake elections in an increasingly fiscally sustainable manner by end-2008, with the Government of Afghanistan contributing to the extent possible to the cost of future elections from its own resources. A permanent civil and voter registry with a single national identity document will be established by end-2009.

Gender

By end-2010: the National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan will be fully implemented; and, in line with Afghanistan's MDGs, female participation in all Afghan governance institutions, including elected and appointed bodies and the civil service, will be strengthened.

Rule of Law

By end-2010, the legal framework required under the constitution, including civil, criminal and commercial law, will be put in place, distributed to all judicial and legislative institutions and made available to the public.

By end-2010, functioning institutions of justice will be fully operational in each province of Afghanistan, and the average time to resolve contract disputes will be reduced as much as possible.

A review and reform of oversight procedures relating to corruption, lack of due process and miscarriage of justice will be initiated by end-2006 and fully implemented by end-2010; by end-2010, reforms will strengthen the professionalism, credibility and integrity of key institutions of the justice system (the Ministry of Justice, the Judiciary, the Attorney-General's office, the Ministry of Interior and the National Directorate of Security).

By end-2010, justice infrastructure will be rehabilitated; and prisons will have separate facilities for women and juveniles.

Land Registration

A process for registration of land in all administrative units and the registration of titles will be started for all major urban areas by end-2006 and all other areas by end-2008. A fair system for settlement of land disputes will be in place by end-2007. Registration for rural land will be under way by end-2007.

Counter-Narcotics

By end-2010, the Government will increase the number of arrests and prosecutions of traffickers and corrupt officials and will improve its information base concerning those involved in the drugs trade, with a view to enhancing the selection system for national and sub-national public appointments, as part of the appointments mechanism mentioned earlier in this annex.

Human Rights

By end-2010: The Government's capacity to comply with and report on its human rights treaty obligations will be strengthened; Government security and law enforcement agencies will adopt corrective measures including codes of conduct and procedures aimed at preventing arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, extortion and illegal expropriation of property with a view to the elimination of these practices; the exercise of freedom of expression, including freedom of media, will be strengthened; human rights awareness will be included in education curricula and promoted among legislators, judicial personnel and other Government agencies, communities and the public; human rights monitoring will be carried out by the Government and independently by the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), and the UN will track the effectiveness of measures aimed at the protection of human rights; the AIHRC will be supported in the fulfilment of its objectives with regard to monitoring, investigation, protection and promotion of human rights.

The implementation of the Action Plan on Peace, Justice and Reconciliation will be completed by end-2008.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

INFRASTRUCTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Roads

Afghanistan will have a fully upgraded and maintained ring road, as well as roads connecting the ring road to neighbouring countries by end-2008 and a fiscally sustainable system for road maintenance by end-2007.

Air Transport

By end-2010: Kabul International Airport and Herat Airport will achieve full International Civil Aviation Organisation compliance; Mazar-i-Sharif, Jalalabad and Kandahar will be upgraded with runway repairs, air navigation, fire and rescue and communications equipment; seven other domestic airports will be upgraded to facilitate domestic air transportation; and air transport services and costs will be increasingly competitive with international market standards and rates.

Energy

By end-2010: electricity will reach at least 65% of households and 90% of non-residential establishments in major urban areas and at least 25% of households in rural areas; at least 75% of the costs will be recovered from users connected to the national power grid. A strategy for the development and the use of renewable energies will be developed by end-2007.

Mining and Natural Resources

An enabling regulatory environment for profitable extraction of Afghanistan's mineral and natural resources will be created by end-2006, and by end-2010 the investment environment and infrastructure will be enhanced in order to attract domestic and foreign direct investment in this area.

Water Resource Management

Sustainable water resource management strategies and plans covering irrigation and drinking water supply will be developed by end-2006, and irrigation investments will result in at least 30% of water coming from large waterworks by end-2010.

Urban Development

By end-2010: Municipal governments will have strengthened capacity to manage urban development and to ensure that municipal services are delivered effectively, efficiently and transparently; in line with Afghanistan's MDGs, investment in water supply and sanitation will ensure that 50% of households in Kabul and 30% of households in other major urban areas will have access to piped water.

Environment

In line with Afghanistan's MDGs, environmental regulatory frameworks and management services will be established for the protection of air and water quality, waste management and pollution control, and natural resource policies will be developed and implementation started at all levels of government as well as the community level, by end-2007.

EDUCATION

Primary and Secondary Education

By end-2010: in line with Afghanistan's MDGs, net enrolment in primary school for girls and boys will be at least 60% and 75% respectively; a new curriculum will be operational in all secondary schools; female teachers will be increased by 50%; 70% of Afghanistan's teachers will have passed a competency test; and a system for assessing learning achievement such as a national testing system for students will be in place.

Higher Education

By end 2010: enrolment of students to universities will be 100,000 with at least 35% female students; and the curriculum in Afghanistan's public universities will be revised to meet the development needs of the country and private sector growth.

Skills Development

A human resource study will be completed by end-2006, and 150,000 men and women will be trained in marketable skills through public and private means by end-2010.

Afghan Cultural Heritage

A comprehensive inventory of Afghan cultural treasures will be compiled by end-2007. Measures will be taken to revive the Afghan cultural heritage, to stop the illegal removal of cultural material and to restore damaged monuments and artefacts by end-2010.

HEALTH

Health and Nutrition

By end-2010, in line with Afghanistan's MDGs, the Basic Package of Health Services will be extended to cover at least 90% of the population; maternal mortality will be reduced by 15%; and full immunisation coverage for infants under-5 for vaccine-preventable diseases will be achieved and their mortality rates reduced by 20%.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Agriculture and Livestock

By end-2010: The necessary institutional, regulatory and incentive framework to increase production and productivity will be established to create an enabling environment for legal agriculture and agriculture-based rural industries, and public investment in agriculture will increase by 30 percent; particular consideration will be given to perennial horticulture, animal health and food security by instituting specialised support agencies and financial service delivery mechanisms, supporting farmers' associations, branding national products, disseminating timely price and weather-related information and statistics, providing strategic research and technical assistance and securing access to irrigation and water management systems.

Comprehensive Rural Development

By end-2010: Rural development will be enhanced comprehensively for the benefit of 19 million people in over 38,000 villages; this will be achieved through the election of at least a further 14,000 voluntary community development councils in all remaining villages, promoting local governance and community empowerment; access to safe drinking water will be extended to 90% of villages and sanitation to 50%; road connectivity will reach 40% of all villages, increasing access to markets, employment and social services; 47% of villages will benefit from small-scale irrigation; 800,000 households (22% of all Afghanistan's households) will benefit from improved access to financial services; and livelihoods of at least 15% of the rural population will be supported through the provision of 91 million labour days.

Counter-Narcotics

By end-2010, the Government will design and implement programmes to achieve a sustained annual reduction in the amount of land under poppy and other drug cultivation by the strengthening and diversification of licit livelihoods and other counter-narcotics measures, as part of the overall goal of a decrease in the absolute and relative size of the drug economy in line with the Government's MDG target.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Poverty Reduction

By end-2010, in line with Afghanistan's MDGs, the proportion of people living on less than US\$1 a day will decrease by 3% per year and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger will decrease by 5% per year.

Humanitarian and Disaster Response

By end-2010, an effective system of disaster preparedness and response will be in place.

Disabled

By end-2010, increased assistance will be provided to meet the special needs of all disabled people, including their integration in society through opportunities for education and gainful employment.

Employment of Youth and Demobilised Soldiers

By end-2010, employment opportunities for youth and demobilised soldiers will be increased through special programmes.

Refugees and IDPs

By end-2010, all refugees opting to return and internally displaced persons will be provided assistance for rehabilitation and integration in their local communities; their integration will be supported by national development programmes, particularly in key areas of return.

Vulnerable Women

By end-2010, the number of female-headed households that are chronically poor will be reduced by 20%, and their employment rates will be increased by 20%.

Counter-Narcotics

By end-2010, the Government will implement programmes to reduce the demand for narcotics and provide improved treatment for drug users.

ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE AND PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Financial Management

By end-2007, the Government will ensure improved transparent financial management at the central and provincial levels through establishing and meeting benchmarks for financial management agreed with and monitored by the international community, including those in the anticipated Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF). In turn, and in line with improved government accountability, donors will make more effort to increase the share of total external assistance to Afghanistan that goes to the core budget.

Domestic Revenues

Afghanistan's total domestic budgetary revenue – equivalent to 4.5% of estimated legal GDP in 1383 (2004/05) – will steadily increase and reach 8% of GDP by 1389 (2010/11). The ratio of revenue to estimated total recurrent expenditures, including estimated recurrent expenditures in the core and external development budgets, is projected to rise from 28% in 1383 (2004/05) to an estimated 58% in 1389, resulting in a continuing need, in accord with the principles in Annex II, for (1) external assistance to the core budget and (2) increasing cost-effectiveness of assistance that funds recurrent expenditure through the external development budget.

Private Sector Development and Trade

All legislation, regulations and procedures related to investment will be simplified and harmonised by end-2006 and implemented by end-2007. New business organisation laws will be tabled in the National Assembly by end-2006. The Government's strategy for divestment of state-owned enterprises will be implemented by end-2009.

Financial Services and Markets

Internationally accepted prudential regulations will be developed for all core sectors of banking and non-bank financial institutions by end-2007. The banking supervision function of Da Afghanistan Bank will be further strengthened by end-2007. Re-structuring of state-owned commercial banks will be complete by end-2007. State-owned banks that have not been re-licensed will be liquidated by end-2006.

Regional Cooperation

By end-2010: Afghanistan and its neighbours will achieve lower transit times through Afghanistan by means of cooperative border management and other multilateral or bilateral trade and transit agreements; Afghanistan will increase the amount of electricity available through bilateral power purchase; and Afghanistan, its neighbours and countries in the region will reach agreements to enable Afghanistan to import skilled labour, and to enable Afghans to seek work in the region and send remittances home.

APPENDIX III

DECLARATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN SUPPORT OF AFGHANISTAN ISSUED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE THREE CO-CHAIRS PRESIDENT NICOLAS SARKOZY, PRESIDENT HAMID KARZAI, SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON, PARIS, 12 JUNE 2008

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community met today in Paris to reaffirm their long-term partnership to serve the people of Afghanistan, their security, prosperity and human rights.

This conference marks a new commitment to work more closely together under Afghan leadership to support the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). We reaffirm that the Afghanistan Compact remains the agreed basis for our work. We will give priority to strengthening institutions and economic growth, particularly in agriculture and energy. By focusing on these sectors, we will also accelerate progress in areas where important achievements have already been made. The Afghan Government has committed itself to pursuing political and economic reform. The international community has agreed to provide increased resources and to use them in a more effective way. We all commit ourselves to work in a more coordinated way.

We welcome the Review of the Afghanistan Compact prepared by the JCMB co-chairs, which underlines the significant progress that has been made, most notably in health and education, in infrastructure and economic growth, as well as in building stronger Afghan national security forces. However, it also shows that daunting challenges remain, especially in the areas of rule of law and law enforcement, government capacity, development, private sector growth, and the personal security of all Afghan citizens. We endorse its substantive conclusions.

We welcome the commitments made to ensure the security and stability of Afghanistan, reaffirmed most recently at the Bucharest summit.

Today we have emphasized the following key elements that will be essential for the security and prosperity of the Afghan people:

To strengthen democracy in Afghanistan: We underlined the importance of the holding of elections in 2009 and 2010 as a crucial step to consolidate democracy for all Afghans. The international community pledged its strong support to help make the elections free, fair, and secure.

To support the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) in order to give the Afghan people a better future: This strategy, which was presented to us today, will be our roadmap for joint action over the next five years and sets our shared priorities. We will align our efforts behind the financing and implementation of the ANDS in order to achieve the objectives agreed in the Afghanistan Compact. We

have agreed that to be successful the ANDS must have a substantial impact in every district and village throughout Afghanistan.

To stimulate investment in infrastructure, especially in the agriculture and energy sectors: The international community welcomed the determination of the Afghan Government to give priority to the agriculture, irrigation and energy sectors, while continuing support for roads, education and health. We promised to support efforts to expand agricultural production and to extend rural development, as well as to invest in larger scale power generation, transmission, and distribution, in order to stimulate Afghanistan's economic development and generate employment. We agreed to continue to work towards food security for all Afghans and to respond to current food shortages.

To create opportunities for Afghans through private sector growth: The Afghan Government committed itself to support private sector growth, including in the sectors mentioned above. It also committed itself to improve revenue collection and to create a legislative and regulatory environment that will attract investment and generate employment. The Afghan Government and the international community agreed to work together to promote freer trade that will benefit countries in the region, based on mutual friendship and trust, and adherence to international obligations.

To strengthen Afghan government institutions and improve delivery of services to all Afghans: In order to ensure that the progress achieved during the past six years is sustained, the Afghan Government agreed to take action to increase trust in government by improving public administration, local governance, justice, police and other law enforcement institutions. In this context, it committed itself to ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit. In support of these efforts, the international community agreed to increase support for strengthening state institutions at the national and sub-national level, including through larger scale civil service capacity-building.

To improve aid effectiveness and ensure the benefits of development are tangible for every Afghan: The international community agreed to provide increased, more predictable, transparent and accountable assistance. They agreed that all their development assistance would be delivered in a more coordinated way. It will be increasingly channeled through the national budget as strengthened, and accountable government institutions acquire greater capacity for management. The international community also committed itself to providing aid in a way that promotes local procurement and capacity-building. We agreed that the benefits of development must reach all provinces equitably. We also agreed to focus on state building efforts and avoid parallel structures.

To combat corruption: The Afghan government reaffirmed its commitment to intensify action to combat corruption and to take concrete steps to that effect. The international community will support such actions. The Afghan Government and international community will undertake professional audits, including joint audits, of programmes financed through the core and external budgets, and will strengthen government capacity for audit and financial accountability.

To intensify counter-narcotics efforts: We expressed our concern that drug production and trafficking networks continue to threaten Afghan development, particularly in a few provinces. At the same time we welcomed the increased number of poppy-free provinces. We must ensure that these provinces receive the support required to sustain this achievement. The Afghan Government committed itself to taking more effective measures to counter the production and trade of illicit narcotics. The international community committed itself to provide coordinated practical assistance and other resources to support Government plans and efforts, especially alternative livelihood programmes.

To ensure greater civil society participation in the nation-building process: The international community welcomed the strong commitment of the Afghan Government to continue a productive dialogue with civil society and communities, and to reach out to disaffected groups to promote peace and participation of the people in shaping a democratic and pluralistic Islamic society.

To promote respect for human rights for all Afghans: We noted the vital importance for the protection of human rights of establishing the rule of law. We committed to support the implementation of the National Action Plan for Women. In particular, we emphasized the continuing need to ensure respect for International Humanitarian Law. As reaffirmed recently in Bucharest, we will continue to ensure that every measure is taken to avoid civilian casualties.

To strengthen regional cooperation: We highlighted the importance of regional cooperation on political, economic and security matters. We agreed that Afghanistan's neighbouring countries have an essential role to play in supporting Afghan Government efforts to build a stable Afghanistan with secure borders.

We underlined the expanded role of the Special Representative of the Secretary General and UNAMA in leading all aspects of coordination and committed ourselves to making full use of this role both with regards to coordination of international efforts and in coordination between the Afghan Government and the international community.

Today in Paris, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community have made a commitment to a strengthened partnership, based on Afghan leadership, on a set of agreed priorities, and on mutual obligations. We have reaffirmed our determination to fulfill the vision of a democratic, peaceful, pluralistic, and prosperous state based on the principles of Islam, as set out in the Bonn Agreement in 2001 and in the Afghanistan Compact of 2006.

APPENDIX V LIST OF WITNESSES (39-2)

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Afghanistan Reference Group	2007/11/29	5
Gerry Barr, President-Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Council for International Cooperation		
Lina Holguin, Policy Director, Oxfam Quebec		5
Emmanuel Isch, Vice President, International and Canadian Programs, World Vision Canada		5
Stefan Lehmeier, Coordinator, Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee		5
Graeme MacQueen, Associate Professor, McMaster University		5
Mirwais Nahzat, Program Officer, World University Service of Canada		5
Gerry Ohlsen, Vice-Chair, Group of 78		5
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to Canada	2007/12/04	6
Omar Samad, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to Canada		
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade		8
Maxime Bernier, Minister of Foreign Affairs		
Yves Brodeur, Assistant Deputy Minister, Afghanistan Task Force		
Minister of International Trade		8
Bev Oda, Minister of International Cooperation		
Canadian International Development Agency	2007/12/11	8
Stephen Wallace, Vice-President, Afghanistan Task Force		
As individuals	2008/02/14	14
Lewis MacKenzie,		
Seddiq Weera, Senior Advisor, Independent National Commission on Strengthening Peace and Senior Policy Advisor, Minister of Education, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan		14
Conference of Defence Associations		14
Paul Manson, President		
Alain Pellerin, Executive Director		14
Francophone Research Network on Peace Operations		14
Marc André Boivin, Deputy Director		

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Strategic Forecasting, Inc. Kamran Bokhari, Director of Middle East Analysis		14
Amnesty International Hilary Homes, Campaigner, International Justice, Security and Human Rights Alex Neve, Secretary General	2008/03/04	16
Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary M.D. Capstick, Associate		16
The Hillbrooke Group Grant Kippen, Principal		16
Norman Paterson School of International Affairs Peggy Mason, Senior Fellow	2008/03/06	17
Université de Montréal Rémi Landry, Associate Researcher, Research Group in International Security		17
University of Ottawa Nipa Banerjee, Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, International Development and Globalization		17
Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan John Manley, Chair Derek Burney, Panellist Pamela Wallin, Panellist	2008/03/11	18
Canadian Council for International Cooperation Surendrini Wijeyaratne, Policy Analyst, Peace and Conflict	2008/03/13	19
Centre for International Governance Innovation Paul Heinbecker, Distinguished Fellow		19
University of Redlands Robert Jackson, Director of International Relations		19
As individuals Sally Armstrong, Journalist Flora MacDonald, Founder, Future Generations Canada		19
OXFAM	2008/04/08	22

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Matt Waldman, Afghanistan Policy Adviser, Oxfam International	2008/04/10	23
Department of National Defence R.J. Hillier, Chief of the Defence Staff		

APPENDIX VI LIST OF WITNESSES (39-1)

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Department of National Defence		
R.J. Hillier, Chief of the Defence Staff	2006/10/25	24
Rodney Monette, Acting Deputy Minister		24
Gordon O'Connor, Minister		24
Mennonite Economic Development Associates of Canada	2006/11/08	28
Linda M. Jones, Technical Director, International Operations		
Project Ploughshares		28
Ernie Regehr, Senior Policy Advisor		
University of Calgary		28
David Bercuson, Director, Centre for Military and Strategic Studies		
University of Ottawa		28
Roland Paris, Associate Professor, Public and International Affairs		
Mihreya Mohammed Aziz, Camerawoman		31
Hooshang Riazi		31
A. John Watson, President and Chief Executive Officer, CARE Canada		31
As individuals		
Najiba Ayoobi, Manager, Radio Killid	2006/11/22	31
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade		
Leonard Edwards, Deputy Minister	2007/03/20	44
Peter MacKay, Minister of Foreign Affairs		44
David Mulroney, Associate Deputy Minister		44
Queen's University		
Douglas Bland, Chair, Defence Management Studies Program, School of Policy Studies		45
As an individual		
Walter Dorn, Professor and Co-Chair, Department of Security Studies, Canadian Forces College	2007/03/22	45

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Minister of International Cooperation Josée Verner, Minister	2007/03/27	46
Center on International Cooperation Barnett Rubin, Director of Studies and Senior Fellow, University of New York	2007/03/29	47
University of Victoria Gordon Smith, Executive Director, Centre for Global Studies and Adjunct Professor of Political Science		47
Conference of Defence Associations Brian MacDonald, Senior Defence Analyst	2007/04/17	48
Alain Pellerin, Executive Director		48
Réseau francophone de recherche sur les opérations de paix Marc André Boivin, Assistant-director		48
UNICEF Canada Nigel Fisher, President and Chief Executive Officer		48
University of Ottawa Pierre Beaudet, Professor, International Development and Globalization Program, Faculty of Social Sciences		48
Royal Military College of Canada Houchang Hassan-Yari, Professor, Political Science		49
As an individual David Van Praagh, Journalist	2007/04/19	49
Department of National Defence Ward Elcock, Deputy Minister	2007/04/25	50
R.J. Hillier, Chief of the Defence Staff		50
Gordon O'Connor, Minister		50
K.W. Watkin, Judge Advocate General, Operations, Office of the Judge Advocate General		50
Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC) Mark Sedra, Research Associate	2007/04/26	51
Peace Dividend Trust Scott Gilmore, Executive Director		51

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Center for Strategic and International Studies (Washington, D.C.)	2007/05/08	54
Seema Patel, Lead Project Consultant, Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project		
Steven Ross, Research Consultant, Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project		54
High Commission for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan	2007/05/10	55
Musa Javed Chohan, High Commissioner for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan		
Najm us Saqib, Deputy High-Commissioner		55
Saqlain Syedah, First Secretary		55
The Senlis Council		58
Norine MacDonald, President and Lead Field Researcher, Security and Development Policy Group		
As an individual	2007/05/29	58
Sarah Chayes, Founder, Arghand (cooperative in Kandahar)		

APPENDIX VII LIST OF BRIEFS

Organizations and Individuals

Barr, Gerry
Afghanistan Reference Group

Holguin, Lina
Afghanistan Reference Group

Isch, Emmanuel
Afghanistan Reference Group

Lehmeier, Stefan
Afghanistan Reference Group

MacQueen, Graeme
Afghanistan Reference Group

Mirwais, Nahzat
Afghanistan Reference Group

Ohlsen, Gerry
Afghanistan Reference Group

Jackson, Robert
University of Redlands

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this Report.

A copy of the relevant Minutes of Proceedings from Session 39-1 ([Meetings Nos. 24, 28, 31, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 54, 55, and 58](#)) and Session 39-2 ([Meetings Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38 and 39](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Sorenson, MP
Chair

**AFGHANISTAN REPORT
DISSENTING OPINION**

We want to thank all the witnesses who came before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development for their valuable input. Their insightful testimony has helped the Committee members understand the challenges facing the mission in Afghanistan.

On March 13, 2008, a motion passed by the House of Commons, with the support of the official opposition, set the parameters that the Afghan mission would focus on until 2011. While this report makes many notable observations and recommendations, Parliament has given clear direction through the March 13, 2008 motion.

**Bloc Québécois supplementary report
on the report of the
Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International
Development entitled:**

***Canada's International Policy Put to the Test in
Afghanistan***

On March 13, 2008, the House of Commons voted in favour of extending Canada's mission in Kandahar until 2011; nonetheless, the Bloc Québécois maintains its previously expressed position that the mission should end in February 2009.

In our opinion, Canada has done more than its share to maintain security in Kandahar. It has made a significant contribution, ranking fourth in terms of the number of troops deployed. Unfortunately, its involvement has also resulted in the inevitable deaths of Canadian soldiers.

The NATO mission in Kandahar is an international one. At present, 38 countries ensure a military presence in Afghanistan. Canada will have been involved in a dangerous large-scale mission in Kandahar from October 2005 until February 2009.

According to figures published in the Department of National Defence's *Report on Plans and Priorities*, Canadian operations in Afghanistan cost \$7,718.7 million between 2001 and 2008.

The Bloc believes that there should be a rotation in active combat. It is time for other countries to take over.

Furthermore, ending the military mission in February 2009 would allow Canada to allocate the funds that would be freed up to development assistance in Afghanistan.

In short, given the current state of affairs, the Bloc Québécois recommends that, in addition to ending the military aspect of the Canadian mission in Kandahar in 2009, the government rebalance its mission to allow Canada to more effectively meet its defence, development and diplomacy objectives in Afghanistan.

